

DIALOGICAL SELF: INSPIRATIONS, CONSIDERATIONS AND RESEARCH

EDITED BY MAŁGORZATA M. PUCHALSKA-WASYL, PIOTR K. OLEŚ
AND HUBERT J. M. HERMANS



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DIALOGICAL SELF: INSPIRATIONS, CONSIDERATIONS, AND RESEARCH

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Edited by
MAŁGORZATA M. PUCHALSKA-WASYL, PIOTR K. OLEŚ
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Introduction

Dialogical Self Theory (DST) weaves two notions, self and dialogue, together in order to create a bridge between the individual and society. Traditionally, self refers to something 'internal', to processes taking place *within* the individual mind, whereas dialogue is conceived of as something 'external', to communicative processes taking place *between* two or more people. The composite concept 'dialogical self' transcends this dichotomy by bringing the external to the internal and, the other way around, transporting the internal to the external. This allows us to study the self as a *society* of 'I-positions' and, on the other hand, to consider society as populated by the selves of *individual* people contributing to the society from their own specific point of view. Like people have positions in an organized society, they are populated by I-positions in the organization of their own selves. By conceiving the self as a 'society of mind', with communication channels between individual and society, this theory abandons any self-society dualism and any conception that regards the self as essentialized and encapsulated in itself. Moreover, it escapes the limitations of a 'self-less society' that lacks the opportunity to become enriched by the contributions of individual persons with their capacity of innovating existing social practices.

Originally, DST is inspired by two historical traditions: American Pragmatism and Russian Dialogism. As a theory of the self, it has its source in James's (1890) and Mead's (1934) classic formulations on the workings of the self. As a dialogical theory, it draws on the fertile insights in the dialogical nature of the human being, proposed by the Russian literary scholar Bakhtin (1929/1973). At the interface of these traditions, a conceptual system is constructed for the investigation of bridges between self and society with the purpose of studying their mutual influence and implications.

Vasily Yu. Kostenko
Dmitry A. Leontiev

The contribution of self-reflection and inner dialogue to personality development¹

The focus of the present study is the relationship between personality development and mechanisms of self-reflection and inner dialogue. Our understanding is based on J. Loevinger's (1976) theory of ego development stages and D. Leontiev's (2009) differential self-reflection model. 262 participants of student summer school in Russia (age from 14 to 25 ($M = 20.03$, $SD = 3.92$)) were tested on a battery of measurement scales, including: (1) Modified P. Oles' Inner Dialogical Activity Scale; (2) Differential Self-Reflection Inventory; (3) Russian version of J. Loevinger's Washington University Sentence Completion Test. Systemic reflection and Openness to experience showed significant linear dependencies on Ego development level. Systemic reflection manifested as a partial mediator of the link between Openness to experience and level of Ego development. The contribution of inner dialogue became visible from the Stage E5 (Self-awareness) on, while below this level self-reflection mechanisms were neither differentiated nor associated with inner dialogical activity.

Theoretical introduction: Self-reflection and inner dialogue in the developmental context

The category of dialogue opens new horizons in developmental studies. We focus here on personality development in the broader meaning, as distinct from biological maturation and social learning, on the one hand, and from cognitive development, on the other (detailed discussion of these issues ex-

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ceeds the scope of this paper). At the same time, there is no clear delineation between the concepts like personality, self, and ego, used in different contexts. In most general terms, self refers to the picture of oneself given introspectively, that is why the self is represented in qualitative, rather than quantitative terms, in terms of the inner world; personality in its narrow meaning is the person's image from the viewpoint of an outside observer. Goldberg (1981) noted that Big Five traits refer to what is most important to evaluate while meeting a stranger, and ego refers to the person's capacity of authorizing and controlling one's actions and mental representations. Though inner dialogue is first and foremost the self-related phenomenon, we shall speak here about personality and personality development as umbrella terms.

It is now evident that personality development proceeds not as a steady growth, but includes qualitative changes. One of the critical changes is the person's becoming a driving force of one's own development, "the third factor" (Dabrowski, 1964), besides nature and nurture. This is the point when inner dialogue becomes an important factor of the further development. In the present study, several assumptions concerning the links between inner dialogical activity, self-reflective processes and personality development are empirically tested.

