

Quality, Mobility and Globalization in the Higher Education System

*A Comparative Look at the
Challenges of
Academic Teaching*

Health and
Human Development

*Nitza Davidovitch
Zehavit Gross
Yuri Ribakov
Anna Slobodianiuk
Editors*

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HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

This collection of articles deals with the challenges of academic teaching in higher education with regard to quality, mobility, and globalization. The articles in this book reflect a unique interdisciplinary effort at collaboration, generated by colleagues and partners who joined together to form a community that aims to chart the course of academic teaching.

The book is dedicated to the memory of Professor Roberta Milgram, founder of education studies at Ariel University. Professor Milgram was among the founders of Ariel University and the Department of Social Sciences.

The book is divided into five parts:

- Part 1: Academic teaching and learning
- Part 2: Academic teaching and learning in the humanities
- Part 3: Teaching and learning in engineering and architecture
- Part 4: New approaches and technologies in physics instruction: Inquiry-based education in a post-industrial society
- Part 5: Teaching and learning in the health sciences

This volume encompasses papers written on the basis of studies presented at a conference held at Ariel University in Ariel, Israel on September 2015.

We thank all the authors who took part and contributed to this book.

Nitza Davidovitch

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Chapter 25

**CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH THE PREFERABLE
STRATEGIES IN STUDENTS CONFLICT**

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents results of empirical study of the relationship between cultural features and choice of conflict strategy. The study explores the orientations of Hofstede's cultural dimensions (power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term versus short-term orientation, and indulgence versus restraint). Combinations of five conflict approaches (collaborating, dominating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating) of two concerns model are adopted to present the strategies of conflict behavior. Students from Russian, German and Israeli Universities are chosen as the focus group. 68 Russian, 38 Israeli, 49 German, and 39 MASA students took part in this research. A survey as the main method of our research is used. Our research is based on the following questionnaires: the author's questionnaire "Strategy of conflict behavior", the questionnaire VSM13 of G.Hofstede, Survey Values Schwartz. It is discovered that Russian, German and Israeli students prefer to use different strategies of conflict behavior in various learning conflict situations. The results shows as well that this choice of strategy of conflict behavior has a significant relation with such indicators of culture, as individualism, masculinity, power distance, long-term and uncertainty avoidance.

Keywords: strategy of conflict behavior, culture dimensions, conflict in the learning environment.

INTRODUCTION

The conflict in the university is a stressful situation for the student, and it can become the reason of poor academic achievement and impairment of the relationship with other students, parents and teachers. Also conflicts in the university can slow down personal growth and influence

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negatively psychological health (Kupriyanov, 2011). However, the majority of the scientific works studies only conflicts in the school, not in the university (Leonov, 2006). Hence, the arising of conflict situations in higher education remains actual area of social and psychological research.

For the constructive solution of conflict it is very important to comprehend what strategy of conflict behavior the parties use (Rubin, Pruitt, Kim, 2003). The choice of these strategies can be caused by various factors, including culture (Kimmel, 2014). This research is directed at studying of the following problem: what is the choice of the conflict behavior strategy used by students in the educational environment and, in particular, what is the cultural specificity of these preferences. Highlighting of cultural features of conflict interaction plays an important role in the understanding of this process and it is one of the steps in building constructive resolution conflict models (Ting-Toomey, 1985).

Modern society in many countries of the world is in a stage of global sociocultural changes (Matsumoto, Juang, 2012; Stefanenko, 2014). Transition to post-industrial economic system causes change of the existing in cultural values and normative regulators. (Paraboteeah, Cullen, Paik, 2013). Therefore studying of similar transformations and their influence on installations, behavior, values of the person becomes one of issues of psychological science.

Each conflict can become both the destructive factor which creates problems in educational activity, and a push for the personal growth and development of relationship (Tjusvold, 1988). Everything depends on how exactly a conflict interaction occurs and is resolved (Rubin, Pruitt, Kim, 2003). For this reason we find this subject to be promising and important area for our research work.

