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Expressions of hope in prisoners' narratives about close relationships Rehabilitation aspects of hope

Abstract: The aim of the paper is the analysis of hope expressed in the prisoners' narratives about romantic relationships. The study included 301 prisoners from different prisons and 253 persons forming the control group. Participants wrote stories about their close romantic relationships. The narrative indicators of hope were as follows: the number of positive ending of the stories, the number of optimistic views of the situation, temporal approach of the story, mental processes. Intergroup comparisons have been conducted. The results showed that prisoners have a less optimistic view of their romantic relationship, their stories have positive ending less often, they also have a lower level of the mental processes' indicator. However, they describe their stories in present and future tenses which may indicate to some level that hope is present in their narratives. Insight seems to be an important factor constituting the basis for building personal resources, which positively correlates with an optimistic view of the future.

Key words: hope, prisoners, personal resources, close relationship, narrative.

Introduction

In the discourse on the effectiveness of social rehabilitation, various factors that form the basis for the psychological transformation of socially rehabilitated persons are analyzed (Bartkowicz 2016; Opora 2009; 2010). Currently, there is a shift in focus from the main measure of effectiveness, i.e., recidivism, towards emphasizing

the issue of psychological evolution, including the factors that determine it, i.e., protective factors and the potential of socially rehabilitated persons (Bartkiewicz 2016). The potential includes qualities such as high creativity, aptitude, ambition, perseverance, or a sense of self-efficacy, among others (Bernasiewicz 2017). When analyzing the potential, hope proves to be an important aspect. The importance of hope in social rehabilitation has been emphasized by researchers indicating that the formation of hope could contribute to increased motivation and improved functioning of socially rehabilitated individuals (Mudrecka 2014). Hope can be an important factor causing an increased sense of efficacy in prisoners and their social reintegration (Biel 2018; Fidelus 2012; Kieszowska 2012). In this paper, we focus on finding its presence in the experience of close relationships by convicts. Demonstration of the importance of hope in this area seems to be an important factor that forms the basis for social rehabilitation. The literature provides a wealth of data on the various positive functions of hope (Gawda 2017). Researchers indicate that hope contributes to increased motivation, intensification of a person's actions, increased sense of happiness, increased achievements, increased self-esteem, more effective coping with stress, improved mental health, or an overall increase in human well-being (Carr 2009; Koziński 2006; Seligman 2005; Trzebińska 2008).

When analyzing the concept of *hope* at the beginning, it is important to highlight the diversity of how it is defined and recognized in the literature (Gawda 2018). Schrank, Stanghellini and Slade (2008), when analyzing publications on hope, showed that there are 49 definitions of the concept. Moreover, hope is close to concepts such as "optimism", "self-efficacy", "locating a source of control" (Koziński 2006). However, according to Koziński (2006), unlike the other concepts mentioned here, hope refers more to the future and is more saturated with emotion. Hope refers to intentional actions in the context of affective experiences rather than their evaluation, which is characteristic of a sense of efficacy (Filipkowski 2000). Koziński (2006, p. 37) defines hope as "a multidimensional cognitive structure whose central element is the belief that in the future a person will receive good (achieve an important goal) with a specific degree of certainty or probability". This structure includes judgments, emotions, thoughts about the future, motives, and causal factors.

Concepts of hope can be grouped. There are theories of hope as: 1) a motivational construct, 2) a personality trait, 3) theories of hope as an emotion, and 4) systemic approaches to hope (Gawda 2018).

1. In the first theory, i.e. hope as a motivational construct, one of the well-known model is the theory of Dufault and Martocchio (1985, p. 380), who recognize hope as "a multidimensional life force characterized by a confident yet uncertain expectation of achieving a future good which, to the hoping person, is realistically possible and personally significant". According to them, hope can be described on six dimensions, i.e. affective dimension (emotions and feelings),

cognitive dimension (thoughts, cognitive strategies), behavioral dimension (physiological, social activities), affiliative dimension (interpersonal relations of a person), temporal dimension (a person's perception of time), and contextual dimension (specific life situations) (Gawda 2018).

