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SPECIFICITY OF AESTHETIC PERCEPTION IN THE SOCIONICS ASPECT

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Purpose.

A possibility of reasoned search of various options of the aesthetic perception mechanism is considered.

Methodology.

As the research tools the author uses socionics – a theory of information metabolism of person's mentality. The research is based on the empirical data obtained in the course of psychological and pedagogical experiment.

Results.

Are obtained quantitative results on the modification of the procedure of test M. Rokich, and is also revealed the socionics reasons for diachrony of aesthetical perception in the student association.

Practical implications: aesthetical theory and practice, philosophy, pedagogy and psychology.

Keywords: aesthetics, esthetic perception, psychological and pedagogical experiment, socionics, type of information metabolism of mentality.

СПЕЦИФИКА ЭСТЕТИЧЕСКОГО ВОСПРИЯТИЯ В СОЦИОНИЧЕСКОМ АСПЕКТЕ

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Цель. В статье рассматривается возможность аргументированного поиска различных вариантов механизма эстетического восприятия.

Метод или методология проведения работы. В качестве инструментария исследования автор использует соционику - теорию информационного метаболизма психики человека. Примечательно, что исследование опирается на эмпирические данные, полученные в ходе психолого-педагогического эксперимента.

Результаты.

Получены количественные результаты по модификации методики теста М. Рокича для школьников, а также выявлены соционические причины диахронии эстетического восприятия в ученическом коллективе.

Область применения результатов: эстетическая теория и практика, философия, педагогика и психология.

Ключевые слова: эстетика, эстетическое восприятие, психолого-педагогический эксперимент, соционика, тип информационного метаболизма психики.

Research on the specificity of aesthetic perception is one of the traditional problems in science. Since classical Aristotle's works, investigators of this problem turned to its various aspects, such as ontological, cognitive, axiological, anthropological, pedagogical, psychological and biological. Thus, the investigation of aesthetic perception has become an integrative one combining several sciences, not only humanities, but natural sciences as well, and this fact indicates general ontological status of aesthetic perception. According to philosophical aesthetics,

universally valid aesthetic judgments of beauty are possible. Although empiricism, rationalism, transcendentalism and neurobiology prove this “axiom” by different methods. “Nevertheless, it shows the similarity and identity of controlling and organizing mechanisms of consciousness. Just as a universal language grammar might exist so there should be a general aesthetic grammar and neural organization of the human brain must be at the heart of both” [5, p.25].

Whether the mechanism of aesthetic perception is a unified process, or are we justified in underlining some specific alternatives? The author’s research has been focused on this particular problem. Since it is possible to observe the dynamics of the aesthetic perception formation of value judgments in the course of a personality teaching process, this method is used by the author to get the empirical data during a psycho-pedagogical experiment.

The psycho-pedagogical experiment “Value orientations formation of students in a cultural studies school” was carried out in “Derzhavinsky Lyceum” in Petrozavodsk. The purpose was to research and form basic personal values of students in training and upbringing conditions in a cultural studies school (the term was introduced by A.P. Valitskaya [2, 18]), which contribute to successful personality socialization. Structure levels of the value orientations system were studied during the project. Changes in the high-school student personality self-identity, depending on its involvement in the model of a cultural studies school, were studied as well. One of the most important research problems was to monitor the changes of aesthetic worldview of students under the influence of various social, communicative and cognitive factors.

Conditions of the prolonged psycho-pedagogical experiment allowed to observe the changes in the structure of the aesthetic worldview of students, because the students “involved” in the situation of the expanding cultural oikumene can directly, brightly and expressively reflect and describe their surrounding reality through the lens of aesthetic categories. Certainly, these students have had basic knowledge of aesthetics and their personal experience of description is very

subjective, however it does not distort the essence of aesthetic ideas, which were objectively formed in the course of the experiment.

Let's consider the intermediate results of the experiment using Rokeach's methodology:

1. At stage of the existing aesthetic values establishment in the experimental group of students (beginning of grade 8, September 2008) it was determined that such terminal values as: beauty of nature, beauty of art, emotional responsiveness (as a structural element of a developed aesthetical taste) hadn't been formed at all. The results in the control group were identical.

2. At the intermediate stage of values formation, during education-upbringing process in a cultural studies school, the whole system of values in the experimental group after 1 year (end of grade 8) was transformed, so that aesthetic values of the beauty of nature and art became the second priority. The results in the control group showed that axiosphere changed by 35%.

