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The Transformation of Emotional Outsiderism of the First Year Students via Social Psycho Drama

Abstract: In the article, the phenomenon content of socio-emotional outsiderism is under study. The first year students are analyzed in terms of personality psychology of Adler, Freud, Jung and social psychology of Moreno. We come with an idea, that the emotional aspect serves as one of outsiderism determinants in a small group dynamics. The significant conditions for transformation are founded, taking into account the role of reflective thinking in turning a passive personality into a pro-active one. Age peculiarities, emotional descriptors, student status and social roles descriptors are synthesised. Socio-drama is presented as a program of social role internalization of a pro-active personality-to be.

Keywords: Outsider, small group dynamics, emotional aspect, social drama, a student status, social role, pro-active personality

Rezumat: În articol, se cercetează conținutul fenomenului socio-psihologic al autsaiderilor, luînd drept exemplu studenților anului întâi din optica psihologiei personalității a lui Adler, Freud, Jung și a psihologiei sociale a lui Moreno. Reieșim din faptul că aspectul afectival a personalității constituie un determenant a fenomenului autsaiderilor în dinamica grupei mici. Se propune formarea condițiilor necesare și suficiente de transformare socio-emoțională, ținând cont de rolul reflecției în transformarea personalității autsaiderului în personalitate pro-activă, pornind de la descriptorii de vîrstă, cît și a descriptorilor structurii afective și a descriptorilor statutului de student și a rolului său social. Considerăm că

sociodrama a acestuia poate servi drept program-soluție de interiorizare a rolului social a viitoarei personalități pro-actie.

Cuvinte cheie: Outsider, dinamica grupei mici, aspectul afectival, sociodrama, statutul studentului, rolul social, personalitate pro-activă

Introduction

The topicality of emotional maladjustment among first year students is evident due to the fact that at the end of the year there is a growing tendency for students to fail completing the academic year even being capable of passing exams. The problem of the study is to carry out an overview of the adaptation theories in terms of emotional determinant of outsiderism, which makes a learner quite a passive observant, with no initiative or belief in any self-development. Such a learner prefers neither to be seen or spoken, thus misses classes and doesn't show interest in taking exams. The transformation of such a passive learner into an active one is absolutely necessary. The reason being quite evident and can be put into simple words: the society needs pro-active people who are ready to solve social problems and not the ones who create them.

As the theory is the essence of practice, the problem of emotional outsiderism is to be analyzed and synthesized in order to find an efficient algorithm of transformation attaining the academic purposes of specialist and personality formation and actualization. Europe 2020 strategy reflects the social demand in employability and poverty reduction via improvements in education for European countries and for Moldova, in particular.

Theoretical Framework: The Outsider Phenomenon in the Theories of Adaptation

The issues of adaptation as well as maladjustment, one of which stands for outsiderism, have been under study since ancient times. Such representatives of the ancient school as Anaxogoras, Democritus, Aristotle, and other thinkers were engaged in the study of these phenomena, considering a person in close interaction with the environment.

Anaxogoras linked the change in the human constitution with changes in the conditions of the immediate environment: climate change, lifestyle, changes in diet and water intake. Democritus explained the variety of

shapes and colors of animals as a result of lifestyle. Aristotle referred to adaptation as “quality” varying from health to illness” (in Жегульская, *Социально-педагогическая адаптация студентов вуза культуры и искусств средствами культурно-досуговой деятельности* 16).

In the 18th century J. Buffon, the French naturalist, introduced the concept of “adaptation processes”, having basically agreed with Anaxagoras and Democritus, that the adaptation mechanism took place under the influence of environmental conditions and manifested itself in a change in the way the organisms look. Next, the French biologist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck introduced the term of “adjustment”, which in its turn treated adaptation as a fact of compliance with the structure and functions of organisms’ environment. The term “adaptation” (from the Latin. *adaptatio* – adaptation) was first used in 1865 by the German scientist G. Aubert in describing the adaptation of the organs of vision to the effects of stimuli of varying intensity (*Ibid.*).

By and large, adaptation theory considers a human in all his manifestations. According to B.G. Ananyev, a person is an individual, a personality and an performer (in Реан, *Психология адаптации личности* 23).

