

Emotional Creativity as a Resource of Communicative Competence of Students

Lyudmila V. Tarabakina

Moscow State Pedagogical University, Russian Federation

Elena Yu. Ilaltdinova

Irina V. Lebedeva*

Tat'yana L. Shabanova

Natal'ya V. Fomina

Minin Nizhny Novgorod State Pedagogical University, Russian Federation

*Corresponding Email: lebedeva06.08@yandex.ru

Doi:10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n6s7p175

Abstract

Emotional creativity is considered as an internal resource of person's activity and as a psychological means of successful interaction as the mechanism of a development origin and functioning of communicative competence. The interrelation of emotional creativity indicators and styles of communication of students is investigated. The participants of the research are 100 senior students of Moscow and Nizhny Novgorod universities. Positive connections of emotional creativity and such indicators of communicative competence as priority orientation on the achievement of main objectives of communication, abilities to understand and differentiate the experience, to distinguish emotions of partners in communication, and also to react emotionally in non-standard way in difficult communicative situations are revealed. Negative correlation connection is established with such indicators as domination, conservatism, conformality characterizing a personality as non-confrontational, democratic in behaviour, independent. Development of emotional creativity is one of the problems of improvement of quality of modern university education. The tasks of formation of students' qualities of the emotional and creative personality and the conditions of emotionally attractive learning through the usage of substantially semantic and active methods of training based on interaction, reflection, creativity are formulated on the basis of the received results.

Keywords: business communication, activity resource, communicative competence, emotional creativity, students

1. Introduction

Modern psychology defines communicative competence as an integrative resource of a personality which provides success of communication and interaction. Relevance of this problem is obvious as last decades the understanding of importance of communicative competence for career goals achievement has been growing among students as well as the need of mastering the corresponding abilities has been increasing. Insufficiently developed communicative competence blocks understanding of the needs in self-esteem, recognition and self-updating, and, therefore, prevents successful socialization of the youth.

Scientific literature pays attention mainly to a technical aspect of interpersonal communication. Often communicative competence is interpreted as a complex of verbal and non-verbal skills in communication, a possibility of a personality to assume and successfully realize different social roles, to coordinate actions, to control synchronism of rhythms and actions. However, communicative competence research needs further study of psychological characteristics and internal resources of a personality. At the same time efficiency of interpersonal and intergroup communication is to great extent defined by social and psychological achievements of emotional and personal development, in particular, by one of the most important systems of the emotional sphere of the personality – emotional creativity.

The phenomenon of emotional creativity can be considered as an ability of a person to model, design, and creatively transform their own internal and external activity in interactive space by means of emotional self-expression and influence, and a real-life communicative situation according to authentic tasks. Today there is a deficiency of empirical research of emotional creativity in connection with other characteristics of a personality in the context of a problem of resources.

2. Review of Literature

The American researcher J.R. Averill (2004) was one of the first who showed interest to this problem. In his theory of emotions the focus is on the concept of an emotional syndrome which is understood as the existence of emotions which are a product of creative activity of a person. Emotional creativity represents development of emotional syndromes described as new, useful and authentic. There are readiness (i.e. ability to understand their own experience, their differentiation on the basis of the previous emotional experience); novelty (i.e. ability to experience new, unusual emotions); authenticity (i.e. ability to express emotions sincerely and in different ways) among them. Emotions that contribute to the achievement of the personality goals and help to bring to life plans are considered authentic (Averill, 2004).