Another theory of hope as a motivational construct is the model created by Schrank, Stanghellini, and Slade (2008). They concluded that hope can be described in seven dimensions: time, goals, probability of success, relationships, personal characteristics, source of control, and unwanted starting points. They allow the recognition of hope in an integrated form as directed towards the future, towards the achievement of an important goal; the process of achievement is defined, subjectively assessed as realistic, dependent on the subject's activity, characteristics or external factors (Schrank et al. 2008, p. 426). They distinguished four main components of hope: cognitive (e.g., memories, plans), affective (feelings, emotions), behavioral (activity and actions taken), and external factors (e.g., availability of means to pursue the goal) (Gawda 2018).

Motivational constructs include also Snyder's concept of hope, which captures hope as the sum of anticipated abilities to find ways to achieve desired goals and the accompanying specific level of motivation (Snyder 2000, p. 8). Predicting the future is based on two assumptions, first, achievement is possible; second, it is known how to achieve the goal. Hope, according to Snyder, includes four main components: purpose, strength, path, and barriers (Snyder 2002). The level of motivation triggered by hope is the result of the interaction of the goal, strength and path (Snyder et al. 2000).

2. The second group of concepts includes theories that view hope as a personality trait. In this area comes *the theory of basic hope* according to H.E. Erikson (2002). Basic hope is a mental structure formed in early childhood. It serves a key motivational function in regulating human behavior. It emerges as a result of proper interactions between a child and a caregiver, full of love and a sense of security. Basic hope is expressed in adulthood by the belief that the world is structured, meaningful, and favorable to people (Erikson 2002; Trzebinski, Zięba 2003).

Carver and Scheier (2002) believe that there is dispositional hope i.e. hope as a personality trait, and referred to it as dispositional optimism. This trait sustains a person's positive beliefs about their ability to achieve their goals. Seligman (2005), in turn, when referring to the same mechanism, introduced the term "optimistic attributional style". Scioli and Biller (2009, p. 30) described hope in a fairly similar way, i.e. as fundamental hope. According to them, hope is future-oriented, has a network structure, formed on the basis of biological, psychological and social factors. Its fundamental dimensions are human needs: bonds with other people, competence, survival, and spirituality (Scioli et al. 2016).

3. There are also views indicating that hope is an emotion. As an emotion, it has positive valency and serves a number of functions. According to Witwicki

(1995/1927), it is defined as a positive emotion, the opposite of fear, that performs important motivational functions. It is associated with freedom and love as well as a sense of meaning in life (Ricoeur 1991). According to the cognitive-structural theory of emotion, hope is considered a prospective emotion, that is, an emotion that, unlike fear, is directed towards the future (Ortony et al. 1990). Mowrer (1960) believed that hope is an emotion associated with the anticipation of a positive stimulus or an approximation toward it. Lazarus (1999), in turn, assumed that it is an emotion triggered by the expectation of achieving a goal. Averill (1994) proposed “a concept of hope as an emotion that utilizes the following rules: prophylactic rule (promotes an assessment of the degree to which achievement of a goal is realistic), moralistic rule (assessment concerns how much achievement of a goal is consistent with socio-moral or personality principles and rules), validity rule (assessment concerns how much a given goal is important to the subject), and activation rules (stimulates specific actions)” (Gawda 2018, p. 69). In contrast, Fredrickson (2009) believes that “hope occupies a special place among positive emotions because it is somewhat different from them. Typical positive emotions allow for feelings of security and comfort, whereas hope contains an element of uncertainty, as it is oriented towards the future, towards challenges and difficulties” (Gawda 2018, p. 69). And based on them, people can develop their abilities and problem-solving strategies.