CONFLICT IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Enrolling at the university, the student gets in a new environment with the new rights and duties. Process of self-affirmation in a new role and in a new group starts, also first-year students can be excessively categorical in their estimates and moral criteria, they share maximalism and heightened sense of self-esteem (Shevchuk, 2013). It can lead to conflicts, both between students, and between a student and a teacher. And if the confrontation between two students looks like another similar interpersonal conflict arising in the course of joint activity (in this case, educational), the conflict between the student and the teacher will have a number of the features connected with the specifics of teaching activity, distinction in the status and the age of in the interacting parties (Shevchuk, 2013). Educational process is always characterized by the role and the position asymmetry of its participants (Warters, 2003).

Therefore such conflicts can be triggered by many different reasons: differences in subjective assessment of own knowledge by the teacher and the student, in the points of view on educational process in general and on problem points of a separate subject, non-implementation by the student of requirements and norms. The teacher and the student can also have a different understanding of how the parties in the conflict have to behave (Holton, 1995). Moreover, similar situations are complicated by difficulties of their solution, especially, if disagreements concern certification of knowledge. In this case, the student is in a dependent position, and involvement of the third party (for example, administration of faculty or higher education institution) is effective not always. A.

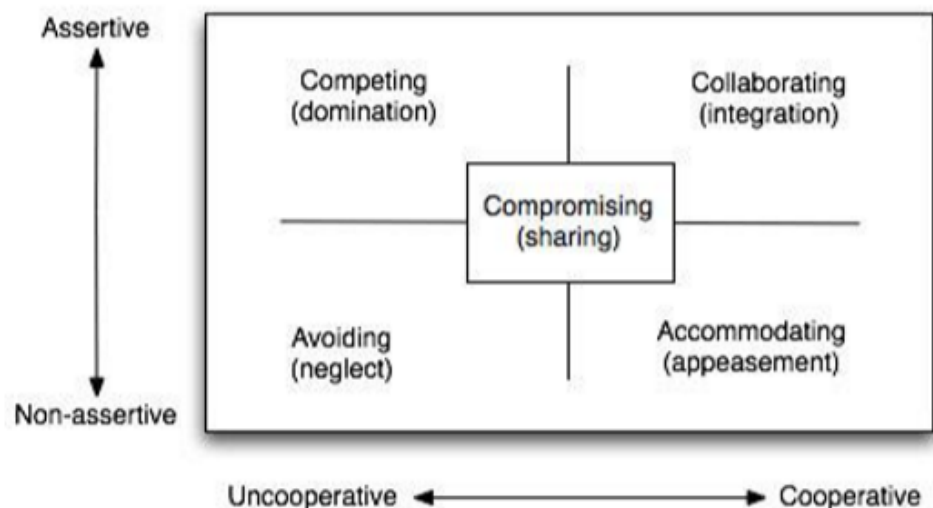
Antsupov and A. Shipilov also emphasize other features of the pedagogical conflicts: different perception of the conflict by the student and the teacher, presence of other students which can be also involved in the conflict and create the atmosphere which requires parties to “save face” (Antsupov, Shipilov, 2013).

In addition to the two above-mentioned types of conflict in high school, our empirical research describes other conflicts between the student and his parents. In our opinion, in the sphere of the child-parental relations in student's years there are serious changes. The higher education are the main step on the way to adulthood, many young people start living separately and provide him/her independently, create their own families. The relations with parents lose their dramatic nature and open confrontations connected with adolescence (Leonov, 2006), however, new problems appear. Parents cannot recognize that their child is an adult independent person, also they interfere with his private life and educational activity, and excessive patronize and control him/her (Willits, 1986). Or they can go to other extremes and deprive him/her of parental support. Modern researches show that the conflict with parents also has its impact on the students who are independently living in a campus (hostel), increasing their uneasiness and depressive symptomatology (Lamis, Jahn, 2013).

STRATEGIES OF CONFLICT BEHAVIOR

There are a lot of approaches studying the conflict strategies. The following classification belonging to K. Thomas and R. Kilmann is most popular in the social psychology (Kilmann, Thomas, 1977). Thomas's scheme assumes the allocation of five strategies depending on orientation of the subject to his/her own interests or to the interests of the partner. The model is two-dimensional and it was called later the Dual Concern Model (Rubin, Pruitt, Kim, 2003).