Averill (2005) allocated some levels of emotional creativity. The lowest level is the most effective usage of already existing emotions created in culture; the average level is modification of standard emotions for the best satisfaction of needs of a person and a group and the highest level is development of new forms of the emotions based on changes in beliefs and norms (Averill, 2005). Thus, J.R. Averill laid the foundation to an approach of emotional creativity study from the point of view of psychology of emotions as prevailing and dynamic characteristic of the emotional sphere of a person. Modern psychological theories considered emotions as the constructive system which organizes the functioning of the subject and system interrelation with cognitive and volition processes of psyche. Oatley and Johnson-Laird (2010) relate to the main functions of emotions considered as phenomenon of social life the following: an assessment of events on compliance/discrepancy of the purposes; signalling to oneself and others about significant objects of an environment; regulation of behaviour according to plans and the purposes; organization of cognitive processes. Another approach to emotional creativity study is cognitive psychology. Its representatives describe emotional creativity as a kind of intelligence or specific creative ability. This approach has started to develop in psychology relatively recently (since the beginning of the 1990th) in connection with emergence of emotional intelligence concept, which is generally defined as an ability to understanding and management emotions (Bar-On, 2004; Goleman, 1995; Goleman et al, 2002; Mayer et al, 2004). The comparison of phenomena of emotional intelligence and emotional creativity are studied. Some scholars consider emotional creativity as broader concept than emotional intelligence, which assumes novelty of emotional reaction unlike the latter (Andreyeva, 2006; Lyusin, 2004). Connection of emotional creativity and cultural norms is studied. However, opinion of specialists in this question significantly disperse. Some authors claim that emotional creativity assumes mastering of culturally set a means of the emotional self-expression. Others hold the opinion that emotional creativity is shown in a non-standard of feelings, an individual originality of emotional reactions to vital events (Tereshchenko, 2011). We consider emotional creativity, following J.R. Averill, as the integrative experience of a personality, which initiates experience of unusual emotions and provides goals achievement, realization of interests in the conditions of business communication and in situations of challenge. Emotionally coloured information can induce to adopt more effective decisions and can promote development of new, creative forms of behaviour (Tarabakina, 2013). Such definition of the term shows its multiple-valued opportunities in the development of communicative competence of the personality, and especially, her emotional component. In the field of psychology, it is not a lot of research today. Researchers recognize that the emotional component of communicative competence is connected, first of all, with creation and maintenance of positive emotional contact with the interlocutor, self-control, ability not only to react to the change of a condition of the partner, but also to anticipate it (Andreyeva, 2006; Dotsenko, 2011; Derevyanko, 2008; Kunitsina et al., 2002; Labunskaya, 1999).

Emotional background creates feeling of psychologically favourable or unfavourable, comfortable or uncomfortable communication. The essence of an emotional component of communicative competence are, firstly, improvement of the skills of emotional states coding, and secondly, manifestation of empathy and emotional self-checking (Boiko, 1996; Bodrov, 2000; Gabdreeva & Prokhorov, 2004; Dikaya, 2003; Leonova & Kuznetsova, 2009; Prichozhan, 2009; Tarabakina, 2013; Shabanova, 2014).

In a number of researches the concept of communicative competence includes the characteristics describing emotional flexibility, sensitivity to behaviour of interlocutors (Asmakovets & Mitina, 2001; Izard, 2009; Ovsyannikova, 2009; Reykovsky, 1979; Rogers, 1994; Sysoyeva, 2009; Shekhter, 1971).

In connection with the aforesaid, a contradiction between the need of growth of communicative competence on the one hand, and, on the other, insufficient study of reserves of social and psychological growth, in particular, of emotional creativity as implicit resource in functioning of communicative competence becomes obvious.

