

Political Discourse as a Factor of Youth Civic Subjectivity Development

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Introduction. Development of information society and postmodern tendencies in the modern world cause qualitatively new understanding of goals and means of political socialization. Provision of conditions for self-determination of an individual as subject of political (civic) interaction has become the main task of the socializing influence. Therefore, the issue of psychological conceptualization of subjectivity, its indicators, conditions and factors of its development comes onto the research agenda. The thesis about the determinative role of subjectivity in structuring youth political discourse have been formulated in view of the outcomes of the theoretical and empirical research, whose findings are presented in the article.

Objectives. The research focused on identifying peculiarities of constructing youth political world outlook in the process of discourse interaction, as well as determination of socializing mechanisms, strategies and technologies which could actualize subjectivity potential and channel it into construction of shared value meanings, value world outlook, self-identification of a citizen capable of defending one's own interests and actively meeting today's challenges.

Method and procedure. The configuration of the research builds up on the combination of classical and post non-classical methodology. The task of its first stage was to determine representations (themes) and variants of interpretations (propositions) of political values, motivations, representations of political practices,

dominant and subordinate interaction which are represented in the discourse of the political socialization subjects (methods: text content analysis, method of unfinished sentences, method of unguided description)

The second stage of the research was aimed at developing instruments for the psychosemantic analysis, which resulted in the questionnaire consisting of 80 statements related to the most articulated discourse themes. After piloting and amending, the questionnaire was used to collect data for the psychosemantic analysis. The data was obtained through the survey of 760 respondents representing higher educational institutions in four regions of the country. The third stage of the research dealt with processing the outcome of the factor analysis (centroid method) and specifying certain positions with the help of such methods as modelling, indication sorting, projective and semi-projective methods, as well as discourse analysis.

Results. The key factor of structuring the value component of the university student political world outlook in all the regions involved turned out to be political subjectivity. The level of the respondents' subjectivity determines the interpretations of political values, which are centered in one of the quadrants of the space designated by the coordinates "*values of power – individual values*" and "*responsibility of authorities – individual responsibility*". Hereby the representations of responsibility are quite descretive and symbolic: responsibility for one's own life turned out to be less significant (according to the indication choice method) than responsibility for close relatives and the country. Representations of responsibility as observation of principles are not actualized in the youth discourse at all. Besides the number of choices of responsibility indications proved to be the lowest among other political values, which indicates insufficient articulation, reflection and internalization of the related meanings.

The regional peculiarities of youth political discourse which were identified in the course of the data analysis are the following: value representations of the respondents in the central region are located mainly in the quadrant "individual values – individual responsibility"; in the western region it is the quadrant of "values of power – individual responsibility"; in the southern region their location is determined

by the coordinates “individual values – responsibility of authorities”; in the eastern region it is “values of power – responsibility of authorities”. This provides evidence to state that only the sample of the central region is dominated by the subjectivity attitudes, whereas in the rest of the regions there is predominance of either the representations focused on authorities or pure objectivity representations of the role of an individual in the political interaction as well as expectations regarding its results.

The factor model of the representations of political practices in the youth discourse is built up on the perception of individual ability to influence the authorities. It includes practices of *problem resolution/evasion*, *influence/refusal to influence authorities*, *choice*, *externality/internality*, *control* of authorities. The student political discourse is dominated by the practices of protest, alienation, and emotionally negative self-attitude practices. At the same time, there is lack of representations of constructive political practices, which indicate **subjectivity** attitude of an individual involved in the political interaction.

Analysis of the basic representations of *social interaction* in the youth political world outlook allowed identification of the problem clusters in the construction of its meanings. They are the following: amorphism of civic identification, narrow radius of institutional and interpersonal trust and interaction, fragmented representation of the experience of maintaining sustainable networks, indefiniteness of representations of the essence of social activities, contradictive attitudes to social norms and rules, and their provision. Under those conditions, it is hardly possible to state that the youth political discourse as certain symbolic capital can be used as an effective instrument of realization of their interests.

Investigation of the regional specifics of the student youth representations allows stating that in the capital of the country as well as in the western and the eastern regions those representations are characterized by the higher level of subjectivity and self-centrism compared to the other regions. However, while the students of the capital consider social involvement and civic participation to be a means of self-actualization, their eastern counterparts find them to be rather a way to defend their own interests and freedom of choice. As for the students in the western region, they

treat social involvement as certain threat to their individual freedom. For the students of the center “self” and social involvement are subordinate to the interests of the society, and for the respondents of the south the aim of social involvement is searching for models of interaction between a citizen and the authorities.

The least articulated components of the youth political world outlook turned out to be *motivation and self-identification* ones, which significantly complicates the process of self-determination and formation of the political interaction subjects. Besides, the factor model of the motivation component of the respondents’ political discourse is dominated by emotional representations. Rational motivations (except the desire to get material benefits) are not actualized.

The findings of the psychosemantic analysis also allowed the determination of the basic meanings of the dominant-subordinate interaction in the youth political discourse. Those meanings are domination-subordination, love-hatred, closeness-alienation, force-influence, protection-vulnerability, involvement-alienation, independence-dependence, organization-chaos (disorder), trust-mistrust. Those constructs are evidently nucleus, and they determine the vector of student youth representations of the essence of the dominant-subordinate interaction. The prior semiotic analysis of the identified nucleus constructs of the dominant-subordinate interaction discourse indicates the prevalence of meanings, which associate with the objectivity identification. This signifies little probability of developing the subject-subject model of the dominant-subordinate interaction.

Conclusions. The identified peculiarities of structuring student political world outlook make it possible to conclude that the socializing discourse does not provide (or only partially provides) for its main functions, which are interpretative, persuasive, instrumental and action mobilizing ones. This proves the need to determine the ways of optimization of the political discourse aiming at the realization of a subjectivity development project, where subjectivity is viewed as an integral characteristic of an individual.

The main tracks of such activities are considered to be: facilitation of reflection about individual political interaction and political self-identification; articulation of

mechanisms of achieving success; themes of personal responsibility for the choice of communicative practices and for the translation of this or that discourse; prevention of frustration discourse development, distrust and alienation; construction of possible models of these or those interpretations of values, and prognosis of the consequences of their realization.