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In the intersection of Art-Pedagogy-Psychology

Introduction

The results of our international research (Twenge, 2017; Cretu, 2017; Hara – Kling, 2000) and our researches confirm in five Hungarian-language higher education institutions in the Carpathian Basin (Kanczné Nagy – Tóth 2018; Nagy – Szabóová – Horváth – Kanczné Nagy, Tóth-Bakos – Orsovcics – Strédl 2018; Tóth-Bakos – Tóth, 2018; Kanczné Nagy – Csehi 2018), support the fact that university students are pretty insecure in their abilities. They have huge expectations regarding how they will perform during their studies and what kind of educators they will become in their later careers. They are afraid that they will not be able to pass, fail the exams, or postpone them. They are afraid of loneliness and the feeling that they can not do anything well. Research has shown that they have a strong sense of anxiety and a depressive state that is a “block” in their actions and thinking. In addition, they struggle with a significant number of mental and spiritual problems.

First-year students significantly impact the beginning of their university careers, human relationships, and interpersonal factors. The personalities of their teachers are significant to them. The results of the questionnaire surveys allow us to conclude that the existence and quality of interpersonal relationships with lecturers are crucial for students. Empathy and consideration of the current state and abilities of the students appeared as an expectation.

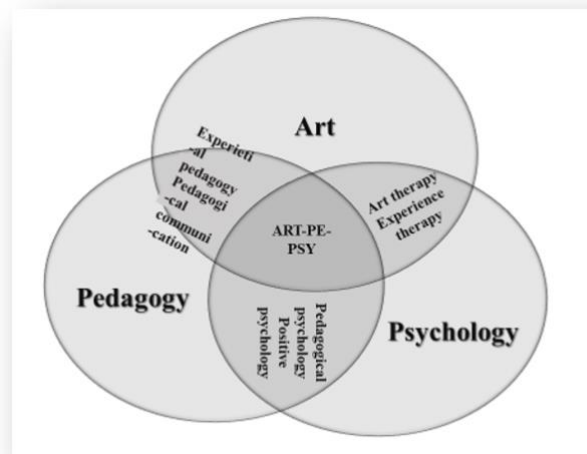
All this led to the conclusion that students need not only to acquire professional knowledge but also to strengthen some of their qualities and develop their personalities. As a result of this finding, we created a development course in the 2019/2020 academic year that sought to offer students a possible alternative to solve the abovementioned problems using three disciplines (art pedagogy, pedagogy, and psychology) (Csehiová – Kanczné Nagy, 2019). The course used developmental procedures capable of bringing about positive changes in students’ personalities. They can strengthen their self-confidence, increase the effectiveness of social cooperation, a positive outlook on life, conflict resolution and communication skills, self-efficacy, and time management efficiency (Csehiová-Kanczné Nagy 2019).

The course was classified as an optional subject in university education. The sessions were conducted using a co-teaching model, which allowed the teachers to exchange experiences more effectively, coordinate the educational strategy, and respond more closely to the needs of the students. The course is activity- and experience-oriented, which we first implemented in training kindergarten teacher students in the first half of the 2019/2020 academic year. The present study aims to explore the first experiences.

In the intersections of the three disciplines

The name ART-PE-PSY was created by the playful use of the initials of three sciences (Art, PEdagoggy, and PSYchology) by the idea of university lecturers teaching the three disciplines. All three of us were actively involved in leading the course. The educational material of the semester, the dates, and the development of the topics were done together. For most of the semester, the classes were conducted together – all three or two by two – to implement process evaluation, share experiences, or just rethink specific plans. Another great result of the collaboration is that it has made it possible to effectively apply the disciplines that have been developed in the intersections of the three disciplines (Figure 1).

Figure 1.: Fields of science of the “ART-PE-PSY” development course



(source: own editing)

At the intersection of the arts and pedagogy (Tóth-Bakos – Csehiová, 2016), we worked with experiential pedagogy and pedagogical communication tools. Experiential pedagogy builds on the evolution of positive emotions. The communicative processing of the experiences helps the students to get to know several points of view through the evaluations of their own and their peers' experiences. Active exchange of experiences, case discussions, analysis of case studies, and outlining situations all contribute to students' more confident action, handling and resolving unexpected situations.