Figure 1. Dual Concern Model by Thomas-Kilmann



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According to this model it is possible to give the following interpretation of the strategies of behavior in the conflict (Rubin, Pruitt, Kim, 2003):

- Competing is aspiration to suppress of one of the parties in the conflict. When using this strategy various tactics of psychological pressure upon other party of the conflict are applied: threats, various coercions, intimidations by condition, that they will be cancelled if the other party gives in to arrangements. All these receptions have one purpose: weakening of the other participant' position and strengthening of the own.
- Avoiding is reaction to the conflict which is expressed in denial or leaving from the conflict. It allows saving emotional and intellectual resources, however, it often only postpones approach of a phase of open confrontation and only aggravates the conflict.
- Accommodating is concessions to the opposite side in achievement of his/her interests. This strategy is the most often applied when the situation is outcome have a great importance for one participant and has no special value for the other. Or, when one part is ready to offer its own interests for the other, proceeding from desire to keep good relations with this party, to receive a positive assessment, or has certain feelings to it which have the importance and can influence behavior of this part.
- Collaborating is striving to meet the fundamental interests of both sides. Even, as the name suggests this strategy, one can conclude that it is distinguished by a high degree of efficiency. When choosing this strategy it is assumed that efforts will be made to identify the causes of the conflict, to develop and implement optimal solutions for all participants. Collaborating, or resolving of the problem is a mature approach, aimed at achieving maximum result and find the true problems, but it is also the most complex, time-consuming and painstaking processing, which requires the active involvement of both sides.
- Compromising is consent to partial satisfaction, both the own interests, and the interests of the other part. In other words the compromise is similar to the strategy of a problem resolving, but acts at more superficial level. As a rule, it is applied when both parties are interested in mutual achievement of the objectives, but they understand that it is impossible. Therefore each of the participants concedes a little in their interests, for achievement of a certain intermediate result. In empirical part of our research we united cooperation and compromise as they are very similar (Rubin, Pruitt, Kim, 2003).

It should be noted that in modern foreign research such concept can be meet as the combined or integrative style when the accurate preference in favor of one strategy does not receive (Podrug, Gauta, 2013).

CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

Culture is very difficult category while having great influence on all of us (Kimmel, 2014). Models of cultural dimensions were developed by many scientists for its studying. One of the most recognized concepts belongs to the Holland scientist Geert Hofstede who allocated five (and then six) following parameters (Hofstede, 1980, 2003).

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- Power distance is how the members of society or organization allocated with rather small power expect and find possible unevenness of power distribution. For cultures with a large power distance (the Arab countries, Latin America, Southeast Asia) is typical to relate to the power, as to very important social institute, and respect for the administration. For cultures with a small power distance (Austria, Denmark, the USA, Germany) equality is highly appreciated, the position and the social status do not influence much on the human relations.

- Individualism - collectivism. In individualistic cultures personal interests and the purposes, independence, isolation, protection of private life (USA) are appreciated above all. For collectivist culture (The Asian countries) the basis are group norms and purposes, feeling of a community, belonging to a certain social group. Harry Triandis divided each of these categories into two components: the vertical is focused on the hierarchical relations, and horizontal is directed at egalitarian communications (Triandis, Chen, Chan, 1998). Despite prevalence of this dichotomy many psychologists, including Sh. Schwartz, criticized opposition of individualism and a collectivism finding them the interconnected and complementary phenomena (Schwartz, Brandi, 2001).

- Masculinity – femininity. The countries with the high level of the masculinity are considered as “male's type” (Japan, Italy, Austria, Mexico, Philippines), for them is characteristic to have the culture of achievement and success, aspiration after competitions and contests, material benefits are highly appreciated. The countries with low level (Denmark, Norway, Sweden) are considered as “female type”, in such culture are highly appreciated the human relations, care, careful attitude to the world around, comfort and the quality of life.

- Uncertainty avoiding is a certain reaction to unfamiliar situations. For the countries with the large aspiration for uncertainty avoiding (Belgium, Japan, Portugal, Greece) it is inherent the fear of unclear, new situations, and also aspiration for conformism, establishment of accurate rules and public norms. In the countries with a low indicator of uncertainty avoiding (England, Denmark, the USA, Singapore) is encouraged the manifestation of a personal initiative, there is a positive attitude towards risk.

- Short-term and long-term orientation to the future is defined by how representatives of this culture tend to set long-term goals.

- Indulgence versus restraint: how in this culture the aspiration to different states of pleasure is encouraged or punished.

INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL DIMENSIONS ON CONFLICT BEHAVIOR

The modern research directed at studying of cultural dimensions and the preferred strategy of a conflict behavior interrelation show sometimes a contradictory picture which gives us is one more reason for deeper studying of this subject.

Influence of individualism and collectivism on the choice making of conflict style is the most studied in the matter. A number of researchers established the following tendency (Stefanenکو,

2014): representatives of the individualistic cultures prefer the strategy directed of satisfaction of one's own interests, such as competing and collaborating, whereas representatives of the collectivistic societies put interests of other part on the second place therefore they either accommodate, or avoid the conflict. However the recent years works show deviations from the established "rule" and emphasize on consideration of horizontal and vertical aspects of these parameters. E.g. Holland researchers found out that respondents with a high level of a horizontal collectivism use the cooperation strategy more often (Boroş, etc. more often. 2010), while their American colleagues in similar case established that strategy of concessions is more often used (Komarraju, Dollinger, Lovell, 2008). The similar Turkish project confirms that collectivism is a cooperation strategy choice factor. Thus authors note that some other aspects play an important role, such as the importance of a personal success, the value of the alone working, norms of subordinating group interests (Ma, Erkus, Tabak, 2010).

Concerning the influence which other cultural factors have on conflict behavior, the following empirical results were received. Members of cultures with a larger power distance have less conflict situations with the chiefs and more status people, than members of cultures with a low distance. Besides, members of cultures with a larger distance come to the conflict solution with the help of the third party more often (Leung, Stephan, 2001). The same researches show that representatives of femininity culture prefer strategy close to a compromise, whereas representatives of masculinity culture resort to collaborating more often (Leung, Stephan, 2001).

Lately scientists began to carry out the complex and multiple-factor works in this field allowing covering the problem more widely. So in one of the researchers studying interaction of personal and cultural factors at the moment of choice of conflict behavior strategy it was revealed that high level of an extraversion stimulates Americans more often to resort to competing strategy, and Armenians to choose the compromise or accommodating (Tashchian, Forrester, Kalamas, 2014). And a large-scale work undertaken in China has established existence of significant level of connection between the parameter and strategy of behavior: a high power distance - accommodating, a low distance - competing, collectivism - collaborating and accommodating, individualism - competing and avoiding, masculinity - competing and collaborating, femininity - avoiding and accommodating, orientation to long-term prospects - a compromise (Tsai, Chi, 2009). That once again confirmed the tendencies found and describe in the last researches.

PRESENT RESEARCH

Proceeding from the problems described above we raised the following questions in our research.

- What conflict situations are typical for the learning environment in Israel, Germany and Russia (Russian-speaking countries)?
- How do Israeli, German and Russian students act in these situations? Are there any differences?

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- What cultural parameters can have a connection with these differences?

Hypothesis 1. *There are differences in the preferred strategy of conflict behavior among Russian, German and Israeli students in the learning environment.*

Hypothesis 2. *There is a relation between a choice of strategy of conflict behavior by the Russian, German and Israeli students and such parameters of culture, as collectivism/individualism, masculinity, power distance.*

METHOD

Participants and procedure

The following table provides the population profiles. 68 Russian, 38 Israeli, 49 German, and 39 MASA students¹ took part in our research. All participants took part in research voluntarily, anonymously, using online survey. Israeli students filled forms in English, all others participants filled forms in their native language.

Israeli and German students are older than Russian on the average which connected with differences in systems of education.

Table 1. Population profiles

	Participants	Average age	Gender	Level of education
Russian students	68 persons	21,9	64% women 36% men	34% B.A. 66% M.A.
MASA students	39 persons	23,15	49% women 51% men	46% B.A. 38% M.A. 16% Other
Israeli students	38 persons	25,45	40% women 60% men	95% B.A. 5% M.A.
German students	49 persons	25,53	58% women 42% men	67% B.A. 33% M.A.

MEASURES

The main method of research is the survey.

To identify the preferred strategies of conflict behavior the author's questionnaire "Strategies of conflict behavior" was used. The design of the methodology was taken from the study by F. Haar and B. Krahe (Haar, Krahe, 1999). The questionnaire was developed during the preparatory phase. It consists of the description of three conflicts in such categories as "student-student", "student-

¹ MASA students are participant of MASA program in Ariel University (Jung Jewish people from Russian-speaking countries)

teacher” and “student-parents”. For each scenario, the respondent is invited to give an answer to an open-ended question: “How would you act if you were in place of the main character?”. Received descriptions are processed by the content analysis method. It is compiled of the coding instruction, through which all the respondents are encoded. The strategies of conflict behavior (competing, collaborating, accommodating, avoiding) serve the categories, and the words and phrases describing their typical manifestation serve the indicators. The coding instructions passed expert evaluation such experts as the members of the Department of social psychology at the Faculty of psychology of Lomonosov Moscow State University were invited.

