

## THE SCHOLASTIC LEARNING AT STUDENTS, IN ACCULTURATION CONDITIONS

Adriana PETRUȘ-VANCEA\*, Monica SECUI\*\*

\* University of Oradea, Faculty of Science, Department of Biology, Oradea, Romania

\*\* University of Oradea, Faculty of Socio-Human Science, Psychology Department, Oradea, Romania

Corresponding author: Adriana Petruș-Vancea, University of Oradea, Faculty of Science, Department of Biology, 1 Universitatii Str., 410087 Oradea, Romania, tel.: 0040259408161, fax: 0040259408461, e-mail: adriana\_vancea@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** This investigation's purpose was to study the relationship between learning styles, individual features, student's motivations, and needs, of psychosocial conditions in acculturation, and the results in school learning, for the foreign students (Moldavians), in comparison with the Romanian ones. At the end of the study we concluded that, concerning the way of learning, the individual features and school performances there are no significant differences between the two groups of students, but the motivation of learning, the student's needs and learning conditions are significantly different, so at the Moldavian students the extrinsically motivation is more pronounced comparatively to the one declared by the Romanian students, the needs and the learning conditions being the ones specific for acculturation. Paradoxically, the Romanian students consider themselves discriminated by the teachers and colleagues, in the same measure as their foreign colleagues.

**Keywords:** scholastic learning, students, acculturation

### INTRODUCTION

Learning is an interactive and intraactive activity [6], meaning that it depends on one hand on the student, on his internal characteristics like: the biophysical ones (genetic potential, normal physical development, physiological balance) and the psycho individual ones (the quantity and quality of the previous experience, purposes, reasons, aspiration levels, learning skills, the characteristics of the intellectual processes), but on the other hand on external factors, like: the educational ones (the character, volume, the structuring and difficulty degree of the learning content, the teachers personality), social ones (the climate and family conditions, general - historical conditions, the adjustment to the new social structure, acculturation), or psychosocial ones (the group, the interpersonal relations, the groups climate, interpersonal communication, social - emotional) and last but not least the ergonomic and hygienic ones.

Extremely important in the instructive – educational activity is the character of the relation between the educator and the one being educated [15], actor and author of the education process: the teacher (as a transmitter, coordinator, mentor, adviser, assessor) and the student (as a receptor, collaborator, scholar, beneficiary). The relationship between the two has a mostly social nature, in form and psychosocial, in content, as a result of the different status – roles, visibly hierarchically structured in the traditional educational practice and invisibly in the active social education, nondirective.

Even if some authors [5], say that learning is a predominantly internal activity (subjective) and that the resources (internal conditions like intellectual interest, learning capacity and the intellectual working skills) have a determinative role in its evolution, the present study will prove that the external factors represent an aspect, at least as important of the learning process.

The students have an important role in the university education, especially in the way they are involved in problems affecting education itself, in renewing the teaching methods, but also in the

institutional setting, in the institutions managerial policy [8]. There is no doubt that the European Union students have a normal relationship with the university education institutions. Countries have different ways of regularizing the relations between institution and students. In the same time, the foreign students position is rather normal than different, toward the one of the local ones.

Life situations from the near space of the student (changes of the psychological climate, dynamics of the socio-cultural events etc.) determine positive/negative changes in the subjects attitude, motivations and behavior (students and teachers as well) [8].

More than that, the students in an acculturation phase, is put up in addition, with the conditions that represent it. The acculturation represents the adapting process of a foreign person, from the moment he enters the immigration country, according to some parameters like: the immigration place and purpose, the fact that he chooses or complies with migration, the social and economic status of the origin community from the host society, scholastic or professional insertion, the space he lives in, age, the fact that he came alone or with family etc. [6]. A large phenomenon of acculturation exists in the USA, and there are numerous on foreign students [9, 12, 16].

Very important in the educational system and in obtaining high school performances are the attitude, interest given, competence, adaptability and teachers professionalism toward all these aspects, psychological as well as social.

