

Formation of Emotional Security of Students during the Period of Training in Conditions of Military Conflict

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Formation of Emotional Security of Students during the Period of Training in Conditions of Military Conflict

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Abstract

Ukrainian teachers and students are now in an extreme situation of military conflict when the territory of the country is under constant air fire, and the line of hostilities stretches for 1500 kilometers. The purpose of the article is to analyze the extreme learning conditions of Ukrainian students and develop a strategy for optimal emotional relaxation by selecting fiction for reading and deepening artistic perception. Respondents' data (120 students and 53 pupils) were collected, systematized, evaluated, and analyzed using systematic written surveys (Project Tuning methodology) and statistical analysis methods. Testing corresponded to three stages of conflict development: conflict deployment, escalation, and post-conflict phase. Pedagogical activity mirrors this parable but in the opposite direction. Fiction thematically and genre-wise at each stage plays the role of a protective shield, which draws the line between students' own emotions and the feelings of literary heroes. Perception of artistic texts was aimed at 1) identifying visual, auditory, and tactile associations; 2) olfactory sensations; 3) the ability to build associative chains; 4) imagining literary heroes; 5) emotionally immersing yourself in the world of fiction. Comparison of one's own emotional perceptions with those that caused anti-utopian works and fantasy literature prove the effectiveness of the chosen pedagogical hypothesis.

Keywords: extreme pedagogy, conflictology, an emotional parable of perception, artistic perception of literature, association.

1. Introduction

Extreme pedagogy as a new and promising direction of pedagogy is focused on the consideration, analysis and development of effective methods and means of protecting teachers from conflict situations related to modern social, psychological and emotional challenges. It is mostly about the formation of protective techniques related to the ethics of the profession, psychological stability, and self-management in difficult situations. Scientists from different countries are studying the causes of emotional instability, burnout of teachers from conflict situations, and looking for solutions to crisis situations J. Song (Song, 2016), C. Kokkinos and G. Stavropoulos (Kokkinos, 2016), A. T. Ishmuratov (Ishmuratov, 1996). B. Gendron (Gendron, 2017), H. Cheng, A. Green, L. Treglown, A. Furnham (Cheng, Green, Treglown, Furnham, Chapman, 2017), B. P. Chapman (Chapman, 2019).

The works of scientists assume a situation of opposition between teacher and students as in a certain sense of rivals, between which it is necessary to find points of intersection, understanding, and sometimes – a direct victory over aggression, violence, and open challenge.

We consider another phase of extreme pedagogy when the threat to life and mental balance unites teachers and students when the teacher must develop his own strategy of helping himself and his students, guided not by personal experience or inner intuition, but by scientific knowledge and evidence.

Ukrainian teachers, pupils, and students found themselves in a situation that has not yet been described in pedagogical practice. Of course, we are not the first to fall under the term «military conflict», there were similar situations in Iran, Syria, Afghanistan, and others. But each conflict has its own characteristics and its own uniqueness. The uniqueness of the Ukrainian situation lies in the fact that despite the full-scale hostilities on the territory of Ukraine, education in most schools and universities continues. The pandemic has prepared us for distance education, and the teacher has feedback from his students, has the opportunity to support morally, explain the teaching material and current circumstances, and help to navigate the information environment. Remote communication in a military conflict is absolutely unreliable, depending on the availability of the Internet and basic conditions suitable for working with gadgets, as well as air alarms that are heard in cities throughout Ukraine during the day and night. Extreme pedagogy of wartime fully corresponds to the name as its methods, means, conditions, and forms of education.

Our research is aimed at developing a general strategy and effective learning tactics in conditions of general extremity. Conflictology as an interdisciplinary science combines philosophy, sociology, psychology, history, law, and management and considers each real conflict as a long process with its own statics and dynamics. Conflict theory was initiated by the research of L. Kozler (Kozler, 1956), R. Darendorf (Darendorf, 1965), K. Boulding (Boulding, 1975), and others. Of a large number of developments in this area, we are primarily interested in the heterogeneity of conflict situations, and the presence of different stages and phases. It is the development of conflict that we associate with changes in the process of communication and learning of pupils and students. The stages of the conflict are determined by the position of the opposing parties and the type of relationship between them. An important component of the conflict is the perception of its participants in the conflict – both direct and indirectly involved in the conflict of opposing forces. Scientists distinguish the stages of conflict: pre-conflict; open conflict with the phases of escalation, culmination, and extinction; post-conflict phase.