The present study intends to fill the gap in our understanding of self-reflective and inner dialogical processes as predictive of personality growth. It aims to clarify the ways different types of self-reflection, inner dialogical activity and basic personality traits interact at different stages of personality evolution.

Personality development

To represent personality development theoretically and empirically we use the methodology and theory of ego development (ED) by Jane Loevinger (1966, 1976), one of the most comprehensive approaches to personality development. According to the theory, nine stages embrace the personality growth process across the lifespan (see below), though not everyone ever reaches the advanced ones. Loevinger described ego development as a progress in cognitive and emotional complexity, psychosocial maturity and moral judgement

capacities. Passing through the stages, a person develops and applies the more complicated and compound concepts for framing and explaining daily experiences. The features of the higher stages, e.g., increase in abstract reasoning, interpersonal awareness, moral reasoning (see more in Gilmore & Durkin, 2001), allow the researchers in the field to consider the level of ego development as an indicator of personality maturity. At the same time, "it is a mistake to idealize any stage" (Loevinger, 1966, p. 200): each one has both a potential for growth, and its weaknesses and paradoxes.

Despite Loevinger's holistic position in defining the term (Loevinger, 1983), ego development seems to be influenced by more particular mechanisms. The author and her followers often mentioned self-awareness, or self-reflection, as a mechanism that advances a person through the stages (e.g., Pfaffenberger, Marko, & Combs, 2011; Westenberg, Blasi, & Cohn, 2013). Thus, the data by Westenberg and Block (1993) showed a strong and positive link between ego development and mindedness, i.e., the capacity to reflect and examine the motives in self and others, as well as to be introspective concerning inner experience and self-knowledge. Helson and Roberts (1994) confirmed this statement and demonstrated that complexity and accuracy in understanding the motives of self and others raised with the ego development level and predicted ego development during adulthood. Cramer's research (1999) highlighted a conscious aspect of behavioral control that raised through the stages. A research of Lane, Quinlan, Schwartz, Walker, and Zeitlin (1990) showed a moderate and significant correlation between the level of emotional awareness and the level of ego development. Studies based on similar approaches reported similar findings (e.g. Diehl, Coyle, & Labouvie-Vief, 1996; Sheldon & Kasser, 1995).

Self-reflection and inner dialogue

The concept of self-reflection is more specific than personality development, though even more ambiguous. Different studies reveal different effects of self-reflection, both positive and negative ones. Whereas it is most likely that self-reflection unfolds coherently from phase to phase in childhood (Rochat, 2003), the outcomes by adolescence might be less uniform. Mor and

Winqvist (2002) mention the strong relation between self-focused attention and negative affect in a meta-analysis of numerous studies. Similar ambiguity of self-reflection mechanisms is associated with the term rumination, excessive attention to one's negative affect, and its consequences of the present state (Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco, & Lyubomirsky, 2008).

As a possible solution, D. Leontiev (Leontiev & Averina, 2011; Leontiev & Osin, 2014; Leontiev & Salikhova, 2010) proposed a model to differentiate the forms of self-reflection. The model logically distinguishes one positive (Systemic Reflection) and three negative forms (Quasi-Reflection and Introspection, as well as Non-reflection – see below). Differential Self-Reflection inventory (Leontiev & Osin, 2014) successfully distinguished three of them, except for Non-reflection – probably a disposition to forget oneself in a total absorption into an external situation just cannot be assessed by self-report measures.

Self-reflection implies autocommunication. The term unified different forms of intrapersonal interactions, among which inner replication, inner monologue and inner dialogue were distinguished (Kuchinsky, 1988). Inner dialogue, in turn, can be considered a necessary condition of inner world self-representation and mastery. During the inner dialogical activity, two or more semantic centers or intentions unfold consciously and form the ontological basis of self-reflection from its cognitive side. At the same time, destructive autocommunication, which supports and develops inner conflicts, should be also taken into account (Oleś, 2009).

