



## ГЛАВА 10. ПРИМЕНЕНИЕ СТРАТЕГИЙ РЕШЕНИЯ ПРОБЛЕМ ПРИ УСЛОВИИ УЧАСТИЯ В ПРОГРАММАХ ОБМЕНА

*ЗАСТОСУВАННЯ СТРАТЕГІЙ ВИРІШЕННЯ ПРОБЛЕМ ЗА УМОВИ УЧАСТІ В ПРОГРАМАХ ОБМІНУ*

*APPLICATION OF PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGIES UNDER CONDITION OF PARTICIPATING IN EXCHANGE PROGRAMS*

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### **Introduction**

According to UNESCO, in 2010, 3.6 million students have completed higher education outside their home country. For comparison, in 2000, about 2 million students were studying abroad in the world, and their estimated number will reach 5.8 million in 2020 [Santiago P., Tremblay K., Basri E., Arnal E., 2008].

The number of students studying abroad (including exchange programs), the desire to provide and improve the level of educational services related to the admission of foreign students, necessitates the study of the problems the exchange students encounter, encourages the analysis of theory and practice of applying behavioral forms that can help exchange students to overcome the barriers while studying and staying abroad.

By "exchange students," we mean the social phenomenon, status, and process of gaining knowledge and skills in a non-national institution of study and characterize their social feeling as a marginal state [Samarska L., 2017].

The social feeling of a student abroad is characterized by a marginal state: the influence of another culture, traditions, behaviors and the need to adhere to the values, norms and rules of the host country; the necessity of adjusting their routine to a new model or finding acceptable substitutes; building an alternative to the permanent and habitual image of the self (including the level of one's own educational aspirations and limitations).

### **Problem of research**

Thus, in the context of increasing student mobility, personal success practices, which become the main resource for constructive response and successful socialization, professional growth, and the dominant resource for increasing competitiveness in the new cultural context, are relevant. The development of such practices is becoming a worldwide trend. Therefore, in modern psycho-pedagogical science, there are more and more publications devoted to overcoming behavior, coping strategies of survival, self-regulated behavior.

The basis of theoretical and applied developments of overcoming behavior - psychoanalytic theory of Y. Alexandrov, Z. Freud, social-cognitive theory of A. Bandura, psychological and pedagogical methods of personality development in activity (Leontiev A.N., 2004), study of the phenomenon of personality success (Badrak V. V. 2011), research of self-regulation as a mechanism of stability of nature and man (Grynyova M., 2016).

The personal and behavioral characteristics of successful people became the object of research by I. Molchanov (2019), Guy Lefrancois (2003), and R. Sternberg (2015); coping behavior strategies are analyzed by S. Folkman, R. Lazarus, S. Pimley,



J. Novacek (1987), V. Levchenko (2010), N. Sas (2018).

The choice from alternatives developed on the example of managerial decision-making is revealed in their works: N. Sas (2013), O. I. Solovyova, O. O. Solovyova, L. Trofimova, V. Trofimov (2012); the possibility of applying mathematical modeling to these issues – V. Lefevre (2003).

In the works of N. Afanasieva (2019), E. Bulygin (2005), V. Vrublevskaya (2014), M. Grinyova (2016), R. Sternberg (2015), L. Hay (2016), specific techniques and practices that can help change behavior to be successful are presented. Reflexivity and self-educational competence as mechanisms of self-development, disclosed by N. Sas (2018).

### **Research Objective**

The analysis and generalization of the publications published on the mentioned issues gives reason to say that, despite the relevance, the research on the formation of successful exchange students' behavior has not yet been carried out, which has influenced the choice of the research topic.

Among the unsolved issues: the use of problem-solving strategies in exchange programs has not been explored; successful behavior formation practices that can be applied and adapted to address problems the exchange students encounter are not systematized.

### **Research Focus**

It should be noted that we talk about teenagers (200-250 people from Ukraine annually) who have overcome the selection process of 11 thousand applications and who, naturally, have leadership qualities, are autonomous in solving vital, or test issues and are potentially ready to establish new connections.

### **Methodology**

The empirical part of the study of strategies for responding to the problems of exchange students was carried out in three stages.

The first stage was to choose the research problems and to gather general information about the research problems. The subjects of the study were selected: 1) identification of the exchange students' problems; 2) identification of exchange students' behavioral responses to problems.