At the intersection of pedagogy and psychology are pedagogical psychology and positive psychology. With the help of the tools of these two disciplines, we wanted to influence the students' motivation. Motivation plays a vital role in the personality traits of teachers. This means, on the one hand, the educator's motivation and, on the other hand, how he or she can effectively motivate students. Therefore, arousing, continuously maintaining, nurturing, and strengthening motivation plays a crucial role in students' success, experiencing and processing their failures, and becoming a successful teachers.

The intersection of psychology and the arts includes art therapy and experiential therapy. The essence of art therapy is to help, heal, prevent and develop through some aspects of art. It draws from all directions of the arts (music, fine arts, literature, drama, dance) and applies them in active and passive forms, individually or in groups, in the way that best suits their needs. With the use of the arts, art trends, and their interdisciplinary nature, it is possible to educate and develop students more uniformly and effectively, which is proved by the results of more and more educational research (Csehiová, 2014). The key to experience therapy is the experience of success. It can be any new experience, experience, challenge, or activity outside the comfort zone.

As a result of combining the three sciences, the complex developmental effects on students' personalities and their transfer effects are broad (Figure 2).

Figure 2.: The transfer effects of the applied procedures and the transfer effects of the changes in the personality

Using tools from the following disciplines:	Available development effects:	Changes in Personality:
art therapy (passive and active elements)	experiencing experiences	→ healing effect
	gaining new experience	→ experience of success
experience therapy (passive and active elements)	experience of success	→ growing self-confidence
	tension relief	→ openness, courage
	joy of creation	→ creativity, taste formation
	development of artistic skills	→ self-confidence
	cooperation with others	→ social relations
		→ strengthening cognitive abilities
↕ ↕ ↕	↕ ↕ ↕	↕ ↕ ↕
experiential pedagogy	evoking positive emotions	→ positive attitude
	change in mindset	→
pedagogical communication	feeling of belonging to a group	→ positive self-image
	problem management	→
	conflict management	→ community attitude
	exercising understanding, attention	→ confidence
	empathy	→ social competences
	optimism	→ new knowledge
	motivation	→ tolerance
↕ ↕ ↕	↕ ↕ ↕	↕ ↕ ↕
pedagogical psychology	pleasure seeking	→ self-esteem
	experiencing positive experiences	→ self-realization
positive psychology	learning positive teaching techniques	→ expansion of pedagogical methodology
	new knowledge	→ professional efficiency
	arousing curiosity	→ motivation
	stress relief	→ stress management
	progressivity	→ innovation

(source: own editing)

The aim of the course is, on the one hand, to strengthen the students' personality traits and, on the other hand, to master the applied experience-based pedagogical principles and modern and progressive methods so that they can apply them effectively in their future teaching careers.

Topics of the sessions

- Creating motivational tasks motivational calendar;
- Case discussions, developmental evaluation;
- Teaching styles, teacher personality;
- Happiness Class Program Classes:
 - exercise optimism,
 - gratitude and good deeds,
 - setting and achieving goals,
 - practice coping,
 - exercising social relations;
- Personality, self-image, self-confidence development sessions;
- Team building, community building;
- IQ, EQ, Creativity, and Thinking;
- Motivation and learning motivation in practice, development of internal, intrinsic motivation;
- Learning anxiety-relieving techniques;
- Active and passive relaxation exercises;
- Communication channels and tools: development of verbal, non-verbal communication, and metacommunication;
- Passive art therapy elements: theatre, concert, museum, exhibition, library visits;
- Active art therapy elements: art therapy (music therapy, art therapy, drama therapy, movement therapy) tasks, joint visual or auditory productions chosen and compiled by the students;
- Controlled processing of experiences: processing, analyzing, and illustrating experience reports, experiences, and information - freely chosen e.g., in the form of a presentation, whiteboard, experience diary, experience map);
- Discussing and evaluating experiences and pleasures.

