Influence of Social-Psychological Training on Selected Features of University Students

Anežka Hamranová, Blandína Šramová, and Katarína Fichnová

Abstract—We presented results of research aimed on findings influence of social - psychological training (realized with students of Constantine the Philosopher University- future teachers within their undergraduate preparation) on the choice of intrapersonal and interpersonal features. After social- psychological training using Interpersonal Check List (ICL) we found out shift of behavior to more adaptive forms in categories, which are characterized by extroversive friendly behavior, willingness to cooperation, conformity regard to social situation, responsible and regardful behavior.

Using State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) we found out the cut down of state anxiety and of trait anxiety. The report was processed within grants KEGA 3/5269/07 and VEGA 1/3675/06.

Keywords—Intrapersonal and interpersonal features, social - psychological training, social competences.

I. INTRODUCTION

ONE of the possibilities for the teacher and educator's preparation to proper influence in the classroom and to form it as an effective group able to achieve the defined goals; is when they have their own experience with the forms of group work as the social-psychological training (SPT).

The essential condition of the right personality development is her congruence. The congruence between inner experiencing and outer demonstration of a personality contributes to its higher maturity. The social - psychological training is one of the forms leading to better self-knowing and self-esteem of a personality as well as to improvement of its social abilities shown in a relationship to people. In a wider sense the social - psychological training is concentrated on the training of abilities in dealing with people [1]. According to Hermochova [2] it is a systematic and planned approach to influencing of group processes and group behavior.

The social - psychological trainings are based, as we mentioned above, on different plays, exercises, activities, case studies and problem situations that are solved and trained at the individual meetings of participants. The application of these techniques as methods used in a social - psychological training depends on a pre-arranged goal which we study by exercises´ realization. Among main general objectives of social - psychological training can be included:

- deepening of self-knowing;
- improvement in an effective communication;
- training of constructive ways of solving problem and strategies of coping with burden situations;
- whole social abilities improvement;

- acquiring of empathy ability, ability of acceptation and congruence;
- achieving and development of abilities of constructive interpersonal conflicts solving;
- assertive behaviour development;
- moral development and others.

In general, the classic social - psychological training has the following basic structure [3]:

1. familiarisation of the social - psychological trainings´ participants with their goals;
2. technique application for acquaintance, relax and creation of a pleasant atmosphere in a group;
3. training of new behaviour forms and analysis of experiencing by the training participants;
4. decision making in a group for the most effective and the most suitable behavior forms and strategies and their application in real environment.

For a successful training continuance, it is necessary to secure that it runs in the environment psychologically safe for the participants. In the training group the main resource of dealing is what is happening "here and now". Conversation content, during the training, concerns most often with what happened in the group.

II. METHODOLOGY

Our goal was to find out how the social – psychological training influences the intrapersonal and interpersonal features.

Research specimen was constituted of 140 participants - Constantine the Philosopher University students in Nitra, future teachers with mean age of 22.3 years.

Experimental group (EG) was made up of 69 participants divided into four smaller groups (EG1 to EG4) to which social – psychological training was implemented in 96 hrs appropriation.

Control group (CG) was made up of 71 participants divided into four smaller groups (CG1 to CG4), without SPT implementation.

In experimental group participants social – psychological training was implemented between September 2004 and May 2005 of structured type comprising total appropriation of 96 hrs based on personal experience interwoven with relevant theoretical findings.

The objective of social – psychological training being a support of social competence of future teachers in the sense of developing optimal forms in interpersonal and intrapersonal behavior.

Interpersonal variables being checked by the Interpersonal Diagnosis Questionnaire ICL [4].

Intrapersonal variables being checked by the Anxiety and Meticulousness Questionnaire STAI [5].

Measurements of intrapersonal and interpersonal variables in experimental groups being implemented prior to social – psychological training intervention and consequently after its termination.

