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The possibilities of elaborating components of psychodiagnostic activity among students-psychologists in the process of experimental program

The article considers the possibilities of creating the components of psycho-diagnostic activity among students- psychologists in the process of the experimental program. The components of psychodiagnostic activity are described. We assessed the semiotic, logic, technical and deontological components of psychodiagnostic activity among students-psychologists before and after their participation in the experimental program. We managed to reveal the markers of deontological components of the psychodiagnostic activity and ways of developing this component. We outlined the ways of the further research.

Keywords: *psychodiagnostic activity, structure of psychodiagnostic activity, components of psychodiagnostic activity, solution of psychodiagnostic tasks, process of students-psychologists training, experimental program.*

Modernization of training process suggests students' personality development, creating their professional competence by the modern psychological and pedagogical technologies. This concerns as well psychodiagnostic skills of the final-year students of the psychological faculty of high school. In a number of works [3, 4, 7] they underline that the level of the diagnostic thinking and the general level of psychometrics among students-psychologists are insufficient.

In the contemporary discussion about the students-psychologists' professional and educational training we can here more and more often, that the academic psychologists, prepared by high schools, are far away from practice, he or she should be trained for the activity which is in demand «here –and- now» at the labor market, there is no need to overload the timetable by complicated theoretical courses, because in the practical work they do not play the essential role in general [6]. The close examination of the particularities of psychodiagnostic tasks in the professional activity, reviewing of their potential in the light of studying the compounds of the psychodiagnostic activity and discovering the ways of their development allows looking from a new angle at the problem of high school training of psychological faculty students.

In this connection the aim of our work is the material systematization in order to improve psychodiagnostic training of students-psychologists, as well as the assessment of the efficiency of the elaborated program destined to form the compounds of the psychodiagnostic activity. Psychodiagnostic competence is characterized by the particularities of specialist's acquiring functional and context contents of psychodiagnostic activity, discovering and tracing the process of forming its normal structure. In correspondence with V.I. Slobodchikova's concept [7], this structure may be represented as several levels: 1) at the object – oriented level: the attention is focused upon the object of the activity; 2) at the task –oriented level: the situation is treated



as the complex of the necessary external conditions for achieving assigned tasks (the task in the conditions of the given professional circumstances); 3) at the problem-oriented level: the specialist plays the role of the subject of the professional act, actively looking for and constructing the activity means, facilitating the goal achievement. The specialist, who is only at the first and the second level, can realize it. The third level allows analyzing all the bases and taking into consideration all the components of the activity.

Relying upon the component structure of psychodiagnostic activity elaborated by A.F. Anoufrieva [1] and structure- component model made by S.N. Kostromina [4], we'll consider in details technical, logic, semiotic and deontological components of psychodiagnostic activity.

Technical component reveals itself in the skill of describing the process of the elaboration, standardization and applying the methods more deeply. It is important to know the principals of building the measuring scales, choice, formulation and analysis of tasks and questions. They relate here the elaboration and interpretation of the results, the procedure of their fulfillment, test validity and validity approval. This component is the most developed one during the workshops in psychodiagnostics. The diagnostics of the development of the technical component of psychodiagnostic activity demonstrates itself in the adequate and optimal selection of tests for examination, and also immediately at the process of computing and interpretation of the research results. Some researchers point out that [1, 4, 8], this component is well formed among the final year students of psychological high schools.

Logical component develops in the process of elaborating diagnostic thinking, while thinking process in order to compute the information and its correspondence to these or those particularities of the respondents, that is necessary for further elaboration of psychological diagnosis. The logical component is in a great demand, it includes such skills of diagnosticians as the interrelation of the several methods or tests into the whole for successful psychological conclusion. This is the component which causes the greatest difficulty among the beginners at psychodiagnostics, because the results of the research contain very often contradictory or mutually exclusive, at the first sight, data.

The logic component is closely connected to *semiotic component* of psycho-diagnostic activity, because it contains the theoretical bases of psychological symptoms. Именно на основании of the assimilated theoretical knowledge students have the possibility to juggle with a variety of facts, relying upon psychological, psychological and pedagogical and clinical symptoms while giving a diagnosis. The elaboration of this component happens through the practical activity while writing psychological conclusion or giving a psychological diagnosis.

Deontological component of psycho-diagnostic activity is created in the most difficult way in the process of students-psychologists training. Its creation is possible only in the process of the natural psychological activity. Deontological compound is reflected in the fact that the efficiency of the psychodiagnostic activity doesn't depend



only upon the professional qualification, but the personality of the diagnostician. The deontological aspect of psychodiagnostic activity is the «complex and multidimensional concept, letting integrate really professional, ethic (moral and healthy) and psychological (values, empathy, motivation and others) compounds of the successful activity» [2, p. 118]. Its contents are created by the entity of the ethic bases, competence (professional and communicative) and personal particularities of the specialist [5]. So, forming the deontological compound of psychodiagnostic activity among students-psychologists is complicated due to the absence or insufficient psychodiagnostic practice while studying at high school.