An important role in this respect has the training of the teachers, which must be done not only from a disciplinary or psycho educational perspective, but also from a social work perspective, a commitment as cultural facilitator, as social actors or citizens. To be a good teacher presumes surpassing in training the classes or schools problems, knowing how to manage situations that transcend the scholastic space. Understanding and managing some social-cultural phenomena are good premises for the intercultural trainer. It doesn't mean that all teachers must be psychologists, sociologists, or cultural anthropologists, but must have also a coherent training in a social direction [2]. The teacher must

be trained not only for managing some strictly educational situations, but also to ease the student's spiritual and cultural permeability. Training implies not only knowledge, but also intercultural practice. We don't need geniuses, "accurate beasts", but harmonious people from a psycho behavioral and moral point of view, who are capable of the highest responsibilities [2].

Making a study on students and pupils from Moldavian Republic, about their intercultural communication ability, [1] concluded the following: the development level of the intercultural communication ability is in a stage of forming, perfecting, acknowledging the intercultural education values, in the stage of displaying the wrongly formed attitudes in an action plan (the presence of stereotypes, rejecting the other, ethnic intolerance etc.)

Comparing the data obtained from the questionnaire applied on students revealed that, they make a clear difference between educational and intercultural communication, between friendships and inter ethnic relations. Most of the students (65%) communicate more with people of different nationality at the university and student's hostel; most of the students (85%) establish friendship relations with people of the same nationality. *Preconceptions* may represent a barrier against creating intercultural attitudes at school players (teachers, students) through cultures and individuals *stereotype* crystallizing. The author [1] also describes a pattern of integration of the intercultural dimension into university educational activity, pattern which changed not only the teacher's role, but also the pattern of the university educational activity planning. Traditional, classis teaching has been replaced by the modern one centered on intercultural learning.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### *Research hypothesis*

➤ Assuming that the learning motivation at Moldavian students differs from the one of Romanian students, at the Moldavian ones the extrinsic type having a higher level;

➤ We assume that the foreign students consider themselves more discriminated in their relation with teachers and colleagues, than Romanian students.

### *Research design*

For the present research we have made a *comparative* study, regarding the relation between learning types and social needs of the Moldavian students, toward the Romanian ones (control batch), and also observing some relations between scholastic performance, psychosocial conditions, preconceptions about social discrimination and learning motivations.

*The subjects studied* were represented by 24 Moldavian students from Oradea University. The students from the control group are their Romanian colleagues, respectively 68 people.

The subjects were asked for information regarding: age, sex, nationality, marital status, specializing, study year, years of residence in Romania (for foreign students).

### *Instruments and procedure*

The research method used in the experiments that make the object of the present paper was the social investigation, and the work instrument was the **Questionnaire "Learning in acculturation conditions" (LAC)**, created by Petruș – Vancea and Secui, in 2009 [14] – for the evaluation of the psychosocial climate indicators, and of the students needs. The questionnaire contains 24 questions, some are close with given answer options among which the subjects selected one option or more, depending on the instructions, a few open questions and an item that was meant to classify the offered features.

The research was made in the academic year 2007/2008, and implementing the questionnaires was organized in March – April 2008, after the winter session, for a better interpreting of the results for the answers from first year students. The questionnaires were implemented individually, based on volunteer, in anonymity conditions.

At the end, we made the statistic processing of the data using the computer program SPSS 16.0, the analysis (checking hypothesis) and explaining the processes and phenomena studied.

## RESULTS

- a. The results about the **reasons** for which the students choose to perfect in a university in Romania (items 12, 15)

If the pressure to learn is made both by Romanian and Moldavian parents, at the Moldavian students we identified also a pressure from "other people" (Table 1), which means that other people but parents or institutions, the difference between the two groups being statistically significant (Table 1). The answers at the question number 15, about choosing a university were somehow predictable, with one exception, the student's desire, both Romanian and Moldavian, to settle in Romania, the differences being statistically insignificant from this point of view. The exception is not about the Moldavian students answers, but about the Romanian ones, because 29 of them have also chosen, on the other hand, the option "I didn't have any other opportunity", option that was not chosen by any Moldavian student (Table 1), the differences for this last case being very significant from a statistical point of view.