During the second stage, data was collected to create and form questionnaires.

To identify the problems of exchange students, we analyzed the websites of organizations, sites of different educational institutions in the respective countries that organize exchanges and host international students. The sites provide general information on exchange programs, conditions of participation, advice to participants on legal, social, and cultural characteristics of living and studying in a particular country. Bloggers give examples of individual experiences (achievements and defeats, problems, and their real solution, personal, often emotional enough attitude to what is happening). Typical issues are grouped by rating objects: school, nutrition, social and everyday life, about patriotism, on differences in adolescent behavior (Samarska L., 2017, 2018).

During the development of the questionnaire to identify the particular features of behavioral strategies of exchange students (during problem solving), we relied on the research of V. Levchenko, V. Lefevre, N. Sas, O. Solovieva, L. Trofimova, V.



Trofimov regarding behavioral strategies in the context of moral choice, decision-making criteria for solving structured and unstructured problems, successful and unsuccessful coping strategies.

In the third stage, the survey has been conducted. Exchange students' problems were identified in 2017-2018. The behavioral responses exchange students have to problems were discovered in 2018-2019.

### **Participants**

A total of 115 exchange students took part in the survey, having studied in the United States as participants of the FLEX program and were hosted by local families in different years. The survey was anonymous, conducted among girls and boys between 15 and 22 years old.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

Both surveys were conducted using the online survey method. Questionnaires were developed for the survey, which was posted on the Google Forms platform and distributed via newsletters through social networks: Instagram, Facebook messenger.

### **Findings**

The analysis of the results of the study of the particular features of "exchange students" revealed that: 50% of the respondents feel that they have problems with switching the food culture; 58.3% noted that the subjects studied were too light or boring; 53,8% - feel discomfort because they cannot respond quickly to other people; 50% avoid contact because they feel afraid of being misunderstood; 57.1% feel emotional discomfort, believing that they have problems that no one else has; 68.2% of the respondents experience so much self-doubt that even when they receive admiration, they feel like it is just an act of kindness.

The analysis of the characteristics of behavioral strategies revealed the following problems in solving problems: 97.5% of the survey participants had to overcome difficulties while studying/living abroad, and 22.3% indicated that they had not completely overcome them. These results show the relevance of the research topic and the need for practical steps to solve the problems of "exchange students."

Solving problems of "exchange students", "foreign students", "international students", "mobile" students ", " foreign participants in the educational process" in terms of gaining knowledge and skills in a non-national educational institution of a country, in the context of the need to identify and develop the ability to overcome international language and interstate barriers, to establish contacts quickly, to successfully adapt to another educational space is possible due to complex psychological and behavioral mechanisms. This is evidenced by the following results.

Despite the fact that the majority (72.8%) of students preferred a rational approach to solving problems, the specification of emotional feelings revealed their full spectrum: heightened anxiety - 54.3%; helplessness - 37%; decrease in self-esteem - 24.7%; aggression - 13.6%; a strong desire to solve the problem as soon as possible - 56.8%; fear of seeking help - 22.2%; apathy - 18.5%; excitement to solve the problem -12.3%; annoyance -38.3%. The excessive number of calls, the need for an immediate response, obviously led to different coping strategies: constructive and destructive.

Responses to the question "Who did you ask for support and who helped you



most?" were as follows: host family – 45.6%; friends in the country of exchange – 46.9%; family in their home country – 39.5%; local coordinator – 24.7%; friends in their home country – 16%; teachers/ counselor in the country of exchange – 14.8%. The results of the survey show that the participants of the international exchange programs are quite communicative, adapt quickly, seeking support from the host family and friends in the country of exchange. Relatives from the home country remain a significant source of support. Please note that only 3.6% of participants asked other exchange students for assistance. The explanation is evident that students who are experiencing the marginal state at the same time are experiencing the same problems and are not looking for each other and may not be able to provide support. In our view, graduates of exchange programs could provide such assistance, but there is no possibility of such.