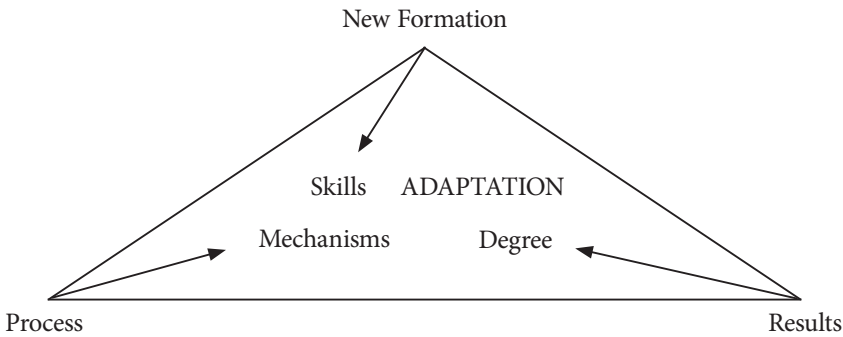
The age, sex, constitutional and neurodynamic properties of the individual form his needs system and the sensorimotor organization. The properties of the individual, in turn, form the makings and temperament of his personality. The *personality* reflects the status of the person, his social functions, the motivation of his behavior and activities, world views, character and inclinations. *The subject of activity* is characterized by a combination of these activities and the degree of their productivity (*Ibid.*).

The impact of an individual adaptation on the regulation of higher forms of mental reflection can be illustrated by the levels of neurological regulation classified by B.M. Velichkovsky:

1. *Paleokinetic regulations* of protopathic sensitivity and basic defense reactions.
2. *Synergies*. Regulations of rhythmic and cyclic movements; awareness of proper- and tango receptor sensations.
3. *Spatial field*. The primary areas of the cerebral cortex are responsible for environmental perception.
4. *Subject actions*. Perceptual images support memory.

5. *Conceptual structures.* Associative areas of the cortex make it possible to identify objects and events as elements of the generating classes, communicate, and have their own symbolic representation of the world.
6. *Metacognitive coordinations.* The formation of the control areas of the neocortex promotes personal and interpersonal relationships, reflexive consciousness, and productive imagination (*Ibid.* 30).

Based on the above-mentioned theory of Ananiev. and A.A. Reanat's conceptual adaptation scheme, we can claim that adaptation mechanisms are the properties of the individual; also, we can compare the quality of adaptation with the personality aspect, and the result of adaptation as a degree of useful action and the possible obtaining of an additive effect when combining the individual and personal aspects (*Ibid.* 26).



Scheme 1. A.A. Rean's main aspects of the phenomenon of adaptation

Accordingly, considering the outsiders in the center of the scheme, the process of maladjustment implies the conditions for the emergence of outsiders, for example, gender sexist relations. New formation – the passive identity of an outsider. The result is a degree of maladjustment of the so-called outcast.

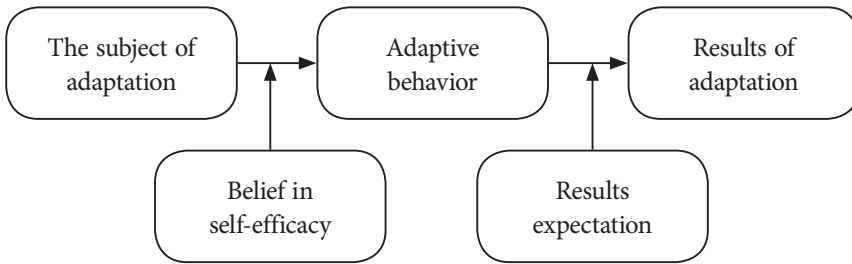
In the case of a maladaptive mechanism, it is important to ask questions about defensive reflection and the idea of the world according to the victimization scenario (by Velichkovsky B.M., the 5th, 6th levels of Conceptual Structures of Metacognitive Coordinations).

The phenomenon of personal maladjustment to difficulties, according to L. V. Kulikov, occurs when there is both a high level of activity and its low manifestation in terms of the properties analyzed:

