

THE INFLUENCE OF CAUSAL REORIENTATION OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO SCHOOL ANXIETY, MOTIVATION AND SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

The paper presents the results of the forming experiment aimed at developing the favorable causal attribution of students' achievement. It is shown that the causal reorientation can be one of the factors to reduce the school anxiety, increase motivation and successful school activities of senior high school students.

Key words: educational activities, achievements, attributing causal explanatory diagrams, learned helplessness, motivation training, school anxiety.

One of the central problems of psychological and pedagogical studies is a student's achievement, and the study of various factors enhances the success of training activities is always actual.

The panto-psychologic and social-psychological researches (G. Andreeva, 1979; P. Trusov, 1981; N. Buchanan, 1999; 2009; T.G. Stefanenko, 1999; D. Ciring, A. Yanchuk, 2001; 2001; T.O. Gordeeva, 2002) provide the extensive data describing the relationship of the efficiency of the activity and peculiarities of functioning the causal achievements of the stakeholders. At the same time, only a few studies focus on studying the impact of the effect of causal attributions of achievement to motivation and success of the training activity (M.M. Dalgatov, 2001, 2006; N.V. Tagaeva, 2001; T.O. Gordeeva, A.M. Mutalimova, 2006; 2006; A.A. Shepeleva, 2008).

The results of researches within the frame of attributive theories suggest that the explanatory style of the individual when confronted with difficulties, as well as the causal attribution of their success and failures effects the motivation of behavior, particularly in the activity or passivity, persistence or helplessness (Abramson, Seligman and Teasdale, 1978; Peterson and Seligman, 1984). Thus, there are relationships between causal attributions of stakeholders and the impact of their activities, as well as emotional and motivational characteristics [1, 2, 3].

Favorable development of causal attribution of the students' achievements, and an adverse change with advisory and remedial training programs, technologies and techniques is one of the major challenges of modern schooling.

Causal reorientation aims to correct and change the interpretation of failures - from internal and stable (attribution of failure to ability) to internal and supervising i.e. attribution of failure to stress.

The forming experiment carried out by us, took place on a specially designed program. The programme for the development of the favorable attribution of achievements made two blocks. The first block of the program was a series of theoretical and practical seminars for teachers working with examinees [4, p. 155-169]. The objectives of the study were:

- to familiarize teachers with the attributive theory of motivation, with the history of its development;
- to show the relationship of attribution, motivation and productivity based on the analysis of the theoretical material;
- to describe the personal and socio-psychological factors of formation of the attribute schema and its development in teaching of the academic discipline;
- to assist teachers in learning the methods of diagnosis and assessment of the type of attribution;
- to teach teachers to use a variety of methodological approaches to correcting and an enabling causal attribution of a favourable achievements in learning.

The second block of the program included the training on the causal reorientation and development of a favorable attribution among senior high school students [4, Pp. 170-183].

Training classes were held during the school year among the senior high school students, with a poor causal attribution of achievements in a situation of failure. The diagnostic indicators of the causal attribution achievements, motivation training, school anxiety and success of training activities was carried out before and after the formative experiment. As the experiment progresses, there have been no side variables (for example, any additional studies or developing additional lessons on specific academic disciplines), which could have an impact on the results: the content of the academic and extracurricular activities are not changed. The main content of the forming experiment was an individual counseling and group sessions in the form of training. The attributing training to the effort is the most common strategy in modern programs of the attribution correction and attributive reorientation. To support the strategy of attribution to the efforts, it should be pointed out that the effort is an only factor which can be appealed, both in successes, and failures. The main objective of the causal reorientation - correction, changing interpretations of failures - from internal and stable (attribution of failure to ability) to internal and controlled, i.e. attribution of failure to effort

Training procedure was limited to a few problems:

- Explanation of behavior and persons' experiences targeted for failure, including their causal attributions of achievements.

- Explanation of feelings and persons' behavior oriented to success, and highlighting differences in casual attribution.

- Study scenarios for success-oriented students.

- Securing actions focused on the success of individuals in the role-playing games and exercises.

In the first phase the trainees make sense of their individual characteristics, determine the possibilities for learning and success of training activities, express their

attitude to them. In the second phase development of a favorable attribution is achieved by learning and mastering the techniques of cognitive strategies with high school students and causal explanation of their achievements relevant to their individual needs.

It should be noted that the formation of the group was based on the principle of voluntary participation. The experiment involved only those “are attributed to unfavorable” high school students who have shown willingness to engage. This group includes high school students who have an unfavorable causal attribution of achievements in a situation of failure. It is this attributive scheme is the most affect-producing underlies the phenomenon of learned helplessness.

When build the classes we held the chosen direction, but the actual content of lessons was not strictly regulated: many meetings were associated with the proposed by the participants of the real situations of “causal diagrams” in the achievements. This strategy was fundamental, since it gave the opportunity to students to recognize and analyze their own hardships and good times in training.

We attempted to change the unfavorable situation in the causal attribution of senior high school students’ failure and to promote a favorable causal attribution in order to reduce the level of school anxiety, develop the positive internal motivation and improve the success of training activities.

