INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION SCIENCES

IAPES 2023

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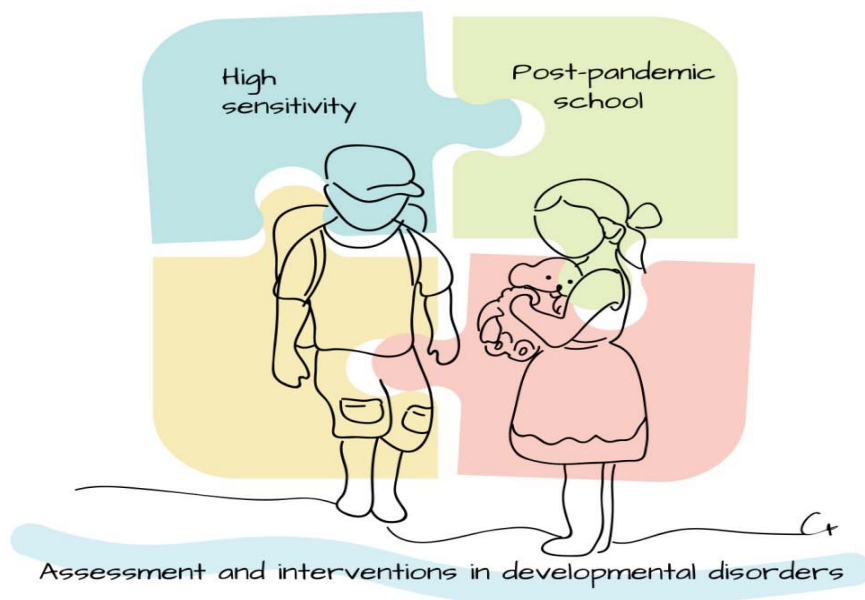
High sensitivity

Post-pandemic school

Assessment and interventions in developmental disorders

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

IAPES 2023 - Book of Abstracts

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HIGH-SENSITIVITY – SCOPE OF PHENOMENA. THE IMPORTANCE OF SENSITIVITY IN SPHERES OF HUMAN FUNCTIONING

Monika BARYŁA-MATEJCZUK, PhD, Lead expert on Hiper-sensitivity WSEI University, Poland

Sensory Processing Sensitivity (SPS) is a temperamental trait that characterizes approximately 30% of society.SPS is a phenotypic trait which is characterized by deep information processing of the environment at cognitive, sensory and emotional levels. Thus, SPS has a great influence on different life areas. Research confirms that highly sensitive people (HSP) process information and stimuli from the environment more intensively and also more deeply than others. People who fall within this group are more sensitive to both positive and negative environments. The evidence from the research results clearly shows that for highly sensitive people the environment in which they develop is of particular importance. Moreover, as it is known from the studies conducted so far, high level of sensitivity can be both a risk factor and a protective factor of proper development. The presentation introducethe results of the most important research conducted in the area of sensitivity and also theoretical foundations of the concept. Afterwards, international, selected qualitative and quantitative research indicating the particular importance of the quality of the developmental environment for highly sensitive people will be discussed. The key environments: home, school and work will be taken into account. Main assumptions of the project PRO-MOTION Sensitive career management" [621491-EPP-1-2020-1-PL-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN] will also be presented, pointing to the challenges faced by highly sensitive people on the labor market.

PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC APPROACHES IN WORKING WITH HIGH-SENSITIVE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Gabriela DUMITRIU, Psychotherapist, PhD student, Romania

Because high sensitivity is a hidden trait, which has more to do with how our nervous system is functioning, it can be sometimes difficult to assess, and read from outside. This can easily happen in the case of highly sensitive children. Highly sensitive children develop and benefit from the positive effects of a supportive and empathetic environment, with much lower probabilities of developing anxiety and depression. In contrast, in aversive environments, where there is aggression, lack of acceptance and lack of support or neglect of emotional needs, these children are more prone to affective and behavioral disorders, compared to the majority who do not have the high sensitivity trait.