3. Research Methods

We undertook experimental study of connection of emotional creativity and communicative competence in business communication. The research objective is to identify steady strategies of interaction in critical situations and their correlation with indicators of emotional creativity of students. Research was conducted at the departments of three Moscow and Nizhny Novgorod universities. The participants are 100 students of the 4-5th year of the departments of cybernetics, electronic engineers, laser equipment, philology, psychology and pedagogics, among which 53 – girls and 47 – young men aged from 21 to 24 years. According to the research objective the research techniques were chosen: a questionnaire of emotional creativity by Averill (2006) in Valuyeva's (2009) adaptation; 'Test of communicative abilities' by Michelson (2013); 'Manifestation of organizing and communicative qualities in the interpersonal relations' by Leary (2005). The questionnaire of emotional creativity of J.R. Averill in E.A. Valuyeva's adaptation consists of 30 statements. Examinees estimated each in a five-point scale as far as it characterizes them. The technique includes three scales: Emotional readiness, Novelty, Authenticity/Efficiency. Each statement can give an examinee from one to 5 points, the total dispersion of estimates can make from 30 to 150 points (Valuyeva, 2009). 'The test of communicative abilities' of Michelson assumes implementation of diagnostics on the basis of emotional intelligence indicators and formation or non-formation of the communicative abilities as elements of communicative situations, where manifestation of verbal expression of approval/disapproval of the interlocutor, response to unfair criticism and support is required. The test contains of the description of 27 communicative situations. Each of them has five possible options of behaviour. The examinee needs to choose one of the offered options, a way of behaviour inherent in them in the described communicative situation. The test does not assume a choice of two or more options or addition of the options, which are not specified in the text of a questionnaire. Examinees are offered to choose only one option of behaviour. It has to be the most characteristic for behaviour, that a person really does in such cases but not what would be necessary to do. The data obtained during performance were transformed to wall indicators. This test is constructed as a task, which has a correct answer. The test offers some reference option of behaviour that corresponds to competent, secure, partner style. The behaviour in this situation is based on realization of resources of communicative abilities: constructive response to unfair criticism; the dialogue, which is not destroying communication; ability to influence emotionally and change a communicative situation in accordance with the purpose of constructive dialogue. The analysis of the allocated criteria allows marking out three styles of interaction in communication (Michelson, 2013): dependent (i.e. uncertain behaviour at which a person lacks internal freedom), aggressive (i.e. suppressive behaviour in communication), competent (the dialogue of equals who realize mature communicative competence). T. Leary's (2005) questionnaire is directed on studying the interpersonal relations and essential at interaction with others features of a personality. It contains 128 statements, which are structured in eight octants showing the leading strategies of behaviour of a personality in communication. The first four types of interpersonal behaviour are characterized by prevalence of not conformal tendencies and by the tendency to the conflicts, expressed by independence of opinions, persistence, and aspiration to leadership. Other four octants represent an opposite tendency. The persons with high rates in them have conformist installations, complaisance, uncertainty and tendency to compromises. As a result of additional data processing factors of goodwill and dominance of a personality in communication are described For processing of primary data methods of mathematical statistics were used: the correlation analysis with application of correlation coefficient of Pearson, the factorial analysis (a method of main component), and also a method of rotation of Varimaks. The obtained data were processed by means of a package of the applied SPSS Statistics 17.0 and Statgraphics Centurion programs of the version XVI.

The method of main components was applied to the analysis of the obtained data. It is one of ways to reduce dimension of data, having lost thus the smallest amount of information. In current research, this method allows to allocate four significant factors, two of which are the most significant. Thus, the value of number of characteristic numbers is 1.0. Not to overload research with large number of factors, and also not to complicate their interpretation this number was increased and allowed to allocate 3 significant factors two of which are the most significant in our research. Thus, by means of a method of main components we managed to allocate the factors explaining in the sum more than 67.91 % of the general dispersion.

4. Results and Discussion

Communicative competence of the personality is based on abilities: to give the social and psychological forecast of a communicative situation in which it is necessary to communicate; to program socially and psychologically communication process, leaning on an originality of a communicative situation; 'to get used' to the social and psychological atmosphere

of a communicative situation; to exercise social and psychological control of processes of communication (Dotsenko, 2011; Raven, 1984). Diagnostics of communicative competence is carried out on the basis of detection of the styles of interaction presented in life situations where verbal expression of approval or disapproval of actions of the accomplice of a situation, response to unfair criticism, rendering sympathy and support are required. The received results allow to judge about the existence of three taken factors, the percent of the general explanatory dispersion answering to them is 67.91 %. To define quantity of significant factors, we will find out, what step there is the maximum jump of percent of explanatory dispersion. The step, on which there is the maximum jump of coefficient, is 2 in our case. It is quantity of significant factors, based on which, the further analysis will be accomplished. The further research will be based on the usage of two factors as the third component does not show well-expressed signs in its structure. Also rather small percent of explanatory dispersion is equal to 16.69 % refers to this factor.

