FOREIGN STUDENTS ADAPTATION IN A NEW SOCIO-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Abstract. Modern requirements dictate the need to actively develop and implement an adaptation system for international students, which will be able to ensure effective interactive and informational interaction between all actors in the socio-cultural environment. In accordance with the requirements, a theoretical analysis of scientific papers on the process of adaptation of foreign students through the prism of the environmental approach. The purpose of scientific research is to reveal the peculiarities of the process of adaptation of foreign students in the new socio-cultural environment. With the help of scientific and theoretical analysis, it is stated that the success of adaptation of a foreign student in the socio-cultural environment is determined by the adaptive psychophysiological level, individual characteristics; temperament, character, special abilities; life experience, in particular, intellectual. The conducted scientific and theoretical research allowed us to clarify the difference between the biological and social aspects of adaptation of foreign students in the socio-cultural environment. It is emphasized that the process of adaptation characterized by the presence of the subject of certain skills and means of interaction in the socio-cultural environment. Levels of research of adaptation of foreign students in the sociocultural environment are described: personal and group. Taking into account the levels of research on the adaptation of foreign students, the main criteria and relevant types of adaptation of foreign students in the socio-cultural environment are highlighted. It is concluded that the scale of adaptation of foreign students in the socio-cultural environment will depend on the level of changes in living environment and may vary from small lifestyle modifications to the
transformation of the entire cultural system with its social, ethnic, psychological and ideological components.

**Key words:** adaptation, biological aspect of adaptation, social aspect of adaptation, environment, socio-cultural environment.

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АДАПТАЦІЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ СТУДЕНТІВ У НОВОМУ СОЦІОКУЛЬТУРНОМУ СЕРЕДОВИЩІ

Анотація. Сучасні вимоги диктують необхідність активного розроблення та запровадження системи адаптації для іноземних студентів, яка зможе забезпечити ефективну інтерактивно-інформаційну взаємодію між усіма суб’єктами соціокультурного середовища. Відповідно до висунутої вимоги, було проведено теоретичний аналіз наукових праць стосовно процесу адаптації іноземних студентів через призму середовищного підходу. Метою наукової розвідки – розкрити особливості процесу адаптації іноземних студентів у новому соціокультурному середовищі. За допомогою науково-теоретичного аналізу, констатовано те, що успішність адаптації іноземного студента у соціокультурному середовищі визначається адаптивним психофізіологічним рівнем, індивідуальними особливостями; темпераментом, характером, спеціальними здібностями; життєвим досвідом, зокрема, інтелектуальними. Проведене науково-теоретичне дослідження, надало нам змогу уточнити різницю між біологічним і соціальним аспектами адаптації іноземних студентів у соціокультурному середовищі. Наголошено на тому, що процес адаптації характеризується наявністю у суб’єкта окремих навичок та засобів взаємодії у соціокультурному середовищі. Описано рівні дослідження адаптації іноземних студентів у соціокультурному середовищі: особистий та груповий. Враховуючи рівні дослідження адаптації іноземних студентів виділено основні критерії і відповідні види адаптації іноземних студентів в соціокультурному середовищі. Зроблено висновок про те, що масштаб адаптації іноземних студентів у соціокультурному середовищі буде залежати від рівня змін середовища проживання і може варіюватися від невеликих модифікацій у стилі життя до трансформації цілої культурної системи з її соціальною, етнічною, психологічною та ідеологічною складовими.
Statement of the problem. Adaptation of foreign students to the new socio-cultural space is a complex, multifaceted, dynamic process. Therefore, it needs a synergetic approach to the interdisciplinary study of the problem by combining the efforts of sociology, philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, social pedagogy and so on. The issue of development and implementation of mechanisms of social adaptation of foreign students in the educational environment of the university is important.

The terminological content of adaptation has wide interpretive limits and is interpreted in a wide field of content from the natural sciences as the adaptation of living organisms to the conditions of existence, and in the narrow - the conquest of the individual environment. Under such approaches, scientists do not pay attention to the study of psychological factors of social adaptation, the lack of which can make ineffective measures aimed at social adaptation of foreign students. It is also worth noting the lack of clear criteria by which to assess the level of social maladaptation of a foreign student, and thus develop appropriate measures for psychological impact. Therefore, the scientific problem of studying the psychological factors of social adaptation of foreign students is relevant both from a social and scientific point of view.