According to the participants, the following factors led them to succeed in solving the problem: an analysis of the task – 37%; planning and problem solving – 54.3%; accepting responsibility for the results of solving the problem – 58%; "Social distraction" – 14.8%; "Seeking social support" – 18.5%. The results indicate that exchange students mostly use successful coping strategies. Participating in an exchange program is a great success for a teenager. Participation in qualifying rounds, preparation for study, and the stay in another country positively influences the selection of successful behavioral strategies. The following factors were offered as success factors for solving delicate situations during study and stay abroad: diplomacy and communication; change in attitude towards problems – 3.6%.

To the question "What hindered success in solving the problem?" – 35.8% of the respondents said: "... pessimistic thoughts about their achievements". From the answers: culture shock, reevaluation of values, lack of familiar surroundings, the need to start from scratch. The strategies of "finger-pointing," "avoiding," "procrastination," indicated by 17.3%, 45.7%, and 42% of the respondents respectively are non-constructive. It is well known that there are inversely proportional dependencies between the use of avoidance, distraction, emotional response, aggressive response, and successful problem-solving strategies. In an unfamiliar environment, the selection of these behavioral reactions can have extremely negative consequences. Especially essential are self-regulation skills, which are lacking.

The need to adapt in the new environment, change behavioral stereotypes, evaluative judgments led to a situation of total choice. The moral choice (the decision between good and evil) or the option of alternatives was indicated by 48.1% and 51.9%, respectively. Among the problems that had to be solved, 42% of the respondents noted structured (with known cause and effect) problems. 60.5% of the survey participants reported unstructured (with unknown possible consequences) that required a solution.

Of the selection criteria used by the survey participants, 64.2% choose the best option; 19.8% avoid the worst; 13.6% - select the option with the lowest risk; 1.2% - choose the most predictable option; 1.2% - act depending on the situation. It is noted that the most predictable option is selected as a criterion by only 1.2% of respondents, which indicates the influence of the emotional component of choice.



Choosing in a new cultural and social environment is similar to choosing under extreme conditions, with time, resources, and information constraints. The more, in our view, the preparation for actions similar to the extreme, and the more important is the development of appropriate skills.

### **Discussion and conclusion**

The survey found that students participating in exchange programs tend to choose effective coping strategies to solve problems, and if they do, try to choose the best option. The results of the survey confirmed the need for purposeful formation of the successful behavior of the exchange students, which necessitates consideration of the theoretical foundations of the issue.

In the works of N. Afanasieva, E. Bulygin, V. Vrublevskaya, M. Grinyova, P. Clancy, R. Sternberg, L. Hay are presented separate techniques and practices that can help to change behavior to be successful. Reflexivity and self-educational competence as mechanisms of self-development is disclosed by N. Sas. It seems interesting to study the possibility of purposeful formation of the successful behavior of exchange students.

Thus, according to L. Hay, for negative experiences not to affect the life of the individual, it is necessary to apply positive thinking. The main points of positive thinking for L. Hay are: everything that a person gives to the world inevitably turns back; "Relationships with yourself is a romance for life" (Oscar Wald), so they need to be paid attention to far more than the love experiences (because they are passing); you should love yourself and your inner child, appreciate your inner adult; if you see a problem as an opportunity to change and the potential for growth in a crisis, you will never be caught by surprise; one should not try to correct the problem, it is better to change their minds - and the problem will be corrected itself [Hay L. E. (2016)]. L. Hay proposes developing the habit of thinking positively with the help of a system of regular, repetitive settings (affirmations), for example, the following: "I am free from dependencies and negatives. I easily get rid of bad influences and habits. I manage cash flows easily"; "I forgive you for not being the way I would like to see you. I forgive and release you"; "I love and accept you as you are"; "I always find the positive and deserve the best in life!"; "I am ready for new experiences and experiments. I take care of my inner child. I trust myself and other people!"

Complementing the suggestions of L. Hay and P. Clancy, V. Vrublevskaya developed the following steps of self-development of a successful person's consciousness: raising the level of self-esteem (healthy self-esteem is essential for achieving an adequate understanding of one's importance, respectively, for forming a successful personality); reformatting of consciousness (getting rid of complexes acquired in childhood); developing the thinking of a successful person (each person is unique; a person can achieve anything he wants; a person has unlimited power over himself); forming a sense of self-confidence and belief in the achievement of the desirable (which programs our consciousness as the consciousness of a successful person); the use of positive affirmations (the simplest mental techniques capable of unconsciously or consciously influencing our brain, our consciousness, sincere belief in these statements) [Vrublevska V. E (2014); Hay L. E. (2016)].