1. Attitude to the situation, the dominant motive where emotional rejection of the goal without adequate cognitive assessment as insufficient level of activity and the emotional component of the relationship dominating the cognitive one; often accepting a goal before adequate cognitive assessment; striving to reach the goal immediately as excessive activity level.
2. Adequate activity level – Ensemble of emotional and cognitive evaluation; the desire to find the way to the goal.
3. Nature of adaptation. Adaptation is incomplete without sufficient activity. Adaptation is weakened by excessive activity. Adequate activity level – adaptation is enhanced by activity.
4. Behavior. Passive (surrendering) on the one pole and actively disorganized on the other pole. Adequate activity level – actively organized behavior.
5. Productivity (estimated activity) of volitional activity. Missing. Present. Behavior. Passive (surrendering) Actively disorganized. Adequate activity level – present.
6. The main characteristic of the state. Apathy. High tension. Adequate activity level – Activation.
7. Predominant Stress. Exhaustion phase. Mobilization phase. Adequate activity level – resistance phase.
8. Mood. Low mood, despondency and the other extreme – being moody, anxiety. Adequate activity level – good mood, cheerfulness.
9. Energy characteristics of physiological processes. Reduction of energy consumption or its waste on braking. Adequate activity level – adequate and sustainable energy use.
10. Probable outcome. Hypotension, depressive syndrome. Asthenia. Adequate activity level – preservation and improvement of psychological stability, satisfaction with self-realization (*Ibid.* 58).

After analyzing the data presented above, the possible determinants of maladjustment or phenomenon of outsiders might be deduced as: emotional, axiological-semantic determinants.

Supporting the idea of the importance of emotional determinants in the process of adaptation, A. Bandura, in his theory of social learning (see the figure below), puts emphasis on the belief in self-efficacy, that is, autonomy (*Ibid.* 47).



Scheme 2. Bandura's self-efficacy in the process of adaptation (*Ibid.*).

It is valid to hold that maladjustment is dictated by the lack of faith in self-efficacy and lack of autonomy.

In contrast to the theory of adaptation vs maladjustment, A. Rean puts forward a four-dimensional model of social adaptation, where Imaginary-adaptation is illusory by internal or external criteria, but it seems to be a possible form of adaptation, while Re-adaptation is real and is the true form of social adaptation, personal self-actualization both in the external world, i.e. society, and in the internal world with the acquisition of wisdom (*Ibid.* 79).

At the same time, the emotional determinant is expressed by means of an internal criterion. Social adaptation is revealed in the external criterion. It should be noted that the angle of total maladjustment is determined by the negative emotional determinant and non-compliance of the individual to the social norms and standards (*Ibid.*).

Social adaptation, which has been studied by the authors of the concept of personality, is possible due to the flexibility of the personality. Allport, Eysenck, Jung believe that adaptive mechanisms are synergistic and strive for self-sufficiency. Adaptive mechanisms might as well differ from author of the concept of personality to author being determined as Allport's personality dispositions; Eysenck's extra introversion, neuroticism; Guilford's temperament properties, abilities, interests, attitudes; Gehlen's ability to differentiate the assessment of the situation; Lersch's higher feelings; Murray's needs; Toma's technique of Being/Self-presence; Levin's

differentiation of personal space; Sullivan's interpersonal relationship; Jung's extra introversion; Fromm's orientation type (*Ibid.* 167).

Causes of impaired adaptation are presented correspondingly as Allport's insufficient distribution (development) of Self; Eysenck's congenital properties of the nervous system; Gehlen's insensitivity to the nuances of the situation Lersch's predominance of emotional reactivity; Murray's discrepancy of environment pressure and the SELF pressure; Toma's inadequate cognitive representations of situations; Levin's simple structure of personal space; Sullivan's hard personalization of dynamism (fear of hostility); Jung's rigidity of the I-structure; Fromm's irrational beliefs (*Ibid.* 167).

Comparison of concepts indicates the leading determinants of maladjustment of outsiders: the rigidity of the I-structure, according to Jung, Levin, Sullivan; cognitive failure of the situation according to Gehlen, Tom; irrational beliefs by Fromm (*Ibid.*).

Factors of irrational beliefs or negative thinking among young people influence in a destructive way upon mutual perception and form wrong attitudes and patterns towards unknown person. Feedback giving is one of the most efficient working solution in dealing with negative thinking, thus developing open-mindedness and trust via objective reflection.

We consider that socio-drama serves the right purpose in feedback realization as it provides conditions for a dialogue in which students of the first year learn to recognize their emotions, describing them, identify their social roles in interaction and claim a desired status in a group. This introspection is another necessary condition in developing reflective thinking which leads to pro-active personality formation, sorting out the problem of socio-emotional outsiderism.

Patricia Sternberg and Antonina Garcia summarize Moreno's sociodrama being a group action method that allows playing roles we share with others, assuming the truth about humankind being rather alike than different, thus the method helps live and understand emotions, clarify values and is effective with all ages groups (*Sociodrama: Who's in your shoes?* 12).