3. After 2 years of experiment (end of grade 9) the changes in the block of instrumental values occurred in the experimental group, thus the categories of "punctuality", "politeness" and "honesty" moved to the top positions instead of the last ones, which indicates a significant transformation of the values system during education-upbringing process in a cultural studies school.

Structural changes of the value orientations occurred in 34% cases in the control group, so that the aesthetic values were still at the lowest positions. Values of freedom and independence of the control group of students reached the leading position.

4. After 3 years of the experiment (end of grade 10) in the experimental group such terminal values as freedom, love and a happy family life raised to the first position, and such terminal value as happiness of others took the last position. Zest for life, independence and honesty moved to the first positions, and intolerance to other people's shortcomings and strong will were in the last positions of the block of instrumental values.

In the control group such values as independence moved upward, while other orientations remained unchanged.

5. At the final stage of training (grade 11) value attitudes of the experimental group of students distributed as follows:

- at the first positions: health, active life, love, freedom, interesting work, education, independence, honesty and sensitivity.
- at the last positions (not significant): practical wisdom, happy family life, happiness of others, public recognition, tolerance, intolerance to other people's shortcomings, and high aspirations.

Analysis of the results obviously shows the priority of existential moral and ethical values over material values (financially provided life) and social values (happiness of others, intolerance to other people's shortcomings, public recognition) as well. This result is explained by psycho-physiological features of adolescents.

The level of aesthetic values of the control group students did not change throughout the experiment but the value of independence grew significantly and the values of honesty and justice grew insignificantly by the end of the experiment.

This result obviously demonstrates the priority of the cultural studies school model over the traditional school one in terms of goal-directed formation of students' aesthetic and ethic values.

Moreover, the aesthetic worldview of the experimental group of students obviously was expanding during all these years. This is the ability to perceive and evaluate the surrounding reality emotionally and sensually.

At the each stage of the experiment the students were asked to describe objects, processes and phenomena in nature, society and arts, according to the following aesthetic categories: wonderful, ugly, beautiful, horrible, sublime, low, tragic, comic, simulacrum. So, the following of the mentioned aesthetic categories were allocated as values categories:

The students referred 32 examples to the category of wonderful, 12 examples of them were in the society, 7 examples were in the art and 13 examples were in the

nature. For instance, allegiance and responsibility, Egyptian architecture and painting, spring and a bouquet of roses were determined as wonderful by the students. The students identified 24 examples as sublime images. 14 examples of them were in the society, 6 examples were in the art and 4 examples were in the nature. For instance, family and compassion, a waterfall and the Everest, ballet and St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome. The list of moral values such as help, kindness, sincerity, sympathy and charity was observed in this group of valuable examples as well.

The students termed the majority of natural objects, such as: rainbow, sunrise, white swans, smells and sounds of nature as beautiful value images, which indicated the orientation of aesthetic consciousness to the search for harmony and the ideal in the natural world. Beauty for the students means primarily some experience, positive emotion and peculiar feelings of pleasure. However, the fact, that the same natural objects and phenomena are recognized by the students as beautiful, proves the existence of universally significant criteria of beauty. One of these criteria is a certain ratio of Chaos and Order. "There is no beauty in an object, figure or a combination of sounds devoid of internal organization, but an excessively rigid, once and for ever specified organization will become very boring soon. It's necessary, that the subject detects and discovers hidden regularity in apparent chaos. It is this discovery that will aesthetically delight you" [3, s.6]. The authors of the biological approach to the study of aesthetical perception supported this point of view: "What conditions the validity of human judgments is contained in the consciousness. Transcendentalism as well as rationalism recognizes universally significant aesthetical judgments as possible: all people have the same appropriate means of spiritual perception" [5, p.20].

This fact also indicates that the students are attracted only by moderate novelty, where the new elements combine with the previously known features. Excessively new (simulacrum) and unexpected (cruelty) scare and cause displeasure and fear. "A deeper dialectics of existence of every living thing on the earth hides behind at first sight paradoxical combination of familiar, traditional with the new elements as a necessary condition of aesthetic evaluation. We mean two main trends in the

evolution of living nature - the principle of self-preservation and self-development, inclination to develop new spatiotemporal environments. These two trends have led to the emergence of two types of emotions: negative emotions, which are aimed to be minimized by subject's actions, i.e. to weaken, to interrupt, and to prevent; and positive emotions, which are aimed to be maximized by the subject – to enhance, to extend, to repeat” [5, p.8]. The picture of aesthetic preferences shows the choice of high school students based simultaneously on self-preservation and self-development.