To measure the rigidity of different parameters of culture the questionnaire VSM13 G. Hofstede (URL: <http://www.geerthofstede.nl/vsm-13>) has been used. VSM13 questionnaires in German, Russian and English languages have been taken from the official website of the author.

As for the additional method the Survey Value Schwartz was for measuring of personal values. (Karandashev, 2004; Boer, 2013).

Analysis

The results received by means of the described questionnaires were processed statistically with the use of the crosstabs, criterion χ^2 of Spearman and t-criterion of Student. All calculations were carried out in the Microsoft Excel 2010 and SPSS Statistics 20 programs.

RESULTS

At the first stage of our study, we interviewed students from different countries to discover what conflicts they face more often in the university environment. All situations were divided into three categories: student’s conflict with another student, with a teacher and with his/her parents. The interesting fact is that the situation for all countries came out quite similar. The conflict of two students is associated with joint homework or with a project, the conflict with the teacher relates to an unfair treatment to student’s work done, and the conflict with parents is connected with the wish to change a student’s chosen profession.

At the next step, we asked the respondents how they would act in the described situations. Their answers were analyzed by content analysis grid and statistical processing methods. The Table 2 shows the distribution of relative frequencies of the particular strategy choice. The significant differences between Russian and German students ($\chi^2=8,03$) as well as MASA and German students ($\chi^2=12,45$) were obtained in the conflict situation between students (Table 3).

Table 2. The distribution of relative frequencies of the strategy choice in the conflict situation “student-student”

	Russian students	MASA students	Germany students	Israeli students
Competing	0,25	0,25	0,26	0,22
Collaborating	0,32	0,23	0,57	0,56
Accommodating	0,04	0,05	0,03	0,00
Avoiding	0,38	0,48	0,14	0,22

Note 1. The most preferred strategy conflict behavior in each sample is shown in bold.

Table 3. Criterion χ^2 by comparing the frequency distribution in the conflict “student-student”

	Russian students	MASA students	Germany students	Israeli students
Russian students	-	1,38	8,03	3,94
MASA students	1,38	-	12,45	7,08
Germany students	8,03	12,45	-	1,02
Israeli students	3,94	7,08	1,02	-

Note 2. The significant means are shown in bold (the level of significance $\alpha=0,05$).

In the situation of a conflict between a student and a teacher we have a very similar distribution of relative frequencies. The significant differences between Russians and Germans ($\chi^2=11,04$), as well as Russian and Israeli students ($\chi^2=12,45$) were obtained.

Table 4. The distribution of relative frequencies of the strategy choice in the conflict situation “student-teacher”

	Russian students	MASA students	Germany students	Israeli students
Competing	0,26	0,25	0,20	0,08
Collaborating	0,12	0,18	0,40	0,54
Accommodating	0,22	0,23	0,14	0,15
Avoiding	0,40	0,35	0,26	0,23

Note 3. The most preferred strategy conflict behavior in each sample is shown in bold.

Table 5. Criterion χ^2 by comparing the frequency distribution in the conflict “student-teacher”

	Russian students	MASA students	Germany students	Israeli students
Russian students	-	0,78	11,04	13,1
MASA students	0,78	-	4,78	1,3
Germany students	11,04	4,78	-	7,0
Israeli students	13,1	7,0	1,3	-

Note 4. The significant means are shown in bold (the level of significance $\alpha=0,05$).

But in the situation of the conflict with parents, Russian and German students behave in similar way and prefer active strategies, such as competing or cooperation. Differences between Russian and Israeli students ($\chi^2=16,8$) as well MASA and Israeli students ($\chi^2=16,67$) are significant.

