Formación de habilidades blandas en comunicación y resolución de conflictos en estudiantes

Training communication and conflict resolution soft skills in students

Mariia Morozova[1][1], Tetiana Fasolko[2], Viktoriya Poliuha[3], Liudmyla Veselska[4],
Karina Prinsess Bagration[5]

Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University, Starobilsk, Ukraine[1]
Taras Shevchenko Regional Humanitarian-Pedagogical Academy of Kremenets, Kremenets, Ukraine[2]
Ivan Franko Drohobych State Pedagogical University, Drohobych, Ukraine[3]
Educational and Scientific Institute of Humanities of the University of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine, Irpin, Ukraine[4]
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Kyiv, Ukraine[5]

ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7485-0102[1]
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4131-2735[2]
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8778-2380[3]
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-003-0944-441X[4]
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2068-8554[5]

Resumen
El objetivo del presente trabajo fue establecer el nivel de habilidades blandas de comunicación y resolución de conflictos en estudiantes y crear un programa para su formación y desarrollo. Para el estudio se utilizó un conjunto de técnicas diagnósticas dirigidas a determinar habilidades de comunicación, características de interacción interpersonal y estrategias de resolución de conflictos. Se utilizaron métodos de encuesta y capacitación, así como métodos de procesamiento de datos cuantitativos. Se encontraron cambios constantes en el nivel de habilidades blandas de comunicación, habilidades empáticas y estilos de interacción interpersonal en el grupo de estudio. Se estableció un cambio en la elección de las estrategias de resolución de conflictos: los estudiantes han comenzado a dar preferencia al compromiso y la cooperación. Se observe un aumento significativo en las habilidades empáticas, y que el nivel de estilos interpersonales de interacción como autoritarismo, agresión y egoísmo disminuyó. En cambio, aumentaron las tendencias hacia la amistad y el altruismo como estilos de interacción interpersonal. La perspectiva de futuras investigaciones está aclarando las peculiaridades del entrenamiento y desarrollo de otros grupos de habilidades blandas, en particular, aquellas enfocadas en el autodesarrollo y la autoorganización, lo que perfilará un retrato más integrado del estudiante moderno.

[1]Correspondencia a la autora
E-mail: mrz86.maria@gmail.com

Palabras clave: habilidades blandas, comunicación, habilidades de comunicación, interacción interpersonal, conflictos, resolución de conflictos**.**

Abstract
The aim of the work was to establish the level of communication and conflict resolution soft skills of students and to create a programme for their training and development. A set of diagnostic techniques aimed at diagnosing communication skills, features of interpersonal interaction and conflict resolution strategies was used for the study. Survey and training methods, as well as quantitative data processing methods were used. Steady changes in the level of communication soft skills, empathic abilities and styles of interpersonal interaction in the study group were found. A change in the choice of conflict resolution strategies was established — students have begun to give preference to compromise and cooperation. There has been a significant increase in empathic abilities. It was found that the level of such interpersonal styles of interaction as authoritarianism, aggression and selfishness decreased. Instead, tendencies toward friendliness and altruism as styles of interpersonal interaction have grown. The prospect of further research is clarifying the peculiarities of training and development of other groups of soft skills, in particular, those focused on self-development and self-organization, which will outline a more integrated portrait of the modern student.

Keywords: soft skills, communication, communication skills, interpersonal interaction, conflicts, conflict resolution.

Introduction

The practice of dividing the competencies provided for in the curricula into competencies of two types has established within the competence approach. The first refers to professional-specific knowledge, skills and abilities (hard skills). The second is the competencies related to personal development, human values (goal setting, self-presentation, business communication, teamwork, leadership, public speaking skills, emotional intelligence), which labour market development experts call soft skills (Muraviova et al., 2021; Wilson & Marnewick, 2019). Researchers also note supra-professional competencies, namely: multilingualism and multiculturalism; interdisciplinary communication skills; customer orientation; ability to interact with other people, communicate with them; ability to manage projects and processes; work under the conditions of high uncertainty and fast change of tasks; creativity (Gaines & Mohammed, 2013); ability to work with teams, groups and individuals; programming of IT-solutions/management of complex automated complexes/work with artificial intelligence; system thinking; lean production skills; ecological thinking (Mitchell, 2015). At the same time, experts emphasize the importance of soft and supra-professional competencies in the context of globalization, increasing competition, automation, intensive use of programmable devices, increasing complexity of management systems, blurring disciplinary and sectoral boundaries, increasing ecological thinking (Devedzic et al., 2018; Mozhova et al.,

2020).