4. There are also integrated concepts on hope. Such a concept is Krafft's theory of *perceived hope*. It refers to hope as experiencing a deep trust in positive outcomes, especially in difficult situations beyond a person's direct control (Krafft et al. 2017). This concept combines two viewpoints: individualistic/cognitive with emotional/transcendent. Thus, Krafft, entering the area of phenomena beyond human control, points out that motivational concepts of hope are inadequate. What Krafft calls *perceived hope* goes beyond the concept of optimism or basic hope. These are deep feelings associated with struggle and belief in something or someone greater than a human being. Perceived hope is a phenomenon that relates to self-transcendent areas. These are feelings associated with a sense of meaning and significance of life, the experience of intimacy in relationships with others, and spiritual and religious experiences (Krafft et al. 2017). Perceived hope in this approach is an individualized cognitive-affective construct conditioned by a person's specific experiences and the story of his/her life.

When focusing on finding the presence of hope in the prisoners' narratives about close relationships, we draw on cognitive concepts of hope as a motivational construct. Although Koziellecki (2006) believes in general that the content of individual components of hope and its structure depend on a person's personality, researchers point to the central element of hope, i.e. belief that a person will achieve a desired goal in the future (Dufault, Martocchio 1985). In addition, key elements to hope are emotions and a future-oriented time perspective as a response to threat, an overcoming of helplessness, or a means of reducing

suffering (Morse, Doberneck 1995). Hope encompasses important cognitive components due to the fact that it involves realistic assessment of situations, anticipation of alternative solutions, incorporation of alternative plans, correction of negative outcomes, realistic assessment of resources and external conditions, as well as acquisition of supportive relationships (Farran et al. 1995; Morse, Penrod 1999).

The issues of own research

Research objectives. Due to the crucial importance of hope in social rehabilitation, as shown in the theoretical and cognitive considerations in the introduction, the key objective of this research is to describe the manifestations of hope in the area of close relationships of prisoners. The analysis of the literature indicates that hope can be an important motivational factor in social rehabilitation.

The following research problems oriented to show the manifestations of hope in prisoners were formulated:

- Are there and what are the differences in the manifestations of hope in narratives about close romantic relationships between prisoners and non-prisoners?
- Are there and what are the differences in the temporal perspective of narratives about close relationships between prisoners and individuals from the comparison group?
- Is there a difference, and what is the difference, in terms of the mental indicator /aspect of hope/ between the group of prisoners and non-prisoners?

Due to the fact that the level of hope, its manifestations and motivational role largely depend on the specific life situation in which the person finds themselves, research hypotheses were formulated that emphasize the dissimilarity of the manifestations of hope in prisoners and non-prisoners. These hypotheses are not directional, they are general because the described study using analysis of prisoners' narratives about close relationships is novel and we do not have data to support a particular direction of the hypotheses. In view of the above, we assume that:

First, there are significant differences between prisoners and the comparison group in terms of manifestations of hope in narratives about close relationships. Prison is a specific environment, significantly different from life in freedom, hence we assume that there will be different manifestations of hope in narratives about close relationships of prisoners when compared to those of non-prisoners.

Second, we assume that there will be significant differences between prisoners and non-prisoners in terms of temporal approach in the narrative about a close romantic relationship. The way a statement is constructed in terms of its time frame may reflect a person's characteristic way of perceiving themselves and others (Gawda 2007).

Third, because the prison population is characterized by numerous emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dysfunctions (e.g., Gawda 2007, 2011) – we assume that the cognitive component of hope, recognized here as an indicator of mentalization associated with a close romantic relationship, will differ between prisoners and non-prisoners.

The subjects and course of research

Group 1: prisoners, consists of 301 males aged 19–65. The mean age was 32 years and 10 months ($SD = 9.63$). 38.9% of the subjects had completed primary education, 37.9% vocational education, 21.9% high school education, and 1.3% higher education. The research was conducted in 4 different prisons using an interview, file analysis and written questionnaires. Participants completed the questionnaires in the presence of a psychologist; the prisoners were guaranteed anonymity.