Psychotherapeutic interventions should aim to provide a space of safety and tranquility, in which the child will feel heard, validated and seen. For younger children, expressive-creative approaches are very appropriate. Expressive-creative methods and techniques can be successfully integrated into the evaluation/investigation procedure and psychological intervention in working with highly sensitive children, as complex therapeutic modalities of psychological intervention for various types of problems.

DEVELOPMENT OF A TRAINING BATTERY OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS IN CHILDREN WITH ADHD

Simona MARICA, PhD, Clinical Psychologist, Spiru Haret University, Romania, **Dragoş CÎRNECI**, PhD, Spiru Haret University, Romania

ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) is one of the most common neuropsychiatric diagnoses in school-aged children.Attention deficit and hyperactivity determine a level of academic performance below the child's intellectual capabilities, poor integration in the peer group, which can later lead to school dropout and associated mental disorders - such as conduct disorder, anxiety or depressive disorders.

At this moment, in Romania, the treatment of these children is almost exclusively medicinal, as there are no alternative ways of recovery.

Since the 80s, several studies have revealed the effect of cognitive training on children with ADHD between the ages of 6 and 13.By "cognitive training" we mean tasks of sustained attention, executive attention and working memory, each session lasting 45 minutes, over several week.

Our study aims to develop a battery of tasks for training deficient executive functions, the fnal objective being to offer an alternative to drug treatment, which can be used by psychologists, pedagogues or even the parents of these children.

THE IMPROVEMENT OF MENTALIZATION ABILITY AND EMOTIONAL REGULATION IN AUTISM THROUGH HUMANOID MANNEQUINS

Amelia NEGOI, Clinical Psychologist, PhD Student,University of Bucharest, Romania

The awareness, identification and differentiated naming of emotional states in the offices of clinical psychology and psychotherapy represent the working tool, and their degree of specificity is a good measure of the therapeutic act itself.

In the psychotherapy of autistic spectrum disorders we often refer to mentalization processes, to the facilitation of day-to-day communication, to the development of a social self - all of these have in common an extremely important, if not essential, basis in the recovery processes, namely integrated development of a physical self.

Early psychotherapeutic intervention with an increased degree of personalization of programs is the nodal point for improving the quality of the child's personal life and the family as a system.

Thus, considering the difficulties of verbalization and imitation, of mentalizing one's own person and of mental-empathic representation of those around, of information integration and social response, we bring to the fore a humanoid mannequin type toy that can facilitate the psychotherapeutic approach by staging the emotional reality. Whether it is used for the process of imitation, or for the integration of emotional states or just as a basis for non-verbal communication, the Amity toy can be the interface and the common denominator of communication, a translator, a bridge between the two worlds: autism - non - autism.

The object of the present study is the systemic and multifaceted research of the impact of using the Amity toy in psychotherapy sessions for people diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders (child, adult, couple and family), respecting at every step the ethical norms and the structure of the designated experimental design.

After the collection, analysis and interpretation of the data following the studies – the user manual is written which can be present and used in any psychotherapy office and not only.

INDICATORS OF CHILDHOOD FAMILY STRUCTURE EFFECTIVELY USED IN EXPLORING ATTACHMENT STYLES DIFFERENCES AND IN PREDICTING ADULT COUPLE DECISIONS

Bianca Bogdana PELTEA, PhD, Spiru Haret University, Romania

The present study is part of a larger project including formerly published papers and future research to be undertaken. The whole project's goal is to explore simple indicators of complex family structure, while proving their relevance in applied research. In particular, the present study aims to explore the relations between insecure attachment styles by the use of indicators such as the number of attachment figures in childhood, having mother as part of childhood attachment figures, or having mother as the only attachment figure in childhood.

These simple demographic questions regarding participants' childhood care (and in particular maternal care) are shown to be effectively used in explaining relations between the 3 insecure attachment styles, and their impact upon couple decisions made in adulthood. In contrast to family psychology's dominant view that family systems are difficult to maneuver into research methodology, the present study thus aims to offer a solution to these methodological difficulties.