It is becoming clear that the subjects of basic higher education programmesare primarily aimed at training professional competencies that are defined in educational standards, while employers want to see a graduate who also has soft skills. Of course, the development of soft skills is currently assessed as a process of dynamic transformation of the individual throughout his/her life. Communication skills and the ability to resolve conflicts are especially important for the future specialist, as the future professional activity of students is built on interaction with people. The following soft skills are the most important for the development in the student age: communication skills, creativity, interpersonal skills, teamwork, flexibility and adaptability. The aim of the work is to study the training and development of conflict resolution and communicative soft skills in students. Research objectives are the following: 1) development of a training program for the development of the above-mentioned soft skills; 2) verification of the effectiveness of this programme; and 3) finding out the features of the development of soft skills in students, which are aimed at communication and conflict resolution.

Literature review

The most complete list and categories were formed by the World Economic Forum in the Future of Jobs report (Wheeler, 2016). They include: the ability to solve complex problems, critical thinking, creativity — the ability to think creatively, people management, coordination, emotional intelligence, decision-making, customer orientation, the ability to negotiate, cognitive flexibility — the mental ability to switch from one thought to another, and reflect several things at the same time.

Researchers are focusing on training the soft skills of not only employees but also students as future specialists. The need to take into account the development of soft skills in the process of obtaining subject knowledge and professional competencies is indicated by the results of significant research conducted in different countries (Druhanova, 2021; Sharma, 2017). By its part, Mozhova et al. (2020) research also states the fundamental importance of the student's emotional and communicative qualities (and not only academic success, as previously thought) for his/her further life and professional success. In an attempt to summarize different classifications and identify the most important soft skills, we distinguish the following vectors for the development of soft skills.

Basic communication skills that help to establish communication with other people, to make decisions in difficult situations. These include the following abilities and skills: the ability

to listen, persuade and argue; building communication networks (networking) and supporting their development; self-presentation; negotiation, public speaking, the ability to organize teamwork and work in a team, focus on people (Clark et al., 2018; Muraviova et al., 2021). Self-management skills that help to effectively control and manage one's own emotions and psychological states, the organization of their activities, in particular, time management. These include emotion and stress management, planning and goal setting, organizing one's own development, time management, initiative and perseverance, reflection, the ability to use feedback (Cantón & Garcia, 2018; Onnis et al., 2018). Effective thinking skills, namely building successful thinking strategies. These include such characteristics of thinking as consistency and creativity, its logic and structure, search and analysis of information, decision-making (Capretz & Ahmed, 2018; O'Mahony et al., 2017).

Management skills: business planning, financial modelling, understanding of marketing strategies, reputation management skills (Clark et al., 2018; Dluhunovych, 2014). Most researchers report that conflict resolution and communication skills are key groups of soft skills (Drozdova & Dubinina, 2020; Robles, 2012). Their indicators are persuasion and argumentation skills, which consist in understanding the point of view of the interlocutors and adequately responding to them. It also includes the ability to negotiate and understand ways to avoid mistakes; understanding the interlocutor's needs (Muraviova et al., 2021; Prihatiningsih, 2018). Other indicators are the ability to formulate their needs and communicate them to colleagues, compare with the needs of others (Gibert et al., 2017).

The scientists distinguish the following traditional methods of development of conflict resolution and communication soft skills: 1) Self-study, independent learning of information from books, articles or blogs, audio trainings or webinars; 2) the use of feedback from friends, colleagues, managers or experts on the relevant area about the need to develop certain skills and the success or failure of the progress of their development; 3) studying the experience of others by identifying models of desirable and successful behaviour of a person who has a high level of the required competencies; 4) trainings and special assignments that develop certain skills or help to level the development of negative habits; and 5) development in the course of work — improving the quality of their work by learning new and more effective decision-making and behavioural models (Devedzic et al., 2018; Börner et al., 2018; Pezer, 2015).

The most popular psychological and pedagogical techniques used for the development of soft skills: the technique of creating a subject-developing environment, the technique of collaborative learning and traditional techniques, as well as project work, are actively described in the research. However, group training is the main way to develop soft skills, as a common

and one of the most effective ways to develop them (Valentin et al., 2015; Fernandes et al., 2021).