First experiences of development sessions

The following are some of the seminars whose documentation has already been partially processed.

Creating a motivational calendar

The participants were tasked with preparing the motivational calendar in the first lesson. They had time to work on it until the end of the semester. In the last lesson, everyone presented their work. Students were encouraged to make their calendars so that they could include thoughts and pictures that had a motivating effect on them. The completed works were documented by photography and then subjected to content analysis. In our first study, we established the following categories:

- Thoughts on coping, perseverance
 - "Human Law: To endure everything and always go on, Even if there are no more hopes and wonders in you."*
 - "There is a problem that cannot be solved. But you can start with something: you can grow up. I may not have to start something with the problem, maybe with me."*
 - "Don't let everyday hardships take away your dreams, so take one step forward every day."*
 - "Two things can happen: I'll either succeed or I'll start over."*
 - "Stop complaining, act!"*
- Thoughts on building self-confidence
 - "You know you're going to the right direction, you don't look back anymore."*
 - "You are just as unique and special as ice crystals. Don't believe anyone who claims otherwise!"*
 - "A forest begins with a tree, a friendship begins with a smile, a helping hand can lift the soul, a candle extinguishes the darkness, a life can make a difference in the world. Be the one!"*
 - "Treat yourself!"*
 - "Be the reason someone thinks it's still worth believing in people!"*
 - "Forgive someone, especially yourself!"*

- Thoughts about the accomplishment
"What the human mind can believe, it can realize."
"Learn something new!"
"We are as good as our worst habits. If we not only focus on learning useful habits, but also get rid of our restraining habits, we can achieve orders of magnitude greater results."
"Take a step towards your goal!"
- d) Thoughts on cheerfulness, optimism
"When the winds of change blow, skeptics pull up walls and optimists sail."
"If you started today without smiling, start practicing tomorrow!"
"Believe me, in the end everything will be fine. Everything is moving in the right direction! If everything is not right in your life, it means you still have a way to go."
"Smile today at everyone you meet today!"
"Surround yourself with positive people!"
"Which is just a small thing for you, it can make someone else's whole day happy."

Making a thanksgiving tree

Making the Thanksgiving tree was a group task. During the creation, there was an opportunity for a conversation, the central theme of which was gratitude:

- What do you mean by gratitude? – personal interpretation of gratitude per student;
- Who, in what situations do you feel grateful? – discussing situations;
- What effect (s) does gratitude have? – individual opinions;
- How do we express our gratitude? – case studies;
- Why would we give thanks? – putting grateful thoughts on the finished Thanksgiving tree (Figure 3).

Figure 4.: Gratitude Tree made by students



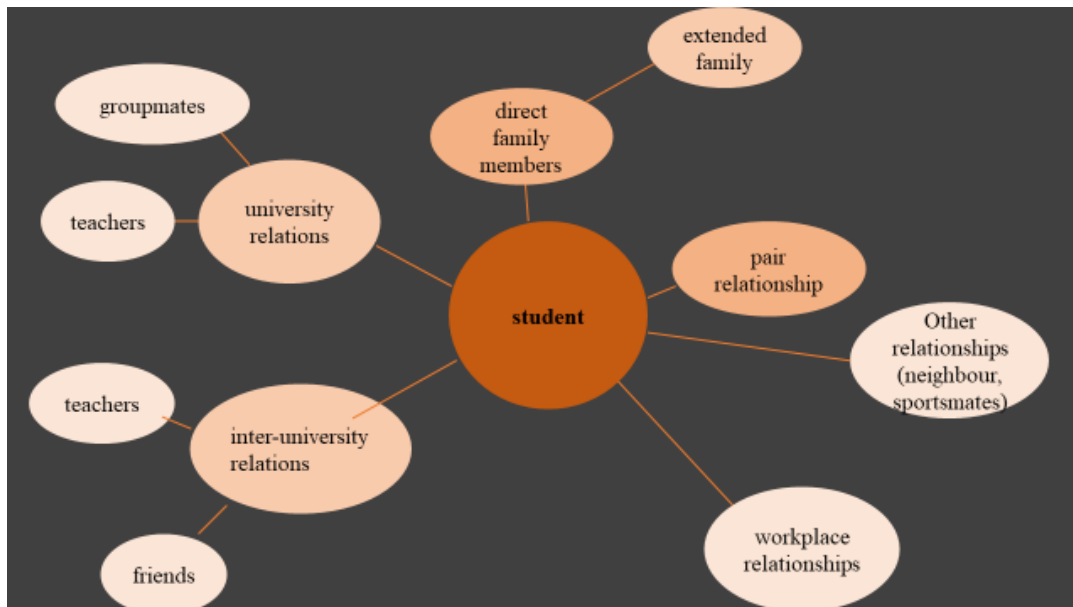
(source: own editing)