This empirical study was designed to test several hypotheses. First, the positive and negative facets of self-reflection and inner dialogue will manifest themselves distinctively through the different stages of ego development and show orthogonal connections. Thus, we expect positive associations between the Ego development level and Systemic reflection, as well as between Ego development (ED) and the factor of Inner world. On the contrary, we expect negative associations between the ED level and the nonproductive types of self-reflection and inner dialogue (Inner conflict, Quasi-Reflection and Introspection). Second, there should be a linear dependence between Systemic reflection and Ego development level: the higher the ego stage, the higher the Systemic Reflection level. At the same time, we expect a reverse linear dependence for the link between the negative types of reflection (Quasi-Reflection

and Introspection) and the stage of Ego development. Basing on well-grounded critical review of Gilmore and Durkin (2001), we finally predict a positive association between the Ego development level and Openness to experience. Following the findings on rumination and other nonproductive self-awareness phenomena, we also predict a negative association between the ED level and trait Neuroticism.

Method

Participants and procedure

The sample were participants of a summer school for academically motivated (basing on strong entrance selection) students from different regions of Russia that took place in Summer 2014. The age of respondents varied from 14 to 25 ($M = 20.03$, $SD = 3.92$), and the whole size of the sample was 263,67% of them were females. During face-to-face contact, the respondents filled in a paper-and-pencil form in quiet and comfortable conditions. They were symbolically rewarded with a special study participant badge. Several volunteers recruited respondents from different workshops through the first week of the classes.

Measures

Ego development. Washington University Sentence Completion Test (WUSCT) based on Loevinger's theory remains one of the most reliable and valid instruments for measuring personality development (Gilmore & Durkin, 2001; Holt, 1980; Loevinger, 1979; Redmore & Waldman, 1975). The main target of the test are conceptual structures, both conscious and implicit ones, that respondents use to interpret life experiences. The beginning of each of the 36 sentences (e.g., "My mother and I...", "Women are lucky because...", "Sometimes he wished that...") induces a respondent to proceed with a personalized answer. Conceivably, both the structure and content of the answers vary depending on the latent pattern associated with the current ego development level. Raters ascribe qualitative answers to one of the ED levels ranged by

ordinal scale from 2 to 9 with the help of specific coding procedures described in the manual (Hy & Loevinger, 1996). The first, Symbiotic, stage is pre-verbal and cannot be assessed using the test. Other eight stages are the following: Impulsive (E2), Self-Protective (E3), Conformist (E4), Self-Aware (E5), Conscientious (E6), Individualistic (E7), Autonomous (E8) and Integrated (E9). We used a Russian adaptation of the test (Leontiev, Mikhaylova, & Rasskazova, 2010). For the current study, a short form of the WUSCT composed of the first 18 items was used, and that is ordinal for research needs (Holt, 1980; Loevinger, 1985).

Self-reflection. There is quite a number of instruments measuring different aspects of self-reflection (e.g. Govern & Marsch, 2001; Sheldon, 1996). Few of them, however, try to distinguish the positive and negative facets of the phenomenon. We used Differential Test of Reflectivity (DTR) (Leontiev & Osin, 2014) that embraces and differentiates both facets. DTI consists of 3 scales, which are mostly orthogonal. A Systemic Reflection scale (SR) is composed of 12 items (e.g., "I usually think of causes of what happens to me", "When I analyze my own actions, I learn something new about myself", "It is useful sometimes to stop to better understand the situation as a whole"). The scale reflects a capacity of self-distancing in different situations and a disposition to analyze oneself and others from different points of view. A scale of Quasi-Reflection (QR) measures a person's inclination to reflect upon facts and details that do not refer to actual life situation or to oneself, or a tendency to muse on "what would be if..." scenes. It contains nine items (e.g., "I love to dream of what I do not have", "I tend to lapse into day-dreaming", "I often dream up of what my life would be otherwise"). The last, Introspection scale (IS) consists of nine items (e.g., "Sometimes attending to my own experiences distracts me from my work", "I tend to ruminate for a long time about what is going on", "When something is not going well, it's difficult for me to stop thinking about it") reflects a tendency to ruminate on mostly negative self-feelings and experiences. All items proceed with 4-grades Likert's scale ("no", "more likely yes than no", "more likely no than yes", "yes"). Cronbach's alphas are given in Table 1.