Altogether, the experimental results obviously show the effectiveness of the philosophy-educational model and methodology applied by pedagogues. However, the analysis of aesthetic worldview formation process detects that the students are able to develop their emotional sensitivity at different paces. Thus, two-thirds of students (65%, group N 1) were able to aesthetically describe nature, society and art using only 59% of the suggested aesthetic categories, and one-third of students (35%, group N 2) used 50% of those categories after the first year of the experiment. After the second year of the experiment the first group of students reached the level of 89%, and the second group of students reached 51%. Comparative analysis of groups results showed the low level of emotionally-sensual tenderness of the second group of students, thus it was necessary to find out the causes of such low level. The methods used in school psychology showed no certain reason for so different dynamics of axiosphere development under equal educational upbringing conditions. Thus, socionic research was organized to find out the features of mental information metabolism of different students groups.

Socionics is a theory of information metabolism of human psyche, which connects psychology, pedagogy, philosophy, sociology, medicine, ethnography, and other sciences. Ausra Augustinavichiute (Lithuania, 1968) discovered the types models of mental information metabolism based on C.G. Jung's theory of psychological types. This discovery signalized the appearance of the actually new information theory at the joint of naturalistic and humanities approaches to the study of mind and mental processes.

The model of the human psyche is the central idea of this theory. It is known, that the models of modern naturalistic sciences are effective and occasionally they are a single tool in the study of complex objects and processes. Socionics is the first of humanities discipline to apply the model as a way (“tool”) of study and prediction of behavior and development of complex objects. In the modern world such complex objects are people and human communities. It provides unique action-oriented capabilities of socionics to solve real problems of the people and society. And now it has become possible to apply a conceptually new approach to understanding the major in the people - parameters and characteristics of the personality. It makes possible to harmonize the personality characteristics of the people and educational and upbringing system, social and organizational structures thus allowing harmonious and conflict-free development of a personality and society as a whole. Socionics allocates value orientation of a sociotype as one of the important aspects. But what is the mechanism of detecting perceptual and processing information features?

There are 16 sociotypes with different level of mental metabolism distinguished in socionics that match 16 ways of information perception, its processing and assigning to a very significant value level. Socionics in the more narrow applied sense is a doctrine of one of the features of psychological compatibility, the key concept of which is “type of information metabolism” (TIM, sociotype, psychotype).

Information metabolism in socionics is the process of mental perception, selection and processing the information about the outside world and the processes within it. The mechanism of perceptual features studying includes building a model of information metabolism, analyzing the properties of 16 possible types of information metabolism (TIM) conditioned by the model and comparing these properties with human psyche demonstration. According to Jung’s principle the division is made through dichotomies: into rational and irrational, into logics and ethics, into sensorics and intuitives, into extraverts and introverts:

Logical-intuitive extravert – LIE

Logical-sensoric extravert – LSE

Ethical-intuitive extravert – EIE

Ethical-sensoric extravert – ESE

Logical-intuitive introvert – LII

Logical-sensoric introvert – LSI

Ethical-intuitive introvert – EII

Ethical-sensoric introvert – ESI

Intuitive-logical extravert – ILE

Sensoric-logical extravert – SLE

Intuitive-ethical extravert – IEE

Sensoric-ethical extravert – SEE

Intuitive-logical introvert – ILI

Sensoric-logical introvert – SLI

Intuitive-ethical introvert – IEI

Sensoric-ethical introvert – SEI

Socionics scientists assume that the representatives of the same TIM have similar characteristics of the outside world perception, furthermore aesthetical mental preferences are also similar. Since psychological mechanism of communication is experience merged together with understanding, but not only rational transfer and reception of transmittable information then the subject perceives not all the information, but only interesting, “competent”, governed by previous experience and various demands. “Aesthetic pleasure is the single language, which tells us, that there is quality of beauty in the beholden object” [5, p.6].

“The essence of this phenomenon is disclosed by the theory of information: aesthetic need shows as the need for optimal amount of information, the amount of information in the message is the aesthetic value” [7, p.17]. It may be also noted, that the amount of obtained information depends on several factors, such as: 1) the structure of the message, its complexity and order; 2) the matter of the message signal; 3) the communication channel; 4) the availability of aesthetic needs; 5)

subject's understanding of the message meaning; 6) subject's previous experience, his thesaurus.