The prisoners were deprived of liberty for the following crimes: against life and health, against freedom, against sexual freedom and morality, against family and guardianship, against property, against money and securities trading, against justice, against public order, against safety in transport. 28.9% of subjects were convicted with one sentence, 19.6% with two sentences, 15% with three sentences, 10% with four sentences, and 26.6% with five or more sentences.

Crimes were divided based on the degree of the social harmfulness of the act into: misdemeanors and felonies. Felonies are acts that indicate a higher degree of social harm than misdemeanors (Bojarski 2006). In addition, a felony is an act punishable by imprisonment for not less than 3 years or by a more severe penalty. A misdemeanor, on the other hand, is an act that is punishable by a fine, restriction of liberty or imprisonment for more than one month (Criminal Code, Art. 7 1997). Misdemeanors in the study group constitute 83.7% of crimes, while felonies 16.3%.

Group 2: comparison group – non-prisoners, consists of 253 men, employed, aged 18–61. The mean age was 23 years and 5 months ($SD = 8.49$). Education: 6.3% of the subjects have completed primary education, 9.9% vocational education, 81.0% secondary education, and 2.8% higher education. The research was conducted at the place of residence using interview, written questionnaires. Participants completed the questionnaires in the presence of a psychologist; the subjects were guaranteed anonymity.

Method

Analyzing narratives about close partnerships. Subjects wrote stories about partnership relationships. They were asked to recall a relationship with a loved one,

i.e., wife, partner, and write a story about it. Based on the previously described concepts of hope, indicators of hope were extracted. These included: optimistic ending of the story, optimistic vision of the situation, temporal framing of the story (we were mainly interested in orientation towards future, but we included this variable as a general temporal perspective of the narrative), insight/analysis of the situation (mental processes). Narratives were analyzed by independent expert judges who coded indicators in the stories based on the criteria. In contrast, the indicator 'insight/mental processes' was counted using a computer program.

Indicators of hope:

1. An optimistic ending to the story. Stories with this kind of ending are stories where the person indicates that, e.g., *everything will be fine, it will work out, we will be happy*, etc. An example of an optimistic ending to a story: "Despite me being in prison, we have been together for 14 years. We have a wonderful son and our relationship is a happy marriage, for which I am ready to serve my sentence and start decent life. Love- understanding, sense of security, faithfulness, loyalty, being needed, being together for better or for worse".
2. An optimistic view of the situation includes a positive description of oneself i.e. the author of the story (actor), and a positive description of their partner. The variable is quantitative; all positive statements relating to the actor and their partner were counted. The sum of these statements was an indicator of an optimistic/positive view of the situation. Here are examples of positive statements concerning the actor or the partner: "beautiful girl, this woman is the love of my life, wonderful, amazing, happy, I love her, it is a beautiful feeling".
3. Temporal approach of the story. We were interested in the attitude towards the future as an expression of hope. This variable had an ordinal (rank) form. We have identified 5 degrees of focusing on time, i.e., five time perspectives of a story: 1 – focus on the past, 2 – focus on the past and present, 3 – focus on the present, 4 – focus on the present and future, 5 – focus on the future. An indicator of the degree of focus on a particular time in a story was the number of verbs included in the story using particular tense. Below is an example of a story focusing on the past:

One time I went to a party and there was a girl I liked, so I approached her and asked if we could dance together. We had fun and we spent the rest of the party together. At the end of the party, we exchanged phone numbers so we wouldn't lose touch with each other. When the party was over and we were going to go our separate ways, we said goodbye passionately. When I woke up the next day, I immediately grabbed my phone and started texting with her. And so we decided to go on a date. We were having fun, so I invited her to my house. It was nice, we had fun, etc. We were together for about a year and we were making plans together, but then she went abroad, I slept with another girl, she found out, and that's how our love ended.

An example of a statement describing the past and present: “we used to have a very good relationship, now we have ups and downs...”.

An example of a statement referring to the present: “...now we’re together...”.

