

Can the influence on personality development of a school on the characteristics of community and individual existence be detected from the nuclear episodes of students' life histories and their school histories?

Éva Valentné Albert, Tamás Frank

Semmelweis University, Pető András Faculty, Institute of Human Sciences

valentne.albert.eva@semmelweis.hu; frank.tamas.zsolt@semmelweis.hu

The educational impact of upbringing or schooling is more difficult to grasp than the "added value" of its knowledge transfer role. Our paper, however, seems to provide a way of measuring the personality-changing impact of school. The aim of the present research paper is to show how school stories and other important life history episodes can be used to implicitly provide information about one of the "added values" of school, its impact on personal development. Our study draws life story episodes from semi-structured qualitative interviews with former pupils of two schools of a Roman Catholic order in Hungary. From an analysis of these episodes after fitting them into McAdams' life history model, we infer the role of the school in the life history of the individual, its personality-changing effects on the mirror of the individual (agency) and communal (communion) existence with Bakan's terms. In the paper we describe the coding process in detail using one interview participant's three life stories, then we show the results of the coding applied for other alumnae's life and school stories.

Keywords: schools of the Society of the Sacred Heart, communicative memory, interview, life history analysis (individual and community life)

"Who do we want to educate? Not insignificant people whose goodness consists merely in not being bad... Who can make them want to be more, to become, in Montalembert's words, 'a shadow, an echo, or a vestige of the real good'?" [1]

1. Introduction

Choosing the right methodology for researching and processing historical and educational sources provides an opportunity to get answers to research questions. Of course, the origins of exploratory-analytical work are not only based on the choice of the relevant methodology, but also on the correct cultivation of research methodology [2].

In addition to the classical exploratory work based on archival sources, research on the history of education has already applied the interpretation of the results of descriptive statistics [3], and a new generation of computer-assisted exploratory work has appeared, such as network research [4], which is not only new from a research technology point of view, but also opens up completely new dimensions of the interpretative framework in terms of the results of historical exploratory work. Similarly, data visualization – due to its novelty – can represent a new generation of educational history research.

The heyday of content analysis, which is a popular tool in historical research, dates back to the late 19th century, when quantitative analysis of press organs was carried out. The relevance of the scientific quality of the methodology was created by the mapping of the communication of the opposing sides in World War II, the analysis of the texts of the enemy troops: the Allies tried to anticipate the actual German military attacks from the communication between the German troops.

Content analysis, which appeared on the horizon of press research and then took root in the educational history research scene, has a history going back several decades, and its rapid development was made possible by the advent of computer aggregates. As a result, not only has the size of the text corpus expanded considerably, but the sharp contrast between qualitative and quantitative methodology has been mitigated by the integration of mixed methods. Of course, not only historical research but also other branches of the social sciences (e.g. psychology) prefer content analysis, but, referring to the historical node, the method can also be put to military use.

The starting point of content analysis methodology is coding, which can be at word or text level [5], but the fundamental distinction is the method of constructing the coding system: inductive, deductive or combined logic is used to explore the text and identify the meanings it contains, similar to other researchers, e.g. [6]. The approach also implies a difference in approach: the extent to which we wish to "let the text come to us" versus the extent to which the canon of the literature is applied in the construction of the code system, in the subject under study.

In the case of qualitative content analysis in particular, but also in the case of quantitative content analysis, it can be argued that it is not merely an isolated analysis of data, but that the knowledge of the context of the source under study allows for a complex analytical and interpretative work in the course of the patterns

that are revealed¹ [7, 8]. This desire to search for patterns leads to the need to choose between content analysis methods. The choice of the appropriate content analysis method is also motivated by the decision to explore and analyse latent or manifest content. Thus, the exploration and interpretation of the explicit and implicit features present in the sources also induces a methodological choice, so that a methodological diversification of the methodological palette of content analysis has taken place in order to achieve the research objectives, also due to the emergence of the former aspects. Different, but fundamentally similar, content analysis methodologies have emerged [9]. Some of them have a science-specific character, such as corpus linguistic content analysis, which is also used in spatial (environmental) psychology [10], but other spectrums of content analysis have also gained ground, such as automated content analysis, qualitative thematic content analysis [11], which is also reflected in several explorations of the history of education [12, 13, 14, 15]. Other studies, stepping outside the boundaries set by the text, derive specific meanings from the interpretation of buildings [16].²