Inner dialogical activity. The variables of Inner dialogical activity were measured by Russian adaptation of P. Oleś' Inner dialogical activity scale

(SWAD; Oleś, 2009). The analysis of psychometric data collected in Russian sample ($N = 262$) showed high reliability of the test (Cronbach's alpha = 0.94; retest correlation = 0.76, $p < 0.05$). However, 7-factor model offered in the original version of the instrument was not confirmed in our data. As a result of explanatory factor analysis, 3 factors having high eigenvalues were extracted.

The first factor reflected General inner dialogical activity (Cronbach's alpha = 0.94; retest correlation = 0.84, $p < 0.05$) as overall level of person's disposition to conduct inner dialogues. The second factor called Inner world (Cronbach's alpha = 0.92; retest correlation = 0.74, $p < 0.05$) was dedicated to a tendency to construe some virtual reality in inner dialogues and possible scenarios of interaction with other people. The third factor of Inner conflict (Cronbach's alpha = 0.90; retest correlation = 0.76, $p < 0.05$) included items connected to internal contradictions, negative and destructive inner dialogues.

The construct validity of developed tool appeared at the high level. All scales of Russian Inner Dialogical Activity Scale (IDAS) significantly correlated with all scales of DTR (see Table 3 below). The nonproductive character of Inner conflict measure was evidenced by the strongest connections of that scale with Introspection (rumination) and Quasi-Reflection variables. The factor of General inner dialogical activity was associated with such B5 traits as agreeableness, neuroticism and openness to experience. The scale of Inner conflict was strongly associated with negative personality variables. People with higher Inner conflict rates were on average more reserved, impulsive and irresponsible in measures. A tendency to develop some constructive and problem-solving virtual reality (Inner world scale) was associated with higher openness to experience and productive self-reflection indices. To sum up, IDAS as a Russian version of SWAD is a reliable and valid instrument reflecting essential variables referring to autocommunication (see Astretsov & Leontiev, 2016).

Big Five personality traits. Russian version of Big Five Questionnaire by Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, and Perugini (1993) was used to measure five basic dimensions of personality – Extraversion (E), Agreeableness (A), Conscientiousness (C), Neuroticism (N) and Openness to experience (O). It also includes a scale of Social desirability (L). The test is contained of 80 items (e.g.,

“I identify myself as an active and energized person” (E), “I am a friendly person” (A), “If I do not succeed in doing something, I tend to keep on until I deal with it” (C), “I often notice that I am nervous” (N), “I am a person who always seeks for new experience” (O), “I was always confident in all my actions” (L)). The Russian version was made by Osin, Rasskazova, Neyaskina, Dorfman, and Alexandrova (2015).

Results

Descriptive statistics. The means, standard deviations and Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the measured variables are presented in Table 1, except for Ego development variables, which are presented separately in Table 2.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Outcome Measures ($N = 259$)

Variable	Female		Male		Total		Cronbach's Alpha
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Systemic Reflection	40.39	5.23	39.76	6.49	40.32	5.39	0.85
Introspection	26.46	5.57	24.88	4.71	26.29	5.47	0.85
Quasi-Reflection	28.97	5.26	26.94	5.78	28.74	5.36	0.83
ID – General Activity	34.70	9.20	30.40	9.80	34.10	9.40	0.94
ID – Inner World	30.00	6.00	28.08	6.72	29.76	6.16	0.92
ID – Inner Conflict	21.28	7.44	17.76	6.00	20.80	7.36	0.90
B5 – Extraversion	41.93	7.43	40.85	7.80	41.79	7.46	0.88
B5 – Agreeableness	54.73	7.01	53.45	7.01	54.51	7.00	0.87
B5 – Conscientiousness	42.58	8.63	43.45	7.58	42.60	8.55	0.87
B5 – Neuroticism	43.26	9.72	37.94	10.47	42.59	10.03	0.91
B5 – Openness	62.80	7.25	59.48	6.47	62.34	7.21	0.86
B5 – Social Desirability	32.04	7.12	31.00	7.12	31.83	7.14	0.81

Note. ID – Inner Dialogical Activity measures; B5 – Big Five personality traits measures.