An example of a statement referring to the present and future: “...we are and will be happy...”.

An example of a statement referring to the future: “...we will always be together...”.

4. Insight, or making an analysis of a situation, is a cognitive component of hope based on Morse and Penrod’s (1999) concept. It is expressed in assessing situations, anticipating alternative solutions, adjusting plans, and realistically evaluating external and internal factors. Insight was measured by an indicator of mental processes, i.e., the presence in narratives of phrases that indicate cognitive processing of information. Such an indicator was developed by Pennebaker. It is used in narrative research. An indicator of mental processes based on Pennebaker and his team (Boyd et al. 2020) includes: perceptual-mental predicates (*I think, I see, I believe, it seems to me*), speculations and doubts (*maybe, I guess, I would*), causality (*to, because, since*), questions (*why did I do that?*). This indicator includes the sum of these elements – it has a quantitative form. All elements described above were counted automatically using a computer program created for the narrative research. It was modeled on the method of Pennebaker *Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count: LIWC2015* (Pennebaker et al. 2015). A computer program that enables automatic word counts has already been used in previous narrative research conducted on Polish language (Gawda 2019; Kosacka 2019).

Indicators of insight with examples:

- perceptual-mental predicates: “I met a girl...but I didn’t get attached in any way... I thought she was a silly little girl... I was convinced that there would be nothing between us... at that time, I thought it was impossible to really love... she still loves... we are planning a future together... now I love her too... you have to believe in love...”;
- assumptions and doubts: “it can survive anything”;
- causality: “because I didn’t want to date such a young girl”;
- questions: “Why did I let myself get into this?”.

Results

In order to determine the manifestations of hope in the narrative of a close romantic relationship, comparisons were made between the group of prisoners and the comparison group. All of the hope indicators described above were compared. Different statistical tests/coefficients were used for intergroup comparisons depending on the characteristics of each variable. Comparing the

number of positive/optimistic story endings required the use of the chi² test. Then, the comparison of the temporal approach of the narratives required the use of Mann-Whitney U test for two independent groups. In contrast, the comparison of the optimistic view of the situation and mental process indicator between the two groups was based on a one-factor analysis of variance, due to the distribution of these variables being close to normal.

Table 1. Optimistic story endings

			Research group		Total
			prisoners	comparison group	
An optimistic ending	no	number	176	114	290
		% of the research group	58.5%	45.1%	52.3%
	present	number	125	139	264
		% of the research group	41.5%	54.9%	47.7%
Total		number	301	253	554
		% of the research group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 1 presents a summary of the number of stories with an optimistic ending in both groups. The calculated value of chi² test confirmed significant variation between the group of prisoners and non-prisoners. It turned out that there is a significant difference in this regard (chi² = 8.83, $p < 0.001$); prisoners writing about their romantic relationships are significantly less likely to formulate optimistic endings. Over 58% of the stories written by prisoners have negative/not optimistic ending. Prisoners are less likely to predict positive growth in their relationship. They are less likely to expect their romantic relationship to be lasting and satisfying. On the contrary, they state that love is over, there is no future for them, or that unpleasant events happened, such as betrayal, breakup, humiliation, or others. The prisoners' stories of a close romantic relationship are not filled with hope, which is a result of their personal experiences. These experiences are mostly negative; their relationships are difficult, they experience failures in their lives, sometimes related to addictions, sometimes resulting, in their opinion, from inappropriate characteristics of their partners, but also from their own irresponsible behavior.

Comparing the subsequent indicators of hope in the narratives of prisoners and those in the comparison group, it was found that those in the comparison group, and therefore those without a criminal record, described close relationships in a more positive way. In contrast, prisoners were significantly less likely to form an optimistic description of the relationship (Table 2). This non-optimistic vision is consistent with the previously demonstrated non-optimistic ending to the story.

