

language educators who can employ innovative teaching methods and adapt to the evolving needs of learners. Additionally, there is a necessity for equitable access to language education, as not all regions in Ukraine have equal opportunities for foreign language training.

On the flip side, Ukraine has the potential to leverage its motivated student population and increasingly accessible technology to enhance foreign language training. Collaboration with international institutions, exchange programs, and the promotion of multilingualism can further encourage students to engage with foreign languages.

Motivation and engagement are cornerstones of foreign language training in Ukraine. A motivated and engaged learner is more likely to succeed in acquiring proficiency in a foreign language, and this proficiency is crucial for Ukraine's aspirations in the globalized world. By nurturing motivation, fostering engagement, and addressing the challenges, Ukraine can continue to make strides in foreign language education, enabling its citizens to connect with the international community and thrive in an interconnected world.

Foreign language training is not solely about acquiring linguistic knowledge but also about applying that knowledge effectively in real-life contexts.

Issues of theory and practice of adaptation of foreign students

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The higher education has undergone a rapid internationalisation since the turn of the twenty-first century, a process where many universities send and receive higher numbers of international students (Wu et al., 2015). In tandem with this, we see a growing range of academic literature describing international students (Choudaha,

2017). The aim of this study is theoretical and practical understanding of the social adaptation of the foreign students using the case of Technical University. Setting this goal involves defining barriers (obstacles) to the successful adaptation of foreign students, finding ways to solve the existing problems of their adaptation and conditions for increasing competitiveness and increasing the number of foreign students.

Adaptation is a dynamic process when an organism adapts to changed living conditions. Generally speaking, students must adjust in the areas such as new cultural, economic, and social environment of the country given; institutional system of the university given; cultural and social atmosphere of the university given; and new free-time arrangement. It results in various forms of adaptation: - academic, social and emotional adjustment. Social adaptation is analyzed in academic literature as a process of an individual entering into the new sphere of social, group, interpersonal relationships and the adjustment to the new social environment. Social adaptation phenomenon includes socialization process, ie an acquirement of base apparatus of social code and values allowing an individual to act as an independent subject in the society (Rhodes, Wellman, 2013). International students cannot escape the cultural shock and change they experience during their studies. These changes occur across physical, biological, cultural, social relationship, and psychological (behavior and mental health status) domains (Lam, 2017). The authors Soltani and Keyvanara (2013) report: in academic competency, students are expected to possess the meta-cognitive skills for learning; in the social domain, students should be capable of building up harmonious relationships with their peers and teachers; and in the behavioral domain, emotional self-regulation is highlighted. Authors Manzon and Rolfe (2019) have shown that problems include several different factors: inadequate English or Slovak proficiency, unfamiliarity with slovak culture, lack of appropriate study skills or strategies; academic learning anxiety; low social self-efficacy; financial difficulties; separation from family and friends; difficult for the student to make domestic friends and gain familiarity with the local culture. Authors (Brown,

Daly, 2004) have consistently shown that international students expect and desire frequent contact with host nationals in both academic and social settings and that lack of intercultural interaction is seen as problematic. There is also strong evidence that cultural distance and the inability to speak the native language fluently have a detrimental influence on the social adaptation of overseas students (Yu, Moskal, 2019; Cetinkaya-Yildiz et al., 2011). Finally, personal background factors such as age, gender, and length of residence in the destination country can relate to international students' connectedness with their domestic peers and their overall level of social adaptation.

Research interest of the authors of this article was inspired by the objective of the Education National Project: to increase the number of foreign citizens studying in technical universities. The aim of this study is theoretical and practical understanding of the adaptation of the foreign students of Technical University in Kosice. Higher education, being one of the major assets for the development of any nation in the 21st century, has turned into an important topic of scientific research.

Among the factors influencing the adaptation of students, scientists note the quality of previous school education, intellectual willingness to learn, learning motivation, personal characteristics, as well as the quality of teaching and the nature of relationships with teachers, the availability of psychological and educational assistance to first-year students. Researchers use the different variables covering academic and administrative aspects of higher education. The variables are grouped into six main dimensions: Non-academic aspects – all elements that are essential for the processes of education and are linked with the duties of non-academic staff of higher education institutions; Academic aspects – the competences of academic staff, their duties and responsibilities; Reputation – the image of the institution; Access – approachability, ease of contact, availability and convenience of higher education institution; Programme aspects - importance of offering wide range and reputable academic programmes with flexible structures and syllabus; Understanding - understanding students' specific need in terms of

counselling and health services. The positive learning environment is vital for student satisfaction (Thygesen, 2020).

The research was conducted at the Technical university in Kosice (TUKE) in Slovakia. The choice of Technical University as the case of our research was determined by its specific nature. University is one of the biggest higher education institutions in the Kosice region. The university consists of six faculties TUKE, delivering education at bachelor, master and PhD levels. Students experience common institutional structure and technické zameranie. The focus group consisted foreign students who had already gone through the initial phase (stage) of studies at the university. 241 participants were selected as international students, who studied in Bachelor's degree. For example, participants from different countries, such as: 170 Ukrainian student, 51 students from India, 18 students were from different countries. Using random sampling, it was ensured the representativeness of the study.

The main objective was to identify the difficulties which foreign students encounter during their stay in Slovakia while studying at TUKE.