Diachronic problem of aesthetic perception of cultural studies school students has been discovered during the experiment of value attitudes formation. During the experiment one group of students (№1) demonstrated a high level of information assimilation at once. The second group (№ 2) made a quantitative "jump" only during the second stage of the experiment. Probably, the diachrony is connected with the mechanism of information perception during its transmission. Since the partners (a teacher and a student) not only exchange some information, but regard each other as a subject to a subject relationship, but they reveal their own value systems, their own convictions, aspirations, feelings, hopes, ideals to each other, they generalize them to the largest possible degree while preserving their own subjective uniqueness. Considering that the structure of information, communication channels, message signal were the same for all students, it becomes obvious that perception of information depends on availability of aesthetic needs and previous experiences of the student. It was established experimentally that the second group was able to demonstrate the quantitative growth of information only during the second stage, because this growth required the addition of two more factors: accumulation of experience and motivation of aesthetic needs. Indeed, the last factor was the task of culture pedagogical community.

During socionic training it was found that there were 12 out of 16 sociotypes among the students, and that the representatives of the fourth delta-quadra (LSE, EII, SLI and IEE) were completely absent.

Moreover, it was found that the first group students included 90% of sensory type students who had function of sensory perceptions or volitional sensing as the main mental functions (SLE, SEE, SEI, LSI, ESI, ESE).

"Sensation as a mental function provides the ability to quickly switch attention of the people from one point in space to another, to respond to external and internal irritants for feeling reality "here and now" most accurately and in details" [7, p.277].

Exactly for this reason, the first group quickly perceived and processed information about the external shape, volume, texture, color, light, smell, sound of objects. All these properties of the objects are typical for aesthetic evaluation of the surrounding world. “Information about beauty and harmony, about natural processes, aesthetic experiences, health, cooking, comfort, ergonomics and ecology fall into the sensory category” [7, p.277]. Certainly this type of mental information metabolism contributes to the orientation of a personality to the aesthetic development, whereas “...sensor types are able to perceive nature and art, to enjoy the all visible, audible and perceptible” [1, s. 34]. Probably such commonality of the psyche structure affects the value attitudes of a personality.

Specialists in the field of socionics write: “It is well-known that people belonging to one type have something in common, inherent to them all regardless of their gender, social, age and other differences. This common something is found within the area of value attitudes and preferences of a personality. Hierarchical structure of vital purposes and objectives is generally presented as an ascending ladder including “physical survival – procreation - self-realization”. Although type features are noticeable at the bottom of the ladder, they are manifested in the most complete, aimed and integral form in the self-realization area. Externally this reminds a kind of “socionic career guidance” [1, s.35].

It was established that the second group consists of such intuitives as: ILE, LII, EIE, IEI, ILI, LIE, EII, IEE whose functions of intuition are based on the processing of intuitive aspects of information (about potential abilities and changes of the world objects) and dominate in perception of particular psychological types. Such psychological types perceive spatial characteristics weakly (light, color, shape, volume, etc.), but they orientate themselves perfectly in time, better feel in what direction they should move. “Intuitives just starting to learn new information, try to unite various fragments into a whole, so they learn the fragments in parallel, pay their attention to greater portions of information and claim that information should be

“digested” [8, p. 70]. Therefore, intuitives demand more time to process information about the objective world and, moreover, “an intuitive needs support of a sensoric here because his own feelings seem for him less objective than the feelings of the others” [7, p. 277]. Such mental feature justifies slight expansion of the second group students aesthetic ideas during the first stages (time of perception and assimilation of aesthetic material was long) and a significant increase of quantitative indications (when support was provided either by the pedagogues or sensoric–students) at the final stage [3, p. 34].

The present research of aesthetic perception features is based on the empirical results of a psycho-pedagogical experiment. It is appropriate to present the results as the following conclusions:

- Perception of aesthetic objects, processes and phenomena is conditioned by psychological predisposition of the people and depends on the type of information metabolism.

- The type of information metabolism of “a sensoric” has a greater predisposition of the psyche to percept aesthetic objects and phenomena and to form aesthetic ideas and values as well.

- Type of information metabolism of “an intuitive” has a lower predisposition to perceive aesthetic objects, processes and phenomena and demands assistance and enough time for formation of aesthetic ideas and values.

- Purposeful control of motivation is necessary to form aesthetic values of intuitive-students which is especially expedient in the course of educational and upbringing activity.

The empirical results indicate a need of a new approach in studying person’s aesthetic perception. It is based on the research of human psyche possibilities to execute aesthetic perception at different rate and intensity depending on the type of information metabolism and social reality. This conclusion is fundamentally important for pedagogues, psychologists, educators, art critics and excursion guides – for everyone who focuses on the formation of aesthetic taste in their professional

activity through the stages of aesthetic perception, aesthetic evaluation and aesthetic needs. Socionic approach denies the absolute unification of aesthetic perception mechanism and shows some different options of this process and discovers the potential for new scientific polemics.

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