

Abstract

Ethological researchers have been investigated a behaviour of couples when they meet for the first time in the long time. Studies are focused especially on the behaviour in the courtship context. Courtship is a process in which possible mating partners express interest about each other and it can lead to formation of romantic relationship. However, the studies focused on this behaviour of younger people in the same situation are missing. We are interested about behaviour of adolescents, the group of people which starts to step off the isosexual groups (typical for children), to manifest an interest in the opposite sex and to create the first romantic relationships. The aim of this study is to investigate how adolescent girls and adult women behave when they meet an unknown partner for the first time, how the behaviour changes in two situations – the first meeting and after one hour interaction, and which differences we can see in the behaviour of adolescents and adult women.

Own research was based on the analyse of video recordings of couples who were recorded in standard environment by hidden camera. There were two situations – the interaction when the unknown couple meet at the first time and the interaction of the same couple when they know each other one hour. The video recordings of ten adolescent girls at the age of 13 and ten adult women at the age 20+ were used for analysis. The behaviour of girls and women was coded by ethogram which was prepared in advance. Their own acting was divided to separate behaviour dimensions (Positive involvement, Flirt, Intimate, Aversive behaviour, Submission, Nervousness and Dominance).

A more flirting behaviour was occurred by adult women on average. On the other hand, adolescent girls more regulate their behaviour, especially in terms of dimensions of Positive involvement and Aversive behaviour, these are displays typical for manifestation of personal attitude towards the other.

There were found out the connections of flirt and aversive behaviour in the group of adolescent girls. These are displays which may have ambivalent meaning for this age group. It is not obvious, if this behaviour predicates the interest, lack of interest or it is a self-presentation behaviour of girls in this age. Adolescents manifested more nervousness in situation when they have met the partner for the first time. It seems that the first meeting causes a higher stress for girls which is projected in their behaviour.

Key words:

nonverbal communication, cross-sex interaction, peer relationships, courtship, expressiveness