Subject of interest was in the section everyday life. Items named the information and skills that were considered most important for the successful adaptation of foreign students during their university studies. The subjects gave their informed consent to participate in the study. The obtained data were evaluated by the statistical package (SPSS). The statistically significant results among the groups are related to the section "Life at the dormitory" (AM for Ukrainian students is 1.85, with 1.05 SD; For other students AM is 2.65 and SD 1.41). Findings show that living in the dormitory of other foreign students according to the different set rules constitutes a problem. This is related to another finding concerning the acceptance by and coexistence with one's roommates in the dormitory. The Ukrainian students' AM accounts for 1.75 with SD of 0.98; while for other students AM is 2.40 and SD equals 1.30. This makes us acknowledge the presence of cultural differences arising from differing traditions, and in comparison to their previous lifestyle, it constitutes a change, which interferes with achieving the level of „smooth" coexistence. Students

also reported statistically significant results in communication with the accommodation department. For Ukrainian students, AM equals 1.72, SD is 0.87; while for other students, AM is as much as 2.51 with 1.27 SD. It turned out that for other foreign students even doing shopping is an issue. On the other hand, Ukrainian students' AM in this sphere is 1.27, with SD of 0.73, thus no major problems were discovered. Other foreign students' AM reaches the value of 2.51, and SD the value of 1, 47; thus, for non-Slavic students doing shopping means a problem. Significant differences in daily routine were noted in the sphere of obtaining everyday services (haircut, cosmetics), with Ukrainian students we measured the AM of 1.79 and the SD of 0.99. In comparison to that, the AA of other foreign students constitutes a value of 2.58 and SD equals 1.24. This area therefore also accounts for a critical sphere. Concerning their language of communication, the arithmetic average of students from Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as AM) was 2.22, with a standard deviation (hereinafter referred to as SD of 0.96), the AM for Indian students was 3.33, with a standard deviation of 1.11; which is a statistically significant difference resulting from the different cultural languages of Indian students, which impede their ability to communicate effectively. Personal-Emotional Adjustment the difference between male and female students is not statistically significant for the total score. Many authors assume that beginning university life requires adjustment to a variety of demands, being a multifaceted process. Four aspects of adjustment to university are measured: Academic and Social Adjustment, Personal-Emotional Adjustment. The difference between male and female students is not statistically significant for the total score.

Many studies (Bencherqui, 2020, Msengi, 2007) explored the challenges and hurdles experienced by international students attending institutions of higher education in the another countries. These difficulties include: language difficulties, difficulties adjusting to the academic culture, misunderstanding, and complications in communication with faculty and peers; stress, anxiety, feeling of isolation, social experiences, culture shock, financial hardships, lack of appropriate accommodation,

isolation and loneliness, and any adaption in their daily life. Arriving from a different country, international students may face difficulties in their daily life. Coming to a new country, international students are faced with the reality of needing to find places to live and finding banks to deposit and withdraw money and transportation by finding buses or buying cars to move around and applying for credits cards. Surviving in a new community is the first lesson they have to deal with, and they need to have a support system when they newly arrive. After settling in a new place, international students will also experience cultural shock. For example, the literature has noted that the challenges experienced by international students often trigger feelings of uneasiness, insecurity, depression, anxiety, and loss or academic pressures, language difficulties, feelings of inferiority, difficulties in adjusting to new food or cultural values, lack of support, perceived discrimination, and homesickness (Wei at al., 2007). Among the problems experienced by first-year students, the researchers point: inability to allocate time, organize their activities, increased anxiety, fear of new environment, difficulties of entering a new team. The most important barriers to social adaptation of foreign students at Technical University were the following: language barrier that causes the problems of understanding educational content and passing examinations by foreign students; psychological barrier leading to the problems of interpersonal communication, self-realization and selfempowerment in new environment; household barrier which results, in particular, in problems of adaptation to living conditions, and also administrative barrier. The results showed that international students faced various problems in Slovakia. International students face challenges not only in the classroom but also in their social life. Participants also noted that because of differences in communication patterns they experience some awkwardness in social interaction. Many of the statements were related to difficulties of establishing friendly relations with the Slovak students. Thus, the participants experienced culture shock due to differences in different systems of values, models of communication, signs and symbols of social communication and patterns of interpersonal relations because of adaptation

problems. However, many studies indicate that there are a large number of students who are unable to fulfill their obligations and complete their studies. Authors (Wilcox, et al., 2008) found that students who feel at home, who are well-connected to fellow-students and professors and who take part in extracurricular activities are more likely to be retained in school and successfully graduate from the university. Namely, support from family and society has a positive influence on the study-success of students. Norms for social intercultural contact can be strengthened through peer-pairing, buddy and mentoring programs between domestic students and international students, intercultural activities in university boarding schools, extracurricular activities and intercultural team work at university (Hendrickson, 2018, Rienties et al., 2012).

The results showed that foreign students face a variety of problems, and they use a variety of strategies to adapt to unfamiliar surroundings. Studying abroad is not without difficulties, and we can confidently say that foreigners have a lot of problems with adaptation, which can affect their studies and the general impression of living in another country. The findings show that it is important for universities to have a broad approach to assessing student satisfaction and dissatisfaction, as the expressed level of satisfaction in one area may also relate to the satisfaction in other areas. According to the research results, participants need special services, organizations such as student associations, centers and departments of foreign students' adaptation, international clubs and various student organizations for their successful adaptation in another country.

The results of this study may be taken as a basis for recommendations, used in the Slovak higher educational institutions, on how to help foreign students to adapt successfully. Language barriers may affect the academic training of students, participation in various activities as well as cultural understanding and social adaptation. Higher education institutions are increasingly concerned with students' satisfaction with the education program. It is recommended to support student communities (interest groups, sports classes) and supervision and mentor system at

the university; to create the information environment of the university; to involve foreign students in extracurricular activities; to organize specialized (additional) advanced training courses in Slovakia for foreign students and in foreign language for staff and professors; to improve the living conditions of foreign students.

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