Analysis of scientific works. In the modern world, interstate educational contacts are intensively expanding; the number of young people who want to get an education outside their country is increasing. «The success of foreign students, the level of their professional training depends largely on socio-cultural adaptation in the host country» (Dovhodko, 2013).

In particular, many authors distinguish between adaptation (adaptation, adjustment) as a process and as a result, but sometimes the latter uses derivative terms such as «adaptability» or «adaptability» (Zinonos, 2015).

In modern pedagogical science, more and more attention is paid to the problem of adaptation of foreign students. The term adaptation (Latin adapto - adaptive, arranging; English adaptation - adaptation, adaptation) means adaptation, the process of adaptation, the ability to adapt to changing environmental conditions (The World Book Encyclopedia, 2001, p. 45).

We consider it necessary to consider the concept of "adaptation" through an interdisciplinary approach. The first science to pay attention to is philosophy. From a philosophical point of view, adaptation is «an attribute of any living being, which is manifested when significant changes occur in the system of its relationship with the environment. As both man and environment are constantly changing, adaptation becomes the fundamental basis of existence» (Hu, 2013, p. 5).
From the point of view of biology, this term is used to define «the process of adaptation of the structure and functions of the organism (classes, populations, species) to environmental conditions» (Hu, 2013, p. 7).

The most common version is the definition of physiology. In this case, adaptation is considered a set of physiological reactions, which is the basis of adaptation to changes in environmental conditions and aimed at maintaining the relative stability of the internal environment.

It should be noted that the supporters of the physiological point of view distinguish between adaptation as a process and as its result (adaptability), which is the most stable state of the organism in new conditions. In terms of physiological reserves of the body, there are urgent and long-term adaptation.

Socio-pedagogical thought is quite interesting, social adaptation is a necessary condition for ensuring collective activity, interaction of the individual and the social environment through the adoption of its norms and rules of life and acceptance of this person by society (Shustova, 2007).

The purpose of scientific research is to reveal the peculiarities of the process of adaptation of foreign students in the new socio-cultural environment.

Main part. It should be noted that other scholars consider the adaptation of foreign students as a process of forming a system of their relations with all components of the pedagogical system of the university, namely: entering a new speech, socio-cultural and educational environment. Adaptation ensures the adequate behavior of foreign students in social, academic and psychological terms and contributes to the achievement of their educational goals (Zinonos, 2015, p.41-52).

For our study, it is appropriate to consider the difference between aspects of adaptation of foreign students in the socio-cultural environment. The first aspect of adaptation is biological. In physiology, the term means the reaction of the adaptation of the sense organs to the influence of the corresponding stimuli, and in biology - the adaptation of the structure of the functions of the sense organs to the conditions of existence of the organism. The meaning of maintaining homeostasis, and the actual adaptation, remains in psychology. This is especially expressed in those psychological concepts aimed at analyzing the relationship of the individual with the environment.

In the natural sciences, adaptation is understood as the adaptation of living organisms to certain conditions of existence that are constantly changing in the external environment, which occurred in the process of evolutionary development. Physiologists consider adaptation as a process from different points of view. First, it is believed that on the part of the organism, adaptation is a purely passive process of balancing the system «organism-
environment», the content of significant variables within certain limits; secondly, there is an opinion that the organism should disturb this balance, trying to actively optimize its internal variables.

In revealing the second social aspect of adaptation, it is worth highlighting the opinion of T. Dovgodko that in the process of individual human development it reveals the mechanisms of adaptation based on the transformation of social relations between people (Dovgodko, 2013).

Thus, the second aspect (psychological component) of the process of «adaptation» is much broader than in the biological sciences, due to social sounding, namely: the need to adapt the individual to the new social environment, as well as the importance of adapting different types of personal activity.

It should be noted that the mechanisms of assertion and theories of the development of individuality in the social environment, in a particular team or group play a significant role here. The success of human adaptation in specific conditions of existence is determined by the adaptive psychophysiological level, individual characteristics; temperament, character, special abilities; life experience, intellectual, etc.

We emphasize that the process of adaptation is characterized by the presence of the subject of certain skills and means of interaction (see Fig. 1).

![Fig. 1. Signs of social adaptability](Source: edited by the author)
Given the above, it is advisable to distinguish between adaptability and adaptability. The difference is the understanding of adaptation as a process and adaptability as a result of this process. Adaptive is a person in whom productivity and mental balance are not disturbed. In the adaptation, there are active changes in personality and environment, which determine the relationship of adaptability. The state of adaptability is the result of the functioning of the completely difficult system of social adaptation. Adaptation allows an individual to make a change, involving information models to solve problem situations, creating mechanisms and models of the changing environment.