Aristotle saw in the tragedy the spectators purification, as it artistically excite certain emotions which act as a relief from their own selfish passions, which Moreno after Freud named catharsis (*The concept of socio-drama: A new approach to the problem of inter-cultural relations* 434).

Sociodrama Myth of Cassandra as a Transformation Method of Emotional Outsiderism

In her research of Cassandra complex, Laurie Schapira works out an algorithm of emotional outsiderism transformation.

An empirical study was launched in September-December 2018. 120 first year students joined the quazi-experiment. 60 students from experimental group were asked to take part in socio-drama according Schapira's algorithm, while other 60 students from control group would have sociodrama. 10 young men were present in each group. The age of participants was about 18-19.

The experiment followed the principles of identical means of monitoring from trainers. A special algorithm for experimental group served as an experimental variable, providing that other conditions were the same.

The aim of this study is to see how L. Schapira's algorithm of overcoming emotional outsiderism is realized via Moreno's sociodramatic method at the first stage. The group of first year students were asked to dramatize the story of a Modern Cassandra. The role of a patriarchal figure of Modern Apollo in his dark aspect denies any kind of emotions worth to be of any use. This type of authoritative man considers the woman intellectually inferior and ultimately always wrong. Cassandra's part reflects her being on the one hand extraverted and well adapted, but her Persona sometimes all of a sudden is split and feels as a small, scared, helpless child-outsider in an unsatisfactory search for care and guidance of her match, who is the unconscious masculine side of her (*The Cassandra Complex* 8).

In fact, Cassandra's split ego is about 2 sides of a personality: a male side of Apollo – intellectual aspect and a female part of Cassandra – emotional aspect. The moment a non-discriminating dialogue between Cassandra and Apollo is possible, we can state that the transformation of these figures occurs in terms of both emotional and intellectual aspects internalization.

The working hypothesis

Thus, the overcoming of emotional outsiderism needs certain conditions to be created:

1. A dialogue in socio-drama between a discriminating figure and Cassandra for her to reflect upon her emotional state, thoughts, actions and become aware of her emotional outsiderism.

2. A dialogue in sociodrama between discriminating figure and Cassandra applying the Afina's way of being, one who is objective and overcomes idealization of intellect specific to initial Cassandra.

The background for the problem to be solved according to the scenarios:

Apollo was attracted by Cassandra and planned to make her his oracle voice. Cassandra accepted the gift of a prophet, but when she refused to belong to him, Apollo cursed her. No one, even Cassandra herself believed her words to be true.

Warming up

In sociodrama development, warming up stage pursuits at least 3 general objectives:

1. to facilitate communication within the group evoking pro-activity and spontaneity which help create the conditions necessary for genuine inner motivation to solve both internal and external problems (Холмс, *Психодрамма-вдохновение и техника* 27);
2. to create conditions for introspection and awareness of personal problem to be solved within socio-drama;
3. to carry out a pre-test and post-test assessment of emotional sphere of each member of the group to observe emotional sphere dynamics.

Warm up. D. Lampen's tree test with blob-figures in Ponomarenko's adaptation is chosen in this research to serve the purposes of ice-breaker on the one hand and an instrument to measure emotional sphere dynamics before socio-drama and after it.

Hand-outs, a tree with blob figures without numbers on them, are given.

Instruction N1: Work in a small group of 2-3 people and a) choose a blob-figure from those in a tree, which resembles you when you are disbelieved or feel helpless; b) choose the blob-figure that you would like to associate yourself with; c) speak about situations when you feel like those 2 blob-figures while your group-mates try to note the range of feelings you mentioned.

Data analysis

Being very easy and accurate to recognize the emotional state and social status of a participant the test reveals via their introspection their complexes of inferiority and superiority. It helps recognize and strengthen emotions, and to some extent, understand their status in society too. Each blob figure in this picture is in a different mood and has a different position which reflects an adaptation/outsiderism level in a group (Донцов, *Методики социально-психологического исследования учебных групп школьников и студентов* 112).

In both experimental and control groups, the choices of students in the task where they were supposed to choose a blob-figure from those in a tree, were decided by us to be assessed according to the criteria of adaptation or low adaptation.

The choices of well-adapted student are 1, 3, 6, 7, 2, 19, 18, 11, 12, 4, 9, 10,15, 20,16, where in both groups students would try to persuade others that they are to be trusted, the result is 12% in experimental group, while in control group it is 14%.