Of course that, the differences are more and more significant from the statistical processing perspective and scholarship opportunity, the need of learning about other cultures and the need of something new, which can explain the above mentioned exception, in the sense that, in Romania has arrived a certain category of students, from the Moldavian Republic, some of the best students, ambitious and eager for new, meanwhile the batch of Romanian students has been heterogeneous from this point of view.

Both groups of students are just as contempt toward the Romanian educational system, but the frequency is under 50%, which is not gladdening.

**Table 1.** The statistical processing of the differences between the Romanian students answers and the Moldavian ones at the questions about the **reasons** for which they choose to perfect in a university from Romania (questions 12, 15) of the questionnaire “Learning in acculturation conditions – LAC”.

Item	Answer type	Romanian students frequency	Moldavian students frequency	Chi-square $\chi^2$	Significance $p$
12. Reasons for learning	a. Maintaining the scholarship	12	2	5.109	0.403
	b. I wish to become a good specialist	56	18		
	c. I wish to become an influential person	29	14		
	d. e. Pressure parents and other people	3	3		
	f. Appreciation	2	2		
	g. Interest for knowledge	30	9		
	h. Unmotivated	0	0	N/A	N/A
15. Choosing a university	a. I wish to settle in Romania	27	10	27.338**	0.000
	b. The good Romanian education system	25	11		
	c. The opportunity of a scholarship	2	14		
	d. To meet other cultures	2	8		
	e. The need for something new	7	13		
	f. I didn't have any other opportunity	29	0	N/A	N/A

Note: t – significance tendency ( $p < 0.1$ ), \* - significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ), \*\* - very significantly ( $p < 0.01$ )

**b. The results about the way of adapting to Romania (items 8 – 10, 17 and 21)**

About the way of adapting to Romania (Table 2), questions 9 and 17 have been specially addressed to Moldavian students, but the Romanian students were asked to give their opinion about those aspects too. At these questions, we will avoid comparisons between the two groups and statistical interpretations; instead we will analyze strictly the Moldavian student's answers.

Noticeable is that 9, respectively 10 students of 24 said that it was easy or quite easy to adapt to Romania (Table 1), and the rest of 20% admitted that they have a problem with adapting and that it is still very hard for them here, but they were 4 from first year and just one from the fourth year, from a total of 5 Moldavian students who choose this answer.

The conditions of a quick and efficient adaptation are seen the same by the two groups of students (differences are statistically insignificant), although Romanian students did not have the experience of a long term travel, for a specialization in another country.

After analyzing these answers one can observe that there are no obvious stereotypes created for the Romanian students, connected to discriminating aspects of nationalist nature.

High differences have been observed between the two samples of students, at the question about the support they receive during their studies. Most of then Romanian students (91,2%) and 17 from 24 Moldavian students, meaning 70,8% have said that they are supported by their family back home. Most of the Moldavian students have made new friends in Romania or prefer to manage on their own, but are helped also by relatives or old friends, arrived in Romania, and

they keep in touch less with the unknown people from their nationality. Only 8, 3% admitted that they do not manage at all in Romania, and as a result of comparing the answers after study years, we have identified the fact that, these two Moldavian students were from the second and third year of study (under no circumstance in the first year, as it was the case of the ones who said that they had problems adapting).

Another *preconception* contradicted by the results of this study is that Moldavian students feel discriminated in Romania. As one can observe from Table 2, Romanian students consider themselves discriminated in the same manner as the Moldavian ones. The Romanian students feel again discriminated by colleagues and society, and by the authorities, the degree of discrimination of the two groups being equal. Of course that, from the open questions of the questionnaire came out the fact that the nature of the discriminations is different, between the two subjects categories, the Moldavian students needing more acceptance from the Romanian society, indirectly, this hypothesis of a supposed ethnical discrimination, was not demonstrated, which assumes the fact that it is just a *preconception*.