Methods

The development of soft skills in students was studied in extracurricular time. The electronic form of the survey using Google forms was chosen with a view to the peculiarities of quarantine restrictions and distance learning of students. Students who agreed to take part in the survey were sent a link to the electronic form and asked to fill it out in a week. All responses were processed only in generalized form.

350 students aged 18-22 were selected to find out their communication and conflict resolution soft skills of students. The subjects were selected by random sampling. Students study at Drohobych State Pedagogical University of Ivan Franko and Zhytomyr Medical Institute of Zhytomyr Regional Council. The respondents were selected from the first to the fifth years of study. Distribution by place of study: Institute of Musical Arts (Drohobych University) — 45% of students, Department of Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and the Humanities (Zhytomyr Institute) — 55% of students.

A training programme was developed to train the communication and conflict resolution soft skills of the surveyed group. This programme was tested on 80 students in the period from November 2020 to January 2021. The programme was implemented for the surveyed group in the period from February 2021 to June 2021. The programme contained 8 topics, which included one lesson on each topic. The duration of one lesson was 3.5-4 hours, including an introductory part, discussion of preliminary results, exercises and a final discussion. Meetings were held by professional practicing psychologists once a week in a group of 12-15 people. A brief description of the programme is provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Programme of development of communication and conflict resolution soft skills in the respondents (author's development)

Topic 1. Basic model of communication
Participants, communication triangle (COP, setting, adjusting, maintaining)
"Contact cycle", structure, stages, complexities
Types of business communications (barriers and their overcoming)
Specifics of telephone conversations
Meta-message is the image and impression we make
Communication with an individual, a group, a large number of people
Training exercise "Build a house — stages of communication, emerging difficulties and problems"
Analysis of cases by the participants

Topic 2. Orientation in the partner, establishing trust
Classification of types of interlocutors in negotiations (features and difficulties)
"Pyramid" of needs
The concept of representative leading systems, reference systems, public access keys, predicates, internal strategies.
Persuasion patterns
Practical contact skills. Paraphrase method. Reframing
Technologies for finding new solutions when creating a partner's world map
Hidden and explicit motives and purposes of communication
NLP in interpersonal communications:
-    "Non-verbal adjustment" techniques
-    "Verbal adjustment" techniques
-    "Paraverbal adjustment" techniques

Topic 3. Building partnerships, removing barriers to communication
Determining the interlocutor's interest, motivation, position, negotiating goal:
-    active listening in the course of constructive dialogue;
-    types of issues that affect the interlocutor's point of view;
-    SPIN-questions technique
Exercise — role-playing game "Find out the interlocutor's purpose", work with the partner's "hidden motives"

Topic 4. Goal setting as a basic skill of personal success
Definition of the purposes and tasks, competent formation, the preventive control
Building a goal tree, conflict of goals
"Strategic cardboard"
Balance and consistency of corporate and individual goals
Dependence of achievement of results on correct formulation of the purpose (activity map)
Exercise. Setting goals and their evaluation according to the SMART format

Topic 5. Techniques for conveying information to the interlocutor
Rules for conveying information to the interlocutor (5C)
Listener's actions in the process of negotiations
Transition from a topic of interest to the interlocutor to a topic of interest to me
Methods of attracting attention
Persuasion, argumentation techniques
Development of interaction tactics and key phrases
Development of an individual style of interaction with the interlocutor
Exercise — role game "Infect with your IDEA"

Topic 6. Improving personal and professional performance through time management
Optimal use of available resources
Pareto principle
Time management matrix
Principles of setting priorities, their impact on achieving results
Rationalization through grouping of tasks
Bringing the most important affairs to the result
Exercise — workshop "Goal setting according to DISCO"

Topic 7. Typical problems and errors that occur during the stages of communication
Objection: types, reasons and overcoming techniques:

Customer's objection as a hidden need
Algorithm for working with objections
True and false objections
Private forms of response to objections
Obstacles to a mutually beneficial agreement and ways to eliminate them
Nonconstructive partner's behaviour
Interlocutor's personal "difficulties"
Hidden and conscious conflicts, conflict resolution strategies
Problems of business communication with subordinates, with colleagues, with management
Exercise — business game "Responses to customer objections", analysis of cases from participants
Topic 8. Methods of developing skills of constructive dialogue
Personal communication efficiency (components)
Self-esteem and its impact on interaction with people
Resources and limitations in the organization of effective communications
Ways to enhance personal communication effectiveness Behavioural proactivity and the development of psychological resilience
Testing exercise "Discovering your communication style"
Harmonization of living space
Wheel of life balance
Value criteria scale
Role choice "Lotus"