Table 6. The distribution of relative frequencies of the strategy choice in the conflict situation “student-parents”

	Russian students	MASA students	Germany students	Israeli students
Competing	0,35	0,45	0,26	0,21
Collaborating	0,46	0,38	0,43	0,14
Accommodating	0,10	0,13	0,11	0,07
Avoiding	0,09	0,05	0,20	0,50

Note 5. The most preferred strategy conflict behavior in each sample is shown in bold.

Table 7. Criterion χ^2 by comparing the frequency distribution in the conflict “student-parents”

	Russian students	MASA students	Germany students	Israeli students
Russian students	-	1,6	3,02	16,8
MASA students	1,6	-	5,58	5,8
Germany students	3,02	5,58	-	16,67
Israeli students	16,8	16,67	5,8	-

Note 6. The significant means are shown in bold (the level of significance $\alpha=0,05$).

Table 8. Comparison of the cultural dimensions means, measured using a VSM13 questionnaire

	Russian students	MASA students	German students	Israeli students
Power distance	18,31	33,68	14,17	-14,5
Individualism	86,99	58,03	52,5	24,5
Masculinity	-15,44	-12,89	-11,67	-8,75
Uncertainty avoidance	-26,84	-22,11	-46,53	-82,25
Long-term orientation	-11,84	-25,26	-21,11	-32,5
Indulgence versus restraint	71,1	82,76	93,06	68,5

On Table 8 one can see the average values of six dimensions of culture: power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation and indulgence against restraint. If the parameter value is below 0, it means that it is expressed very weakly. By using t-criterion of Student the following significant differences were obtained: means of power distance between Russian and Israeli students ($t=2,24$), also MASA and Israeli students ($t=0,03$); medium value of individualism between Russian and MASA ($t=2,24$), Russian and German ($t=2,35$), Russian and Israeli ($t=3,88$), MASA and Israeli ($t=2,05$) students; means of uncertainty avoidance

between Russian and Israeli ($t=3,23$), MASA and Israeli ($t=3,48$), German and Israeli ($t=2,03$) students. The level of significance $\alpha=0,05$.

In addition, we measured the association between high and low levels of each dimension in each sample and the choice of the strategy of conflict behavior by using crosstabs. The following significant relationships are marked by **X** on Table 9.

Table 9. Relations between cultural dimensions and conflict strategies

	Competing	Collaborating	Accommodating	Avoiding	
High power distance	X	-	-	-	$(\chi^2=10,47)$
Low power distance	-	-	-	X	
Individualism	X	X	-	-	$(\chi^2=8,59)$
Collectivism	-	-	X	X	
Masculinity	X	-	-	-	$(\chi^2=13,95)$
Femininity	-	X	-	X	
High uncertainty avoidance	-	-	-	-	
Low uncertainty avoidance	-	-	-	-	
Long-term orientation	-	X	-	-	$(\chi^2=8,17)$
Short-term orientation	-	-	-	-	
Indulgence	-	-	-	-	
Restraint	-	-	-	-	

The level of significance $\alpha=0,05$.

Using additional methods Survey Value Schwartz grades of values for each sample were received. Spearman rank correlation coefficients for all samples were obtained at a meaningful level $r = 0.92; 0.73; 0.79; 0.73; 0.74; 0.82$ (at significance level $\alpha = 0.05$). All groups of respondent took universalism and autonomy in the first place and power and tradition in the last that coincides with the general culture hierarchy of values selected S. Schwartz (Schwartz, Bradi, 2001).

DISCUSSION

Our results correspond to the trends identified in the studies of recent years (Matsumoto, Juang, 2012; Stefanenko, 2014). We have tried to compare the cultural profile of students in different countries and apart from that we looked how it may be connected with model of behavior in conflict.

First we consider cultural dimensions obtained for the different samples. Profile detected by Russian subjects diverges from the conventional view of Russian culture as the collectivistic, with strongly pronounced power distance and with the tendency for long-term orientation (URL: <http://geert-hofstede.com/russia.html>). This may confirm the observation that Russian societies, and especially young people, are experiencing the period of socio-cultural transformations (Lebedeva, 2000, Leontiev, 2009). Unlike Russian, German students have demonstrated the “expected” values to its sample, except for a very low level of masculinity, not typical for German culture (URL: <http://geert-hofstede.com/germany.html>). This fact can say that modern German youth is moving to the “female type” culture, in which the mutual support, the care and the quality of life are highly regarded. This trend is confirmed by the existence of numerous organizations in German universities aimed at protecting people in severe life situation, the natural environment and animals (Prescher, 2011). Israeli students are also consistent with their cultural profile except for the very low uncertainty avoidance (<http://geert-hofstede.com/israel.html>). In our view, this may due to the current geopolitical situation in Israel, as young people grow up an atmosphere of unstable future, they get used to live in an environment where at any moment armed conflict may break out. In general, the average values for all samples were similar; the use of t-criterion of Student hasn’t showed many significant differences. We also got very similar profiles shared values on the Survey Value Schwartz. We guess that modern youth in different countries are affected by globalization and young people share the universal values inherent in people of a certain age and level of education (Tsai, Fuligni, 2015).

