

Gotseva Y.A.

Influence of the sex of teenagers on the content of images manifested by them

During the last decade an interest to a problem of self-presentation of personality in communication has considerably increased in native psychology. It was promoted by many social processes in our society which forced people to think of what they look in opinion of encirclement and how is it possible to influence on formation of representations about themselves among partners of communication. We consider self-presentation as the intentional and realized behaviour directed on creation of certain image (more often positive) in encirclement. One of the most difficult problems in studying specific features of self-presentation consists in the answer on a question: how a child, and then a teenager trains in presenting himself in communication with surrounding people, what image of self he forms in opinion of surrounding people.

In this process great role is played by social expectations concerning behaviour of representatives of the different sex, which exist in each culture. Each person tries to express himself in accordance to these expectations in order to meet with surrounding people's approval. Last years in native psychology there appeared works devoted to analysis of distinctions in self-descriptions of men and women [1; 2], and also to teenagers' perception of images of men and women [3]. However, in native psychology, the distinctions in self-presentation of teenagers of different sex were not examined.

The problem of a described part of our research was examination of substantial characteristics of the images shown by teenagers of different sex in interpersonal communication.

Empirical object of this research is presented by scholars of 10th form: 50 girls and 50 young men. As a technique for diagnostics of specific features of self-presentation of teenagers it was used the SIC test (self-presentation in interpersonal communication) developed by I.P. Shkuratova on the basis of the technique of repertoire lattices of J. Kelly [4].

Procedure of implementation of this test consists of two stages. At the first stage the role list which includes persons from the nearest environment is offered to an examinee; the examinee should pick up concrete persons who are carrying out these roles. In this research the role list included following partners of communication: mother, father, sister, brother, friend, girlfriend, class teacher, schoolmate. At the second stage the list of 50 personal features was offered to an examinee; the instruction was to imagine the dialogue with each person from the role list and to think about a quality he demonstrates first of all in dialogue with him. Then an examinee should estimate the degree of aspiration for looking the same in communication with other people, using estimations: 2 points – I aspire very much, 1 point – I aspire sometimes, 0 – I do not aspire at all. In such a way an examinee filled



the table of estimations in which lines presented qualities and columns presented people attributing this qualities.

The most often selected qualities among young men were: adult (82 % of respondents have specified it in the answers), strong (80 %), clever (66 %), assured (62 %), capable (56 %), responsible (48 %), friendly (42), brought up and independent (in 36 %), modern (34 %). Summary these qualities form 60 % of all elections, therefore, it is possible to consider that they are the basis of the generalized image shown by young men in communication.

In communication with encirclement girls most often show following qualities: friendly (have noted 66 % examinee), understanding (56 %), reliable (54 %), capable (48 %), emotional (40 %), attentive (40 %), sociable (36 %), frank (35 %), responsible (34 %), modern (33 %). It is possible to consider these qualities are base in the image manifested by girls concerning different persons from the nearest environment.

If we compare these qualities with those that were most often elected by young men it is obvious that only four qualities coincide: capable, responsible, friendly and modern, but even they have different frequency of occurrence. It is easy to notice, that generalized images manifested by teenagers correspond to feminine type at girls and masculine type at young men.

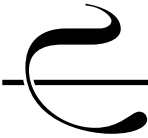
For more generalized analysis all listed characteristics were divided into seven groups: business, intellectual, altruistic characteristics, characteristics specifying intimacy in relations of the respondent with other people, characteristics being socially approved, characteristics of appeal and socially disapproving qualities. The degree of presence of categories was determined by a number of teenagers named this or that characteristic.

As the analysis of data has shown young men more often represent business, socially approved and altruistic qualities in communication. The second position is occupied by characteristics of appeal and intellectual qualities. Demonstration of intimacy of relations and socially disapproving qualities is most seldom carried out by young men (for example, in comparison with business qualities it is five times as less).

As most often manifested categories girls had business, altruistic qualities and characteristics of appeal. The average position was occupied by socially approved qualities and characteristics of intimacy of relations. Intellectual qualities take the sixth place in frequency of manifestation in communication and absolutely seldom girls deliberately show socially disapproving qualities.

We have made the analysis of influence of the sex of the partner of communication on a degree of presentation of feminine and masculine qualities of teenagers that showed the following tendency. In communication with representatives of both sexes young men aspire to show masculine features, and distinctions in a degree of presentation of these characteristics to men and women are not observed. Feminine features are shown by them twice less, irrespective of the sex of the partner of communication.

Strategy of self-presentation of girls is more difficult. In communication with persons of the same sex girls manifest more masculine features, and in communication



with the opposite sex they manifest feminine features. In other words, they are inclined to manifest to representatives of the same sex the image of self-assured, capable, responsible, independent and clever girls, and to men and young men they manifest the image of attractive, charming, cheerful, understanding, friendly, gentle and emotional girls.

Summing up the analysis of influence of the sex of teenagers on the contents of images manifested by them, it is possible to conclude the following. In communication young men are inclined to manifest a traditionally man's image with prevalence of masculine features, including business, intellectual features and characteristics approved by society which allow to become successful.

Girls are inclined to manifest more versatile image including as traditionally feminine qualities (altruistic, characteristics of appeal and the features specifying intimacy of relations) and masculine qualities (business and intellectual characteristics).

The Literature

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