Only ten protocols rated at E3 Self-Protective stage or below were found, and they were excluded from the final analysis, as well as data on 3 participants rated at E8 Autonomous stage (Table 2). In our data, E5 Self-Aware level turned out to be modal, and that is usual for urban samples (Holt, 1980).

Table 2. Frequencies of Participants Scoring at Each Stage of Ego Development ($N = 263$)

Ego Development Stage	Frequencies	Percentage, %
E2 Impulsive	1.0	0.38
E3 Self-Protective	9.0	3.42
E4 Conformist	63.0	23.95
E5 Self-Aware	105.0	39.92
E6 Conscientious	66.0	25.10
E7 Individualistic	16.0	6.08
E8 Autonomous	3.0	1.14
Total	263	100

Table 3. Pearson Correlations of Outcome Measures

Variable	<i>r</i>		
	Systemic Reflection	Introspection	Quasi-Reflection
Introspection	0.41**	–	–
Quasi-Reflection	0.34**	0.46**	–
ID – General Activity	0.38**	0.30**	0.26**
ID – Inner World	0.37**	0.42**	0.50**
ID – Inner Conflict	0.18**	0.51**	0.36**
B5 – Extraversion	–0.07	–0.23*	0.03
B5 – Agreeableness	0.13*	0.07	0.11
B5 – Conscientiousness	0.09	–0.16*	–0.25**
B5 – Neuroticism	0.21**	0.56**	0.33**
B5 – Openness	0.34**	0.02	0.18**
B5 – Social Desirability	–0.12	–0.30**	–0.13*

Note. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$; ID – Inner Dialogical Activity measures; B5 – Big Five personality traits measures.

Bivariate correlations. We calculated the correlations between the measured variables, using Spearman's rho for correlations including ED level and Pearson's r for all others (Bonferroni correction applied). As presented in Table 3, all types of self-reflection performed differently. While the Systemic reflection had no noticeable links with Extraversion, Conscientiousness and Social desirability, two other types of self-reflection did. At the same time, the Systemic reflection indices were the only ones that had a clear association with Openness to experience. Spearman's rho correlations between Ego development level and other variables showed a significant association between Ego development stage and Systemic reflection ($\rho = 0.263$, $p < 0.001$), as well as between ED and Openness to experience ($\rho = 0.199$, $p < 0.001$). Other types of self-reflection showed no significant direct associations with ED level. As expected, all types of Inner dialogical activity measures were significantly linked to all types of self-reflection. However, the Inner conflict variable had the weakest connection to the productive type of self-reflection (Systemic reflection).

ANOVA and General linear modelling. A One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effects of Ego development level on all other measures. There were significant effects of ED on Systemic reflection [$F(3, 246) = 9.76$, $p = 0.000$] and on Openness to experience [$F(3, 246) = 3.19$, $p = 0.024$] at the $p < 0.05$ level for the four conditions (levels from E4 to E7). Other effects were not significant.

We performed general linear modeling on variables that had significant associations with Ego development level. Both factors (Systemic reflection and Openness to experience) showed significant linear dependencies ($p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.01$ consequently) on ED level. Figures 1 and 2 display this dependency graphically.

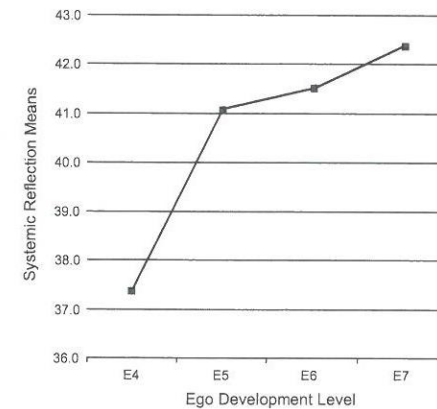


Figure 1. Results of General Linear Modelling for Ego Development Level and Systemic Reflection. Contrast Estimate = 3.468; Standard Error = 0.979; $p < 0.001$; Confidence Interval Between 1.540 and 5.395.