Let's highlight the main aspects of adaptation of foreign students in the socio-cultural environment: process and result. In the first case (process), adaptation is the initiation and deployment of protective reactions, as a result of a new personal acquisition, which provides adaptation in more difficult conditions. They work with the concept of adaptation (process) and adaptability (the result of this process).

Well-adapted individuals demonstrate high productivity, the ability to enjoy life and maintain mental balance. Therefore, we can say that in the process of adaptation is actively changing both the individual and the environment. As a result, the relationship of adaptability is established, and the adaptation process is regulated by the «I». It is important to note that in the course of adaptation a person searches for a certain environment that is favorable for its functioning. Phenomena such as «power of self», «limitation of self», described by psychoanalysts, also affect the process of adaptation and its success.

After the scientific and theoretical analysis, it should be noted that adaptation is one of the conditions for the development of personality in the social environment. Its indicator is the comparison of goals and results, which is the basis of self-analysis of their own activities.

In the course of scientific and theoretical analysis, different types of adaptation are represented, which are inherent in a certain professional, socio-cultural sphere, features of human activity. We emphasize that the concept of adaptation should be explored on two levels: individual and group, from the standpoint of «man – environment», in terms of social environment, interaction and interpenetration of different cultural communities and more.

Given the levels of research on the social adaptation of foreign students, it is necessary to identify the main criteria and relevant types of adaptation of foreign students in the socio-cultural environment (presented in Table 1).
Table 1.

Types of adaptation

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<th>№</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>By the nature of the flow</td>
<td>Normal; Deviant; Pathological.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Attribution to the content of activities</td>
<td>Educational adaptation; Adaptation of labor, Adaptation of game activity.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>In relation to the type of culture</td>
<td>Intercultural; Interethnic.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Sensory adaptation; Social adaptation; Situational adaptation; General adaptation.</td>
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Source: edited by the author

According to the criteria of the analysis, the types of adaptation are distinguished by: the nature of the course (normal, deviant, pathological); attribution to the content of activity (adaptation of educational, labor, game activity); attitude to the type of culture (intercultural, interethnic), etc. There are also species depending on the duration, complexity and direction of the process of adaptation to individual or social and mental phenomena and so on. For example, sensory adaptation means adapting changes in sensitivity to the intensity of the stimulus acting on the sense organ. Social adaptation means the process and result of active adaptation of the individual to the conditions of the social environment (The World Book Encyclopedia, 2001).

It should be noted that in some scientific approaches, adaptation is considered in relation to the leading activities of the individual and the ability of the individual to solve a problem situation. Thus, O. Kachynskyi defines social adaptation as a state of relationship between the individual and the group, in which the individual without prolonged external and internal
conflicts effectively performs its own leading activities, meets its own needs, meets the role expectations of the exemplary group, experiences state 30 self-affirmation and freely expresses his creative abilities. In this regard, the author distinguishes between normal, deviant and pathological adaptations (Kachynskiy, 2018).

Normal adaptation leads to stable adaptability of the individual in typical problem situations without pathological changes in its structure and at the same time without violating the norms of the social group in which the individual is active. The scientist emphasizes that this adaptation can be protective, non-protective and mixed. Defensive adaptation manifests the action of the main protective mechanisms of the individual (aggression, rationalization, regression, projection, etc.).

It should be noted that the actualization of the protective mechanism depends on how difficult the situation is for a particular person, as well as on the internal conditions, characteristics and general psychological state of man.

Therefore, non-protective adaptation occurs when a person finds himself in an unfrustrated problem situation that requires him to make rational decisions. These processes occur without the use of protective mechanisms through cognitive operations, goal-setting mechanisms, group socio-psychological processes and problem solving, various forms of social compliance (eg, conformal behavior, but without protective mechanisms).

Mixed adaptation occurs when a person is partially frustrated but faces constructive challenges related to his or her social roles. Thus, protective or cognitive mechanisms may be actualized simultaneously or in any sequence. How effectively and quickly a person will cope with the task set before him depends on the successful combination and application of both types of adaptation.