The results that are announced here can support Patricia Crittenden's thesis that each person develops every one of the four attachment styles, but more importantly the study shows avoidant-ambivalent and disorganized styles to be different in configuration from the simple anxious insecure style.

In the end, presently assessed frequency of falling asleep while crying throughout childhood is another indicator that is used to initially explain the development of insecure attachment (of any style: anxious, avoidant, disorganized) and, by this route, couple dissatisfaction (mediation analysis).

NJOY. A PSYCHOLOGICAL TOOL DESIGNATED FOR CHILDREN

Loredana BĂNICĂ, PhD, Spiru Haret University, Romania,
Cristina VASILESCU, Clinical Psychologist, Romania

Emotions are an important part of our inner experience, with essential role in regulating and general functioning. Also, emotions profoundly influence learning and achievement.

The relationship between emotions and colors is a topic for various studies and researches. Research focused on emotions and colors have shown that they can influence people's health, behavior and actions. Also found that emotion schemas are embedded in the human visual system therefor the relationship between emotions and colors is our choice to research. We are interested in that topic with special focus on children's emotions and color choices of children. So, we intended to create a tool that can assess this kind of topic and meantime a tool for interventions (to manageemotions as precursor of feelings, behavior,thinking associated with colors; to investigate and fosterdevelopment of self-regulation, executive functioning skills, comunication abilities and verbal language)

Projective tools are noninvasive, playful, comic,and creative, they offer a lot of thinking „out of the box" and ways of expressing inner self. Those are the reasons because we choose them as a type of tool.

First, we organized focus-groups with 4-12 aged children to identify children's preferred animals, frequent children's associations between animal andemotions (emoticons), also between colors / emotions (emoticons) and animals/colors.

Subsequently, we designed *nJoy* – a set of 18 cards (6 images of animals, 6 colored balloons, 6 emoticons) as a psychological tool appropriate in the psychological work with children. *nJoy* can be used in different manners and goals, meaningrecognition of color/emotion, associationcolor/emotion; narrative – free stories or structured stories (with established beginning / scenario); language game; memory game.*nJoy* is a psychological tool appropriate for typical children and for children with autism, learning disorders, delays in development.

DEVELOPMENT STORYTELLING IN AN FOREIGN LANGUAGE COURSE (ORAL VS WRITTEN STORY IN ENGLISH)

Sebastian CHIRIMBU, Phd, Spiru Haret University, Romania

Storytelling is much more than just transmitting some facts to a specific audience. "Storytelling is a contextual bridge between play and written narrative "(Bruner 1990, Saracho and Spadek, 2006)

It is present when we tell our friends what happened to us last night or when we narrate this funny anecdote that happened to us last holidays. Stories come in a variety of forms: plays, songs, poetry, pictures or movement.

It is a common event of our daily conversations and certainly a tool through which different cultures and personal experiences are represented. For students of a foreign language, this task of becoming main characters before an audience may represent a task apparently far beyond their possibilities due to a lack of knowledge of the foreign language.

Speaking in a second language is a daily activity for millions of individuals all over the world and has often been viewed as the most demanding of the four skills. When attempting to speak, the students from *Spiru Haret* University, Department of Psychology must master their thoughts and encode them in the vocabulary and syntactic structures and functions of the target language for a communicative purpose.

In order to understand properly the importance of in storytelling, it is necessary to offer them at the beginning of the new course, a literature review on (oral) communication, its processes and strategies for learners of a foreign language, the relationship between storytelling and pragmatics, the speech acts and language functions involved and finally, a more accurate explanation of differences of oral and written storytelling, their conventions and the context that might surround them.

According to one of the specialists (Revell) "Communication is an exchange of knowledge, of information, of ideas, of opinions, of feelings between people… For genuine communication to take place, what is being communicated must be something new to the recipient: there is no sense in him being able to tell in advance what is going to happen. Communication is full of surprises. It is this element of unexpectedness and unpredictability which makes communication what

it is, and for which it is so hard to prepare the student by conventional teaching methods" *(Revell 1979: 1)*

Students learning a foreign language will not only have to count on their mastery of the language but also to face the unexpected elements with regard to which they will have to develop a number of communicative strategies to be successful in the communicative situation.