We related such indicators to the first factor as: readiness – 0.697, novelty – 0.798, authenticity – 0.540, the general indicator of emotional creativity – 0.852, indicators on a scale 'self-confidence' – (-0.454), and indicators on a scale 'scepticism' – 0.382. This factor includes all indicators of a technique 'Diagnostics of emotional creativity' that obviously speaks to us about its content, the indicators of two other scales testify to openness in relationship with people including in communication. The diplomatic style of behaviour, orientation to achievement of a compromise and aiming at the end result are also noted. Indicators on the scale "Scepticism", in our opinion, testify, most likely, about existence of some system of critical evaluation of information, some distance which allows to filter somewhat arriving from out of information and qualitatively to process it. The analysis of data makes it clear that this factor characterizes emotional creativity of the personality more, also there are scales giving some characteristic of an internal position of the personality concerning their interaction with other participants of communication. On this basis, we will designate this factor as an indicator of emotional creativity of the personality the following indicators were related to the second factor: sociability – 0.842, fight avoiding – 0.787, indicators on a compliance scale – 0.446, conformities – 0.514 and responsiveness – 0.556. Such set of characteristics can be described in general as aspiration to productive interaction, openness to new social contacts, aspiration to diplomatic settlement of disputes and conflict situations. Indicators on a scale 'Compliance' characterize, most likely, unwillingness to confrontation with participants of business communication, existence of orientation not only to own feelings, but also to feelings of other participants of interpersonal interaction. Also high level of sociability and cooperation with a leader and other participants of group is noted. High rates on the scale 'Responsiveness' allow to judge manifestation of empathy, emotional flexibility, altruism and commitment to the purposes. On the basis of it we will designate this factor as an indicator of communicative competence as all listed above qualities allow to build productive communications with participants of process of communication, assume manifestation of flexibility in communication and orientation to achievement of mutual understanding. In the research, we used a method of rotation of Varimaks. To meet requirements of simple structure, we used a transformation of factorial display which simplifies structure of information columns of system as much as possible, that is reduces small and increases big weight in each column, as promotes interpretation of separate factors. The results received after rotation while applying the method of Varimaks differ in initial coefficients of system and dispersions of factors. Common as well as total dispersion of all factors, at rotation do not change. At continuous total dispersion of change factors in their separate dispersions usually go towards smoothing of divergences in sizes of these dispersions: the greatest dispersions after rotation decrease, the smallest increase. Such data allow us to speak about the existence of connection between the level of emotional creativity and communicative competence in business communication. That fact that the general indicator of emotional creativity is positive and at the reliable level correlates with indicators "Independence", "Fight avoidance" and "Responsiveness" allows us to claim that persons with the developed emotional creativity are inclined to show consideration for emotional experiences (one's own and others emotions of accomplices of interaction). Flexibility and variability in expression of emotions, their high-quality processing, and, in certain cases, manifestation of absolutely new emotions which do not coincide with the standards accepted in culture are inherent in them. In addition, there is a connection of emotional creativity level and expressiveness of communicative qualities which are shown in the level of communicative competence. Such statement is proved by connection with a scale "Fight avoidance", in this case firstly orientation to achievement of main objectives of communication is supposed. The personality is ready to show the sufficient level of flexibility and democratic character in behaviour, aiming at not breaking communication. Proceeding from the data analysis, we can judge about the existence in this group of statistically significant connections between an indicator of emotional creativity on the one hand and indicators of scales "Domination", "Conservatism" and "Conformity" – on the other. Such correlations testify to statistically significant communication of low level of emotional creativity with aspiration to dominate, desire to possess the power, motivation on fight and some aggression. Also we can speak about existence of such qualities as straightforwardness and irritability, lack of sufficient flexibility in behaviour. The reliable indicator of statistical connection with a scale "Conformity" testifies to primary orientation to opinion of people around,

lack of sufficient self-confidence, search of social approval of the actions. Such persons are characterized by the high level of suggestibility and authoritative type of management.