The student's perception about the necessity or importance of the university and **university system** in Romania is different and statistically significant (Table 3). If most of the Romanian students, 94,1% , have said that learning in a university is necessary for the development of the personality and of the specific skills, only 75% among Moldavian students consider this fact true, on the other hand they have given more diverse answers about this aspect, emphasizing on getting a diploma and jobs. In percents, the Moldavian students were more numerous (16%) in the affirmation that rarely the knowledge accumulated in a university is useful.

**Table 2.** The statistical processing of the differences between the Romanian and Moldavian students answers about the **way of adapting** to Romania (questions 8, 9, 10, 17 and 21) of the questionnaire “Learning in acculturation conditions – LAC”.

Item	Answer type	Romanian students frequency	Moldavian students frequency	Chi-square $\chi^2$	Significance $p$		
8. Contribution to success in school	a. Optimum self trust	45	16	2.353	0.798		
	b. Participating to extra-scholastic activities	5	3				
	c. Volunteer activities	10	2				
	d. Moderate time spent with friends	3	2				
	e. Time for individual study	29	11				
	f. Involvement in the extra-scholastic activities of the teachers	4	3				
9. Did you manage to adapt in Romania?	a. Yes, it was very easy	15	9	0.695	NS		
	b. Yes, relatively difficult, but I managed	10	10				
	c. I did not have enough time	0	0			N/A	N/A
	d. No, it is very hard for me	0	5			N/A	N/A
Item	Answer type	Romanian students Mean Rank	Moldavian students Mean Rank	Mann Whitney Test	Significance $p$		
10. The conditions of a quick and efficient adaptation	a. Making new friends	46.34	46.96	805	0.921		
	b. Isolation toward the new society	47.41	43.92	754	0.503		
	c. Keeping my own traditions, but also meeting new ones	48.80	39.98	695.5	0.156		
	d. More acceptance from the society of the residential state	44.60	51.90	686.5	0.242		
	e. More help from the states institutions	44.99	50.79	713	0.353		
	f. More involvement from the universities	48.39	41.15	687.5	0.246		
	g. More interest from my side	47.65	41.40	693.5	0.302		
Item	Answer type	Romanian students frequency	Moldavian students frequency	Chi-square $\chi^2$	Significance $p$		
17. Are you supported by someone?	a. By my family from home	62	17	N/A	N/A		
	b. By relatives from Romania	1	5				
	c. By old friends, here in Romania.	3	5				
	d. By new friends, I met in Romania	8	9				
	e. By new friends, from my country, who came to Romania	0	4				
	f. No. I can manage very good alone	6	6				
	g. No. I cannot manage at all	0	2				
21. Do you consider that you are being treated discriminatory?	a. By the teachers	Yes/often	19	3	2.325	NS	
		No/rarely	49	21			
	b. By the colleagues	Yes/often	6	2	0.031	NS	
		No/rarely	62	24			
	c. By the authorities	Yes/often	13	8	2.035	NS	
		No/rarely	55	16			
	d. By the society	Yes/often	10	5	0.379	NS	
		No/rarely	58	20			

Note: NS – insignificant; t – significance tendency ( $p < 0.1$ ), \* - significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ), \*\* - very significantly ( $p < 0.01$ )

### c. Results about the educational system (university, teacher teaching styles) from Romania (items 7, 11, 13, 14, 16).

About the team work, according the students affirmations we found out that Romanian students prefer jobs that consist in team work, and the Moldavian ones prefer individual work, the differences being statistically significant, this fact could not be found in the LAC results but one could notice the choice for individual learning and not cooperation, on both teams. So, for learning individualism is preferred, and for work at the Romanian students, the team, meanwhile the Moldavian students are constant, in both situations preferring the individual work.

In a similar study was proved that the individualism and collectivism of Arabian students are not depending by their ethnic origin [13].