The following methods were used to study the soft skills of the respondents, which are aimed at establishing communication and resolving conflict situations: 1) the Leary test (Diagnostics of Interpersonal Relationships) is designed to clarify the perceptions of respondents about their own ideal "I" and research of the relationships in small groups. The technique is represented by the following scales, which characterize the types of attitudes towards other people: authoritarian, selfish, aggressive, suspicious, submissive, dependent, friendly, altruistic. Each scale has 4 levels of manifestation: low, medium, high and extreme, which indicates a pathological manifestation of a particular type of attitude towards other people.

2) Thomas Behaviour in Conflict Situations Test. The results of the questionnaire are reflected in the following scales: competition, adaptation, avoidance, compromise and cooperation; 3) Questionnaire: evaluation of communication skills. It consists of 14 questions that need to be evaluated on a scale from 1 to 7, where: 1 — this aspect of communication is completely absent, and 7 —a person has a full certain skill or ability. A total score of less than 30 indicates a low level of development of communication skills, 30-60 — medium, and more than 60 points — demonstrates strong communication skills. Finally, 4) Boyko Empathy Test.

Statistical analysis

The third stage of the research involved the processing of questionnaires, as well as the use of quantitative and qualitative methods of data processing. The comparative Student's t-test was

chosen among the statistical methods of data processing, which allows identifying differences between the same traits in different groups of subjects. Also, the survey was completely anonymous and voluntary, with a short questionnaire containing only questions about students' gender, age and educational institution.

The study does not differentiate between the peculiarities of the development of soft skills of students by specialties and areas of training, does not take into account the impact of the specialty mastered by the student on the motivation of his choice of specific communication strategies. The proposed training program is universal, focused on students in general, but does not provide professional content. Professional orientation of individual components of the program may further affect the outcome of its implementation.

Results

The results of the subjects will be analyzed in detail, obtained before and after the implementation of the training program.

Table 2
Distribution of the survey results according to the K. Thomas Conflict Resolution Strategy before and after the training

Type of conflict resolution	Low level 1*	Low level 2*	Medium level 1*	Medium level 2*	High level 1*	High level 2*
Confrontation	30%	65%	15%	30%	55%	5%
Adaptation	67.5%	60%	22.5%	20%	10%	20%
Avoidance	42.5%	67.5%	7.5%	27.5%	50%	5%
Compromise	67.5%	7.5%	10%	50%	22.5%	42.5%
Cooperation	65%	22.5%	25%	50%	10%	27.5%

*1– pre-training data, 2 – post-training data

In the first stage of the study, students have a predominance of conflict resolution strategies such as confrontation and avoidance. They prefer to defend their own needs and goals, trying to achieve them fully, regardless of the appropriateness of such actions in a certain period of time or the needs of others. Along with this result, high avoidance rates look somewhat contradictory. We can assume that respondents, assessing a certain conflict situation, decide whether they can achieve the desired (through a strategy of rivalry), or better avoid the situation. This approach is quite pragmatic and atypical for young people.

The results obtained after re-slice indicate that most of the subjects are not conflicting individuals. They are more likely to choose other conflict resolution strategies instead of confrontation and avoidance. It is recorded that at the first stage of the study, some students,

namely 22.5%, strive to achieve goals without exacerbating conflicts, by choosing a strategy of compromise. Only 27.5% of respondents are often inclined to choose a cooperation strategy.

Respondents began to give preference to more effective ways of resolving conflict situations. Compromise and cooperation now prevail among their choices. A significant reduction in the use of avoidance strategies is also worth noting, which indicates a more conscious attitude of the subjects to interpersonal communication. It is also an additional sign of the development of soft skills.