Deviant adaptation - are those processes of social adaptation of the individual that meet the needs of the individual in a particular group, provided that the expectations of other participants in the social process are not justified by such behavior. There are two types of deviant adaptation: non-conformist and innovative. Non-conformist adaptation is a process by which an individual overcomes an internally group problem situation in ways that are unusual for its members. As a result, the individual finds himself in conflict with the norms of the group and their bearers, as the latter experience constant frustration associated with the implementation of non-conformist adaptation. In this case, the individual may be excluded from the social environment, or create a zone of constant tension and conflict. Innovative adaptation is the action of a creative person who is cramped within existing boundaries, so he transforms society according to his own beliefs. At the same time, a person...
must have a high level of activity and at the same time resistance to the influence of others, high personal strength and potential.

Pathological adaptation is a socio-psychological process that is carried out in whole or in part through pathological mechanisms and forms of behavior and leads to the formation of pathological complexes of character that are part of neurotic and psychotic syndromes. However, pathological behavior can be adaptive when such behavior is expected in the group, i.e. the group has pathological norms.

It should be noted that the step towards successful adaptation of foreign students in the socio-cultural environment is knowledge of the language, establishing friendly relations with the local nationality and its socio-cultural representatives. We emphasize a large number of factors that affect the successful adaptation of foreign students, but it is necessary to systematize them into certain blocks, in particular: physiological problems; psychological, socio-pedagogical; legal; cultural (religious); communicative (linguistic); educational (see Fig. 2).

![Diagram of Factors of Social Adaptation of Foreign Students](image)

**Fig. 1.6. Factors of social adaptation of foreign students**  
*Source: developed by the author*

Physiological factors are probably one of the first to influence the process of social adaptation of foreign students. Students find it difficult to change dramatically in their lives. Not everyone can rebuild their daily schedule or create a new one and live the way Ukrainians live.
The first group include cultural differences; we mean the degree of similarities and differences between cultures: language, religion, level of education, food, and so on. The next group - the peculiarities of the native culture of a foreign student.

Another group singled out the cultural characteristics of a country chosen by a foreign student for higher education, in particular, the reaction to foreign students (the desire to assimilate foreign students or tolerant acceptance of cultural diversity).

It is worth noting that very often-sharp differences in the socio-communicative environment of countries, as well as cultural and linguistic differences negatively affect the performance of foreign students and the level of education and future professional practice.

It is worth emphasizing that the presence of psychological and socio-pedagogical factors is the most dangerous for the social adaptation of foreign students. Psychological factors include, such as: psychological atmosphere and emotional well-being of students in the teaching staff; satisfaction / dissatisfaction with the group, style of communication with teachers and classmates; to socio-pedagogical factors: new pedagogical system, insufficient prior training, speech barrier, organization of the educational process, system of control and assessment of knowledge, establishing contacts in the study group with representatives of foreign countries) (Kaczynski, 2018).

However, it should be remembered that the social aspects of adaptation differ significantly in different cultures, for example, the set of certain qualities for successful social adaptation of a foreign student is not enough, knowledge of acceptable and desirable behavior in the new culture becomes more necessary.

**Conclusion.** Since the paper considers the process of adaptation of foreign students in the socio-cultural environment, we want to emphasize their importance: communication skills as the ability to express a positive attitude, respect for others, respond without judgment, manage interaction, make decisions in uncertain situations, be flexible, express empathy, etc.

These skills of effective communication in different ways are expressed in different cultures; linguistic skills as a good command of the language of the country you are in; the skill of «using all opportunities», which consists in the ability to apply their own knowledge, professionalism, abilities in a new socio-cultural situation; the ability to achieve the goal even in conditions of uncertainty and unpredictability; use of personal potential as activation of those traits and abilities that contribute to effective activities in the new culture.

In our opinion, cultural adaptation is important for the successful study of foreign students. This relatively new concept is used to determine the
specific ability of a person (community) to overcome changes in the natural and social environment by changing its culture.

Foreign students, as individuals, were formed in a society of their own kind with certain life values, moral qualities, and religious beliefs and so on. Having moved to a foreign country with other customs and traditions, economic, political and social order, religious religion and educational practice, foreigners find themselves in another educational, cultural, social environment of diversified youth who come from different parts of the world. First, they must use the new culture and educational system and the level of knowledge of spoken and academic foreign language will be a major factor in their cultural, academic and socio-psychological adaptation. Other important factors of successful adaptation are individual characteristics (age, mental and physical abilities, education), social level and similarity of mentality, religion, culture, civilization, lifestyle, nutrition, clothing style, gestures and others.

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