Another paradoxical result has been registered at question 16; regarding the satisfaction degree toward the assistance received from the authorities. None of

the Moldavian students considered totally ignored by the Romanian state's authorities, but 16% from the Romanians, say this, differences being significant from a statistic processing perspective. Most of the students mention that it could be better, a type of answer that, generally, is chosen by the investigated ones, and more, the Moldavian students have chosen this middle way of expressing their needs (without being too radical in affirmations) in a much higher percent (of 91.7%). The Romanian students were more categorical in affirmations (although in the case of LSI questionnaire, especially about learning strategies and learning opinions, they have usually chosen the middle way, scoring the affirmations with 3 points, in a 1-5 interval) [14] and their needs are bigger, in comparison with those of the Moldavian students.

Both students' categories, especially the Moldavian ones, with insignificant statistic differences, agreed with the fact that, **teaching styles** of the Oradea University teachers are formal and dictatorial or demonstrative, a bit centered on individual learning or

assuming group activities (Table 4), this aspect is underlined also by the answers at the open questions of the present questionnaire. In a study realized between 2001 – 2006 on the teachers didactic activity from 257 Romania universities, in which were involved 5148

students [17], was revealed that students had an high level of gratitude for courses and seminars, most favorable feedback was the teachers availability for answer to the students questions, which certify the open communication between students and teachers.

**Table 3.** The statistical processing of the differences between the answers of the Romanian and Moldavian students at the questions about the **professional training system** (questions 11, 13, 14, 16) of the questionnaire “Learning in acculturation conditions – LAC”.

Item	Answer type	Romanian students frequency	Moldavian students frequency	Chi-square $\chi^2$	Significance $p$
11. Is learning within a university necessary?	a. For the development of the specific personality and abilities	64	18	N/A	N/A
	b. No. It is enough to get a diploma	0	1		
	c. The knowledge assimilated in the university are rarely useful	4	4		
	d. No. A well paid job is more important	0	1		
13. What job would you wish for?	a. One that implies team work	48	11	4.726*	0.030
	b. One that requires only knowledge and skills	20	13		
14. Is it useful to make future plans?	a. Yes, but only for a short term	33	4	18.640**	0.000
	b. Yes, especially for a long term	15	17		
	c. No, I risk to be disappointed	20	3		
16. Are you contempt with the assistance received from the authorities?	a. Yes, very contempt	5	2	N/A	N/A
	b. Yes, but I could be better	47	22		
	c. No, I was totally ignored	16	0		

**Note:** t – significance tendency ( $p < 0.1$ ), \* - significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ), \*\* - very significantly ( $p < 0.01$ )

**Table 4.** The statistical processing of the differences between the answers of the Romanian and Moldavian students at the question about **teachers teaching style** (question 7) of the questionnaire “Learning in acculturation conditions – LAC”.

Item	Answer type	Romanian students frequency	Moldavian students frequency	Chi-square $\chi^2$	Significance $p$
7. Teaching methods of teachers	a. Formal and dictatorial	27	6	0.350	0.320
	b. Demonstrative	26	9		
	c. Facilitating, implying group activities	4	4		
	d. Centered on individual learning	11	5		

**Note:** t – significance tendency ( $p < 0.1$ ), \* - significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ), \*\* - very significantly ( $p < 0.01$ )

**d. The results about the personal aspects connected to learning** (way, learning style, learning conditions, scholastic performance) (items 1 – 6 and 18 – 20).

Generally, the students have different style of learning [7], but in our case, from the personal aspects perspective regarding the learning conditions there are no significant differences between the two categories of students answers (Table 5). A noticeable fact is that, according to student’s affirmations, from the processing of the answers corresponding to questions 18 and 19 regarding **scholastic performance**, between the two categories of investigated students, Romanians and Moldavians, there are no statistically significant differences, we studied students, from both groups, with different performance levels, from the ones with low performance, to the top ones, most of them choosing the answer option from the middle to the top (Table 6).

The two groups of student’s answers to the **open** questions (items 22, 23 and 24) were grouped into categories, according to their predominance, character, and importance. The marked results interpretation was made by calculating their frequency, for each answer category, and the raw data were reported to the number of questioned students, from each group separately, percentage values that can be found in tables 7, 8 and 9.