Table 3
Results of comparative analysis of positions in communication
before and after the training

Position in communication	Before the training	After the training
Dependent	37.5%	35%
Competent	50%	55%
Aggressive	12.5%	10%

The following results were obtained from the analysis of the L. Michelson's Test of Communicative Skills (Table 3). We see that the majority of respondents have a competent position in communication, which indicates a high level of their communicative competence and ability to communicate with the interlocutor as equals. After the training, 55% of respondents had a competent position in communication, these respondents are able to communicate with the interlocutor as equals, demonstrate a high level of communicative competence. In some situations, (provocative behaviour from others, reaction to unfair criticism, ability to make contact, response to an attempt to make contact), respondents cannot behave competently enough, and show either an aggressive attitude in communication or a dependent one.

Instead, some respondents have an aggressive position, which indicates the immaturity of their communication skills and abilities; the subjects show insecure behaviour in communication or behave too aggressively and "suppress" the interlocutor. The subjects manifest an aggressive position in communication in the following groups of communication skills: response to provocative behaviour by the interlocutor, response to unfair criticism, the ability to give and receive signs of attention (compliments) from another person, the ability to come into contact with another person, in-touch capabilities, response to attempts to get in touch with you. That is, in situations that provoke aggressive behaviour, students often succumb and

demonstrate such behaviour, which indicates a lack of communicative competence. After the training, no significant changes in the manifestation of an aggressive attitude in communication were recorded. The position declined by only 2.5%.

The dependent position in communication is manifested in a third of the subjects. They pay a significant part of their attention to the needs and emotions of other people and adjust their behaviour to external changes. No significant changes were recorded in this position after the training programme. Given these results, we can conclude that according to this method, communicative soft skills of students are quite well developed, but need correction in some respondents. Analysing the results of this method, we do not see any significant changes after the programme. We can assume that the components of the training programme were more effective for the development of other types of soft skills of the subjects.

Table 4
The level of empathic abilities before and after training

Level	Before the training	After the training
Very low	42.5%	17.5%
Low	37.5%	20%
Medium	20%	42.5%
High	0%	20%

Analysis of the results of Boyko Empathy Test revealed that in general, the subjects have a medium-low level of empathy, which indicates certain difficulties in communicating with others. The effectiveness of empathy decreases when the subjects try to avoid personal contacts, consider it inappropriate to show interest in another person, convince themselves to be calm about the experiences and problems of others. Such sentiments sharply limit the range of emotional sensitivity and empathic perception. Researchers cannot create an atmosphere of openness, trust, sincerity.