The aim of the present research paper is to show how school stories and other important life history episodes can be used to implicitly provide information about one of the "added values" of school, its impact on personal development. Our study draws life story episodes from semi-structured qualitative interviews with former pupils of two schools of a Catholic order in Hungary. From an analysis of these episodes after fitting them into McAdams' life history model, we infer the role of the school in the life history of the individual, its personality-changing effects on the mirror of the individual (agency) and communal (communion) existence [17].

The Society of The Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Women Educational Order (founded in Paris in 1800) in 1883 settled in Budapest, Hungary. It opened its schools in the district VII, on István Road (today Ajtósi Dürer), and in 1917 in Mikszáth Kálmán Square in District VIII. The schools were nationalised in 1948, the members of the order were no longer allowed to teach, and in 1950 the order was dissolved in Hungary [18]. Nevertheless, the memory of the school lives on in the minds of many people. In other words, we would like to capture the impact of the school through the mosaic of volatile communicative memory, one of the components of Jan Assmann's concept of cultural memory [19].

¹ István Dániel Sanda was one of the first in Hungary to perform computer-based discourse and content analysis using the Atlas.ti program.

² "The primary problem for every philosophical school of thought is the possibilities and circumstances of the encounter between the subject and reality. I believe that humans and the world shape each other mutually. It is not possible to interpret this process unilaterally. Our reality-shaping activity is nothing more than the placement of signs in space, that is, in the world. By entering the framework of reality, these signs are no longer exclusively the property of the "I." (...) In my view, the function of the sign is to mediate the relationship of the "I" to reality, while the functional purpose of reality is rather to preserve the system of countless points of encounter in the world." [16:185-186]

On the basis of the interviews, we performed a life history analysis, on the one hand, based on the experiences and nuclear episodes corresponding to the McAdams life history model, and on the other hand, the school stories highlighted from the answers to the interview questions.

Based on the 13 interviews, a longer dissertation [14] discusses the guiding principles of the interview participants' families [20], family coping strategies [21], and various cases of multigenerational family value transmission [22], which can be depicted in genograms, and in some cases the symbolic family effect system [23], from the life stories of the participants.

In the most important stories about the school, the beautiful feasts, the frequent renunciation of speech, the silence, the contemplation, the individual care of the sisters ("Cura personalis"), the vocation, all reinforced the family culture, the deepening of the relationship with God, one of the most important results of which was the will, the perseverance, the effort and the dedication to the community in a given situation. The latter can be seen both in the more pronounced community attitude in the alumnae' life stories and in the functioning of a memory community with a close network of relationships between pupil, sister, teacher and parent, which goes beyond the school years.

Our research now focuses on the individual and communal implicit contents that can be extracted from school and life episodes.

The educational impact of upbringing or schooling is more difficult to grasp than the "added value" of its knowledge transfer role. The analyses presented in detail below, however, seem to provide a way of measuring the influence on personality development of school.

2. Memory and life story interview

The process of coding is illustrated through three stories of sister Eva, a former student and later a member of the Order, from different periods of her life.

In the life story interview that McAdams offers, he asks the participants about the chapters of the subject's life, key (nuclear) episodes, their future, their struggles, their personal ideology. Among these, we highlight questions on nuclear episodes, which ask about the best moments in the participant's life; worst memories; turning points in her life, turning points in fate; early, positive and negative memories from childhood (see Table 1) [24].