One can observe the Romanian students answers directed toward future needs (job), and those of the Moldavian students, toward immediate needs (accommodation conditions).

**The strengths and weaknesses of the teacher – student relation** required the division in two categories, namely, the ones from the students perspective, that regarded the personal answers about the equality of the status, personality features and the ones from the teacher’s point of view, making reference to their personality, professionalism, the capacity of collaborating with students and teaching/evaluation styles (Table 8).

Unfortunately, student training is more concentrated on technical academic specialization. Beyond the scientific formation by acquiring specific type of training, even psycho-pedagogy. Moreover, teachers, form students for a world that will arise tomorrow, are not able to understand the present in their lives, together with their students. Essential issues such as urbanization, globalization of information, cultural plurality of young people remain out on behalf of a narrow professionalism, often didacticist, and otherwise relatively elusory. Should reflect more deeply in our relationships between the dimensions of training, between the academic and psycho - relational part, between generic training and specialized, and between the initial and continuous formation [2].

**About the students change wishes** regarding their life in Romania, from the total of Romanian or Moldavian students, who were questioned, 26%, respectively 50% (the highest percent expressing the frequency of some answers, from the present study) would change (if they had the possibility) the Romanians standard of living (Table 9). The high percent noticed at the Moldavian students group, can be explained through their negative financial situation or through the fact that, their expectations about their arrival to Romania were higher, and the reality in the country disappointed them. If in Romania, the social

conditions for learning are not satisfactory, in Norway, 304 foreign students of Bergen University, from 64 different countries are satisfied how they live [10].

With an identical percent, of 9% (Table 9), were the answers at the category referring to changing the Romanian's mentality, just that the Romanian students meant the Romanians mentality, in general, about the lifestyle, and the Moldavian students referred exactly to the mentality change toward the people came from Moldavian Republic, to a better image and appreciation from the Romanians.

**Table 5.** The statistical processing of the differences between the answers of the Romanian and Moldavian students at the questions about the **learning conditions** (questions 1 - 6) of the questionnaire "Learning in acculturation conditions – LAC".

Item	Answer type	Romanian students frequency	Moldavian students frequency	Chi-square $\chi^2$	Significance $p$
1. Strengths	a. Visual memory	49	14	0.607	0.738
	b. Auditory memory	7	2		
	c. Motive memory	27	11		
2. Learning ways	a. You move around the house	8	5	7.486	0.187
	b. You crunch something	20	3		
	c. You listen to music	8	5		
	d. Light in the room	55	17		
	e. Warm in the room	28	14		
	f. Cold in the room	11	1		
	g. Dark in the room	0	0	N/A	N/A
3. The favorite moment for learning	a. In the morning	24	11	7.241 <sup>t</sup>	0.065
	b. All day, no matter the hour	26	4		
	c. In the evening	14	4		
	d. At night	4	5		
4. The favorite place for learning	a. At home	67	19	N/A	N/A
	b. At school	4	2		
	c. At work	2	2		
	d. At the library	4	9		
	e. At friends	4	0		
	f. Some other place	4	4		
5. How do you learn?	a. Together with at least one friend	3	1	N/A	N/A
	b. Alone	62	20		
	c. Together with a teacher	0	2		
	d. Together with a colleague	3	1		
6. Learning techniques	a. Underlining on the text	48	16	0.019	0.991
	b. Making sketches	35	12		
	c. Simply reading the material	11	4		

**Note:** t – significance tendency ( $p < 0.1$ ), \* - significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ), \*\* - very significantly ( $p < 0.01$ )

**Table 6.** The statistical processing of the differences between the answers of the Romanian and Moldavian students at the questions about the **scholastic performance** (questions 18, 19, 20) of the questionnaire "Learning in acculturation conditions – LAC".

Item	Answer type	Romanian students frequency	Moldavian students frequency	Chi-square $\chi^2$	Significance $p$
18. The level of school performance	a. Among the first 5 from my year	31	7	3.834	0.425
	b. Form middle to the top	15	9		
	c. In the middle	19	7		
	d. From middle down	3	1		
	e. At the end	31	7		
19. General Average of the study years	a. Between 5 and 7	18	5	0.683	0.877
	b. Between 7 and 8	27	9		
	c. Between 8 and 9	13	5		
	d. Between 9 and 10	10	5		
20. Is school performance influenced by social factors?	a. No	9	3	N/A	N/A
	b. In a small extent	33	8		
	c. Largely	20	13		
	d. Totally	6	0		

**Note:** t – significance tendency ( $p < 0.1$ ), \* - significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ), \*\* - very significantly ( $p < 0.01$ )

**Table 7.** Answer categories expressed by the Romanian and Moldavian students at the question number 22, regarding the **student's needs concerning the educational system**, and also the percentage of these answers reported to the total number of questioned students (number considered to be 100%).

Question 22: Students needs about the educational system are connected to:		
Answer categories	Romanian students (control)	Moldavian students
1. Future job	13%	5%
2. Endowment of the universities and learning conditions	32%	14%
3. The conditions from the accommodation facilities	0	45%
4. Scholarships	7%	23%
5. Teachers behavior	31%	23%
6. Learning process	38%	23%
7. Extra – scholastic activities	4%	0
8. Getting diplomas	1%	0
9. Others	16%	27%

**Table 8.** Answer categories expressed by the Romanian and Moldavian students at the question number 23, regarding the **strengths and weaknesses** in the student – teacher relation, and also the percentage of these answers reported to the total number of questioned students (number considered to be 100%).

Question 23: Strengths and weaknesses of the relation between students and teachers:		
Answer categories	Romanian students (control)	Moldavian students
<b>Strengths</b>		
<i>From the students perspective:</i>		
1. Equality of the status	24%	18%
2. Students personality	41%	45%
3. I don't have strengths	1%	9%
<i>From the teachers perspective:</i>		
4. Teachers personality	15%	14%
5. Professionalism	22%	5%
<b>Weaknesses</b>		
<i>From the students perspective:</i>		
6. Personality features	25%	27%
7. I don't have weaknesses	1%	5%
<i>From the teachers perspective:</i>		
8. Collaboration relationship, cooperation with the students	29%	14%
9. Teaching / evaluation style	24%	14%

**Table 9.** Answer categories expressed by the Romanian and Moldavian students at the question number 24, regarding **what would the students change about their life in Romania**, and also the percentage of these answers, reported to the total number of questioned students (number considered to be 100%).

Question 24: What would you change about life in Romania:		
Answer categories	Romanian students (control)	Moldavian students
1. Standard of living	26%	50%
2. People mentalities	9%	9%
3. The educational system	12%	18%
4. Working motivation	9%	9%
5. Job safety	10%	0%
6. Corruption	9%	0%
7. Conditions for receiving Romanian citizenship	0%	18%
8. Equal working rights for immigrants	0%	5%
9. Central authorities	10%	5%
10. Other	28%	27%

## DISCUSSIONS

The results regarding the student's learning method, identified in the present study, are according to the ones marked in a previous study [14] where we concluded that the Romanian and Moldavian students learning styles are similar, especially directed on application or understanding, but the Moldavian students shown a slight disposition to the reproductive style, while the Romanian ones shown also a undirected style. Self-competence training (SCT) for students is a problem more often raised by specialists in education, in special in occidental literature [3], it

falls within the broad area of permanent education issues [4].

The reasons from the learning's foundation, of the two samples of investigated students, register some differences, consequently, besides the common motivations that the two groups share (to become a good specialist, to become an influential person or interest for knowledge), the Moldavian students have a more profound extrinsic motivation (financial reward through scholarships system, pressure from certain people or institutions).