In order to achieve this communicative competence, according to Paula Gordo "students must be trained to use language appropriately in a wide variety of contexts and for different purposes. This idea is strictly linked with pragmatics or meaningful situations, sociolinguistics, ethnography and the relevant competences and communicative strategies. Other features which will surely affect communicative competence are the speaker's interest or motivation, affective factors, the audience their message is addressed to, the topic selection, etc."
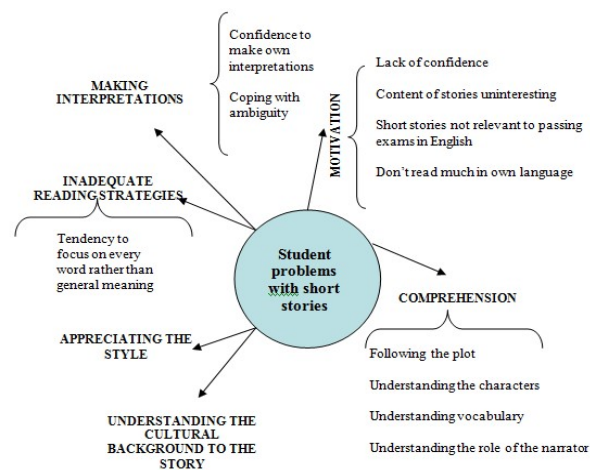
The main difference between oral and written language is the amount of time and space available for communication. In addition, oral language allows the negotiation of meaning to ensure effective communication. Written language relies on the text to create the context of situation where the correct meaning can be interpreted.

Stories and storytelling serve to many purposes in our lives and in our classes. We need to develop them because we need to improve reading or listening in a foreign language. They are instrumental in cognitive, social and emotional development. Literacy begins with stories and by storytelling we learn to relate to others and empathize with them including our students or our teachers and colleagues.

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TEACHING VALUES AND SENSITIVITY THROUGH VIDEOS

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Denisa Elena DRAGUŞIN, PhD, Spiru Haret University, Romania,
Daiana DUMBRĂVESCU, PhD, Spiru Haret University, Romania

It is clear evidence that even before the pandemic period, general classescontaining just plain text are utterly boring for students.Studies already demonstrate that the use of different kind of art and visualizations in the classroombecome a highly efficient tool that promotes learning.Since the 1970's Allan Paivio pointed out that the human being understands texts in general on two different levels: verbal and visual. Therefore, the combination of the verbal and visual messages enables students to understand and memorize information in a more precise way.As teachers, we have easy access to a wide variety of programmes, applications, web pages, etc., that allow us to create simple animations that could be usedduring our students´ learning process. However, we all prefer to be consumers than video creators so, in this paper, we have selectedfivedifferent videos available in YouTube channelfeaturing five corresponding advertising spots from the Spanish national lottery. All videos featurethe same message: the importance of keeping tradition alive especially during Christmas time. Although the first video was made during the pre-pandemic era, the second and third videos were made during the pandemic period and the fourth and fifth during the post-pandemic era, they all convey the same message: the significance of remaining united and sharing with other people. Given the high level of sensitiveness that these videos present as well as the underlying messages and values that they communicate, we strongly recommendtheir useas teaching material not only for Spanish/ English teaching classes but also for communicationor individual classes because of the potential impact they may have on the student.

Post-Pandemic School Session

WHAT DOESN'T HAPPEN IN THE PANDEMIC VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

Dale A. KOIKE, PhD,The University of Texas at Austin, USA,
Rose POTTER, Prof., The University of Texas at Austin, USA

The two-year COVID pandemic period greatly affected every level of education all over the world. While teleconferencing enabled teachers and students to meet in virtual classrooms, allowing an exchange of information, it also created problems that became clear when students and instructors returned to the real-world classrooms. Those problems in part are based on the affective dimension of learning that is either largely absent or distorted in the virtual environment. This short presentation will address those issues and offer some suggestions to overcome this problem.