Table 1
Connecting McAdams' nuclear episodes with school stories

McAdams' nuclear episodes	Nuclear episodes with school stories
the earliest memory of her childhood	the earliest memory of her childhood
the most beautiful memory in the history of life	the most beautiful memory <i>from the school</i>
the worst memory in the history of life	the worst memory <i>from the school</i>
turning point in the life story	turning point in the life story

In the research on the life histories of Sacré Coeur alumnae [14], the questions and answers on the school-age phase of life can be partially mapped to the questions of the McAdams life history interview. However, while the former focuses on school and its impact, the latter refers to the whole life span. The turning points in both studies relate to the adult life stage.

McAdams examined the measurable proportion of two typical modes of existence from the nuclear episodes in life histories. Humans have an "individual" (agency) and a "communal" (communion) mode of being. The "individual" is manifested in self-protection, self-confidence and self-expansion, the communal in cooperation. [17, 25] The coding system³ applicable to McAdams' "individual" and "communal" types was carried out on the life-history episodes of six participants in the Sacré Coeur study cited above and reported at a conference [26], but no detailed publication on the results of the analysis has yet appeared. In the present research, the coding system is applied to a single episode in the life story of Sister Eva, a former Sacré Coeur student and member of the order. Of the four significant nuclear episodes, the earliest, the most beautiful, and the fate-transforming story of adulthood are discussed. Although bad memories of the school were recalled by the participants, these were almost absent, thanks to Merkel's retrospective idealisation framework, (n)ostalgia, which serves to protect the individual when his core values are externally devalued in a way that he cannot change [27, as cited in 28:22].

The coding was done as follows, first independently and then jointly for the three stories. If any of the following eight themes appear explicitly in the life story episode, the scoring table will score 1 in the theme column, if they do not appear explicitly, the score will be 0. For each episode, we added up the 'individual' and 'community' points, so that an episode can receive up to 4 individual points and up to 4 community points.

Topics of an "individual" nature are listed with their names and abbreviations:

- Self Master (SM), self-actualization, leap of self-awareness through new life goals, dramatic insight into life, taking control of life. e.g., I'll be a nun, whatever they say

³ Retrieved March 4, 2019, from <https://www.sesp.northwestern.edu/foley/instruments/agency/>

- Status/Victory (SV), special increase in prestige among peers, e.g. performing in a self-education group
- Achievement/Responsibility (AR), successfully completing a task, taking responsibility, e.g. running a marathon at 61.
- Empowerment (EM), God manifesting Himself

Themes of a "community" nature with their names and abbreviations:

- Love/Friendship (LF), friendship. love
- Dialogue (DG), conversation, not quarrelling
- Caring/Help (CH), to give help, to provide care
- Unity/Togetherness (UT), community, to belong

The most important novelty of our research is that we apply an analysis method applied to life history interviews to school stories, based on the suggestion of our doctoral school supervisor Ágnes Boreczky. In this way, the analysis of the nuclear episodes of the life-history phase, which are school stories, can also measure the influence on personality development of school [26].

3. Episodes in the life story of a Sacré Coeur alumna, later a sister, in the duality of "individual" and "communal" existence

In the following, the coding process is described in detail using three stories. It is very difficult to remain indifferent and cram a human life into numbers. It would be more accurate to say that we are presenting some of the outstanding moments in the life of a special person, and we hope that the reader will not only take pleasure in the way the stories are coded to reveal clear evidence of a 'communal' or 'individual' existence, but also feel how the storyteller shudderingly recounts the most cherished or uplifting moments of her life. The following is an early memory from an interview with the narrator of the reminiscence, Sister Eva.

We have underlined the components of individual or communal existence, but so that the reader is not left idle, we have footnoted the code for the underlined part. We invite the reader to re-read the themes of individual and communal existence and code with us. The stories have been transcribed while preserving the naturalness of live speech.

Sister Eva did not share any names or other details about her family, so I created the genogram based on the stories she told me. The story takes place in the late 1930s. Until 1918, Kosice was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire under the name

Kassa, then, according to the First Vienna Award, it belonged to Hungary again from 1938 to early 1945.