The scholastic performance of the two students categories (Romanians and Moldavians) did not

register significant differences from a statistical point of view, but this aspect does not imply consequently that it cannot be in a direct relationship with the learning styles, individual characteristics or psychosocial conditions, because scholastic performance can be obtained through many ways, the advantages or disadvantages created by one of the aspects could be balanced. The aspect of the motivation's nature of extrinsic type, better expressed at the Moldavian students, can compensate with the unfitted social conditions where the Moldavian students unfold their activity. The scholastic performance of the Romanian and Moldavian students – with all extrinsic – similar stimulations can be explained through the fact that the Moldavian student's motivation counterbalances the specific life, psychosocial problems, present in acculturation situations. Identifying a significant difference of the motivation, and also different individual and psychosocial aspects between the Romanian and Moldavian students, the similar scholastic performance signaled at the both student groups of results from the compensation system.

The study proved that the Romanian students are feeling that they are discriminated by their colleagues, teachers and authorities, equally as Moldavian students. Same conclusions were observed at U.S. Southwest University [11], where a study was made using 24 foreign students from 15 different countries and their specific difficulties, caused by injustice and discrimination. The authors concluded that not all the foreign students' problems are problematically, but the most serious attempts they are forced to occur are generated by a hostile society, things that are not observed in Romania.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Budnic, A., (2006): Formarea competenței de comunicare interculturală. Doctoral thesis. „Ion Creangă” Pedagogică de Stat University, Chișinău, Republic of Moldova [in Romanian].
- [2] Cucoș, C., (2000): Educația. Dimensiuni culturale și interculturale. Polirom Printin House, Iași.
- [3] Delors, J., (2000): Comoara lăuntrică. Raportul UNESCO al Comisiei Internaționale pentru Educație în sec. XXI, trad., Polirom Printing House, Iași.
- [4] Dordea, M., (2003): Perspective contemporane în didactica învățământului superior. Studii. Academiei Forțelor Terestre „Nicolae Bălcescu”, Printing House, Sibiu.
- [5] Drăgan, I., Partenie, L., (1997): Psihologia învățării. Excesior Publishing, Timișoara.
- [6] Dumitriu, G., (1998): Comunicare și învățare. Didactică & Pedagogică Printing House, Bucharest.
- [7] Dunn, R., Dunn, K., (1992): Teaching secondary students through their individual learning styles: Practical approaches for grades 7-12. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- [8] Farrington, D., (2001): A study of student-institution relationships in selected member states of the Council of Europe, *European Journal for Education Law and Policy*, Kluwer Academic Publishers (Netherlands), 4: 99–120.
- [9] Kamal, A.A., Maruyama, G., (1990): Cross-Cultural Contact and Attitudes of Qatari Students in the United States. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 14: 123–134.
- [10] Lackland, S.D., (2001): Satisfaction with life among international students: an exploratory study. *Social Indicators Research*, Kluwer Academic Publishers (Netherlands), 53: 315–337.
- [11] Lee, J.L., Rice, C., (2007): Welcome to America? International student perceptions of discrimination. *Higher Education*. Springer Science-Business Media B.V., 53: 381–409.
- [12] Okazaki, S., (1997): Sources of ethnic differences between Asian American and White American college students on measures of depression and social anxiety. *J. Abnorm Psychol*, 106: 52–60.
- [13] Oyserman, D., (1993): The Lens of Personhood: Viewing the self and others in a multicultural society. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.*, 65: 993–1009.
- [14] Petruș-Vancea, A., Secui, M., Roman, D., (2009): Students learning styles in acculturation conditions (pers. comm. 2009, in press in: *An. of Univ. of Oradea, Fasc. Psychology*, Vol. 15).
- [15] Pritchard, R.M.O., Skinner, B., (2002): Cross-cultural partnerships between home and international students. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 6(4): 323–354.
- [16] Ting-Toomey, S., (1981): Ethnic identity and close friendship in Chinese-American students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 5: 383–406.
- [17] Zaharie, M., (2006): Evaluarea cursurilor de către studenți în anul universitar 2005-2006. Centrul de Dezvoltare Universitară, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai. Grant: “Asigurarea calității activității didactice în universitățile din România”, 17/1374/2006. [http://ascr.ro/proiectqaubb/Raport\\_de\\_faza\\_Grant\\_1374](http://ascr.ro/proiectqaubb/Raport_de_faza_Grant_1374) downloaded on March 2009.