The most dramatic and tense stage of the conflict is escalation, when contradictions escalate, which leads to an increase in the scale of action and the number of participants involved in a life-threatening area, including civilians, children, and so on. During the escalation of the conflict, feelings and emotions become dominant, dominated by common sense and logic. At the same time, the surge of emotions increases the awareness of the threat not only to one's own life but also to the fate of the country, which creates a surge of patriotism and national unity. It is very difficult to determine the stages of a conflict during its development, it is necessary to have a time distance to know and assess the full scale of the event. At present, it is difficult to say at what stage of escalation Ukraine is, whether there will be an increase in bombing, destruction, and deaths, or whether hostilities will be reduced and stopped. Therefore, it is too early to talk about the completion stage, especially the post-conflict stage.

We need the theory and stages of conflicts to develop pedagogical tactics in extreme conditions because the actions of the teacher directly depend on the deployment/collapse of hostilities. We will continue to talk about military conflicts, which are the most dramatic for the child's psyche and require new pedagogical anti-stress tools. The organization of pedagogical work in extreme conditions of secondary and higher education institutions in Ukraine, as well as the whole world, was prepared by the pandemic of 2019-2021 because at this time the methods of distance learning were actively developed. Researchers (Magomedov, Khaliev, Khubolov, 2020) note that in a sense, distance learning has had a positive impact on education, in particular on the process of mass integration of technology into education. Kharkiv teachers (Melnyk, Pipenko, Maslov, 2020) claim that such changes have a «revolutionary effect» on higher education. Their experiment among teachers and students of Karazin National University, allowed them to identify priority innovations of distance learning for teachers: 1) the ability to adapt and act in a new situation; 2) commitment to security; 3) the ability to search, process and analyze information; 4) skills of using information and communication technologies; 5) the ability to assess and maintain the quality of work. And also for students: 1) to work independently; 2) design and manage projects; 3) adapt and act in a new situation; 4) apply knowledge in practical situations; 5) work in an international context (Maslov, Pypenko, Melnyk, 2021). Monitoring the views of teachers and students revealed a common denominator for both categories - the priority of the ability to adapt to new situations. This conclusion is like a prediction for today's reality, because Karazin University is now completely destroyed by the Russian bombing, and teachers are lecturing from the basements. The video of such a lecture by Mykhailo Spodarets became famous all over the world, thanks to the optimism and sense of humor of the teacher, who connected his subject with his own image: «A teacher of postmodernism should look postmodern»¹.

In addition to the general problems of distance education, educators around the world note the lack of attention to the human factor in teaching and learning (Gatti et al., 2020). There is also a need to «Aware and plan how to react, by understanding that this is a potential catalyst for changing traditional policies and institutions» (Blankenberger & Williams, 2020). For extreme pedagogy in the context of military conflict, the general problems, as seen in the context of pandemic distance education, do not seem acute and relevant. The new catalyst is so powerful that it can destroy, not just change, traditional education policies and institutions. At the same time, assistance should be recognized, at least technical and methodological, for the distance education system mastered by teachers and students, to which they are accustomed, and which allows communication even when the learning process seems incompatible with realities.

In our opinion, it is important in the context of a military conflict to develop general psychological tactics for the learning process depending on the stages of social tension. The unfolding of the phases of the conflict radically changes the teacher's activity, and his emotional and value policy of influencing students. The changes also affect the program material, in particular the humanities. If the conflict in its development goes through phases of escalation, exacerbation, and culmination, then educational activities should be built in accordance with these phases. Three-phase models (Sorokin, 1962) for socio-cultural systems is a rhythmic form, as it

¹ Public TV. Kharkiv from April 9, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqwYGWaz1hA>.

tends to continue in different configurations, which depend on many factors of social, economic, cultural, and media nature. The orientation and shape of the model «between the three main points» (Orlova, 2016) organize the parameters of openness-closedness, and the degree of dynamism (acceleration or deceleration), while the model only demonstrates the process, but does not explain the events of economic, socio-organizational or cognitive nature.

