Adaptation of the Existence Scale to the Russian Sample

Diploma work at MSU (Moscow State University), Psychological Faculty, 2007

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Abstract

The Existence Scale (ES) is a new self-rating test to assess the degree of a person's existential content. The test is based on Frankl's anthropological theory and on a four-level process model of a person's search for meaning in life (Längle). The test consists of 46 items and includes 4 subscales: realistic perception, free emotionality, decision-making ability and responsibility. Its validity was tested on more than 640 respondents. The external validity was tested by the Purpose-in-Life test (PIL), the Personal Orientation Inventory test (POI) and the Eysenck Personality Inventory test (EPI).

Object

The questionnaire *Existence Scale* was translated into Russian in 2002 by O. Larchenko. It was edited by a team from the International Society of Logotherapy and Existential Analysis, Moscow: G. Petrova, N. Ignatieva, A. Loktionova, N. Dyatko, S. Krivtsova, I. Larina. The adaptation of the Russian version was made within the frame of the graduate research work by I.N. Maynina under the scientific supervision of S.V. Krivtsova.

The ES Adaptation Results

The ES was tested on 645 (411 women and 234 men) Russian adults at the age from 17 to 71. People came from various occupations and had various educational levels. The distribution was homogeneous. The average age of the respondents was 36.

Internal Consistency (Cronbach Alpha Coefficient) for the subscales and the total score is satisfying (*Table 1*).

The test validity check showed high validity index of the questionnaire scales. The validity was checked by the correlation (Spearman Correlation Coefficient) between the data of two interviews held at a month interval (*Table 1*). Thus, the conclusion about the temporal stability of the existential fulfillment of a person can be made.

		Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. N = 645	Spearman Correlation Coefficients. N = 108
Self-distance (SD)	(8 Items)	0.637	0.692
Self-transcendence (ST)	(14 Items)	0.806	0.691
Freedom (F)	(11 Items)	0.671	0.717
Responsibility (R)	(13 Items)	0.704	0.784
Person (P)	(22 Items)	0.832	0.721
Existentiality (E)	(24 Items)	0.811	0.794
Total score (G)	(46 Items)	0.891	0.796

Tab. 1: Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and the reliability for the subscales and for the total score in the sample from the general population. $p < .01$.

The ES results depend on gender but insignificantly (only according to ST scale). It is a notable result as the test authors pointed out that there is no difference in parameters between male and female respondents (Längle et al. 2003). The differences revealed can be explained by the respondents' gender distribution (female respondents accounted for 63.7%). We can suppose that in case of equal gender representation there should be no difference in parameters. The dependence on educational level is more distinct, the test results increase according to the increase of educational level.

The *external test validity* was checked by means of correlation links between ES scales and the abovementioned tests.

Statistically notable positive correlations between all ES scales and the PIL test parameters were obtained. The closest correlation link was found between ST (r = .523 - .623), P (r = .513 - .606), G (r = .507 - .596) scales and all the scales of PIL test (*Table 2*). In our view, this can be explained by the fact that

1. both questionnaires were developed within the frame of Frankl's theory, in particular his theory of meaning;
2. Some of the ES and PIL scales have complementary meaning. For instance, the concept of existence is defined as a meaningful life in freedom and with responsibility. On the other hand, such PIL scales as Locus-Control-I and Locus-Control-Life are connected to a person's confidence in their ability to build their lifes themselves in a world full of opportunities.

By using PIL and POI tests in the research we intended to study the connection of the ES with

1. the methodical tool developed within the frame of one paradigm (PIL) and
2. the test developed in the closely related humanistic approach (POI). Thus, we analyze the links within the „spiritual" (Längle 1999) measurement of mentality.

A direct linear correlation of medium strength (r = .342) (at $p < .01$) was observed between the total scores of ES and POI tests. In general, positive correlations were observed between the scales of ES and POI tests in 19 correlation coefficients (Spearman Correlation Coefficients from 0.273 to 0.435 at $p < .01$) (see *Table 2 on next page*).

We supposed that we will find correlation between different psychic axes. For this reason we used the EPI questionnaire. In Eysenck's theory, temperament traits (extraversion, neuroticism) have a strong influence on behavior. Therefore it was important to prove that there is no connection between extraversion and the existential features of a personality. In theory no connection should be present. Empirical research has proved this supposition in our sample.

A significant negative connection was found between all scales of the ES and the Neuroticism scale of the EPI (Rs from -0.344 to -0.511). There was no significant connection with extraversion (Rs from -0.084 to 0.051).

To sum it up, the results show that

		SD	ST	P	F	V	E	G
PIL N = 157	Purposes	0.338	0.555	0.523	0.418	0.391	0.437	0.516
	Process	0.422	0.611	0.606	0.404	0.324	0.398	0.542
	Result	0.399	0.632	0.602	0.473	0.419	0.487	0.596
	Locus-Control-I	0.375	0.523	0.530	0.530	0.413	0.506	0.566
	Locus- Control-Life	0.345	0.531	0.513	0.388	0.348	0.405	0.507
POI N = 93	Orientation of the time					0.325	0.319	0.304
	Values					0.280		
	Creativity				0.273			
	Autonomy				0.434	0.396	0.435	0.331
	Self-understanding				0.367		0.307	
	Auto sympathy				0.419	0.381	0.430	0.345
	Total score				0.406	0.379	0.412	0.342
EPI N = 82	Neuroticism	-0.511*	-0.344*	-0.475*	-0.454*	-0.463*	-0.496*	-0.511*

Tab. 2: The significant Spearman correlations between scales ES and tests PIL, POI and EPI. p <.01; *p <.05.

the ES test version satisfy the validity requirements such as the internal validity, external validity, criterion validity and is applicable for the Russian-speaking population, first of all, as measuring tool in psychotherapy and counseling practice as well as in the research of personality features.

References

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Different types of empathy indications in psychological practice

Diploma work at MSU (Moscow State University), Psychological Faculty, 2007

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Summary

In this graduate work empathy is investigated by a phenomenological procedure which aim is the perception of essence. Empathy can be understood as a perception of a person's essence. This is a theme of greatest interest in psychotherapy since being seen and understood in one's essence is what the clients need most in psychotherapy.

Three stages of phenomenological perception in empathy may be extracted in the following way:

1st stage: getting information;

2nd stage: experiencing own feelings as a reaction on this information (primary emotion);

3rd stage: understanding of the essence (integrated emotion – a feeling regarding a primary emotion).

It should be noted that these stages are the stages of receiving impressions. Besides of these phases Personal Existential Analysis differentiates more phases for the therapeutic practice: a phase of taking a position and a phase of action performance, but these phases weren't taken into consideration in this work.

Existential analysis doesn't consider empathy only as a sharing of the client's feelings. It puts emphasis on integrated emotions which help to understand the meaning of the primary emotion in the context of personal life. Only experienced psychotherapists with a strong self are able to create such kinds of integrated impression.

In consequence of the different understanding of empathy in psychotherapeutic schools we have differentiated three types of empathy noticeable in the practical psychotherapeutic work.

This classification is done for the following reasons:

- type of emotion (primary or integrated);
- subject which is at revelation of this emotion (client or psychotherapist);
- correlation with the Self (if it occurs of not).

Peculiarities of each type of empathy

I type – paying attention to the *primary emotion*. This type of empathy is relevant at early stages of psychotherapy. It's important to reflect emotions that can be realized by the clients at the present moment.

II type – expression of *understanding*. The psychotherapist reflects integrated emotion or facilitates its realization. This type of empathy should be