When describing their partner or themselves in a close romantic relationship, prisoners emphasized negative emotions such as fear, anger, or dissatisfaction. More often the description of such person's characteristics is negative, e.g. "...I thought then that she was a silly little girl, that she was frivolous, etc. ...". Prisoners stress that their partner disrespects them, cheats on them, or is immature. In such a relationship they often feel humiliated, used, and not taken seriously. Sometimes they also emphasize that the relationship difficulties are due to their own carelessness, their addictions, or their irresponsible behavior. In general, prisoners' narratives about a romantic relationship contain a less optimistic description of the situation, which reflects their past life experiences and views on the subject. This vision is much less optimistic than for people with no criminal record.

Another indicator of hope is the temporal framing of a story about a close relationship. Although the instruction was to talk about one's past experiences, it seems that the temporal framing of the statements may vary due to the different perceptions of self and others in the situation of incarceration. The temporal perspective of a narrative may be related to the specific elaboration of the data or content of such a narrative, e.g., it may be related to wishful thinking or reflection on a given topic (Gawda 2011). Describing love is more likely to involve the present time perspective, while a situation of anxiety forces one to focus on the past (Gawda 2007). In this regard, it has been shown that in the group of prisoners, the overwhelming number of stories about a close romantic relationship are maintained in the perspective of the past or a combination of the past and present. A comparison of this indicator between groups showed that in general (considering the total value of the indicator) prisoners are slightly more future-oriented than non-prisoners (Table 2). Such a temporal perspective of the prisoners' narrative is due to the construction of their stories based on reference to the present as well as the present and future (Figure 1). The illustration of the number of narratives in each time perspective reveals that prisoners are more likely to formulate their stories using present tense, a combination of present and future tense, and future tense than those in the comparison group, who most often oscillate between the past and present in their narratives. Thus, it can be assumed that this aspect suggests a slightly higher level of hope in relation to close relationships in prisoners. Examples indicating this aspect are expressed in the following statements of the prisoners:

...My only regret is that she was capable of putting me back in jail...

...And this is how my relationship with the person I trusted completely ended...

...Our close relationship later ended. But we are still in touch, and we like and respect each other...

...our relationship ended because I went to jail. That's how much of my love I have left...

...in confinement I realized that I had to break up with my partner because otherwise I would destroy her life. It was a difficult decision for me but probably one of the smartest decisions I've made in my life...

...I had some flings, but I have never took the risk again and now I am single and I think this is not going to change...

The fourth indicator involved making insights/ mental operations in relation to relationships. It can be considered, to some extent, as elaboration of material and therefore the ability to analyze, synthesize, and make predictions based on the conclusions reached (Pennebaker et al. 2015). This indicator was found to be significantly lower in the group of prisoners. Terms indicating cognitive elaboration of material are far less common in narratives about close romantic relationships written by prisoners (Table 2). Terms suggesting mental processes, e.g., *I think, I see, I believe, in my opinion, it seems to me*, are far less common in the narratives of prisoners. Similarly, assumptions and doubts (*maybe, probably*), indications of causality (*to, for, because*) are less frequent in their narratives when compared to the group of non-prisoners. Very rarely did questions arise in the prisoners' stories about the close relationship.

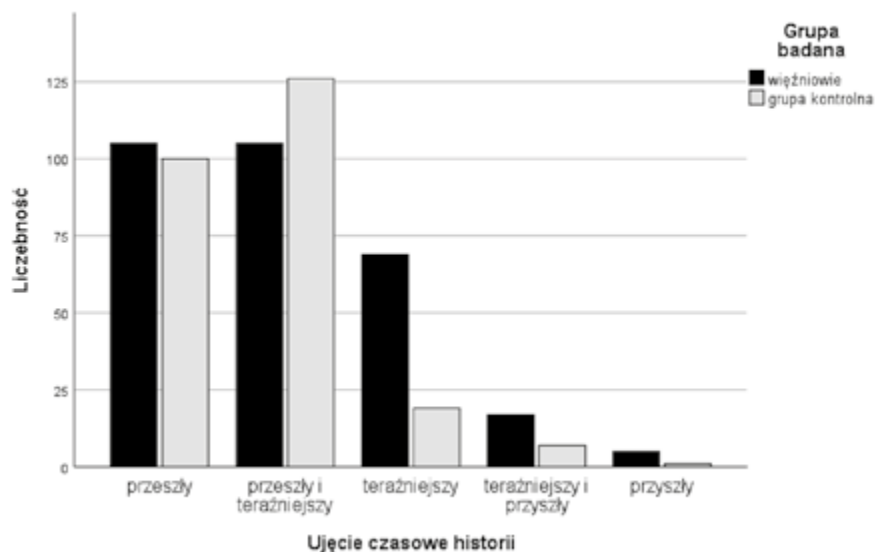
Table 2. Descriptive statistics for variables studied (prisoners n=301, non-prisoners n=253)