The ability to empathize helps to establish contact with people, support them, better understand their needs. As we can see from the results, this part of the students' soft skills needs significant attention and development. We record significant changes in the development of empathy of the study group after the training programme. Respondents began to pay much more attention to the needs and interests of others, became more sensitive to other people's emotions.
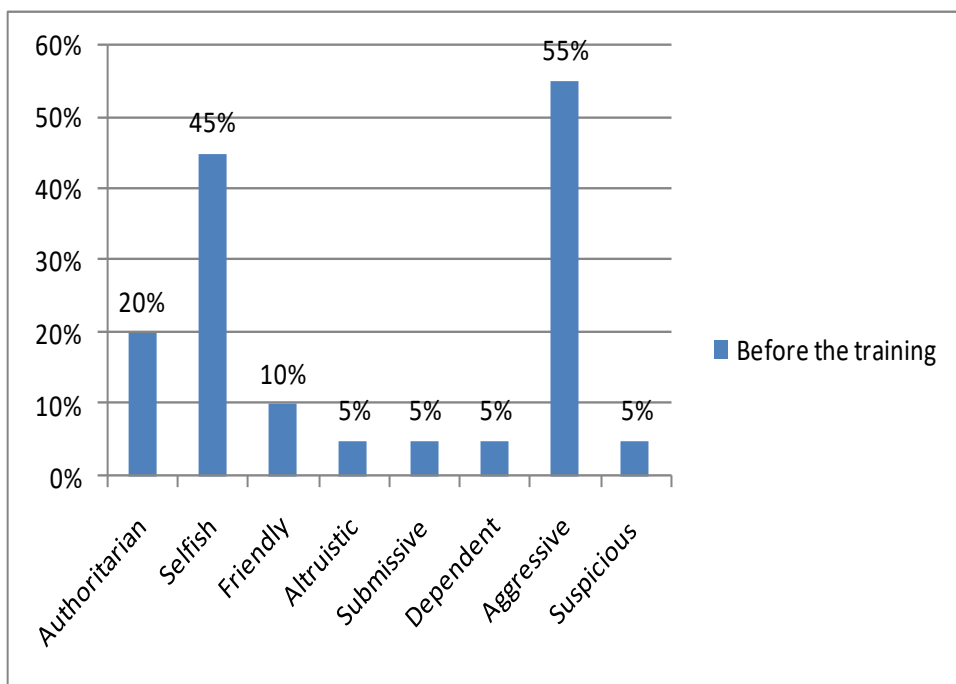
Figure 1. Types of interpersonal relationships (T. Leary) before the training
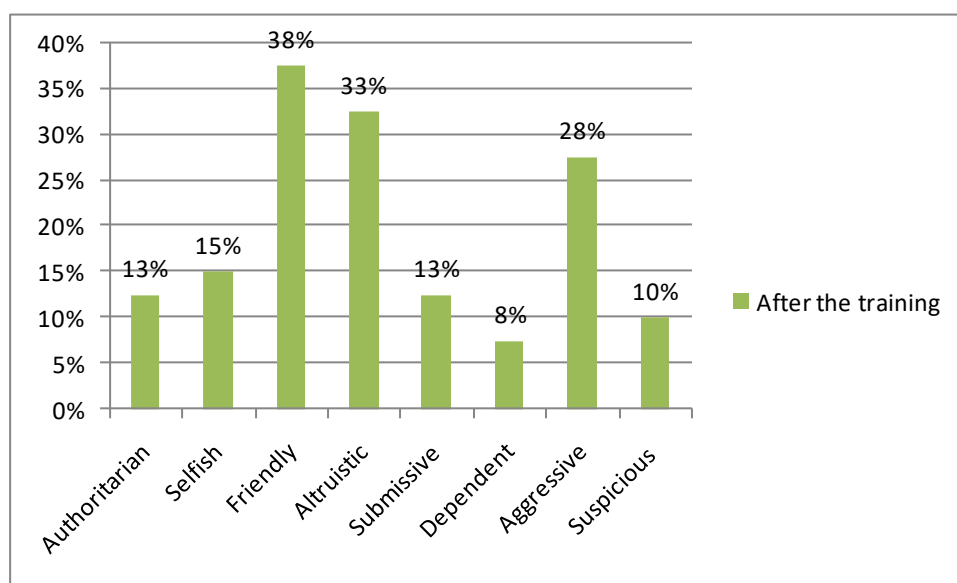

Figure 2. Types of interpersonal relationships (T. Leary) after the training

Analysing the results of the T. Leary's questionnaire, we can note a high manifestation of the values of aggression and selfishness. Young people (we noted that students were the surveyed group) are too self-centred, strive to lead and stand out, without focusing on the needs of others. They will argue with others just to stand out and show their ability to lead and achieve

what they want. These are quite natural age features of adolescence. After the training, the indicators of aggression and selfishness decreased significantly. Such changes in the types of interpersonal interaction indicate that the subjects have become more sensitive to the needs and conditions of others. There are also indicators of the authoritarianism of the surveyed group, respondents are quite harsh about others, they are ironic and easily irritated, may tend to blame others for their failures and react negatively to answers or information that is not consistent with their vision.

At the same time, the subjects show critically low rates of suspicion and dependence. This result on the "suspicion" parameter is somewhat contradictory to the previously described indicators, as criticism involves the perception of others, social phenomena, some isolation and self-centeredness, which is associated with signs of aggression and selfishness. Instead, a low rate of submissiveness, which reflects modesty and emotional restraint, wimpishness, is a logical continuation of high rates of aggression and selfishness. According to T. Leary's method, the predominance of such interpersonal tendencies in communication as friendliness and altruism was revealed after the second test.

Discussion

A comparison of the results of the subjects before and after the training indicated significant changes in the development of soft skills of the study group. The aim of the study was to find out the features of the development of soft skills of the research group before and after the implementation of the training program.We will note the changes in conflict resolution strategies. At the beginning of the study, the confrontation and avoidance were the main strategies for resolving conflicts. Effective coping strategies such as compromise and cooperation prevailed in only a quarter of the surveyed. The indicators of empathy according to Boyko's method have also changed —32.5% of the respondents showed a high level of empathy (no high indicators were recorded before the training conducted through this method), and only 12.5% had a low level of empathy.

In this case, Clark et al. (2018) note that only 15% of success in career growth is provided by hard skills, and the main part of success is related to the development of soft skills. In particular, Scaffidi (2018) notes that communication and conflict skills are necessary for all professions, regardless of specialization. He points out that in the IT field, employers also pay considerable attention to the development of these soft skills groups.

By its part, Devedzicet al. (2018) and Rana (2018) consider the relationship between different types of personality skills and points out that the development of both professional

and soft skills is important for professional growth. The researcher focuses on the interaction between people, noting that the ability to create effective dialogue is the key to the development of the team and its members.

Researchers note that a significant proportion of graduates clearly realized the lack of soft skills during the first year after graduating from university in their first job (Stewart et al., 2016; Taptyhina, 2018). Susilawati et al. (2020) described the experience of assessing these skills in medical school graduates not even by the leaders of their work teams, but by the consumers of their services — patients, and also noted that graduates lack certain soft skills. The works of scientists confirm the opinion of employers about the need for technical specialists and the representatives of creative professions to have soft skills (Heather, 2020; Mozhova et al., 2020). The studies of some scientists who found that soft skills are more developed in students majoring in the humanities than those who study technical sciences are of interest. Other scientists established a direct relationship between the level of soft skills and academic performance. The theoretical consequences of the study are the actualization of modern concepts of soft skills development, highlighting the most relevant soft skills that students need. The practicality of the results of the study is the creation of a training program for the development of soft skills, which can be recommended for use in other higher education institutions in Ukraine.

The main limitations of the study are the difficulty of verifying the results over a long period of time, in order to determine the effectiveness of the program. Some of the respondents completed their studies at the university after completing the study, which makes it difficult to retest the group. Also due to quarantine due to the COVID-19 pandemic, data collection was somewhat complicated (because the electronic form of the questionnaires was not convenient for all respondents) and the testing of research materials in the real educational process was difficult. Future research should be aimed at developing various competencies of future professionals. Special attention should also be paid to the formation of separate, specialized competencies that are necessary for the training of specialists in various fields.

Conclusions

The research raised the current problem of forming communicative and conflictological soft skills in students. Such skills are the basis for achieving effective communication and the formation of tolerance for communicative destruction. Within the framework of the research, the author's training program for the development of communicative and conflictological soft skills of the respondents was developed and experimentally tested. The

main directions of the program were the formation of business communications, the creation of partnerships, overcoming communication barriers, establishing and achieving communication goals, the formation of constructive communicative interaction.

The study established the effectiveness and feasibility of using the proposed author's training program. This is confirmed by the formation of the respondents' skills of using strategies of cooperation and compromise in interpersonal communication. The effectiveness of the author's program is also confirmed by the empirically recorded predominance of friendliness and altruism in interpersonal communicative contacts, improvement of empathic abilities. Prospects for further research in this area are the development, testing and implementation of training programs for the formation of communicative and conflict soft skills in students of various specialties and areas of training. Of particular scientific interest is the establishment of relationships between different groups of students' soft skills.

References

Börner, K., Scrivner, O., Gallant, M., Ma, Sh., Liu, X., Chewning, K., & Wu, L. (2018). Skill discrepancies between research, education, and jobs reveal the critical need to supply soft skills for the data economy. *PNAS, 115* (50). https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1804247115

Cantón, A., & Garcia, B.I. (2018). Global citizenship education. *New directions for student leadership, 160*, 21-30. https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.20307

Capretz, L., & Ahmed, F. A. (2018). A call to promote soft skills in software engineering. *Psychology and Cognitive Sciences, 4* (1). https://doi.org/10.17140/PCSOJ-4-e011

Clark, K. A., Konrad, M., & Test, D. W. (2018). Upgrade your performance: Improving soft skills of students with disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 49*, 351–365. https://doi:10.3233/JVR-180979

Devedzic, V., Tomic, B., Jovanovic, J., Kelly, M., Milikic, N., Dimitrijevic, S. & Sevarac, Z. (2018). Metrics for students' soft skills. *Applied Measurement in Education, 31* (4), 283-296. https://doi/full/10.1080/08957347.2018.1495212

Dluhunovych, N. A. (2014). Soft skills training as a necessary component of IT professionals. *Herald of KhmelnytskyiNationalUniversit, Technical sciences, 6*, 239-242. http://journals.khnu.km.ua/vestnik/pdf/tech/2014_6/47.pdf