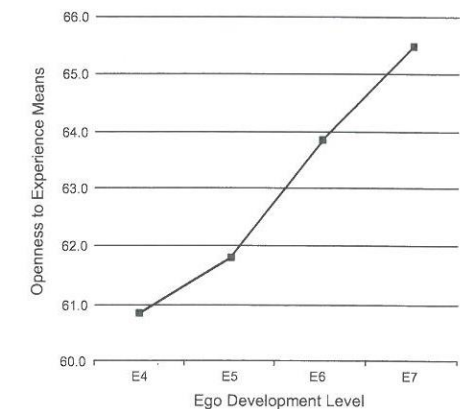


Figure 2. Results of General Linear Modelling for Ego Development Level and Openness to Experience. Contrast Estimate = 3.587; Standard Error = 1.359; $p < 0.01$; Confidence Interval Between 0.910 and 6.264.

Path modelling. While the indices of general linear modeling were not completely persuasive, the data allowed to make further assumptions. We performed a path analysis to clarify the interdependence of measured variables (Figure 3).

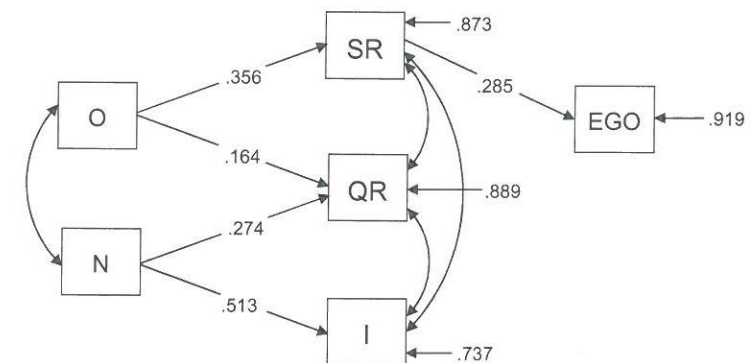


Figure 3. Results of Path Modelling. O - Openness to Experience; N - Neuroticism; S - Systemic Reflection; QR - Quasi-Reflection; I - Introspection; EGO - Ego Development Level; $N = 259$, $\chi^2 = 270.44$; $df = 14$; CFI = 0.97; RMSEA = 0.063.

Path model statistics were satisfactory in our sample. Furthermore, we also tested a hypothesis on the mediation role of Systemic reflection in the link between Openness to experience and level of Ego development. Indirect effects were significant in our data ($p < 0.001$), thus highlighting Systemic reflection as a partial mediator of the link.

The dynamics of dialogical activity at different levels of Ego development. The three big enough groups rated from E4 Conformist to E6 Conscientious stages of ego development were analyzed separately to specify the contribution of self-reflection and autocommunication to ego development. The correlations of dialogical activity and self-reflection measures with Systemic reflection variable at different levels of Ego development revealed essential differences of the links between these variables (Table 4).

Table 4. Correlations of Dialogical Activity and Self-reflection Variables With Systemic Reflection at Different Levels of Ego Development (Pearson's r)

Variables	Systemic reflection		
	E4	E5	E6
Introspection	0.60**	▶ 0.33**	0.26*
Quasi-Reflection	0.42**	0.34**	0.20
ID – General Activity	0.08	▶ 0.48**	0.47**
ID – Inner World	0.22	0.44**	0.28*
ID – Inner Conflict	0.03	0.32**	0.16

Note. $N(E4) = 63$; $N(E5) = 105$; $N(E6) = 66$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; E4 – Conformist ego development stage; E5 – Self-aware stage; E6 – Conscientious stage; ID – Inner Dialogical Activity measures; ▶ – differences between adjacent correlation coefficients are significant ($p < 0.05$).

At E4 Conformist stage, self-reflection mechanisms manifested were neither differentiated nor associated with inner dialogical activity. This association emerged at higher stages parallel to divergence of constructive and non-constructive forms of self-reflection that develop from then on by orthogonal trajectories.

Discussion

Our main goal was observing and empirically clarifying the ways self-reflection, inner dialogical activity and Big Five dimensions contribute to ego development. As we expected, an increase in the ED level covaried with the productive (Systemic) type of self-reflection. We also proved that in our sample Systemic reflection increased linearly through the stages. Moreover, progress in that type of self-reflection had a sharp leap after E4 Conformist level. These findings fit to Loevinger's theory (Loevinger, 1983), and empirically disclose the role of productive self-reflection in personality evolution on post-conventional stages (see more in Pfaffenberger, Marko, & Combs, 2011).