5. Conclusion

Research of the phenomenon "emotional creativity", understood as the integrative experience of the personality initiating experience of unusual emotions and providing achievement of the objectives, realization of interests in the conditions of business communication and in challenging situations, allowed us to track its interrelations with the most important characteristic of the personality – communicative competence. The results of the research allowed us to make the following conclusions.

1. There is statistically significant connection of indicators of emotional creativity and of emotional component of communicative competence in business communication. The latter is shown in the ability of people with the highly developed emotional creativity to understand and differentiate the feelings, experiences, and also to distinguish emotions of partners in communication, and also to react emotionally in a non-standard way in complex communicative situations
2. There are connections of emotional creativity with such indicators of communicative competence of a personality as a prior orientation on achievement of main objectives of communication. In this case, a personality is ready to show the sufficient level of flexibility and democratic character in behaviour in order not to break communication process.
3. The high rates of emotional creativity in the presence of their connection to criteria of communicative competence characterize a personality as non-confrontational, democratic in behaviour, capable to develop the process of communication in a constructive way. The identification of negative correlation connections with such indicators as domination, conservatism, conformity confirms that fact that emotional creativity allows a personality to develop productive strategies in communication, to avoid aggression, conflicts, rigid domination, and dependence on other people, increases self-confidence and confidence in one's strengths.
4. Development of emotional creativity is one of tasks of quality improvement of modern university education. Productive learning activity of students is also promoted by conditions of emotionally attractive training through the use of substantially semantic and active methods of training based on interaction, reflection, creativity (dialogue, discussion, collective productive and creative and independent research activity).

Thus, it is possible to claim that emotional creativity acts as the resource allowing the subject to build structurally communication, to direct efforts in achievement of the objectives of activity, to show skill in establishment of social contacts deeply to understand itself and interlocutors, flexibly to react in non-standard situations. Therefore, development of this emotional quality will expand possibilities of young people in development of communicative skills, professional motivation, personal and career prospects.

References

- Andreyeva, I. N. (2006). Emotional intelligence: researches of a phenomenon. *Psychology Questions*, 3, 78-85.
- Averill, J. (2005). Emotions as mediators and as products of creative activity. In J.Kaufman & J.Baer (eds.). *Creativity across domains: Face of muse* (p.243). Mahwah, New York: Erlbaum.
- Averill, J.R. (2004). Individual differences in emotional creativity: structure and correlates. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bar-On R. (2004) *Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i): A Measure of Emotional Intelligence. Technical Manual*. Toronto: Multi-Health Systems.
- Bodrov, V.A. (2000). *Information stress*. Moscow: Per Se. [in Russian]
- Boiko, V.V. (1996). *Energy of emotions in communication: view of itself and others*. Moscow: Information publishing house "Filin". [in Russian]
- Derevyanko, S.P. (2008). Development of emotional intelligence in the training group. *Psychological journal*, 2, 79-84.
- Dikaya, L.G. (2003). *Psychological self-control of a functional condition of the person*. Moscow: Institute of psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. [in Russian]
- Dotsenko, E.L. (2011). Deep semantics of interpersonal communication. In I. Hanina & D. Leontyev (eds.). *Psychology of subjective semantics: Sources and development* (pp. 133-143). Moscow: Sense [in Russian].
- Gabdreeva, G. Sh., & Prokhorov, A.O. (2004). *Praktikum on psychology of states*. Moscow: Speech. [in Russian]
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., & Mckee, A. (2002). *Primal Leadership: learning to lead with emotional intelligence*. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press.
- Izard, K. (2009). *Psychology of emotions*. St. Petersburg: PITER. [in Russian]