Making a network of contacts

In the session, they had to draw their social network for their current stage of life. The session aimed to raise awareness of the relationship system and recognize the inherent retaining power in human

relationships. After the document analysis of the completed contact networks, we summarized the displayed persons, and based on the frequency, the aggregated result of the students' social relationships could be plotted (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Summary of contact networks drawn by students



(source: own editing)

What do I take with me from the course...?

For the last time, after the presentation of the motivational calendars, we asked the students to visualize what the ART-PEP-PSY course gave them? During the creation, a spontaneous conversation took place, the topics of which were as follows:

- How does positive thinking help to overcome everyday difficulties?
- What is a good smile for?
- Why is it important that the joy of life flows from the teacher?
- What techniques did they try at home on their mate?
- What are they consciously paying attention to as a result of ART-PE-PSZI?
- How do you plan to deal with their current difficulties (exam period, dissertation preparation, moving)?
- What do you want to deal with in the future?
- What kind of teachers do you want to become?
- How can they help each other with the tasks at the end of the semester?
- What positive sentences influenced them the most?
- What were the sweetest experiences of the semester?
- What were the most memorable tasks at ART-PE-PSZI?
- What topics could be included in the future?
- Why is it good not to have a lesson in more than just a formal setting?

The completed montages depict the positive thoughts of the students (Figure 6).

Figure 6.: Montage by students entitled: *What do I take with me from the course?*



(source: own editing)

Summary of results

The categories set up during the first content analysis of motivational calendars show that students collected and formulated their thoughts on the topics in which they are most vulnerable based on our research results: 1. coping, perseverance, 2. self-confidence, 3. performance, 4. cheerfulness, optimism. Further qualitative analysis of the collected motivational thoughts is currently underway, but the first analysis points out that the quotations contain suggestions for solutions, alternatives for action, and encouragement for self-reflection.

During the conversation, while we were making the Thanksgiving tree, we observed many reactions that confirmed each other's thoughts and opinions - verbal and metacommunicative signals. Our students agreed on the importance of gratitude and the energizing quality of the personality - by continuously strengthening each other. The honest sharing of individual stories intensified the social connections with one another, and at the end of the lesson, we observed the content of cooperation in the spontaneous conversations between students of different grades, which suggested that they helped them study.

The analysis of relationship networks supported the finding of our preliminary research that interpersonal relationships are of paramount importance to students (Kanczné Nagy, 2019). On the drawn contact networks, it could be read that the "closest circle" includes direct family members. More distant, though, but with great frequency, teachers - university lecturers and educators from their former school - also appear. We also have measured results among the students about the importance of the teachers' personality and personality. Our previous research also points out that a significant proportion of our students work in addition to learning.

Furthermore, this is typical not only for students in the correspondence department but also for full-time students. When they draw their social network, they also display their workplace relationships. Overall, it can be said that our students have an extensive network of contacts. The reason for their fears about social relationships, we assume, lies in the quality and quantity of how relationships work. Exploring this requires further investigation.

Positive thoughts are reflected in student reflections on the semester course. Their oral statements support their beliefs about the importance of an optimistic attitude. The lasting manifestation of changes in behavior can only be measured later. Our further objective is to compare the results of the students participating in the course with the results of the other students in the framework of the longitudinal research carried out by the Ratio research group in our faculty using eleven measurement tools.

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