The choices of low-adapted student are 13, 21, 8, 14, 17. So, the results in experimental group are 88% due to emotional outsiderism (13, 21, 14) and 86% in control group due to isolation and emotional outsiderism (13, 21, 14, 8).

Thus, 86%-88% of emotionally low-adapted students are quite many in both groups, which stands for the facts that even if students are quite brave to express their views, they don't feel being trusted or considered.

The socio-drama requisites are as follow:

The stage – The Modern Myth of Cassandra dramatization, in our case was predestinated to let active imagination go free. Unconscious, being presented by active imagination could mingle with conscious and form a soil for revelation, which is a key to a problem solution.

The subject – the role of Cassandra is to remember the situation when she felt being disbelieved with no reason although, as it occurred in a long run Cassandra predictions proved to be true.

Actors – auxiliary egos of the subject. They represent real or imaginary figures of the dramatization.

The director – has to carry out an algorithm of Cassandra transformation via 2 stages. Here the subject chooses actors from the audience to play split ego of Casandra, one of dark merciless Apollo and another of helpless prophet Cassandra.

I scene: Dark Apollo blames Cassandra as any sexist man blames a woman. Cassandra takes part in a scene idealizing the intellect of Apollo and pays attention to emotions, thoughts, actions she may have.

II scene: Cassandra initiates into Afina. Cassandra-Afina stops idealizing Apollo (a patriarchal figure of a man) and assesses men objectively, which gives her understanding and feeling of her self-sufficiency. As a result, a dialogue between a male figure and a female one denotes the way out of female/emotional outsiderism of Cassandra.

The audience is a sounding board of collective opinion (*Psychodrama and sociodrama* 13-19).

Socio-drama Analysis

In the **first scene**, after Apollo's verbal aggression, a student playing Cassandra's role being quite a reserved girl, all of a sudden changed her behavior. Her body started speaking, as if saying that she is a woman (slowly moving hips, giving a seducing smile), but being unable to decode her emotions, which were revealing, even through the attempt to hide them. Having become aware of such drastic effect, Cassandra, actors, the audience confessed going through the same, first reaction being total insensitivity and then overwhelmed uncontrollable emotions.

The conclusion: the emotions being suppressed by Cassandra, because they were unbearable, showed themselves unconsciously via corporal reactions, which should convey the fact that Cassandra is a woman, which means she has emotions.

In the **second scene**, Cassandra being provoked again by Apollo, was so irritated, that her shadow activated itself giving Cassandra energy for an inner change. Cassandra blamed Apollo and men being liars and irresponsible, which means that men are not to be trusted, rather than women, who are truly devoted to kids and family. Thus, Cassandra being objective and finding belief could express what she feels and thinks and initiated into Afina. Apollo gave in to a new status of Cassandra-Afina, admitting the facts of life.

Sharing. The audience shared opinions of the sociodrama, confessing going through the same sociodramatic processes and being emotionally involved, experienced catharsis. Due to the fact, many of them began feeling differently.

Post-test data analysis was to measure emotional sphere dynamics after the sociodrama. . D. Lampen's tree tests with blob-figures in Ponomarenco's adaptation were given.

Instruction N2: Work in a small group of 2-3 people and a) choose a blob-figure from those in a tree, which resembles you after sociodrama b) choose the blob-figure that you would like to associate yourself with; c) speak about situations when you feel like those 2 blob-figures while your group-mates try to note the range of feelings you mentioned.

The choices of well-adapted student are 1, 3, 6, 7, 2, 19, 18, 11, 12, 4, 9, 10,15, 20,16, where in both groups students started understanding that facts of life stand for the truth and wisdom of a woman, whereas Apollo lineal intellect is not always enough to see the truth. The results were 78% in experimental group, while 23% in control group where Cassandra did not stop advocating Apollo, keeping idealizing his intellect and preferred trusting her intellect, rather than her emotions. Control group were not involved in sociodrama.

Conclusions

Emotional tension appears more evidently among young people which may lead to inadequate reflective thinking about events, impulsive actions, formation of such personality traits such as lack of initiative, lack of participation, the feeling of personal uselessness. All these states describe the phenomenon known as emotional outsiderism, a form of maladjustment. The conditions necessary for reflective thinking formation as a synergetic component in transformation of the inactive personality of a learner into a pro-active, most efficient learner are worked out. In terms of personality psychology and social psychology of Moreno, it is of paramount importance to provide skills formation of dialogical speech via socio drama to overcome learner's emotional vulnerability and help learners better their social status, thus be accepted by the group.

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