POST-PANDEMIC SCHOOL: THE CASE OF THE IZMIR UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS

Aimara RODRIGUEZ DE CESERO, Prof., Izmir University of Economics, Turkey

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The COVID-19 pandemic forced the closure of schools in many countries and, in the case of our university, this closure lasted almost two years and a half between online and hybrid periods. During this time, distance-teaching-learning solutions were implemented to ensure the education continuity. However, with the post-pandemic school we are faced with gaps and students with inadequate levels of education created during these years of pandemic and online lessons.

FACTORS INFLUENCING SUCCESS IN THE PROCESS OF LEARNING. A SUCCESSFUL TEACHER NOWADAYS

Sebastian CHIRIMBU, Phd, Spiru Haret University, Romania,
Larisa SADOVEI, PhD, Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University**,** Department of Education Sciences. Moldova

Education have been always considered as the most important step in the overall development of a person as someone who is capable of making a very profound change in the community and world at large (Battle & Lewis, 2002.). The quality of learning of an individual not only influences the wellbeing the individual but also their family, nation and world at large. During the process of acquisitions of knowledge, various factors affect the quality of the learning, in the educational institutions, which includes factors related to the individual themselves and their surroundings (Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder, 2004) but also the role model of the teacher (more precisely that "successful teacher,, everyone would like to be or to meet with). This process is influenced by a variety of factors related to the learner, the teacher, the process of instruction.

School is no longer what it used to be because now, neither the students, adults or children, are as they were anymore. Their needs are different: the rhythm of today's life makes them stop lying to listen to 50-100 minutes of explanations in a monotonous tone and write down the key information. That is why, regardless of the matter, a way to work differently must be found, actively involving them for almost the entire duration of the class.

This can be done by organizing activities in pairs, in teams, competitions, building projects or group experiments, alternating individual and team work. A lot of interaction and learning patterns can be realized. For this, a good teacher is willing and willing to sacrifice his speaking time to give it to his students. He's willing to monitor their work and provide guidance and help where needed. And to teach them to collaborate, instead of pitting them against each other, in a blind competition.

In a press interview, R.Manea (2019) considers that a good teacher teaches his students HOW to think, not what they think. It teaches them the thought process that leads to certain results, not the right answer. It encourages them in their creative and research endeavors, celebrates error as a learning method and cultivates reflective thinking (what are the consequences of my actions, what I have learned from this situation/ thing, what I can improve in the future so that I can achieve my goals or get closer to them). A good teacher shows himself to be vulnerable and always thirsty to overcome his own limits. He admits when he is wrong, takes actions to become better and to meet the needs of his students. It does it naturally and enters the process of learning and discovery with students, creating a secure environment where the dignity of each student is protected and confidence in his potential is cultivated.

In an attempt to conclude what a successful teacher is, what it represents or what it looks like, we thought of one of the definitions discussed with the students from the master's program at the *Ion Creangă* State Pedagogical University of Chişinău through which we defined such a teacher as a "builder" of destinies, not just a person who comes to school to transmit information to students (similar to the role of the one who delivers a product to you which you ordered). Successful teachers are those who make students leave school with a smile on their faces and come back happy the next day. Successful teachers are those who know that they have chosen this career for the huge role of the teaching profession in society (whether society recognizes this or not!). In our opinion, successful teachers trust their students, know them and cherish them all. But more than that, it also gives them a vision, it gives them support in their trials, it gives them all their support!

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HAPPINESS – THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DREAMERS, PROFESSORS & STUDENTS ALIKE

Smaranda CAZAN-LIVESCU, Professor, PhD studies Curriculum and Education Management, ESL specialist, GA TESOL, TESOL INTERNATIONAL, UNIFERO Inc. USA,
Ioana SILION, Psychiatrist MD, Development Department; PhD Medical Sciences, Psychiatry Department, Bucharest, Romania

Is Happiness a normality? What about the opposite?