In control groups the measurements being parallel with those in experimental groups but without social - psychological intervention.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TABLE I
RESULTS OF ICL QUESTIONNAIRE MEASUREMENTS IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP (N=69)

ICL	Measurement before SPT Mean	SD	Measurement after SPT Mean	SD	t	p
PA	8.06	2.75	8.04	2.40	0.045	0.964
BC	6.50	2.29	6.77	2.13	0.894	0.374
DE	5.87	2.54	6.35	2.32	0.724	0.089
FG	6.71	2.40	6.38	2.37	1.131	0.262
HI	7.61	2.99	6.26	2.89	5.085***	0.000
JK	8.90	2.54	7.83	2.50	4.339***	0.000
LM	9.83	2.47	8.45	2.62	4.888***	0.000
NO	9.16	2.62	7.96	2.56	4.073***	0.000
DOM	51.64	0.83	53.10	10.43	1.164	0.249
LOV	55.60	9.48	51.00	9.43	5.198***	0.000

Legend (holding for Tables I to II): PA – power and strength, BC – independence and self-confidence, DE – determination/vigor, FG – uncredulous resistence, HI – submissiveness, JK – weakling/unmanly dependence, LM – affiliation, NO – protectiveness, DOM – index of power, LOV – index of affiliation, SD - standard deviation, t – pared samples test, p – signification, ***p< 0.001

TABLE II
RESULTS OF ICL QUESTIONNAIRE MEASUREMENTS IN THE CONTROL GROUP (N=71)

ICL	Measurement before SPT Mean	SD	Measurement after SPT Mean	SD	t	p
PA	8.14	2.84	8.30	3.05	0.583	0.562
BC	6.30	2.28	6.55	2.55	0.948	0.346
DE	6.72	2.41	6.92	2.58	0.635	0.528
FG	7.42	2.27	6.97	2.81	1.405	0.165
HI	7.68	2.89	7.69	2.97	0.051	0.959
JK	9.18	2.20	8.93	2.49	0.940	0.350
LM	10.37	2.40	10.35	2.52	0.044	0.965
NO	9.72	2.73	9.52	2.92	0.660	0.511
DOM	5.03	11.03	51.69	11.71	0.476	0.635
LOV	56.07	8.93	55.20	8.95	0.763	0.448

Social – psychological training used for interpersonal relations has influenced participant behavior toward the use of more adaptive forms characterized by extrovert friendly

TABLE III
RESULTS OF STAI QUESTIONNAIRE MEASUREMENTS IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP (N = 69)

STAI	Measurement before SPT Mean	SD	Measurement after SPT Mean	SD	t	p
X1	37.98	9.58	32.55	7.35	5.393***	0.000
X2	42.00	8.27	39.96	8.54	2.912**	0.005

Legend (holding for Table III to IV): EG – experimental group, CG – control group, X1 – actual anxiety, X2 – anxiety as a personality feature, SD - standard deviation, t - pared samples test, p – signification, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

TABLE IV
RESULTS OF STAI QUESTIONNAIRE MEASUREMENTS IN THE CONTROL GROUP (N = 71)

STAI	Measurement before SPT Mean	SD	Measurement after SPT Mean	SD	t	p
X1	41.70	9.05	45.29	11.38	3.124**	0.003
X2	44.70	8.63	46.63	8.98	2.470*	0.016

behavior, willingness for cooperation, conformity with regard to social situation, responsible and considerate behavior.

The experimental group, after undergoing social – psychological training, have documented significant reduction of anxiety and meticulousness, the control group conversely, significant increase of both anxiety and meticulousness.

Reduction of momentary anxiety corresponds with research results in topical problems of mental load control, mental health boosting and increasing the quality of life [6]. One of the preconditions of our training lessons is to safeguard the non-menacing psychological atmosphere of safety. Working in a group with its members expressing their sentiments and thoughts naturally brings a certain degree of anxiety, being partly a consequence of intensive participant work on him/herself. However, over-anxiety can likely curb the group work. This is why we consider the social – psychological training induced anxiety reduction an important result interpreting it as a shift toward more relaxed and spontaneous behavior of group members, which can lead to their higher frustration tolerance and more self-confident behavior in social situations.

The control group showed an opposite response – both anxiety and meticulousness being significantly increased. The reason for this can be lower confidence among group members that can cause apprehensions of open airing of their experiences and behavior in social situations.

IV. CONCLUSION

Social behavior of the teacher is a model for social behavior of his/her pupils. The teacher is in continuous contact with people, encountering various social situations, and hence affiliant behavior characterized by extrovert friendly behavior to people and willingness for cooperation, as well as protective behavior characterized by responsible, self-confident and others-supporting, and considerate

behavior, should be firmly represented in his/her interpersonal behavior.

We can confirm our social – psychological training has helped the participants train the above social capabilities and hence modify their interpersonal characteristics, which transferred to common everyday situations should boost their efficient functioning in real social environment. Following the mentioned results and also some more results, which we published in previous contributions [3], [7], [8] and from researchers' results for looking over the training group effect [9], [10], [11], [12], [13] we can deduce conclusion that social - psychological training is adequate component for future teachers preparation.