Narrative indicators	Prisoners				Comparison group				Test of differences
	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Min.	Max.	M	SD	
An optimistic description of the situation	0	11	2.80	2.35	0	10	3.44	2.34	F(1.552)/z
Future orientation/temporal approach	1	5	2.04	0.97	1	5	1.74	0.75	z=-3.43***
Insight/mental processes	0	25	3.91	3.74	0	29	6.52	5.07	48.31***

M – mean; SD – standard deviation

Level of statistical significance: ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

Additionally, it was examined whether the mental process indicator is correlated with other indicators of hope. It appears that there is a positive, moderate relationship between this indicator and an optimistic approach to the situation (Table 3). That is, the increase in insight in the situation is accompanied by the increase in optimistic perception of the situation. This information is important for building prisoner resources.



Grupa badana – Studied group; więźniowie – prisoners; grupa kontrolna – control group; Liczebność – numer; przeszły – past; przeszły i teraźniejszy – past and present; teraźniejszy – present; teraźniejszy i przyszły – present and future; przyszły – future; Ujęcie czasowe historii – Temporal approach of the narrative

Figure 1. Temporal approach of the narrative

Table 3. Correlations between insight indicator and others in the group of prisoners ($n=301$)

	Mental processes indicator
An optimistic description of the situation	0.32***
Focus on the future	0.02
An optimistic ending	0.12**

Level of statistical significance: ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

Discussion

More than 11 million people around the world, and the number continues to grow, are detained in some form, most of them are people who are temporarily arrested or convicted. With increasing prison populations and high crime loads (McCullister et al. 2010), improving social rehabilitation programs and reducing risk factors for repetition of offenses is crucial. These factors include age and gender (Piquero et al. 2013), unemployment (Verbruggen et al. 2012), psychoactive substance abuse (Håkansson, Berglund 2012), decreased general self-regulation (Mann et al. 2010) and executive dysfunction (Hancock et al. 2010; Langevin,

Curnoe 2011; Ross, Hoaken 2011). In this context, the research conducted for this paper was oriented towards the search for factors that reduce the risk of repetition of offenses, more specifically, towards the factor of the potential of convicted persons. However, the results of the research showed that hope indicators in regards to close romantic relationships of prisoners are low. Their vision of a relationship and the way they predict its future turned out to be not very optimistic. In addition, they have been shown to be less analytical, reflective, and predictive i.e., they have less insight into the experiences associated with a romantic relationship. This means that they did less analysis of the situation in comparison with the comparison group. This reduced mental processing capacity suggests that they may face greater difficulty in artfully solving problems, overcoming dysfunctional behaviors, or turning them into more functional behaviors (Diamond 2013). The results of the present analyses are consistent with data indicating that prisoners perform less cognitive processing of various events, resulting in less insight and difficulty in suppressing harmful impulses (Miyake et al. 2000). A non-optimistic view of the situation and a lack of positive attitudes in this area can significantly lower their potential and thus reduce their opportunities for social rehabilitation.