In the context of hostilities, given the lack of awareness, because there is a concept of military secrecy, it is difficult to determine with maximum probability all phases of the conflict. But moments of aggravation, intensification of the enemy, the intensity of shelling are sufficient to direct the educational process in the country. The main thing for teachers is to develop appropriate tactics in certain phases of the conflict, taking into account the conditions of their region. We propose an overall education strategy in a country where the escalation of the conflict has become critical. The experience of work in the Ukrainian school and university allowed to form a hypothesis of the dependence of the phase curve of the conflict and the course of the educational process. Thus, the psychological reaction to danger, embedded in the instinctive human behavior, causes the desire to beat, run or freeze (hide) is also taken into account in the pedagogical tactics of learning. If the main strategy of the teacher – to teach, develop, and educate is unchanged under any circumstances, the tactics directly depend on external factors.

Phases of conflict development mirror the pedagogical trajectory of extreme pedagogy. At the stage of conflict development, it is necessary to intensify the perception of the real relationship of confrontation in society, analytical assessments, analogies in history and culture should not be avoided, and knowledge of conflict situations depicted in various arts should be updated. Communication with reality is a traditional principle of learning, but in the phase of escalating conflict situations in the country and the world, it must be maximum and convincing. In choosing the forms and means of teaching, the teacher thus follows the phases of the conflict, but his activities, in contrast to the curve of the conflict line, should go in the opposite direction: the hotter the escalation, the farther from reality the learning process deepens, introducing children to fantasy, fiction. In the graphic image, the process of extreme learning is correlated with the mathematical functions of sine and cosine. This mathematical formula was once transferred by Ukrainian scientist D. Chyzhevsky to change cultural and historical formations when the upper waves indicated a tendency to realistically reproduce the problems of social and personal life, and the lower – deepening into the realms of the subtle matter: faith, emotions, subconscious. The changing ideas of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Romanticism, and Realism reflect the oscillations of the sine wave.

Our pedagogical hypothesis is to transfer the patterns of the wave-like process of conflict development to the direction of the educational process. This process can be illustrated by the genre-thematic direction of the selection of literary and media texts in the educational process. Anti-utopia as a genre of literature may be relevant in the phase of the conflict, and its escalation in society. Mankind has always tried to look into the future, to imagine what the social structure and technical development of the state will be, how much a person will change, and his ability to feel and think. In contrast to the works of utopias, which model the intelligent and harmonious path of human civilization, anti-utopias depict the future of mankind in black. Even in comparison with the modern, far from perfect world, anti-utopias are frightened by the depiction of despotic

regimes, catastrophic environmental changes, and irreversible experiments on human nature. All anti-utopian ideas are born in the modern world. Mankind observes future problems in modern life: the disappearance of fauna, air pollution, and fascination with virtuality. In the sprouts of global problems, artists find plots for their cautionary works.

Working with texts of works of the anti-utopian genre is expedient in the process of studying language and literature in secondary and higher school. Because to some extent it emotionally prepares for extreme conditions and cataclysms both in the global world and in the domestic world. However, when anti-utopian paintings become a reality, students must be introduced to the literature of catastrophes, totalitarian imprisonment, destruction, and destruction of culture. World literature has a wide range of works with positive authorial emotionality, starting with folk and literary tales. The fantasy genre offers the reader an immersion into the world of fantasies, dreams, and romantic relationships combined with the exciting adventures of the characters. The purpose of this work is to substantiate the strategy of learning in extreme conditions of military conflict by means of fiction. The wave-like development of conflicts led to a similar trajectory of student reading: anti-utopian literature in the period of unfolding and immersion in the fantasy world of fairy tales in the period of escalation of military conflict.