We also assumed that nonproductive types of self-reflection would show a decreasing linear dependency on ED level. Although this hypothesis was not confirmed, these types gradually diverged from the productive Systemic reflection type. They had stronger associations with Neuroticism and no significant links with Ego development stage. If we add to this another piece of our data showing that Quasi-Reflection and Introspection usually have negative significant correlations with satisfaction with life measures (Leontiev & Osin, 2014), we might assume that Systemic reflection is the only type of reflection that covariates with the personality maturation process. At the same time, a tendency to ruminate or to be focused on "what would be if" situations appeared to be unrelated to personality development. Some scholars also articulated similar assumptions (e.g., Manners & Durkin, 2000), but here we offer their empirical confirmation, though a preliminary one.

Our hypothesis of a negative connection between neuroticism and ego development is to be rejected. Our data showed no significant correlations between these variables despite the theoretical assumptions made earlier in literature (Einstein & Lanning, 1998).

Another hypothesis assumed the role of openness to experience in the process of ego development. Past research reported of that tendency more than once (e.g., Kurtz & Tiegreen, 2005; Lilgendahl, Helson, & John, 2013). In our study openness to experience was also significantly associated with ED level. In contrast to data on Systemic reflection, Openness to experience increased smoothly through the stages, without notable leaps. This does not im-

ply that personality maturity equals to openness, but rather that openness may constitute a necessary condition for the development after the conventional stage.

The data from our path analysis leads to several new assumptions. Constructive (Systemic) self-reflection seems to catalyze the contribution of experience acquisition to further personality development. At the same time, non-constructive forms of self-reflection (Quasi-Reflection and Introspection) seem to be unrelated to Ego development, and predicted by Neuroticism.

Limitations of the present study

As we mentioned, the developmental level of our sample was higher than in general population due to entrance selection, and indeed, the E5 Self-awareness level was modal in our sample rather than standard E4. Therefore, an association between ED and Systemic reflection might not reveal itself in general population, where we may also expect, basing on previous data (Leontiev & Osin, 2014), lower average scores of the Systemic reflection. Therefore, the findings need to be verified with larger samples, and longitudinal design is needed to prove whether and in what ways productive types of self-reflection and inner dialogical activity support and/or drive personality development, and whether nonproductive types of self-reflection and autocommunication impede to it.

Conclusions

The differential model of self-reflection proved to be helpful for highlighting the trajectories of ego development in adolescence and early adulthood and the contribution of inner dialogue to this process. Different aspects of self-reflection behaved in our sample distinctively as refers to their relation to ego development. The Systemic reflection, as well as trait openness to experience, increased along with personality growth in our data. At the same time, non-productive types of self-reflection, although positively associated with Neuroticism, had no significant connections with Ego development level. Before interpreting these data in causal terms further studies are needed and this line

of research seems to be very promising. Our data suggest that the dialogical self gradually emerges through the adolescent transition and seems to be critical for the achievement of highest stages of personal maturity; different kinds of reflective processes are indicative of qualitatively different forms of inner dialogicality.

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This book represents a creative and rigorous effort to apply the perspective of the dialogical self to the fields of personality psychology, studies of identity and cultural psychology. Importantly, it contains new conceptual advances and innovative methodological approaches. I recommend its reading to all interested in this field of knowledge.

Prof. dr Miguel Gonçalves

Dialogical Self Theory (DST) weaves two notions, self and dialogue, together in order to create a bridge between the individual and society. Traditionally, self refers to something 'internal', to processes taking place *within* the individual mind, whereas dialogue is conceived of as something 'external', to communicative processes taking place *between* two or more people. The composite concept 'dialogical self' transcends this dichotomy by bringing the external to the internal and, the other way around, transporting the internal to the external. This allows us to study the self as a *society of 'I-positions'* and, on the other hand, to consider society as populated by the selves of *individual* people contributing to the society from their own specific point of view.

The present book is one of the main results of the Ninth International Conference on the Dialogical Self and covers some of the highlights of this scientific event.

From Introduction



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