Reduced levels of hope in relation to a close relationship are to some extent related to or conditioned by a way of processing information focused on the past. Although it is generally assumed that such a focus can promote reflection, when coupled with low rates of mental processes, it does not lead to reflection, but rather perpetuates inability to cope with problems and lowers mood (Gawda 2007). Persistence in the past minimizes the experience of hope and translates into an inability to cope with the situation of prison isolation. In addition, it is not uncommon in this situation to experience mood changes, thoughts of death, low self-esteem and feelings of guilt, impaired ability to focus attention, irritability, disrupted sleep and circadian rhythms characterized by e.g. early wakeup, problems falling asleep or staying asleep, and daily mood swings, changes in weight and appetite, decreased libido, general loss of interests and reduced social activity (Chmielewska-Hampel, Wawrzyniak 2009). These symptoms may be an indicator of depression (Marcus et al. 2001) or the occurrence of posttraumatic stress disorder (Butler, Allnut 2003; Goff et al 2007). Under such circumstances, it would be useful in the process of change to take advantage of the adaptive nature of the mechanism of hope by undertaking therapeutic work on reconstruction of beliefs of convicts. This would be aimed at forming positive beliefs and transferring a sense of meaningfulness, favorability, and orderliness to the outside world, taking into account the differences between the rules of the prison world and the rules of functioning in the society. The effect of such a change would be that the individual would gain a sense of security based on adaptation to the rules of functioning in the society and legal norms, which the criminal often did not learn in the process of socialization, and which should be taught to them. In the external world, a convict would obtain a sense of meaningfulness, orderliness,

and favorability by following legal, moral, and social rules, which would allow for harmonious coexistence with other people (Chmielewska-Hampel, Wawrzyniak 2009). It seems that time perspective and mental processes are important indicators that could be relied upon in planning correctional activities, i.e., building personal resources of convicts. Indeed, it has been shown that an increase in the indicator of insight/more engagement of mental processes is associated with a more optimistic perception of reality. Those prisoners who do more cognitive processing of the situation are capable of a more optimistic attitude. In terms of temporal framing of a story about a close relationship, prisoners scored slightly higher in terms of orientation towards future. This way of perceiving a close relationship may be due to the essence of the feeling of love or the love script that is activated in the situation of describing a relationship (Gawda 2011). Love is an emotion that is extremely powerful, it satisfies extremely important, fundamental human needs, including the need for meaning in life. Its motivational significance, in terms of forming plans or expectations, is extremely important. It is the properties of love that somehow force the person talking about it to focus on the present and future (Gawda 2007). It is a factor that builds self-esteem and has great motivational significance, so it can provide, to some extent, a basis for building hope.

Prison, however, is now a clear example of an impoverished environment because it involves a threat to the mental and physical integrity of the convicted person, who has no sense of control over the situation in which they find themselves and the negative emotions they feel (Woodall et al. 2013). This results in increased emotional tension with an inability to relieve it in a socially acceptable manner. Studies conducted in various countries show that incarceration is characterized by a lack of physical activity (Ireland, Culpin 2006; Plugge et al. 2009). In addition, prisoners spend most of their time in passive recreational activities such as watching television (Elger 2009), it has been shown that they sit or lie on their beds for an average of 9.36 hours per day, in addition to the hours spent sleeping (Ireland, Culpin 2006). It is worth noting that an impoverished environment has a negative impact on the prefrontal cortex (Bagorda et al. 2006; Melendez et al. 2004; Witte et al. 2007), a region of key importance to executive functions (Jurado, Rosselli 2007). It would therefore be necessary to make the prisoners more physically active, to make them involved and to work closely together in planning, setting goals, solving current problems, which require close observation, correction and implementation of the action plan. This would be to increase the indicator of mental processes and through it, increase other components of hope. In addition, education should be strengthened. According to research (Pendleton 1988) convicts who are active i.e. gaining higher education tend to have a positive perspective of the world, set higher standards and goals for themselves and manage their time better, unlike convicts who are passive in this regard, who feel left on their own, who are influenced by limited resources and overcoming powers of imagination.

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