2. Material and Methods

Educators develop theories of reading, mostly focused on understanding the text (Leon, 1992; Snow, 2002; Kendeu, 2014; Fonseca, 2021). Understanding the concepts and ideas of an artistic work is associated with cognitive skills: formulating conclusions, understanding the structure of the work, and self-regulation of understanding and control (Topping, Thurston, McGavock, 2015). Fonseca L. (2021) suggests expanding these criteria by adding vocabulary work to the reading process. The researcher quite rightly outlines the range of problems related to reading: «One of the issues that arise in the process of understanding a text is to determine which processes are correlated with the construction of content, which has cause-and-effect and interrelationships». Our research is related to the problem of reading efficiency, however, we connect it with the external conditions in which readers find themselves, and the key concept is not so much understanding as perception – a sensory reaction to what is read. The experiment does not yet have large statistical results, since the stage of escalation of the conflict in Ukraine has not yet ended. Work with students and pupils is in the formative stage.

The psychology of the perception of works of art requires preliminary work, in particular, identifying the level of emotional sensitivity. The developed «Algebra of Feelings» tests are aimed at determining the personal level of emotional (associative) sensitivity – apperception. Association as a connection between images is one of the key principles of literary creativity. The author's associations with a thing, phenomenon, or event serve as a key to understanding the idea, or concept of the work. To prepare for the understanding of the author's associations, a test program was developed, which took into account the intensity of associations (brightness, duration, depth), as well as the rate of switching from various sensory stimuli (sight, hearing, tactility). Self-assessment of own sensory perceptions is indicated by points for The study was conducted on the basis of written answers (Project Tuning methodology).

The tests were tested on students of the Poltava Pedagogical University (120 people) and students of the Uspih language school (53 people) in the pre-war period.

Table 1: Test-program «Algebra of Feelings»

1.	What color is your country (the brightness of the imaginary color is assessed)	0	1	2	3
2.	Which flower do you identify with (the argumentativeness of the idea is assessed)	0	1	2	3
3.	What does the morning smell like? (the generality of the association is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
4.	What geometric figure is music associated with? (abstractness of imagination is assessed)	0	1	2	3
5.	What does the first snow look like (the novelty of the comparison is assessed)	0	1	2	3
6.	What resembles the starry sky (the comprehensiveness of sensations is assessed)	0	1	2	3
7.	Feel the smell of lilies of the valley (the similarity and duration of the feeling are evaluated)	0	1	2	3
8.	Name the associations for the word «loneliness» (the poeticity of the verbal chain is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
9.	Name the visual and sound associations associated with the monastery (variety is appreciated)	0	1	2	3
10.	Continue the associative chain from the word «asphalt» to the word «tenderness» (assessed by the conditioning of connections)	0	1	2	3

3. Results

The test results were analyzed from the point of view of the development of visual, tactile, visual, and emotional associativeness. The highest scores were recorded on questions containing visual images (1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10). The questions on smell associations (3, 7), abstract concepts (4), and chain associations (9, 10) turned out to be the most difficult.

Table 2: Calculations of the results of Test-program No. 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
School students 8-9 grades	2,4	2,5	1,6	0,6	1,4	2,3	1,7	2,2	1,7	1,3
Highschool students	2,8	2,7	2,0	1,6	2,3	2,8	1,9	2,6	2,3	1,5

The results of the questionnaire were used in the pedagogical theory of the development of artistic perception, which was worked on by the Department of World Literature of the Poltava Pedagogical University, the essence of which was the search for ways to develop personal emotionality when studying literature. Associative thinking and attention to it in literature lessons contributed to a deeper perception and understanding of fiction.

