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STUDENT’S SELF-IMAGE: A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC VIEW

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Abstract

The paper discusses the results of a series of experiments aimed at studying how the student’s self-image changes in the student’s mind. The hypothesis of the study was as follows: during the years of studying at the university the student’s self-image undergoes significant changes due to the various activities in the studying environment as well as to the personal evaluation of his/her own activities. This hypothesis was tested by a series of experiments conducted by the method of free associations and the method of unfinished sentences, the results of which complement each other. The hypothesis is partially confirmed. During the years of studying, the student’s self-image in the student’s mind is enriched with a variety of language means, primarily expressive ones. However, the growing variety of linguistic means of expressing the self-image of the student does not allow us to speak about a significant qualitative change in the image (new features, new aspects of the image does not appear), but only about a quantitative change. Various linguistic means of expression speak about the integrity of this image, despite its internal inconsistency. The student seems to live in two worlds or two lives: he/she gains new knowledge, but suffers, self-improves, but does not understand why he/she needs it, skips classes, but passes the exams successfully.

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1. Introduction

The concept “language consciousness” has become extremely widespread in Russian psycholinguistic studies of various types in recent years. In Russian linguistics, this concept is widespread while is not known abroad. Many researchers use it not just as a convenient designation of a certain range of phenomena, but as an explanation of the observed phenomena. Two facts are paradoxical in this regard. First, the language consciousness of a certain social group as a whole is not studied, but only some of its fragments, images, concepts, etc. As a result, studies of language consciousness are reduced to the enumeration of “semantic exoticism” to some extent (not completely explainable) connected with culture. Second, a rare publication on this issue contains the general linguistic basis of the study, many of them rely on the usual psycholinguistic or cognitive or, worse, traditional linguistic methodology without a substantial revision of the key concepts and their correspondence to the chosen methods.

2. Problem Statement

We cannot accept the usual definition of the language consciousness as the part of the individual human consciousness that can be expressed in linguistic signs (Dzjuba, 2017; Ilyina, 2012; Kubrjakova, 2012; Myskin, 2016; Popova & Sternin, 2017; Shishkanov, 2012; Ufimtseva, 2003; Ufimtseva, 2017; Ufimtseva & Tarasov, 2009). This definition is widespread in many Russian publication, but it is not appropriate for our work. With such interpretation of the language consciousness (hereinafter – LC) it is only possible to state that some representations and images of consciousness find expression in speech activity. It is impossible to find the images’ regular connections with phenomena of a socio-cultural and emotional-personal kind.

In our interpretation the LC as a theoretical concept is intended to fix a certain regular relationship between the internal (personal) and external (socio-cultural) factors affecting the language as a person’s property. We define the LC as a psycholinguistic concept which shows how the internal and external conditions for the functioning of a language as a person’s property are connected with changes in meanings and personal senses of words. The LC generalizes the characteristics of the speech experience of a group of people depending on certain (that is, taken into account by theory) internal and external factors. On the concept of “personal sense” see: (Leontiev, 2017a,b; Leontiev, 2019; Zalevskaya, 2011). Expressing through emotion, personal sense, unlike meaning, reflects the way a certain phenomenon (i.e. a word) is experienced by the person him/herself as important for his/her life or its essential part. The personal sense connects events and phenomena not with a specific situation, but with the personality as a whole. Theoretical and experimental justifications of such point of view on the LC can be found in the author’s works mentioned above.

3. Research Questions

The methodology of the LC studies is reduced to the need to appeal to the individual consciousnesses of a certain group of people who are active in the experimental conditions. The characteristics of the LC can only be discussed in relative and probabilistic terms. It is impossible to make an unequivocal conclusion about the characteristics of a word in the mental lexicons of every person of a

group. One can only conclude that in the totality of identified characteristics there are such and such tendencies that are more or less likely under such and such conditions, but never their probability is 100%. For the same reason, it is impossible to judge unequivocally about the emotional attitude of a particular person to the object or phenomenon denoted by this word. One can only say about the greater or lesser (but never absolute) probability of such relationship in conditions similar to the experimental ones.

4. Purpose of the Study

The general aim of our research is to identify social and emotional-personal factors that influence the change in the student's image in the minds of the students themselves and are expressed through language forms. The hypothesis was as follows: the image of the student him/herself during the years at the university undergoes significant changes due to both the various activities in the studying environment and the personal assessment and evaluation of these activities.

5. Research Methods

Our research is based on two experiments. All the stimuli and reactions are given by the participants in Russian and translated into English by the author of the article. We don't mention the original form of reactions because their semantics is essential for us.

First, it is an associative experiment with stimulus TYPICAL STUDENT. The associative experiment was conducted in 2016–2018, in total 353 subjects participated in it – students of the Institute of Philology and Language Communication of the Siberian Federal University (Krasnoyarsk). In the first part of the experiment first-year students took part (236 people in total), in the second part the undergraduate student took part (117 people in total). Accordingly, it was conducted in two stages: the same stimuli were presented to first-year students in late September or early October, and to the undergraduates in the middle or end of April. This was done in order to cover the entire educational experience of undergraduates and to catch the first-year students at the very beginning of their educational experience, but at the stage when they already have the idea of students about the university rather than the idea of applicants.

Second, the experiment by the method of sentence completion. The first-year students (119 people in total) and the fourth-year students (133 in total) from the same Institute took part in this experiment. Experiments with the first-year students were conducted in November 2016 and 2017, and with the undergraduates in March 2015, in March 2016, in April 2017 and in April 2018. In special forms the participants had to anonymously add the incomplete sentences as they want. The volume of sentences was not limited: each subject could write several words, one word or nothing at all, if nothing came to his/her mind as the end of the sentence. Of all the sentences of the form we will be interested only in the following: *Typical student usually...; At the university a student...; When a student learns, he/she...*

A few words should be said about the experiment procedure. As a rule, separate words are used in an associative experiment, and the question of the legitimacy of using words combinations may arise. A special study of this question showed that reactions to words combinations show all the same basic

tendencies as reactions to separate words (Yakovlev, 2019b). According to the experimental conditions, the participants (hereinafter – Pp.) could give up to three reactions to each stimulus. The objection is completely logical: such a procedure introduces an undesirable distortion into the results of an associative experiment (each subsequent reaction is not given to a stimulus, but to a previous reaction). However, we have studied this issue and came to the conclusion that the fluctuations of the associations during this procedure remain within 1–2%, are random and do not distort the connections in the mental lexicon; see (Yakovlev, 2018d).

The distribution of reactions according to the type of their connection with the stimulus (Ufimtseva, 2003, p. 140–141) allowed us to use the method of analyzing the obtained data which can be called *the method of semantic-thematic grouping of reactions*. It is based on the simultaneous consideration of both the links between the stimulus and the reaction and the links between the different reactions. Reactions to each stimulus were grouped on the basis of their potential belonging to the same topic or statement, sphere of use, class of designated items, etc. In order to identify the emotional-personal component in the student’s LC the reactions were also grouped by the expression of the personal relation to phenomena denoted by stimuli. Then the resulting reaction groups were compared to identify the general trend. It is important not just the number, for example, of emotion expressing reactions, but their relation to the number of all other reactions. In our case, it is not a comparison of groups of reactions obtained from one group of subjects, but a comparison of identical groups of reactions obtained from different groups of Pp. This allows us to concentrate on the personal sense that is realized in the reactions and on its “specific weight” in the totality of the received reactions (the associative field). The same procedure was used to analyze answers to incomplete sentences.

6. Findings

It is logical to assume that the image of the student him/herself is central in the student’s LC. Such image shows how a student sees him/herself in a variety of situations and ways of interaction within the studying environment. The stimulus TYPICAL STUDENT is associated with this image of a student’s LC. There were 471 reactions received from the first-year students (including 8 zero reactions), 248 reactions from the undergraduates (there are no zero reactions, which means, apparently, that the image of a typical student causes persistent associations). All reactions can be divided into three thematic groups: “student’s actions”, “student’s characteristics and attributes”, “others”. Quantitatively, the groups and subgroups of reactions are represented in table 1.

Table 01. Reactions to the stimulus TYPICAL STUDENT

Group of reactions		1 year	4 year
Student’s actions	Positive	6	6
	Negative	22	27
	Neutral	13	19
Student’s characteristics and attributes	Positive	31	20
	Negative	213	96
	Neutral	101	28
Others		93	47

The table 01 shows that the image of the student is conceptualized mainly through characteristics and not actions, because the reactions with action semantics are few.

A small number of unambiguously positive reactions catches the eye, especially in the “student’s actions” group. For example: *studies* (3); *having fun*; *try* (1 year); *studies* (2); *tries*; *will break through*; *works* (4 course). Due to this number and similarity the reactions of the two groups of Pp. do not express any particular tendency.

The number of negative reactions from first-year to fourth-year students is increasing. Reactions of the first-year students: *late* (3); *not getting enough sleep* (2); *does not sleep* (2); *skips*; *has no time for anything*; *drinks*; *did not sleep*; *is asleep*; *hungry*, etc. Reactions of the undergraduates: *drinks heavily* (2); *does not sleep* (2); *sleeps little* (2); *late*; *does not study*; *eats little*; *suffers*; *torn between life and work*; *skips*; *motivated by deadlines only*; *does not want to study*; *sees no point in studying*; *always weeping*, etc. It can be seen that the reactions are concentrated around the semantics of “absenteeism” and “sleep” to which the undergraduates also add “alcohol”. We can note here that the further analysis of the material will strengthen these trends.

The “neutral actions” subgroup includes the reactions that cannot be described as unequivocally positive or negative ones. Reactions of the first-year students: *sleep* (6); *learns at night*; *tries to be in time*; *wants to study for 3 days and have rest for 4 days*; *eats shawarma at the bus stop*; *always has rest*, etc. Reactions of the undergraduates: *sleeps* (6); *eats* (2); *eats much*; *looks for a freebie*; *crams*; *makes everything quickly*; *doing everything at the last moment*, etc.

There are not many unambiguously negative reactions in the “characteristics and attributes” group. Reactions of the first-year students: *cheerful* (6); *busy* (3); *funny*; *gifted*; *excellent student*; *smart*; *diligent*; *sharp-witted*; *curious*; *communicative*; *positive*; *active*; *purposeful*; *will*; *interested*; *responsibility*, etc. Reactions of the fourth-year students: *cheerful* (4); *smart* (2); *responsible* (2); *busy* (2); *purposeful*; *tenacious*; *cool*; *resourceful*; *sociable*, *versatile*, *creative*, etc.

The subgroup of negative reactions fully manifests the above-mentioned trend: the reactions are concentrated around the semantic centers “laziness”, “hunger”, “lack of sleep”, “alcohol”. Here are the most illustrative examples. Reactions of the first-year students: *hungry* (24); *lazy* (19); *sleepy* (15); *tired* (13); *hunger* (9); *bummer* (8); *sloth* (7); *poor* (6); *fatigue* (4); *alcohol* (4); *stupid* (4); *poverty* (3); *lateness* (3); *no money* (2); *homeless* (2); *sleeping*; *without sleep*; *tired*; *dissatisfied*; *pain*; *moron*; *sucker*; *drunk*; *difficulties*; *nerd*; *boring*, etc. Reactions of the fourth-year students: *lazy* (16); *truant* (7); *hungry* (6); *bummer* (5); *sleepy* (4); *freeloader* (4); *tortured* (2); *tired* (2); *poor* (2); *hunger* (2); *without money*; *no money*; *laziness*; *drunk*; *madman*; *tired*; *disoriented*; *out of employment*; *stupid*; *procrastinator*; *alcohol*, etc.

The group “neutral” contains many reactions that are close to the mentioned semantic centers. For example: *sleep* (14); *food* (7); *shawarma* (7); *cheap food*; *energy drink*; *lack of sleep* (1 year); *junk food* (2); *food*; *sleep*, etc. (4 year). Both the characteristics and the attributes of the student appear here: *in glasses and a shirt*; *backpack*; *many notebooks*; *time trouble*; *deadlines*, etc. (1 year); *record book* (4); *scholarship* (2); *bag*, etc. (4 year).

Reactions of the “others” group do not show any tendency, except for the similarity of some of them according to the semantics of the place or situation where a student can be met. For example: *exams*

(5); lessons (2); smoking room; buffet; classes, etc. (1 year); residence (5); exams (4); parties, etc. (4 year). In addition to the most obvious trend, it is interesting that in the image of a typical student there is no self-reflection through success, creativity, potential, freedom of action and thought.

For a more in-depth study of the student's image the additional unfinished phrases were used: *A typical student usually...*; *At the university a student...*; *When a student studies, he/she...* The last sentence complements the data of the associative experiment in which there is almost no reflections of the studies.

Let's start with the first of these phrases. In total, there were three groups of answers according to semantic criteria. The quantitative analysis of the results of this part of the experiment is presented in table 2.

Table 02. Answers to the sentence *A typical student usually...*

Answers group	1 year	4, year
Zero answers	5	1
Food and sleep	36	31
Studying	47	60
Overcoming difficulties	19	16
Others	12	26

The first group, as the name implies, includes the answers that express the place of food and sleep in the image of a typical student, and in the answers of the fourth-year students both of these aspects are present. Here are some examples of the first-year students' answers: *Asleep* (3); *Sleeps a little* (2); *Does not get enough sleep* (2); *Always hungry and sleepy*; *Hungry and tired*, etc. The answers of the fourth-year students are less numerous and three of them appeal to alcohol: *Sleeps* (4); *Sleeps a little and parties a lot*; *Drinks heavily*; *Eats and sleeps, but still gets tired forever*; *Hungry, wants to sleep and to graduate from the university quickly*, etc.

Answers of the group "studying" are connected with educational activity, all answers like *Lazy* are included here. The first-year students' answers: *Studies* (2); *Lazy* (2); *Is late* (2); *Skips lessons* (2); *Skips "unimportant" lessons*; *Postpones everything and at the end of the semester regrets this very much*; *Takes exams anyway*; *He/she takes lightly the knowledge he/she receives and does not use opportunities until the last moment*, etc. The answers of the fourth-year students: *Does everything at the last moment* (3); *Skips* (2); *Doesn't attend classes, but still somehow graduates from the university*; *"Wakes up" before the exams*; *Knows when to freeload, and when to study*, etc.

The answers of the group "overcoming difficulties" include the following ones: *Tired* (2); *Trying to survive*; *Busy, but despite this wants to believe that he has the opportunity to have a rest*; *Does everything possible*, etc. (1 year); *Does not sleep, does not eat, but remains alive*; *Honestly tries his/her best, but gets tired quickly*; *Lives in hope of chance and does not realize how much he/she misses*; *Doesn't know why he needs all this, doesn't feel how it will be useful in the future, chooses the affairs outside the university as prior ones*; *Strives to achieve the desired with minimal effort*, etc. (4 year).

Judging by the analyzed answers, the main feature of the typical student image is a paradox: despite laziness, irresponsibility, etc., he/she succeeds in studying more or less normally.

In the "others" group, two responses appeal to stereotypes: *Hungry, poor and lazy, but this is just a stereotype* (1 year); *Goes to the exam hoping to get C, eventually gets B and wonders why not A* (4 year).

Apparently, the student himself understands that a typical student is a stereotype, but not some features of this stereotype are present in reality.

Also, when comparing these answers with the above-mentioned data of the associative experiment, it is easy to notice a small number of answers expressing such feature of a typical student as poverty.

Let's now turn to the analysis of the answers to the second sentence – *At the university a student...* The vast majority of them are based on the semantics of the main predicate which is very useful for the purposes of our study, because the associative experiment reveals the characteristics of a typical student, but not the actions.

The distribution of answers by groups is presented in table 3.

Table 03. Answers to the sentence *At the university a student...*

Answers group	1 year	4 year
Zero answers	3	0
Actions	79	87
Modality	20	34
Suffering and tiredness	8	8
Others	8	6

Most of the answers of the “actions” group are related to studying. The first-year students’ answers: *Studies* (20); *Acquires knowledge* (6); *Acquires knowledge necessary for life*; *Acquires knowledge, meets new interesting people*; *Studies the subjects he/she needs and acquires education*; *Expresses him/herself*; *Self-development*; *Spends his/her best years*; *Often skips lessons*; *Studies, eats, passes exams*, etc. The fourth-year students’ answers: *Studies* (10); *Acquires knowledge* (2); *Acquires education* (2); *Studies and eats* (2); *Studies or tries to study*; *Attends lectures, does homework at night and is constantly sleep*; *Develops and grows intellectually*; *Acquires education and spends the best years of the life*; *Acquires knowledge in different areas, develops as a personality, acquires new knowledge and “learns to be a human”*, etc. The given examples are enough to see the enrichment of this image in the fourth-year students’ LC with more diverse means of expression rather than with new features. In addition, the image is deprived of stereotypes that means that personal sense becomes more important in it.

In the answers of the group “actions”, given by the forth-year students, more obvious is the paradox ambivalence of the typical student’s image, which was mentioned above. For example: *Studies and suffers*; *Sleeps at the seminar that he/she prepared all night*, etc. Instead there are very few of those among first-year students’ answers. For example: *Waiting for the lessons to end, tries to master new material at the same time*; *Getting tired, but trying to survive, should feel comfortable and acquire useful knowledge*, etc.

Note that among the answers of the first-year students there is no one with clearly negative semantics, while the answers of the fourth-year students of this kind constitute an obvious tendency – there are at least 15 of them. For example: *“Acquires” knowledge*; *Fucks up*; *Is needed only to him/herself*; *Understands that he/she chose the wrong profession*; *Tries to find him/herself, to determine his/her future, but fails*; *Spends 4 years in order to get a profession, and then it turns out that everything was useless, and nobody needs him/her*; *Has no rights*; *Is always sad*; *Is afraid*, etc.

Many answers to this sentence contain modality that is prevalent in the answers of the fourth-year students. Moreover, the answers of the first-year students are similar, we can even say stereotyped, and express only the modality of obligation and likelihood (with one exception): *Must study* (10); *Must study and comprehend the basics of his/her future profession*; *Must feel comfortable and free, go there at will, with a great mood*; *Is obliged to study hard*; *May acquire education*; *Can eat well in the buffet*; *Has the opportunity to show his/her knowledge, creative abilities, participate in the organization of events and acquire the necessary knowledge*; *Wants to have some rest*, etc. The answers of the fourth-year students are much more diverse and express different types of modality: *Must study* (4); *Must strive to acquire knowledge and not only good grades*; *Must study and acquire professional experience, but in fact suffers from workload*; *Owes everyone*; *Can sometimes skip because this is not an indicator of his/her academic performance*; *May get knowledge if he/she is responsible*; *Usually just wants to go home and sleep*; *Forced to do everything and attend all classes, otherwise he/she will not survive until the end of the studies*; *Cannot acquire the education, if at this university the primary needs of man are not satisfied*; *Nothing can do*, etc. In the Russian the modality of obligation or likelihood by the same verbal means and distinguished only in a context, so we cannot say which one is meant in each case.

A special group of answers is conventionally called "suffering and tiredness." There are few of them in each group of Pp. so we cite them all. Answers of the first-year students: *Studies and has Fun!* *And suffers a little*; *Gets tired*; *Doesn't get enough sleep*; *Pupil, survival (exclusion) player*; *Sad and hungry*; *Victim*; *Suffers most of the time, and during breaks tries to find some food*; *Suffers because of gaps in the education system and is forced to suffer from poverty*. Answers of the fourth-year students: *Suffers* (5); *Suffers from queues in the buffet*; *Suffers from lack of sleep, waits for the end of the day*; *Suffers in vain*.

Many answers to the sentence *When a student studies, he/she...* express the student's actions. For this reason, we have grouped the answers thematically, see table 4.

Table 04. Answers to the sentence *When a student studies, he/she...*

Answers group	1 year	4 year
Zero answers	2	3
Studying	79	59
Sufferings and tiredness	22	27
Characteristics	8	0
Others	8	46

It can be seen that the overwhelming majority of answers are to some extent connected with studies, in particular, with the acquisition of knowledge and self-development. Answers of the first-year students: *Develops* (10); *Gets tired* (3); *Gets smarter*; *Works on him/herself*; *Develops, overcomes the difficulties arising in its path, becomes smarter and stronger*; *Gets better*; *Acquires knowledge, spends a lot of time*; *Learns a lot of interesting things*; *Acquires the necessary knowledge for future work*; *Is tormented, but develops him/herself*; *Gets smarter and dumber at the same time*, etc. Answers of the fourth-year students: *Develops* (5); *Acquires knowledge* (2); *Improves him/herself, improves brain function, trains self-discipline, passes the "demo version" of his/her future, ideally*; *Learns life, and not those patterns that we have to follow in the study process*; *Devotes a lot of time to studying what he/she is*

really interested in; Acquires knowledge that is likely to be useful to him/her in the future; Acquires knowledge that is unlikely to be useful to him/her in the future, but will make some contribution to expanding horizons, etc. A large number of the answers mention general personal development, and not just the accumulation of information in the process of study.

This group includes all answers with different modality markers. The first-year students have 7 such answers, and they all express the obligation, for example: *Must perform tasks in a timely and diligent manner; Must be focused; Is obliged to responsibly perform tasks in order to achieve the highest possible result*, etc. The fourth-year students do not have such answers in this group, but they are found in other groups of answers (there are 10 of them), and they express not only the obligation. Here are a few of them: *Must be completely immersed in the process; Also obliged to change the scope of activities in order to avoid overloading, and he/she also must SLEEP; Must not suffer to succeed; May fail the exam; Wants to have some rest as soon as possible; Wastes his/her nerve cells, and then he/she wants to die*, etc.

Many answers of the “suffering and tiredness” group are of the same type and are related to the semantics of hunger. Answers of the first-year students: *Doesn't sleep (4); Suffers (2); Is tired; Is sad; Is always busy; Forgets about his/her personal life; Suffers, but not always*, etc. Answers of the fourth-year students: *Is tired (3); Suffers (2); Cries; Does not live; Separated from the whole world, has no friends, only health problems due to the heavy workload; Loses his/her personal life and gives all his/her strength to study*, etc. It seems that by the student him/herself, the time spent in the university is understood not as personal, not as “his/her” time, but, on the contrary, as time that he/her gives to “someone” or spends on “someone”. The paradox of the situation is aggravated by the large number of answers mentioning self-development and personal growth.

The answers of the “characteristics” group were given only by first-year students and all of them are clearly positive: *Concentrated (5); Good boy; Concentrated, active, (preferably) interested; Focused on self-improvement*.

The table 4 clearly demonstrates the large number of answers from the “other” group given by undergraduates. There are two main trends in them. The first is the presence of answers with the general semantics of hunger and sleep, for example: *Doesn't sleep (3); Wants to sleep; Sleeps a little; Eats much; Eats a lot of sweets*, etc. The second is the presence of answers with a negative assessment: *Does not live; Forgets about real life; Loses time for life; Pissed off, because either studies, or personal life and normal sleep; Does not understand why all this is necessary*. It can be seen that these answers emphasize the isolation of private life from study as a stable aspect of the student's self-image.

7. Conclusion

A general view of the results of the two experiments leaves a contradictory impression. Judging by the answers of our Pp., a typical student seems to live in two worlds or two lives: he/she gets new knowledge, but suffers, self-improves, but does not understand why he/she needs it, skips classes, but, having learned “everything” all night long, in general, successfully passes the exams.

However, all that has been said above is only certain tendencies in the obtained empirical material. It is necessary to understand what kind of psycholinguistic sense they have in order to speak from these positions about the place of this image in the student's language consciousness. The contradictory nature

of the means of expressing the self-image of a typical student, and, consequently, of the self-image itself, imposes certain difficulties on understanding the psycholinguistic sense entailed by the experimental data. It seems that this sense can be expressed in two conclusions.

The first conclusion is socio-psycholinguistic. Looking at the material, one might think that our Pp. just reproduce stereotypical ideas about the student. In our opinion, this question should be put and solved in the opposite direction: “Aren’t these student traits are stereotyped because they are constantly reproduced in the activities of students and in their understanding of themselves?” Our answer to this question should be affirmative: Such image of a student is so persistent because, even unwillingly, the students reproduce it in acts of understanding themselves as personalities and as students (carrier of certain social functions) in the studies environment.

The second conclusion is personal. The contradictory verbal means of expressing the image of a typical student in a student’s language consciousness speaks about the ambivalence, one might say, paradox of the student’s personal attitude to him/herself and to the complex of his/her activities. The complex of interactions with other people has in its structure actions many unpleasant, even painful for the student, but is generally positively experienced. Indeed, most people remember the years of students as the most vivid and intense ones, which contrasts with the many answers and reactions of our Pp. We tend to explain this situation by the fact that the complex of the student’s activities is comprehended from the standpoint of a completed and incomplete learning experience at the university. Negative situations and student life on the scale of these situations and phenomena themselves are experienced and emotionally evaluated as negative ones, on the scale of life in general or a significant part of it they are experienced and emotionally evaluated as positive ones. It seems that this ambivalence is also the basis of ordinary stereotypes.

It can therefore be concluded that the student’s self-image is not devoid of stereotype, and, moreover, is not devoid of personal sense. It is the personal sense that are common and at the same time most significant for many students that underlie renewable and sustainable stereotypes. The study of their cultural and ethnic differences is a promising perspective.

Regarding verbal means of expressing the student’s self-image, it can be said with confidence that during the years of study it is enriched by connections with various verbal means, primarily emotional ones. However, the growing diversity of verbal means of expression does not allow us to talk about a significant qualitative change in the image (new features, new aspects of the image does not appear), but only about a quantitative change. Various verbal means of expression (denoting both the actions and characteristics of the student) speak about the integrity of this self-image, despite its internal inconsistency: this latter does not change and, moreover, does not disappear from the fourth-year students minds, but only acquires more diverse means of expression.

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