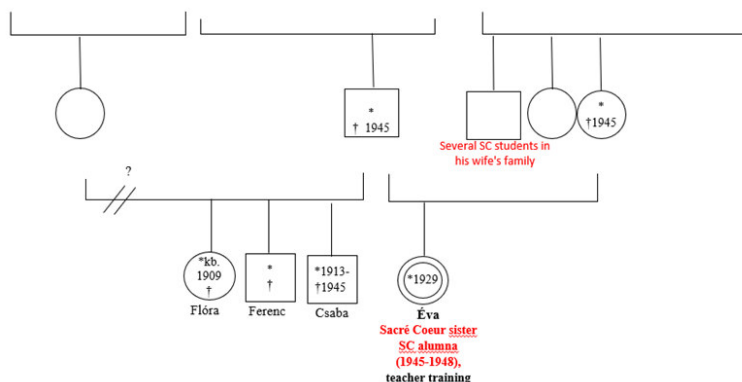


Figure 1

Sister Eva's genogram

"I've been going to the cinema a lot since I was very young in Kassa. There was a very famous American dancing girl, one film after another was made with her, her name was Shirley Temple, if I remember correctly. She had quite a cult, a society in Kosice. You could get photographs of her there, of her various roles. We watched all her films⁴, one after the other. She could jig dancing. Jig dancing was tap dancing, and I, as a child, at home, I wanted to learn to jig dance⁵, and I could have, but I couldn't make the noise that went with jig dancing, the beat... I was so unfortunate that I couldn't jig, that I couldn't hear it, the way Shirley danced. Years later, I realised that you need a special shoe to do that."

At the time of our story, in the 1930s, this little girl in this story recounted her first memories of a passion that would later survive, a fascination with the art of dance. We can almost see the little girl going to the cinema, a real community experience (UT), admiring the child actor, and then at home learning the steps, learning to jig (AR). How disappointed she must have been that she did not sound like she did on the screen. In 1945, the most tragic year of Éva's life, she entered the Sacré Coeur Sophianum School in Budapest.

The Sophianum, the school on Mikszáth Kálmán Square, was named after the founder of the order. The Society of the Sacred Heart was founded on 21 November

⁴ UT

⁵ AR

1800 by Madeleine Sophie Barat (1779-1865)⁶, who was canonised in 1925. The goal of the society, as stated in § 4 of the old Constitution⁷ of 1815, was:

„The aim of this Society is, therefore, to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus by labouring for the salvation and perfection of its members through the imitation of the virtues of which this Divine Heart is the centre and model, and by consecrating them, as far as it is possible for women, to the sanctification of others, as the work dearest to the Heart of Jesus." /§4. Constitutions of 1815, approved December 22, 1826”

The means for the realisation of the objects of the company according to the so-called old Constitution (Rules of Order) of 1815, §6. /approved December 22, 1826/:

- "1. The education of children as boarders.
2. The free instruction of poor children as day-pupils.
3. Retreats offered to persons living in the world.
4. Such contacts with people outside our communities as spring necessarily from its work."

A beautiful but painful memory from 1945:

"The Spiritual Exercises. It was unforgettable. It was my conversion in general. When my parents died, we were in a spiritual exercise at the Sophianum⁸, and one of the reasons was that Gyorskocsi Street was so far away, there was no bridge, so I didn't go with my parents, but only on Saturdays, when they were no longer alive. There was a spiritual exercise at the Sophianum. Then there were Jesuits who gave the lectures, a very famous one who also wrote books, but I forget his name, he gave the lectures. There was one lecture that struck me so much. He spoke to us⁹ about creation, about the microcosm and the macrocosm. I was so..., I don't know what he said, I don't know the content anymore, but I know that it was a moment that changed me terribly inside, that once God said something to me¹⁰. So, from that moment on I was interested in God and interested in religion. So, I became a completely different person, and that was the week my parents died. When the weekend was over, I went to look for them, I couldn't find them. And then we found them on Monday. They had been dead for a week."

⁶ [13:164]

⁷ The English version of the old Constitution is the source of the text, which is the property of the Order. The current members of the Sacred Heart Society (Sacré Coeur) monastic order in Hungary and around the world live their monastic life according to the Constitution (Rules of the Order) renewed after Vatican Council II.