Table 3: Test-program «Guy Montag's Algebra of Feelings»

1.	What color is the country in which the heroes of the work live ? (the brightness of the imaginary color is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
2.	What flower do you identify with Clarissa? (argumentativeness of the presentation is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
3.	What does Guy Montag's work smell like? (the generalizability of the association is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
4.	What geometric shape does Montag associate with the bedroom in his own house? (the abstractness of the imagination is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
5.	What does autumn smell like in the feelings of Clarissa, Montag? (the novelty of the comparison is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
6.	What does the starry sky resemble in Guy's perception? (comprehensiveness of sensations is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
7.	Smell the cinnamon from the withered leaves that Clarissa mentioned (similarity and duration of sensation are evaluated)	0	1	2	3
8.	Name the associations to the number «451» (the poeticity of the verbal chain is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
9.	Name the visual, olfactory associations associated with the book: Faber, Beatty, Montag (variety is appreciated)	0	1	2	3
10.	Continue the associative chain from the word «fire» to the word «freedom» (assessed by the conditioning of connections)	0	1	2	3

To conduct the questionnaire, we involved the same students and pupils, but their number decreased, some students stayed with their families in the occupied territory and did not communicate (10%), and some went abroad (28%). Among the Poltava school pupils, 60% were in Western Ukraine, Poland, Germany, and the Czech Republic, but contact was made with them though. The calculations were based on the analysis of 95 school student questionnaires and 48 highschool student questionnaires. Analysis of author associations, including associations of literary heroes, showed better results than immersion in one's own feelings. This is explained by the fact that the author mentions and describes associations, building on them the characteristics of the characters, as well as moving the plot action. The flower associated with Clarissa was unanimously named dandelion because it is associated with the important scene of the meeting of the heroes, Guy's subsequent mentions of the girl who turned his peaceful life upside down. On the same question, respondents rated their own association much lower: 2.5 and 2.7 versus 3 and 2.9. In the same way, olfactory associations when carefully reading a novel are remembered and transferred to one's own feelings. The smell of autumn leaves, the smell of cinnamon according to the confession of the heroine of R. Bradbury's novel, was rated by students almost one unit higher than their own olfactory perceptions).

Table 4: Calculations of the results of Test-program No. 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
School students 8-9 grades	2,4	3	1,6	0,6	1,4	2,3	2,3	2,2	1,7	1,3
Highschool students	2,8	2,9	2,0	1,6	2,3	2,8	2,9	2,6	2,3	1,5

The analysis of associative reader and author images has a literary character since all questions are related to the text, moreover, the creative, non-trivial associations of the girl Clarissa play an important role in the work, because they awaken the feelings and mind of the firefighter Guy Montag. And Faber's olfactory associations are related to the deep spiritual meaning of the book and reading for an individual and society in general.

The third test program was developed and tested during the critical phase of the conflict that Ukraine is currently experiencing. Now we work only with literature that gives positive feelings, that does not resemble the during war life of children, that introduces us to the land of dreams, fantasy, goodness, and victories. Reading and analyzing the works of J. Tolkien's «Lord of the Rings», M. Ende's «The Neverending Story», J. Rowling's «Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone», R. Riggs «House of Peculiar Children» and others. a test was proposed, designed to detect associations, related to the life of heroes in a fictional magical world, where there are evil forces, but they are also in a fantasy world that is not like reality. The questions were developed with an emphasis on different types of perception – visual, sound, smell, and tactile. The questionnaire preserves associative images that were born from the author's imagination and during reading pass to the reader's ideas, often enriching their own associations. Therefore, focusing on some of them develops the artistic perception, emotional memory, and imagination of the reader.

Table 5: Test-program «Courage hides in the most unexpected places»

1.	What colors are associated with images of hobbits? (the brightness of the imaginary color is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
2.	What flower are elves identified with? (argumentativeness of the presentation is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
3.	If the riders looked for Frodo by smell («sniffed»), then try to describe this smell (the generalization of the association is assessed)	0	1	2	3
4.	Hobbit houses are associated with which geometric figure? (the abstractness of the imagination is evaluated)	0	1	2	3
5.	Reaction to the snowfall that began at Caradras Pass: The Hobbit Sam, Aragorn, Gandalf (evaluated sensory deprivation)	0	1	2	3
6.	Which of the characters in the novel looks at the starry sky: as beauty; as for known stars and constellations; can't see the stars at all? (characterization of the characters and knowledge of the text are assessed)	0	1	2	3
7.	Imagine the sounds of the «great praise» given to Frodo and Sam by the warriors of the United Kingdom of Arnor and Gondor at Aragorn's command (similarity and strength are appreciated)	0	1	2	3
8.	Name associations with the words «orcs», «Mordor» (the metaphoricality of the verbal chain is assessed)	0	1	2	3
9.	Name the visual, olfactory associations associated with the complex journey of the hobbits (variety is appreciated)	0	1	2	3
10.	Continue the associative chain from the word «Lord» to the word «ring» (assessed by the conditioning of connections)	0	1	2	3