In the framework of humanisation of a school system, the social - psychological training turns out to be an effective way that enables pupils and teachers to get to know, develop and use, in an appropriate way, social skills necessary for everyday coping with problem situations.

REFERENCES

[1] S. Kratochvíl, *Skupinová terapie neuros.* Avicenum, Praha, 1978.
[2] S. Hermochová, *Sociálně psychologický výcvik.* SPN, Praha, 1988.
[3] A. Hamranová, "Intervenčný program vo výchovno-vzdelávacom procese". In: Zborník prednášok z medzinárodnej konferencie *Slovenské školstvo v kontexte európskej integrácie*, Nitra, UTV PF UKF a CI UKF, 2003, p.377-379.
[4] T. Leary, R. L. LaForge, R. F. Suczek, *Dotazník interpersonální diagnózy ICL.*Bratislava, psychodiagnostické a didaktické testy, 1976.
[5] C. D. Spielberger, R. Gorsuch, R. Lushene (slovenská verzia J. Műlner, I. Ruisel, G. Farkaš), *Dotazník na meranie úzkosti a úzkostlivosti.* Bratislava, Psychodiagnostické a didaktické testy, 1980.
[6] A. Prokopčáková, A. Potašová, "Spokojnosť so životom a afektivita z hľadiska veku". In: *Práca a jej kontexty.* Zborník príspevkov zo "Psychologických dní", Bratislava, Stimul, 2003, p. 458-462.
[7] A. Hamranová, "Prevencia násilia vplyvom intervenčných programov v práci školského psychológa". In: *Násilie na školách: zborník príspevkov z 2. ročníka medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie "Ďuričove dni",* Banská Bystrica, UMB, 2006, p.106-114.
[8] A. Hamranová,"Príprava učiteľov na skupinovú prácu s deťmi v rámci prevencie násilia". In: Hamranová, A. (Ed.) Násilie v rodine a v škole III. Príčiny vzniku a spôsoby ich odstraňovania. Monografia vedeckých príspevkov, Nitra, FSVaZ UKF, 2007, p. 244 – 263.
[9] K. Fichnová, "Program stimulácie tvorivých schopností detí integrovaný do programu výchovy a vzdelávania detí v materských školách: východiská, popis a predbežné výsledky". In: *Školská psychológia – intervenčné programy zamerané na rozvoj osobnosti,* Nitra, PF UKF, 2001, p. 92-104.
[10] K. Fichnová, J. Satková, "Aktivizujúce metódy v príprave budúcich učiteľov v "na študenta zameranom vyučovaní" a ich odraz v osobnostných premenných". In: *Uplatňovanie aktivizujúcich metód a foriem vyučovania vo vysokoškolskom vzdelávaní,* Zb. príspevkov z medzinárodnej konferencie III, Nitra, SPU, 2003, pp.167-173.
[11] B. Šramová, "Cognitive training - Teachers ́help". In: *Studia psychologica*, 3, 2004a, p.203-210.
[12] B. Šramová, *Domáce násilie páchané ne deťoch a mládeži. Vybrané sociálno-psychologické aspekty.* Nitra, FSVaZ UKF, 2004b.
[13] E. Gajdošová, "Prevencia násilia a agresie v školách v práci školského psychológa." In: *Spoločne proti násiliu za bránami škôl.* Zborník z konferencie, Nitra, UKF, 2005, p. 45 – 54.

PaedDr. Anežka Hamranová is a special assistant on Department of Educational and School Psychology, Faculty of Education, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Drážovská 4, 949 74 Nitra, Slovakia (e-mail: ahamranova@ukf.sk). Her main areas of research are the social – psychological training, social and educational psychology.

PhDr. Blandína Šramová, PhD. is a special assistant of psychology at the Department of Mass media communication and advertising studies, Faculty of Art, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Drážovská 4, 949 74 Nitra, Slovakia (e-mail: bsramova@ukf.sk). Her main areas of research are personal identity, developmental psychology, child abuse and neglect and psycho semantic method.

Mgr. Katarína Fichnová, PhD. is head of Departmet of Mass Media Communication and Advertising Studies (Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Drážovská 4, 949 74 Nitra, Slovakia, e-mail: kfichnova@ukf.sk) and Special Assistant Lecturer of Psychology. Her main area of research is psychology of creativity.