That's why the created experimental program was oriented to the development of the compounds of the deontological component, such as:

- Clients' support (empathy, formal-friendly level of the interaction, supporting nonverbal behavior and etc.);
- the search for resources (trust to clients experience, discovering his strong sides and etc.);
- the way of giving feedback to the client (focus upon the positive «findings» in psychodiagnostic research, finding mutual decisions in the complicated situation, constructive recommendations, not the simple statement of the results and etc);
- they do not give their own evaluation of the results (observation of the ethical moments while presenting the information to the client and etc.).

Establishing the contact between the psychologist and the respondent is the condition of the successful diagnostics. This is in the process of the experimental program students-psychologists have the opportunities to build and develop deontological component, setting up the friendly, confidential relations in the process of the diagnostics and individual feedback, developing the level of the empathy and sympathy. The individual meeting of the tutor with the first-year student, during which the first-year students are informed about the test results, it requires particular attention and delicacy, taking into consideration the high emotional significance of the situation, conditioned by the new social life stage of the first-year students.

In our research we wanted to assess the degree of the development of the components of the psychodiagnostic activity, and used the following methods: 1) solution of psychodiagnostic tasks, taken from the real practice of consulting (6 tasks at each stage); 2) method of experimental assessment; 3) method of the inclosed observation; 4) the method of content-analysis; 5) methods of the mathematical statistics of the data computing (the statistical criterion of Mann Whitney, criterion of Wilcoxon).

After the first stage of the research 252 students-psychologists were divided into two subgroups: experimental and control ones. Let's note that before starting the experiment the average means according to all the parameters for solving psychodiagnostic tasks in both groups of the students have almost the same means and do not show any significant dissimilarities (Table 1), which is confirmed by the criterion of Mann-Whitney.



Table 1

Average indices in the experimental and control groups before carrying out the experiment

Indices	Experimental group	Control group	Level of difference significance – no dissimilarity
Success rate	0,9	0,9	0,94
Number of stages	2,0	1,9	0,55
Sequence of stages	0,0	0,0	1
Number of the hypotheses	1,9	2,0	0,38
Adequate hypotheses	0,9	0,5	0,5
Number of the methods	1,7	1,8	0,32
Adequate methods	0,4	0,6	0,34
Feedback	1,0	1,0	1
The search for problems	2,9	3,7	0,39
The search for resources	1,7	0,4	0,58
The search for decisions	1,7	0,8	0,6
Neutral description	1,3	1,9	0,35
Support of the client	0,0	0,4	0,66
Questions to clients	5,7	2,7	0,87
Unprofessional statements	1,4	1,3	0,37



Then, the experimental group took part in the experimental program, the aim of which was to develop components of psychodiagnostic activity. The program includes several stages of work. Each stage has the certain orientation, let's consider it in details.

Substantiation and choice of methods for making diagnostics among the first-year students let us develop the technical and logic components of psychodiagnostic activity.

The carried out testing was made in order to elaborate the deontological component.

Data analysis of psychodiagnostic study are called to train semiotic, logic, and technical components of psychodiagnostic activity.

The elaboration of the psychological portrait of the first-year student with the forecast of the success of their training at the selected faculty of the high school form the logic and semiotic components in the diagnostic activity of the students-psychologists.

Feedback was given during the individual meetings, the extra trainings and individual correctional events allow to develop deontological component.

The students-psychologists participation in the experimental program was organized by the psychological service of South-Russian Humanitarian Institute in Rostov-on-Don.

After taking part in this program, the experimental group was exposed to the second examination of the efficiency of solving psychodiagnostic tasks, these tasks were proposed to the control group, too. As at the first stage of the study, the respondents were proposed 6 psychodiagnostic tasks for each of them. The problems were the same, but the concrete conditions were changed.

Below, in the table 2, you can see the average means of the different parameters characterizing psychodiagnostic tasks and indices of statistic dissimilarities.

Analyzing the data, represented in the table, we can make a conclusion that in the experimental group there were the following changes:

1. There is a statistically significant increase of :
 - the index of the integral success of solving diagnostic tasks, in comparison with the first stage of the research, it means after taking part in the experimental program the students started to solve more efficiently the suggested diagnostic tasks;
 - the index of stage consequence of the diagnostic process, that means the development of the logic component;
 - the adequacy of the preliminary hypotheses, that points up to the development of the semiotic and logic components;
 - the adequacy of the diagnostic methods, that testifies about the development of the technical and semiotic components;
 - the orientation towards the search of client resources, and also the number of the supporting statements addressed to the client, it means that the psychologist tries to find strong sides of client's personality, instead of looking for disturbances and complexes, as it was before the experiment; development of the deontological component.