Table 6: Calculations of the results of Test-program No. 3.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
School students 8-9 grades	2,4	3	2,2	2,8	1,6	2,5	2,8	2,4	2,4	2,3
Highschool students	2,8	2,7	2,5	2,8	2,7	2,5	2,6	2,2	2,3	2,5

The results of Test-program No. 3 revealed the highest level of reading activity among both school students and highschool students. This testifies, firstly, to the lively emotional response of the readers to the work, sympathy for the heroes, their struggle with the forces of evil, and,

secondly, to the consonance of the desires and dreams of the heroes and readers of the work. J. Tolkien's high fantasy introduces the reader to the world of fiction and fantasy, but not a fairy tale, but a real one, since the situation when small and friendly hobbits became the main rivals against the forces of evil is reminiscent of the modern confrontation.

4. Discussion

Attention to associative thinking and figurative and sensual representation was continued during the conflict period in Ukraine. The images from the previous test were related to the realities of peacetime, which became unacceptable during the unfolding of the conflict. The color of the country from blue-yellow acquired other shades, it would evoke a tragic worldview, and feelings. During the escalation of the conflict, the test underwent changes, since it was not the own associations that were analyzed, but the author's or reader's, caused by the perception of dystopian works – R. Bradbury's novel «Fahrenheit 451» or J. Orwell's «1984», which became symbols of the 20 th and 21 st centuries century, because the leading motives – people's loss of spiritual landmarks, totalitarian control of the state, zombification of people with the help of mass media – are becoming even more relevant in our time.

Searching for concepts connected by associations is preparation for literary reading and analysis. This is a kind of exercise, an exercise in artistic thinking, without which there is no understanding of literature since poetry is generally called the art of associations and metaphors. Each writer has his own system of associative thinking. Realists, as representatives of the art of mimesis (imitation), primarily value conformity to reality in the figurative system. The associative connection in realistic art is causal and deterministic. By the way, the test questionnaire also checks the reader's type of associative thinking. If the associations are due to logical cause-and-effect relationships, this is a realistic type of thinking. If there is no logic, then we are dealing with a romantic, magical, impressionistic way of perceiving reality.

However, reader and author associations in the process of reading an artistic text served in this case not so much as an artistic task, but as a pedagogical one. Extreme conditions require attention to both the subject and the tools of education, prepared in turn by the conditions of the pandemic (Maslov, Y., & Pypenko I., & Melnyk, Yu., 2021); (Sahu, P., 2020).

Thus, emotional competencies in the process of reading fiction (or using it when learning a foreign language) become the main ones in the period of extreme learning conditions, since the wave-like nature of the unfolding of conflicts dictates a change in the thematic and emotional context.

5. Conclusions

The problem of reading effectiveness is closely related to the external conditions in which the readers find themselves, the key concept is chosen not so much as understanding, but as perceiving what is read, that is, a sensory reaction to what is read. In the extreme conditions of a military conflict, this process acquires special importance, which affects not only the knowledge of students but also their psychological health. The experiment does not yet have significant statistical results, the last stage of conflict escalation in Ukraine has not yet ended. Work with students and pupils is in the formative stage. And yet, the hypothesis about the dependence of learning on the stages of the unfolding of the conflict, as well as the idea of the selection of artistic

texts and the strategy of associative analysis at different wave-like stages of the war can be influenced by public demand. Unfortunately, we have to state that such studies are necessary for modern pedagogy and testify to global changes in the education system.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest.

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