⁸ UT

⁹ DG

¹⁰ EM

The story describes the harrowing experience of Eva's conversion, while at the same time, in ruined Budapest, shortly after the end of the war, she suddenly loses her parents, both at the same time. She finds God, or God finds her (EM), just when she needs him most... According to McAdams' coding, the above story also includes conversation (DG) as a communal feature. The experience of belonging is also suggested by the use of the plural. Eva has only been at this school for a few weeks, so it is understandable that she does not have a strong sense of belonging to a community. The soul-searching experience of the various church celebrations or festive events, which makes the larger community tangible, was a typical motif of the most beautiful stories (cf. [29, 30]).

The third analysed story is the turning point episode from the life story interview.

"When Mère Jármai became the superior, Mère Korinszky became the Maître Général and I loved her very much¹¹ and went to visit her several times. Once, during a conversation¹², she says: I thought you were going to go on with life in a different way. I was frightened and asked: why, what did you think? I thought you had a vocation. I had already told Mère Jármai a year earlier that I had a vocation, she had probably talked to (Korinszky) Fanni about it... I said I had a vocation, but I don't know where. I don't know anything else but the Sacré Coeur, I don't know where God wants me to go¹³ ... She gave me the advice: 'Go and get to know other orders', she knew then what the end of the orders would be, I didn't know then. 'The important thing now is not for you to learn something; the important thing is for you to join as soon as possible.'"

In the fate-turning, signposting story, love (LF) and conversation appear, and among the individual characteristics, God (EM) (see Table 2)

¹¹ LF

¹² DG

¹³ EM

Summary

Table 2

The coding used for the nuclear episodes of the McAdams life story interview in Sister Eva's school and turning point stories

	Agency				Communal				Agency: Communion
	SM	SV	AR	EM	LF	DG	CH	UT	3:5
The earliest	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1:1
The most beautiful	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1:2
Turning point	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1:2

The coding described above was performed on a total of 6 students' 4-4 stories, as all 4 types of stories were present in the selected students' life story episodes.

Table 3

Codes used for the nuclear episodes of the McAdams life story interview in the earliest stories of 6 students

	Agency				Communal				Agency: Communion
	SM	SV	AR	EM	LF	DG	CH	UT	7:4
	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0:1
	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1:1
	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2:0
	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1:1
Sister Eva	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1:1
	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2:0

The earliest childhood stories are dominated by Agency factor, the individuality. In these stories, the participant typically speaks in the first-person singular (see Table 3).

Table 4

Codes used for the most beautiful school memories for 6 students

	Agency				Communal				Agency: Communion
	SM	SV	AR	EM	LF	DG	CH	UT	6:11
	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2:2
	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1:3
	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	2:2
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0:1
Sister Eva	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1:2
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0:1

In the most beautiful stories related to school, the community experience is intensified (UT=5), reinforced, becomes tangible, and conversations (DG=4) also become stronger. So does the experience of God (EM=3). (see Table 3).

Table 5
Codes used for the worst school memories for 6 students

	Agency				Communal				Agency: Communion
	SM	SV	AR	EM	LF	DG	CH	UT	7:5
	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0:1
	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2:1
	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2:0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0:1
Sister Eva	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1:1
	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	2:1

In the worst parts of school memories, the number of conversations decreases, and the struggle intensifies (improving bad grades, nationalization or secularization, which are experienced as major disruptions). It is important to note that these stories have hardly appeared due to the Merkel-style (n)ostalgia.

Table 6
Codes used for the nuclear episodes of the McAdams life story interview in the adult turning point life stories of 6 alumnae

	Agency				Communal				Agency: Communion
	SM	SV	AR	EM	LF	DG	CH	UT	6:14
	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1:3
	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1:2
	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0:3
	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	2:2
Sister Eva	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1:2
	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1:2

In the most important story of adulthood, there is a strengthened individuality, the Self, but the communal is more fully expressed (see Table 6). The daily experience of the large community of school is eclipsed by the fateful conversations, friendships and support, in line with educational goals.

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