Table 2

Average indices in the experimental and control groups after carrying out the experiment

Indices	Success rate	Number of stages	Sequence of stages	Number of the hypotheses	Adequate hypothesis	Number of the methods	Adequate methods	Feedback	The search for problems	The search for resources	The search for decisions	Neutral description	Support of the client	Questions to clients	Unprofessional statements
Control group	0,9	1,8	0,6	2,8	0,9	2,1	0,6	1,0	3,3	0,5	0,8	0,7	0,4	2,7	0,9
Level of difference significance	No dissimilarity	No dissimilarity	0,05	0,05	No dissimilarity	0,01	No dissimilarity	No dissimilarity	No dissimilarity	No dissimilarity	No dissimilarity	0,05	No dissimilarity	No dissimilarity	0,05
Experimental group	1,5	2,1	0,9	1,9	1,0	1,0	1,7	1,0	1,9	2,8	1,7	0,3	2,4	5,7	0,4
Level of difference significance	0,05	No dissimilarity	0,01	No dissimilarity	0,05	0,01	0,01	No dissimilarity	0,01	0,05	No dissimilarity	0,05	0,01	No dissimilarity	0,01
Level of difference significance	0,05	No dissimilarity	0,01	No dissimilarity	No dissimilarity	0,01	0,01	No dissimilarity	0,05	0,01	No dissimilarity	No dissimilarity	0,05	No dissimilarity	0,01



2. There is a statistically significant decrease of:

- means demonstrating the quantity of the proposed diagnostic methods, that suggests the development of the logical and technical components;
- the quantity of the markers of the problems and disruptions, that shows the adequacy to the hypotheses of the psychodiagnostic study; development of logic and semiotic components;
- the quantity of the neutral fact descriptions and unprofessional statements, that points up to the development of the deontological component of the psychodiagnostic activity and helps to improve the efficiency of solving diagnostic tasks.

In the whole we can say that, at the final stage of the experiment the experimental group achieved the development of all the components of the psychodiagnostic activity.

Furthermore, however, the results of the control measurement in the control group (see. table. 2) show that students who didn't take part in this program, also demonstrate changes of some parameters characterizing solving of diagnostic tasks, that should be explained by the acquired experience of such an activity: tasks at the first and the second stages of the research were not identical, but analogical. The stage consequence, quantity of the preliminary hypotheses and the quantity of the diagnostic methods, are related to the gnoceological and technical components of psychodiagnostic activity. There is a decrease of unprofessional statements and neutral descriptions, that are not closely connected to one of the components of psychodiagnostic activity, but they are tied with the integral success of solving diagnostic tasks.

Thus, we can suggest, that logical, semiotic and technical components of psychodiagnostic activity there is a trend for the development at a sacrifice of practice: while solving the analogical tasks the second time these indices increase in both subgroups. Meanwhile, the experimental group demonstrates the more significant tendency of increasing the efficiency of fulfilling psychodiagnostic tasks, that can be explained by the following factors: 1) goal-oriented creation of the compounds of the psychodiagnostic activity in the process of the experimental program; 2) interconnection between all the components in the process of psycho-diagnostic activity [1, 4], it means that, the goal-oriented elaboration of one of them helps to increase the level of the development of the others.

It is necessary to particularly underline, that the number of the markers of the deontological components significantly increased only among the experimental group. This corresponds to the fact that the deontological component can be formed only in the process of the real interaction between the student and "client", when the professional position of the subject of psychodiagnostic activity is actualized.

According to the results of our research we can assert, that the suggested correctional and developmental program can be efficiently used in the system of the students-psychologists' training in order to improve professional competence of the psychologist – diagnostician in the whole, and also the elaboration and development



of the deontological component of the psychodiagnostic activity, particularly. So, correction and development of the psycho-diagnostic skills among students-psychologists are possible at the different stages of the high school training by developing particular compounds of the psycho-diagnostic activity applying available methods. These means in the contemporary educational process are extracurricular special events, dedicated to form the students' professional identity, which will contribute to the development of the internal educational and professional motivation; to the performance of the independent studies in the frame of psychological laboratories and services, which leads to increase of students' professional orientation and etc.

However, in the process of the research we could observe a trend of the irregularity in the efficiency of studying different components of the psychodiagnostic activity by students-psychologists. The questions which arise are: «what helps to fulfill psychodiagnostic tasks successfully?», «What role plays the thinking style in psycho-diagnostic process?», «What are the strategies of solving psycho-diagnostic tasks among students with different thinking styles?», «what are the differences in the efficiency of the assimilation of the psycho-diagnostic activity among representatives of the different thinking styles». The research is to be continued, the answers to these and other questions should be found out.

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