As for the strategies of conflict behavior which, as respondents assumed, they would use in various situations, we see significant differences between, on the one hand, students from Russia and other Russian-speaking countries, and on the other hand the German and Israeli students. In two of three situations (the conflict with the other student and with the teacher) the Russian and MASA students prefer avoiding strategy. This fact can demonstrate that, despite the transformations and aspiration of youth for the “western” values, the Russian society still has the “phobia of conflicts”, with a high tendency of conflict situations avoiding and with undeveloped culture of the productive resolving of the conflicts (Grishina, 2008). Thus in a situation of the conflict with parents Russian students prefer the active strategies – collaborating and competing. Perhaps, it is connected with the contents of the situation (a vital choice) and, respectively, with the high importance of one’s own interests in this case. Most of the German students chose collaborating strategy in all three situations that is characteristic for cultures with a high level of individualism and femininity and low dependence on a context (Matsumoto, Juang, 2012). The Israeli students in the majority prefer collaborating as well, except the situation of the conflict with parents, in which avoiding strategy is the most popular strategy. This may be connected with the fact that Israeli students are adults, have

greater autonomy and simply don't discuss with their parents the issues related to their university studies. Particularly the family relationships are highly valued in Israel (Etzioni-Halevy, Shapira, 1975). In our opinion, the preference of cooperation can be caused also by older age of the German and Israeli students, their bigger personal and emotional maturity (Rubin, Pruitt, Kim, 2003).

Moreover, we carried out the statistical analysis for identification of relations between expressiveness of the various cultural dimensions and the conflict strategy preference. The significant relations were revealed for power distance, individualism, masculinity and long-term orientation. For all parameters (regardless of samples), except for the power distance "classical" connection were received: high level of individualism and masculinity occurs more often with the respondents who prefer competing; the collaborating is connected with the high individualism, femininity and long-term orientation; and avoiding is connected with femininity and collectivism. That corresponds to the theoretical models and the empirical data of the researches of the different years (Leung, Stephan, 2001). The exception was the dimension of power distance, the Russian students there is connection between the high level of power distance and competing, both between the low level of power distance and avoiding. This completely contradicts the representations of the cultural psychology (Stefanenko, 2014). We for that reason consider that the capacity of both samples was small, and this criterion works with large numbers better.

CONCLUSION

The study focused on the preferences of making choice of conflict behavior strategies by students belonging to the German, Israeli and Russian (Post-Soviet) culture. This study used new methodology, which entailed some difficulties at certain stages of its implementation. Used methods require further refining to increase the reliability, the accuracy and the validity indicators. But it should be noted that exactly owing to the non-standard methods a very extensive material on the subject was received allowing maximum detail and versatility considering the subject of study.

The obtained results partially confirmed the hypotheses made by us, at the same time proving the cultural transformations happening in modern society. They can serve as the material for the further analysis; moreover they can stimulate promotion of new hypotheses and carrying out researches for more detailed studying of this problem.

The question of culture influence on conflict behavior still remains relevant and significant for modern psychology (Kimmel, 2014). This interest is caused by direct inquiries of practice: the socio-cultural transformations taking place in the world, the globalization process, the creation of the international companies and organizations, the growing interethnic tensions and, unfortunately, a huge number of international conflicts (Haumersen, Liebe, 1999). Therefore, the understanding of influence of culture mechanisms in conflict situations is the very important subject.

Moreover, the mentioned conflict situations belong to the educational environment, the reasons of their emergence, the possibility of prevention and resolution can be considered further. The obtained results may enable the formulation of practical recommendations about creation of more comfortable conditions of stay of the student in educational institution, and, therefore, increase the quality of the higher education in general.

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