This presentation addresses issues that adults but also teenagers and children are confronted with: attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) that is more difficult to identify due to lack of research, but also difficulties in identifying it, even if defined by the following signs:

In adults we can observe the following: Carelessness and lack of attention to detail; continually starting new tasks before finishing old ones; poor organizational skills; inability to focus or prioritize; continually losing or misplacing things; forgetfulness; restlessness; difficulty keeping quiet and speaking out of turn; often interrupting others; mood swings, irritability, and a quick temper; inability to deal with stress; extreme impatience.

Related conditions and Problems to mention a few only: Anxiety, depression, sleep problems, autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), personality disorders, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and addictive disorders. The behavioral problems associated with ADHD can also cause problems such as difficulties with relationships and social interaction.

Some DREAMERS who have made us happy along times inspite of their issues: The cave men; Da Vinci, Enesco, Menuhin, Aurel Vlaicu, Brancusi Coloana Infinitului, Mademoiselle Pogany and … us!

Of course, we can talk about the Hues of Happiness and here is a very interesting example:

> *"When I was in grade school, they told me to write down what I wanted to be when I grew up. I wrote down happy. They told me I*

didn't understand the assignment. I told them they didn't understand life." John Lennon

We might wonder if in our world happiness is largely a matter of personality. Can our happiness change, or is it a fixed and impossible individual difference? Are we, as adults, sure about the factors that will really make us happy or unhappy?

What about the population we are working with? Students & parents? What limits our ability to feel happiness and satisfaction, as well as to grant it on to the others?

Educational psychology examples include: Study of the most effective methods for teaching people with specific learning challenges - attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or … dyslexia. Primary focus of educational psychology is the study of how people learn.

We would challenge you with the following question: How can we help the dreamers? Our students but also colleagues. If we pause from our fast walk-through hours, days, months we can understand that the usual Psychological Problems in School Children are Anxiety, Learning Disorders, Conduct Disorder, Eating Disorders OR / AND the attention-deficit hyperactivity Disorder, Autism, Substance Addiction, Schizophrenia.

What about those newcomers who:
a. Find themselves without the necessary language skills to perform as wished from the very beginning.
b. Lack of understanding the rules both in the educational institution they have to attend & in social everyday life?

In their case, the psychosocial issues can range from: school refusal, difficulty with concentration & learning, disruptive behavior up to eating and sleeping problems. Besides these, we must take into consideration their parents' lack of language skills. Some can be transitory while others can cause distress, confusion, lack of control & can become unmanageable.

Our suggestions:
First, let us provide an embracing environment with i.e., a musical background; peer helpers; an always present word wall; space and time to work with others; projects built on their prior /home/ own culture and things they know. Also, rewards (Praise & prizes)

The biggest problem among students who are new in the country is: the difficulty to deal with emotions. Here are the most important to observe and recognize: depression, anxiety, anger that sooner or later replace the BIG DREAM and WISH

to be happy, to overcome interpersonal and relationship difficulties and all the concerns related to academic issues.

Why? Because there is no motivation in the last desk that most of the time, they are placed to be sited in. Derived from that we also deal with concentration problems, test anxiety, sadness.

WHAT or who can influence students in better?

WE CAN! How? Minding: Adapting class and curriculum structure; teacher behavior and personality; teaching methods; encouraging parental involvement; understanding family issues and instability; peer relationships and not the least, the learning environment and assessment.

Let us take into account that one size does not fit all!

Just imagine that we are in their shoes, displaced from their birthplace, out of the comfort of native language and land. What can or could make YOU Happy? Your dream(s)?

There are people for whom: 10 $ in their pocket, a roof above their head, a book to read, a child whom they can afford to feed, a friend to talk with, being able to see the sky every day. All these MEAN TO BE HAPPY!

Sometimes the smile on our faces lead the minds and drive to know and to be part of the island of KNOWLEDGE!

> "Imagine all the people/Livin' life in peace …/
> You may say I'm a dreamer/ But I'm not the only one/
> I hope someday you'll join us
> And the world will be as one"