The purpose of the experiment is to determine the possibility of reducing the school anxiety, increase motivation and success of high school students’ training activities through causal reorientation and development of an enabling causal attribution of their achievements.

Diagnosing types of attribution of senior pupils gave the following results (fig. 1). Before the pilot study the senior high school students are attributing to explain their own failures in study, especially the abilities: 59.1% of high school students have attributed abilities first rank, 9% - the second grade, 19% - the third rank. Overall, it was 87.1% of the total number of elections. Only 12. 9% of the total number of examinees-high school students indicated that the attribution on the last

three places. Only 18% of the examinees expressed a preference (1st place) – to such favorable factor as efforts in a situation of failure to the pilot study, 4.5% of the examinees attributed the second rank to this factor, just 9% of the examinees attribute to the effort in the third turn. The vast majority of participants 68.5% attribute to the effort in the least (4-6 grade), considering the efforts as non important factors in the failure of the training activities.

The diagnostic results of causal attributions in the situation of a failure after the forming experiment show the bright expressiveness of the senior high school student's attribution to the efforts, 81.8% of students attribute this attribution 1 rank, and only 13.6% attribute to the students' abilities. 4.6% of the examinees attribute to the efforts of the least to (3-6 grade). This suggests that the majority of the students during the period of the school year during which the experiment have been carried out (verbal and written causal reorientation, simulations of success), have revised their views on their own abilities, believing that efforts in some cases compensate the lack of them (Figure 1).

Failures are often interpreted by students as due to lack of their efforts and less - insufficient capacities

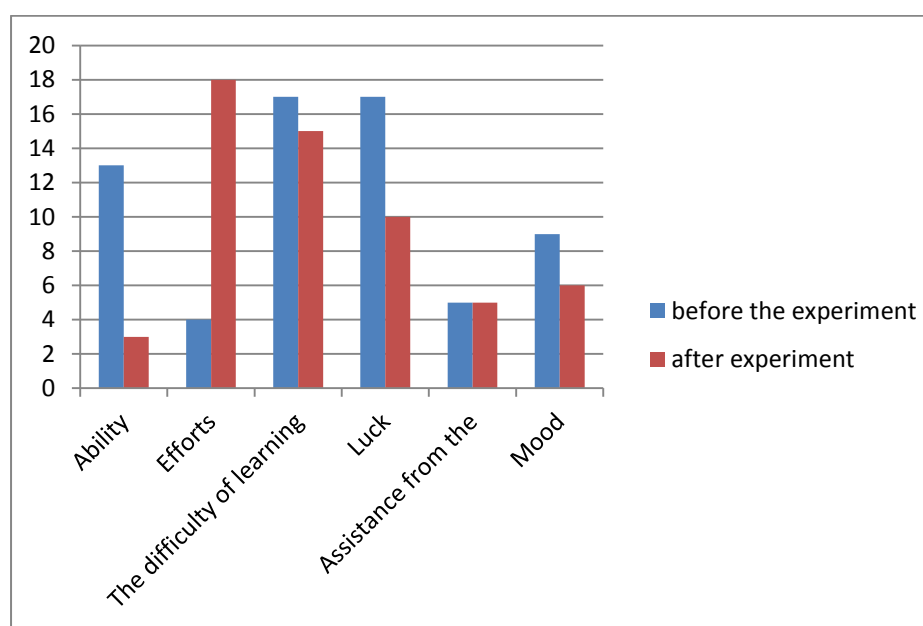


Figure 1. Gistogramma rank attribution failure frequency allocation to various causative factors before and after a formative experiment.

The experiment results were subjected to statistical analysis. An analysis of differences (was used non-parametric Mann-Whitney test) among the examinees before and after the formative experiment showed that there was a change of adverse causal diagrams to more favorable. There is a noticeable increase of motivation training activities under the influence of the formative experiment. Yet there are obtained significant differences in the level of school anxiety among examinees before and after the experiment (Table I). So we can conclude that in the course of the experiment there was a positive dynamics of the success of the examinees' training activities.

Table 1.

Average Values of Causal Attribution of Achievement, Level of Motivation, Anxiety and Success Measures of School Learning Activities of Subjects before and after a Formative Experiment.

Variables	Medium values		U EMF.	U thm.	
	Before	After		.05	.01
Causal attributions of achievements	.091	.545	132	171	142
Motivation	1.550	2.590	85	171	142
School anxiety	12.100	10.900	73	171	142
Academic progress	3.090	3.820	93	171	142

Comparison of pre-and post-forming experiment revealed the presence of significant changes indicating an increase of the academic motivation and success of the senior high school students' training activities, as well as the downward trend in the level of school anxiety that occurs due to changes in causal attributions of students' achievements.

Thus, the results of the formative experiment allow to conclude that the adverse causal schemes change, the development of students' favorable attribution have a certain effect in students regarding the success of the training activities,

reducing the level of school anxiety and forming the inner (positive) academic motivation.

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