- Kunitsyna, V. N., Kazarinova, N.V., & Pogolsha V.M. (2002). *Interpersonal communication*. St. Petersburg: Peter. [in Russian]
- Labunskaya, V.A. (1999). *Expression of person: interpersonal communication and knowledge*. Rostov na Donu: Phoenix. [in Russian]
- Leary, T. (2005). *Questionnaire of the interpersonal diagnosis*. In: L.A. Golovey & E.F. Rybako (eds.) *Praktikum on age psychology*. (pp.683-693). St. Petersburg: Speech. [in Russian]
- Leonova, A.B., & Kuznetsova, A.S. (2009) *Psychological technologies of management of a condition of the person*. Moscow: Sense. [in Russian]
- Lyusin, D.V. (2004). Modern ideas of emotional intelligence. In D. Lyusin & D. Ushakov (eds). *Social intelligence: The theory, measurement, researches* (pp.29-36). Moscow: Institute of psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences [in Russian].
- Mayer, J., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. (2004). Emotional Intelligence: Theory, Findings, and Implications. *Psychological Inquiry*, 15, 197–215.
- Michelson, L. (2013). *Test of communicative abilities. Transfer and Yu.Z. Gilbukh's adaptation*. [Online] Available: <http://www/azps.ru/tests/5/mihelson.html> (December 14, 2013).
- Mitina, L.M., & Asmakovets, E.S. (2001). Emotional flexibility of the teacher: psychological contents, diagnostics, correction. Moscow: Flint. [in Russian]
- Oatley, K., Johnson-Laird, P. (2010). Towards a cognitive theory of emotions. *Cognition and Emotion*, 1, 29-50.
- Ovsyannikova, V. V. (2009). Types of a sensitivity of the observer at recognition of emotions. In D. V. Lyusin & D. V. Ushakov (eds.) *Social and emotional intelligence: From processes to measurements* (pp. 114-124). Moscow: Institute of psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. [in Russian]
- Prichožhan, A.M. (2009). *Uneasiness psychology: preschool and school age*. St. Petersburg: Piter. [in Russian]
- Raven, J. (1984). *Competence in Modern Society: Its Identification, Development and Release*. Oxford, England: Oxford Psychologists Press.
- Reykovsky, Ya. (1979). *Experimental psychology of emotions*. Moscow: Progress. [in Russian]
- Rogers, K. (1994). *View of psychotherapy. Formation of the person*. Moscow: Progress. [in Russian]
- Schachter, S. (1971). *Emotion, Obesity and Crime*. New York : Academic Pr.
- Shabanova, T.L. (2014). Emotional competence of future teacher as problem of research and problem of development. In T.N. Knyazeva (ed.) *Psychological researches of development of the personality: age, gender and professional aspect* (pp.169-179). N. Novgorod: NGPU [in Russian]
- Soysoyeva, T.A. (2009). The receptions and strategy used at identification of emotions. In D. V. Lyusin & D. V. Ushakov *Social and emotional intelligence: From processes to measurements* (pp.15- 166). Moscow: Institute of psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. [in Russian]
- Tarabakina, L.V. (2013). Emotional installations of managers in group decision-making. *Teacher XXI century*, 4, 412-418. [in Russian]
- Tereshchenko, R. N. (2011). *Emotional creativity as ability*. Moscow. [in Russian]
- Valuyeva, E.A. (2009). Diagnostics of emotional creativity: adaptation of a questionnaire of J. Everill. In D.Lyusin & D.Ushakov (eds). *Social and emotional intelligence: From processes to measurements* (pp. 216-227). Moscow: Institute of psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences.