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**PEDAGOGICAL COMMUNICATION PROMOTING
REGULATION OF ADULT LEARNERS’ FOREIGN LANGUAGE
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY**

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Abstract

The orientation of an adult's personality in the process of education is expressed in his desire for self-actualization, disclosure of his capabilities and achievement of positive results based on the obtained knowledge in the areas relevant to him. In this regard, the reserves for improving educational process are laid down in the very mechanism of pedagogical communication – humanistic in its essence, aimed at stimulating the internal motivation of the student, his need for self-realization and self-expression in learning. However, the adult is often far from being immediately able to organize his educational activities and participate successfully with other people in the process of foreign language communication, which can cause psychological barriers. The subject of our research is pedagogical communication which contributes to overcoming psychological barriers in mastering a foreign language and stimulates practically directed and self-educational activities of adults in the language sphere. This research confirms that the emergence of psychological barriers manifested as an internal obstacle to learning is due to a number of socio-psychological factors and the nature of learning itself. The main psycho-pedagogical parameters that characterize the features of pedagogical communication as a factor contributing to self-realization of the adult's personality and reducing psychological barriers in learning were determined. Pedagogical principles for optimizing adult learners' self-educational activity were developed. The methods used in the research are theoretical analysis of the problem; questionnaires, interviewing and semantic differential. The obtained data were processed by correlation and factor analysis.

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Keywords: Adults' self-education, pedagogical communication, self-realization, foreign-language, barriers, personal factors



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1. Introduction

This research work summarizes the theoretical analysis on the problem of pedagogical communication as a condition for the self-realization of an adult in practical activities and learning. It provides an overview of socio-psychological and psycho-pedagogical literature on the problem of psychological barriers to communication, considers the specifics of pedagogical communication in the process of foreign language teaching, describes various forms of pedagogical communication between authors of educational and methodological literature and students.

The theoretical analysis conducted on the problems of communication and activity, as well as the psychology of adult education, allows us to consider this education as a process subordinate to the adult's need for self-realization primarily in his practical activities, in which his values (knowledge, skills, experience) are exteriorized. Practical learning includes the adult in the sphere of his real activity and therefore self-realization in learning is of the same personal importance for him as his practical activity. The common thing that makes a person an active and independent subject in practical activities and learning is interpersonal communication and relationships in which he is included in the process of joint activities with other people. Interpersonal communication has a decisive influence on the development of the person's ability to arbitrarily direct and regulate his activities, it forms his image of other people and himself, promotes self-respect and self-approval of the personality (Andreeva, 2014).

In his practical activity the person performs a variety of functional positions and roles and on the basis of self-reflection assimilates them. The mechanism of reflexive self-regulation is expressed in the ability of the person to act both as an object of regulation ("I am a performer") and as a subject of regulation ("I am a controller"). Developing the mastered functions of self-regulation the person exteriorizes them in the joint activities entering into active interaction with other people, enriching himself with new functions and means of regulating actions (Sukhobskaya, 1975).

The researchers of the "Self-concept" note that the "Self-system" cannot act without positive self-esteem and self-respect, without success in the activity significant for the personality which are formed on the experience of the axis "I can, I learn." The person's positive self-concept is determined by a firm belief in other people's good attitude, confidence in the abilities for a certain type of activity and a sense of his own significance which are acquired in the process of interpersonal interaction (Blaga & Shebek, 1991; Burns, 1986).

A characteristic feature in adult education is that an adult tries to transfer his position as an independent and active subject of his practical activity to the educational process which he seeks to regulate and control independently to the extent that he is capable of self-regulation as a personality. Self-regulation refers primarily to the psychological determinants of independent educational activity. The psychological justification of self-regulation comes from the understanding of the personality as a self-learning, self-perfecting and self-regulating system.

In this regard, pedagogical communication in adult education is aimed at enhancing the level of independence of the adult in conducting his own educational activity, at interiorizing teaching and controlling functions carried out by the teacher, which implies the ability to set independently educational goals and determine tasks, find means and ways to solve them, carry out self-control and self-esteem

(Sukhobskaya, 1975). It is in this case that an adult is able to acquire “freedom to learn” (Rogers, 1969), in which the psychological essence of pedagogical communication is embodied.

However, many studies show that the process of interpersonal communication is often complicated by emergence of psychological barriers which are often considered as an absolute or relative obstacle to communication, interaction and mutual understanding of people (Cross, 2004; Falasca, 2011; Leontyev, 1979). The most consistently meaningful analysis of the concept of “psychological barriers” was made by Parygin (1975) defining them as “such processes, properties or even states of a person as a whole that preserve the hidden emotional and intellectual potential of his activity” (p. 176).

As the research results show the process of learning is also often complicated by psychological barriers due to such socio-psychological factors of the adult people's life as a long break from their study and negative past experience. As a result of this the adult often partially loses his educational skills, the ability to regulate independently his learning activities, acquires a “burden” of negative personal attitudes. At the same time, any failure in learning activities can lead to understating the person's self-esteem threatening his self-respect that protects the integrity of the personality (Blaga & Shebek, 1991; Burns, 1986; Rogers, 1969). Dissatisfaction with the adult's need for self-realization in learning activities, when instructive and teaching functions do not get out of the teacher's “hands” and the student does not acquire a feeling of internal freedom to learn. It leads to a feeling of internal obstacle – anxiety, inner constraint, fear of failure, which can be very difficult for him to overcome on his own.

Pedagogical communication in the process of educational activities is its “cardinal characteristic”, its “socio-psychological core” (Kan-Kalik & Kovaliov, 1985) contributing to the self-realization of the student's personality and preventing the emergence of psychological barriers. The theoretical analysis indicates that in learning a foreign language the purpose and means of which is communication in the target language itself, the role of pedagogical communication as a factor of overcoming psychological barriers is especially clearly manifested (Leontyev, 1979; Tenishcheva et al., 2017; Zimnyaya et al., 1991;).

The analysis of the research on the problem of perception and acceptance of textual information by adults has shown that any text is an interaction between the author and the recipient. The main effect that the author seeks is acceptance of a text through the recipient's active involvement in the process of joint communication. In this regard, the problem of pedagogical communication is supposed to consider the nature of communicative relations between the author regulating the process of interaction and the recipient, as well as those factors that contribute to the decision of the latter to engage actively in this interaction. A set of the text parameters (functional orientation, significance and accessibility, personal appeals, etc.) determines the process of their acceptance by different categories of adult people depending on their social and individual psychological characteristics. The research results of popular science texts with different degrees of appeal to the recipient show that the presence of personal appeals largely determines the acceptance of such texts by most adults. In terms of language, it is possible to outline “a whole palette of the author's appeal to the reader” (Babailova, 1987, p. 67). For example, personal appeals expressed verbally and having an incentive function can have both soft (request, advice) and rigid, categorical forms (order, requirement), which creates an appropriate tonality and style of communication between the author and the recipient (Bozhko, 1979; Dridze, 1984).

2. Problem Statement

On the basis of the theoretical analysis made we hypothesized that pedagogical communication as the most important condition of promoting self-realization of the adult personality is aimed at reducing psychological barriers arising from the influence of a number of socio-psychological factors in the life of adults and manifesting as an internal obstacle to learning activities (anxiety, self-doubt, constraint, emotional discomfort). This disorganizes the personality's ability to self-regulation in the learning process.

Pedagogical communication aimed at stimulating the internal motivation of the adult personality contributes to an increase in the level of self-regulation of educational activities (mastering the internal control functions), self-knowledge, self-approval and the acquisition of internal freedom in learning.

We also formulated the following working hypotheses. First, psychological barriers to learning foreign languages are caused by a number of socio-psychological factors of the adult people's life – a long break from their study and negative past experience, as well as by the character of learning. Second, pedagogical communication at the initial stage of the adult education is aimed at its personalized forms – in communication with a teacher (author) the adult learns techniques and methods of performing educational activities, develops his internal control and assessment of his actions, acquires faith in himself, etc. Third, when the adult's control is interiorized, pedagogical communication gradually loses its direct personal form, i.e. it becomes depersonalized, which indicates the adult's transition to independent activity in learning.

3. Research Questions

In this regard, we defined the following research tasks:

1. development of a theoretical concept that reveals the essence and role of pedagogical communication in adult education; identification of the main psycho-pedagogical parameters manifested in the process of pedagogical communication;
2. identification of socio-psychological factors leading to the emergence of psychological barriers in adult education;
3. identification of an assessment of the difficulty and importance of the practical use of a foreign language in various areas of communication;
4. identification of features of adults' perception and acceptance of different models of pedagogical communication with the author of educational literature.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of our research is to identify the main psychological and pedagogical parameters that characterize the features of pedagogical communication in the process of educational activity of adult people. This contributes to the self-realization of the adult person's personality, improvement of his psychological state in learning, and on this basis to develop pedagogical principles for optimizing the self-educational activity of adult students in the process of foreign language teaching.

The experiment was carried out among the 1st year students of the Correspondence faculty of the Navigation Department on the basis of the Admiral F.F. Ushakov Maritime State University.

5. Research Methods

For checking the hypothesis and solving the tasks we used the following methods: theoretical analysis of socio-psychological, psycho-pedagogical and methodological literature; questionnaires and interviewing methods; method of “Semantic differential” in order to identify the features of perception of foreign-language educational texts. This is based on the associative method and scale assessment technique; questionnaire “Before – After” which allows one to identify the initial expectations of the subjects in relation to the texts and the degree of their acceptance by the subjects. The processing of the obtained data was carried out by the mathematical statistics methods: correlation and factor analysis.

It should be noted that the specificity of the “Semantic differential” method is that a set of scales which are a continuum fixed at the ends by antonymous adjectives makes it possible to determine the direct relation to the message, to obtain a judgment on such features of the text that are difficult to describe with objective characteristics. The semantic differential is related precisely to the connotative aspects of the meaning, not to a wide range of denotative aspects. This method is a convenient tool for identifying differences in evaluation of texts, which allows determining both the features of the texts themselves and individual characteristics of the recipients’ perception.

6. Findings

The tasks of the first stage of the experiment were to identify an assessment of the difficulty and importance of the practical use of a foreign language by different categories of adult learners and to reveal socio-psychological factors leading to the emergence of psychological barriers in adult education. To solve the tasks, the subjects were asked to answer in writing a number of closed (on a five-point scale) and open questions of the questionnaire. To obtain reliable results, the survey was anonymous and the subjects used nicknames.

Most subjects (92%) noted that it is important for them to be able to use a foreign language primarily in business professional communication, 65% noted the scale gradation “very important”. The result of the correlation analysis for the parameters “significance” and “difficulty” of using a foreign language showed a connection between them only for business professional communication ($x^2_{emp.} = 16.2$ with $df 4$, $x^2_{critic.} = 4.9$, $\gamma = 5$). For other types of communication (business non-professional and personal) $x^2_{emp.}$ does not exceed its critical value. In addition, 91% of the subjects consider the ability to make contact with a person to be the most important skill in communication (“First, it is important for me to make contact with a person who speaks a foreign language to communicate at ease with him”).

In the process of learning a foreign language, most subjects (70%, $n = 100$) have psychological barriers accompanied by increased negative experiences at practical classes, i.e. increased anxiety, stiffness, emotional discomfort, associated primarily with negative past learning experience and a long break in study. Correlation between the parameters “negative past learning experience” and “attitude to inability to master a foreign language” with calculation of the significance criterion ($x^2_{emp.} = 11.25$ with $df 4$, $x^2_{critic.} = 9.48$;

pair correlation coefficient $r = 0.22$, $r_{critic.} = 0.16$). The basis of the adults' psychological barriers is the inability to direct, regulate and control his educational activities, which gives him a sense of helplessness and self-doubt, nervous tension in interpersonal foreign language communication. The heterogeneity of student population by age, level of knowledge and skills, individual psychological qualities, social status, etc., increases psychological tension in communication (fear of "strong" students and mistakes, fear of disapproval, etc.). The greatest psychological tension is caused by the situation of communication with the teacher, as with the main evaluator and expert (the criterion of significance for the parameters "a long break in study" and "stiffness with the teacher" $x^2_{emp.} = 21.5$ with $df\ 8$, $x^2_{critic.} = 15.5$, $\lambda = 5$). The subjects' pessimistic mood for study and negative personal attitudes are evidenced by their answers to open questions. "I do not expect anything good from learning foreign languages" (motorman, 35 years old). "It's too late to learn the language. I feel ill at ease" (bosun, 43 years old). "I'm probably not capable of languages. I understand everything, but I can't say anything at once" (motorman, 38 year old).

The second stage of the research is aimed at determining the assessment of the perception by adults of texts of different internal orientation in a foreign language, made it possible to identify the main needs of adults in communicating with the author of the educational text. The method of "Semantic differential" was used including the questionnaire "Before – After". The processing of the obtained data was carried out by the mathematical statistics methods: correlation and factor analysis. Two foreign-language texts chosen for the subjects participating in the experiment are similar in subject, active vocabulary and equal in accessibility. The main difference of the texts is representation of the author's appeal to the readers.

Text A is a polyfunctional text represented by information, emotional, evaluative, contact-making, etc. functions, and the dominant – incentive function which determines functional focus of the text through the author's verbal appeals to the recipient. The author performs a variety of functional roles ("a speech partner", "activator of communication", "evaluator", "emotional defender", etc.). The author's model of communication with the recipient in Text A has personal, dialogic (personified) forms. The author's clearly expressed personal appeals which define communicative orientation of the text; personal coloring of information, ease of communication, expressiveness inherent in the conversational style of speech create a situation of direct live communication. Soft forms of communication with the reader, a lack of categoricity in the author's judgments and assessments, various speech incentives that encourage the reader to respond create the atmosphere of trusting, friendly communication.

Text B is mainly descriptive in nature, has an informational functional orientation, and does not contain the author's personal position and direct appeal to the reader. The text represents impersonal, monological (depersonalized) forms of communication. However, the information in it is strictly organized and the language of the text is close to scientific. The author makes an impartial statement of the facts, giving clear and concise definitions.

First the subjects were informed of the topic and then they answered the questions of the first part of the "Before–After" questionnaire aimed at revealing the initial expectations regarding the text. Then they read the texts and evaluated them by each parameter (or variable) on a five-point scale. After evaluating the texts on the Semantic differential scale the subjects answered the questions of the second part of the questionnaire.

Due to the fact that a foreign language text is an educational material that serves as a source of information for the student in solving the communicative problem, the most traditional set of scales of Semantic differential used to evaluate the perception of popular science texts has been modified by us by adding adjectives reflecting the concept of “instrumentality” in accordance with the leading didactic function – transformational. That defines the specificity of educational texts in a foreign language, as well as adds adjectives reflecting the general impression of the text (“many used expressions – few used expressions,” “useful – useless,” induces to continue learning” – “discourages to continue learning”, etc.). For our experiment 22 antonymous parameters were selected for assessing the texts.

The initial data that showed significant differences in the perception of TA and TB were obtained on the basis of determination of average group values for each text parameter. To clarify these differences, the “semantic profiles” of these average group values were constructed. The estimated values were then correlated on the basis of the correlation matrix (the critical value of the correlation coefficient $r = 0.463$ at $\gamma = 1$) and the constructed correlation graph, the parameters-indicators having the largest number of relationships that determine them were revealed. The correlation rings in Figure 1 below constructed for each text demonstrated the number of relationships even more clearly.

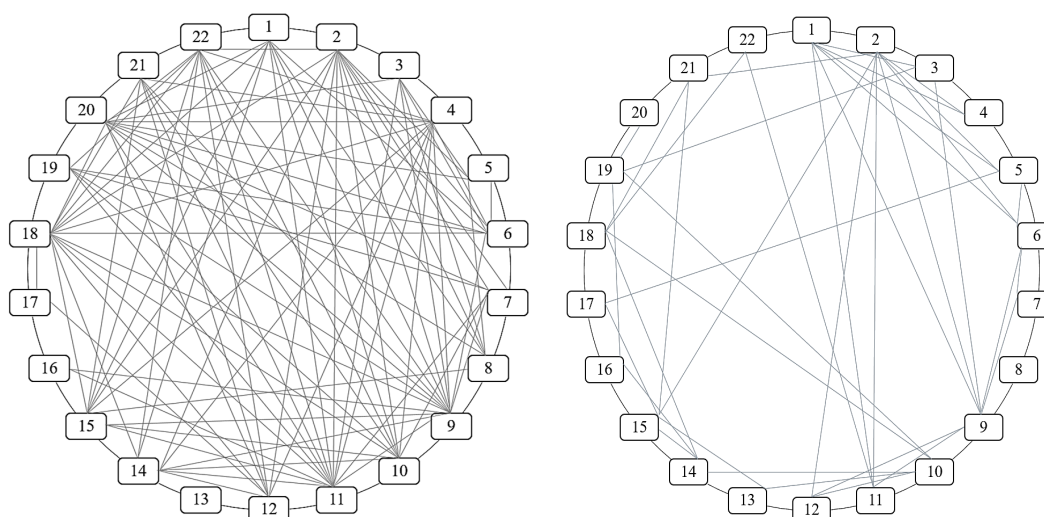


Figure 1. Correlation rings for Text A (left) and Text B (right)

The correlation ring for TA reflects the relationship of all components within the text structure. Special attention is drawn to its integrity: interdependence and interrelation of all its components. The number of correlation connections is an indicator of the integration of the text parameters which determines the general trend in assessing perception of TA. The correlation ring constructed for TB presents a completely different picture: a significantly smaller number of relationships between the parameters, a lack of integrity, which assumes the interconformity of the components, included in it.

The maximum number of correlation relationships in TA belonged to the parameters “unexpected” (18), “interesting” (17), “original” (16), “induces to continue learning” (15), “persuasive” (15), “affecting” (14). The same parameters in the TB have a significantly smaller number of relationships: “unexpected” (5), “interesting” (10), “original” (8), “induces to continue study” (2), “persuasive” (1), “affecting” (7).

In order to identify the minimum number of parameters (factors) defining all significant relationships that characterize the structure of text perception, factor analysis was carried out. Three independent factors were identified for each of the texts. Before the rotation of the axes after refinement of the values of factor loadings, the contribution of the 1st factor in TA was 48.91%, the 2nd – 5.80%, the 3rd – 5.76% with a total sum of 60.76%. The contribution of the 1st factor in TB was 29.08%, the 2nd – 13.83%, 3rd – 10.21% with the total sum of 53.12%.

Factor analysis was carried out by us in order to identify the minimum number of parameters (factors) defining all significant connections that characterize the structure of perception of texts. Three independent factors were identified for each of the texts. Before the rotation of the axes after the refinement of the values of factor loads, the contribution in TA of the 1st factor was 48.91%, the 2nd – 5.80%, the 3rd – 5.76% with the total amount of 60.76%. In text B, the contribution of the 1st factor was 29.08%, the 2nd – 13.83%, 3rd – 10.21% with the total sum of 53.12%.

After the rotation of the axes, the contributions of factors of T A. changed insignificantly (48.22%, 5.76% and 10.28%, respectively). The contribution of the 1st and 2nd factors of TB practically equalized, i.e. the weight of the 1st factor decreased (18.58% and 19.64%, respectively); the contribution of the 3rd factor became equal to 13.92%.

Before considering the structure of the selected factors we ranked the parameters of the evaluation scales in descending order of factor loadings and analyzed the semantics of these parameters and their sequence. The analysis gave us the following results: the 1st factor of the TA is characterized by the fact that it has maximum loadings for all parameters except for two of them. The leading parameters of the 1st factor were “emotional” (0.917), which has the highest factor weight; “interesting” (0.891), “induces to continue learning” (0.858), “unexpected” (0.798). The selected parameters with maximum loads indicate the readers’ emotional involvement in the text, which to a greater extent determined a high assessment of the overall impression of the text that in turn reflected in high assessments of the remaining text parameters as well.

The 2nd factor of TA has the following sequence in distribution of loadings: “complex”, “deep”, “understandable”, “accurate”, the semantics of which reveals rather the structural-logical characteristic of the construction of the text. The 3rd factor has a high loading on the “affective” parameter, which determines the overall impression of the message. All other loadings, as in the case of the 2nd factor (with the exception of the “complex” parameter), in their weights have maximum values in the 1st factor, which in turn indicates that the interpretation of the values of the 2nd and 3rd factors loses its reliability.

The maximum loadings of the parameters in TB were distributed evenly according to three factors. The 1st and 3rd factors include both the assessment of the overall impression and the assessment of its structural and logical features. Thus, the 1st factor has maximum loadings according to the parameters “varied”, “accurate”, “useful” and “cohesive”. The 3rd factor is “continuous”, “affecting”, “informative” and “ordered”. The 2nd factor of TB defines the parameters that semantically reveal an emotional attitude to the text: “original”, “interesting” and “bright”. However, this characteristic does not dominate the overall assessment position of the readers, and therefore the contribution of this factor is low (19.6%).

Thus, the results of the factor analysis indicate that a dialogic, personal character of TA causes an emotional response among the subjects, an interest in the content of the text, which, in their assessment, is

brighter, more original and unexpected compared to TB, which has a monological, detached character. The readers' emotional involvement in TA creates a kind of overall effect on all other parameters of the text, which in general determines a high integrative assessment of its perception.

The analysis of the subjects' answers to the open questions of the "Before-After" questionnaire allowed us to determine the specifics of the texts perception by different categories of students. 90% of the subjects noted that foreign-language texts of the initial stage of learning must teach them to communicate with a partner. 73% of the subjects noted that they liked more the communication with the author of TA: "I have an impression that TA was written by a familiar person with whom it is easy to communicate". "This text is interesting and amusing. I remembered it well". "The text is lively and I have learned many useful words and expressions". At the same time, 67% of the subjects would like to deal with texts like TA in learning, 20% – preferred TB, and 13% – found it difficult for them to answer definitely.

On the basis of obtained results we can state that most of the adults of the initial stage of foreign language learning preferred Text A. In it the author's address to the reader through direct personal appeals defining communicative orientation of the text is clearly expressed. Personal coloring of information (expression of subjective attitude), ease of presentation, expressiveness, inherent in the conversational style of speech create a situation of direct live communication, in which the reader is emotionally involved. Soft forms of communication with the reader, a lack of categoricity in the author's judgments and assessments, various speech incentives encourage the reader to respond and create a feeling of interest of the author in his interlocutor, the atmosphere of trusting friendly communication. The above characteristics of the text can be considered as main psycho-pedagogical parameters of pedagogical communication in connection "teacher – student" of the first stage of learning.

Acceptance of texts of such internal orientation by most adult students is primarily due to the fact that at the initial stage of learning a foreign language in conditions of limited contact with the teacher, the adult needs personalized forms of communication with the author, who acts in different roles ("a communication activator", "speech partner", "controller" and "evaluator"). It teaches him how to master his activities, creates an atmosphere of participation, interest and trust, which helps to relieve tension and create openness in communication in a foreign language.

Preference for "curtailed", depersonalized forms of communication with the author of educational Text B, as it is shown by the analysis of the subjects' answers to the open questions, is due to the ability of these students to work independently with text information, the level of development of methods and techniques for carrying out their learning activities, self-confidence and faith in their capabilities. This ability frees them to certain degree from dependence on the author's help. However, according to the results, the number of such students at the initial stage of learning a foreign language is rather small (20%).

Thus, the conducted research of the adults' perception peculiarities of foreign-language educational texts representing different models of the author's communication with the recipients reveals that adults have different needs in the nature of this cooperation and differentially evaluate texts that differ in the way they appeal to readers. The students who have partially lost their learning skills prefer personalized forms of communication of a predominantly partner type, since uncertainty in themselves and their actions forces the students to seek help of the competent other (the teacher). In this case, a teacher is included as the chief controller and evaluator in the cycle of self-realization of an adult student in the process of learning a foreign

language and only on the basis of his external control and assessment the student forms his own control and ability to evaluate his educational actions. The need for the other (the teacher) makes the process of self-realization of the student not “closed”, but an “open” system, in which the teacher is included as its regulator and controller.

Schematically, this can be represented as follows in Figure 02 below.

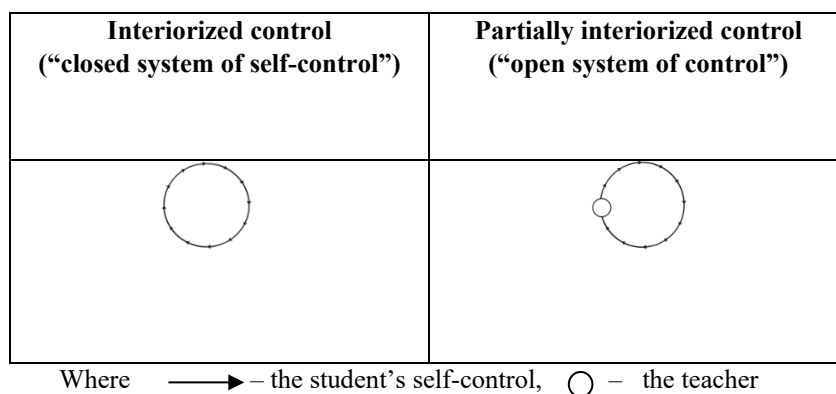


Figure 2. The closed system of self-control and the open system of control including the teacher

7. Conclusion

According to the results of the research, an adult who continues his education and is actively involved in practical activities evaluates his knowledge in connection with its practical application. When learning a foreign language, this happens primarily by his ability to carry out the process of a real foreign-language communication with a partner. However, the results of the research show that the adults’ process of foreign language communication is usually hindered by psychological barriers due to the influence of individual and personal factors, as well as the nature of the learning process often not only reducing but generating these barriers.

The research confirms the initial hypothesis that pedagogical communication, which contributes to self-realization of the adult's personality, stimulation of his internal motivation, is the most important condition for overcoming psychological barriers to leaning activities of adult people. The genesis of pedagogical communication in the process of learning foreign languages, which is based on the consideration of psychological factors, can be schematically presented as follows. The initial stage is psychological dependence on the teacher as a communication activator, regulator and evaluator, which feels like a need for support → the second stage – partial dependence on the teacher, which feels like self-realization in communication with a partner → the final stage – independent planning and control of actions. This psychologically feels like internal freedom in communication with the other. Thus, the genesis of pedagogical communication has at its core a transition from external forms of planning and control (on the part of the teacher) to internal, depersonalized forms carried out by the student himself.

The research emphasizes the importance of taking into account personal factors in adult education, the knowledge and pedagogical usefulness of which help to reduce and remove psychological barriers to learning and practical activity in a foreign language, stimulating the adult’s positive conditions associated with the communication process.

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