The technique of neurolinguistic programming (NLP) (E. Bulygin) is of interest



[Bulygin E. E. (2005)]. Let's say you don't just have to look good, but look right to someone's specific criteria, according to his/her idea of how to look right. To understand how we need to look and what behavior we need to demonstrate to be more profitable to put ourselves in front of this particular person, E. Bulygin proposes to do the following. Imagine what it would be like if you were him/her. How would you feel, what would you be concerned about, worried, what would be important to you, what is interesting, what is pleasant, what is disgusting or unacceptable, etc.? Associate yourself with him/her and live like that for a few minutes. If you find it possible ability to walk his/her walk, say something in his/her manner, or at least reproduce a few typical gestures of that person, then your unconscious will receive and refine such an amount of information about that person that you will even be able to predict his/her decisions. Then you have to imagine what exactly he/she likes, create this "movie." And now you can go to a meeting and do what you need without thinking about how to behave - everything will work out automatically. The procedure described is programming, that is, the creation of an NLP (neuro-linguistic programming) program.

M. Grinyova [Grinyova M. (2016)], N. Afanasieva [Afanasieva N. Y. "Brain Exercise"] develop and practice methods and techniques of self-regulation in any situation. These include: methods and techniques for developing confident behavior in an unfamiliar setting and when interacting with unfamiliar examiners; methods of distribution, switching, focusing in urgent situations; techniques for developing positive thinking, setting for success, fears of failure, and techniques for turning them into confidence and success; techniques for making optimal decisions and effectively planning their activities within a limited time; drawing up and using mental maps for long-term memorization, goal setting and planning; o time management in the assessment situation; methods of maintaining high performance under conditions of prolonged concentration and stress; techniques for rapid stress relief Afanasieva [Afanasieva N. Y. "Brain Exercise"].

All the people who succeed are united by characteristic behavior: similar actions and the same attitude to time, space, calendar. Understanding these characteristics is very important on the road to success; they are not genetics driven – all of this can be learned and made part of your life. Thus, R. Sternberg argues that a successful person is characterized by an optimal combination of three types of thinking: creative, practical, and analytical. Successful people know how to get the most out of their positive qualities and can act competently in any situation [Sternberg R. (2015)]. They are persistent and purposeful, have strong motivation, understand how to go forward, overcoming all obstacles. An important role is played by self-organization: the ability to set specific tasks; respect time (your own and those around you); plan a day; to determine priorities; focus on tasks; study the case in detail before taking it up; continually improving yourself; ability to stop working on time (to take a break for a break, to stop work on a failing project); the ability to organize space, to understand the variability of time and the world around you.

Thus, the use of positive thinking, a system of regular, repetitive setups (affirmations) will help to generate positive self-motivation; applying the steps of self-development of a successful person's consciousness - to develop cognitive ideas



about successful behavior; practicing Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP) techniques, mastering the behaviors of successful people, methods and techniques of self-regulation will help to shape successful behaviors. In our opinion, they can be systematized and used for the purposeful formation of the successful practice of exchange students.

During the 2018 – 2019 survey of exchange students, we were interested in what, in the opinion of those studying abroad, might help them to deal with the problems they face. Among the answers to the question, “What could help solve your problem (resources, tips, etc.)?” the most popular responses were: tips from alumni (alumni) who encountered the same problems; knowledge of the law; better psychological preparation before the exchange (analysis of the experience of previous exchange students; self-regulation techniques); resources to provide tips and examples of solutions to problems, such as an online platform that will bring together generations of students to share different experiences and opinions.

The need for a resource to help structure and analyze the problem independently was confirmed by 72.8% of respondents. 92.6% think it would be useful to create a social network that would allow them to quickly find alumni of exchange programs who are likely to have encountered similar problems and could provide advice; 85.2% agreed to participate in such a network.

However, the survey found that alumni tips may help solve exchange student problems, knowledge of the necessary laws of the host country, better psychological preparation before exchange (in particular, analysis of the experience of previous exchange students, mastering self-regulation techniques). Regarding a resource that would help exchange students to self-structure and analyze existing problems, survey participants believe it could be a social network that would help to find alumni of exchange programs faster. We see the prospect of creating a social network of alumni and exchange program members to support each other and help solve adaptation problems in the host country.