Drozdova, Yu., & Dubinina, O. V. (2020). Conceptual approaches to the definition of soft skills in modern educational and professional models. Abstracts of the Interuniversity Scientific and Methodological Seminar "Soft skills - an integral part of building

student competitiveness in the 21st century", pp. 31-36. https://knute.edu.ua/file/NjY4NQ==/f5e21f8fa4b196951d084e7e586ab122.pdf

Druhanova, E. N. (2021). Role of free choice disciplines in the formation of applicants of higher education "Soft Skills". *Karazin University, Scientific Notes of the Pedagogical Department, 2021* (48), 23-29. https://doi.org/10.26565/2074-8167-2021-48-03

Fernandes, P., Jardim J., & Lopes, M. (2021). The Soft Skills of Special Education Teachers: Evidence from the Literature. *Education Sciences, 11* (3). https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11030125

Gaines, R. W., & Mohammed, M. B. (2013). Soft skills development in K-12 education. Research brief. https://2wh2pdomc1q415tdl40khdki-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/GLISI_SSResearchBrief_E1.pdf

Gibert, A., Tozer, W., & Westoby, M. (2017). Teamwork, soft skills, and research training. *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*, 32 (2), 81-84. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tree.2016.11.004

Heather. (2020). 11 Effective Employee Selection Methods to Start Using Today. *Harver*. https://harver.com/blog/employee-selection-methods/

Mitchell, G. (2015). *Essential soft skills for success in the 21st century workforce as perceived by Alabama business/marketing educators* [Doctoral dissertation, Auburn University]. http://etd.auburn.edu/bitstream/handle/10415/1441/Mitchell_Geana_57.pdf

Mozhova, G., Yevtushenko, V., & Mozhova, A. (2020). Formation of soft skills marketing professional on the basis of competence approach. *Economics and Society, 22*, 24-35. https://doi.org/10.32782/2524-0072/2020-22-40

Muraviova, I. O., Marianko, Ya. H., & Osadcha, A. O. (2021). Soft skills in the modern realities of Ukrainian education. *Innovative Pedagogy, 32* (1), 108-112. https://doi.org/10.32843/2663-6085/2021/32-1.23

O'Mahony, J., Rumbens, D., Thomas, N., Mizrahi, J., Hull, N., & Smith, X. (2017). Soft skills for business success. Deloitte: Access Economics. https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/au/Documents/Economics/deloitte-au-economics-deakin-soft-skills-business-success-170517.pdf

Onnis, L., Klieve, H., & Tsey, K. (2018). The evidence needed to demonstrate impact: A synthesis of the evidence from a phased social and emotional wellbeing intervention. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 70*, 35-43. https://doi: 10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2018.05.003.

Pezer, D. (2015). The importance of soft skills in technical education. In A. Sedmak (Ed.),

Proceedings of TEAM 2015 (pp. 75-79). Belgrade: Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, University of Belgrade. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305360275_THE_IMPORTANCE_OF_SOFT_SKILLS_IN_TECHNICAL_EDUCATION

Prihatiningsih, S. (2018). A review of soft-skill needs in in terms of industry. *IOP Conference Series Materials Science and Engineering, 306* (1), 012117. https://doi.org/10.1088/1757-899X/306/1/012117

Rana, K. (2018). Persuasion, trust, and personal credibility. *Diplo*. https://www.diplomacy.edu/resources/general/persuasion-trust-and-personal-credibility

Robles, M. M. (2012). Executive perceptions of the Top 10 soft skills needed in today's workplace. *Business Communication Quarterly, 75*, 453-465. https://doi.org/10.1177/1080569912460400

Scaffidi, C. (2018). Employers' needs for computer science, information technology and software engineering skills among new graduates. *International Journal of Computer Science, Engineering and Information Technology, 8* (1), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.5121/ijcseit.2018.8101.

Sharma, M. (2017). Radical transformational leadership: Strategic action for change agents. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books. https://doi.org/10.1080/0043231.2021.1983862

Stewart, C., Wall, A., & Marciniec, S. (2016). Mixed signals: Do college graduates have the soft skills that employers want? *In Competition Forum. American Society for Competitiveness, 14*(2), 276-281. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316066488_Mixed_Signals_Do_College_Graduates_Have_the_Soft_Skills_That_Employers_Want

Susilawati, Aznam, N., Paidi, & Ngadimin. (2020). Teachers' perspectives toward soft skills in science learning. Journal of Physics: Conference Series, 1460. https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1742-6596/1460/1/012111/pdf

Taptyhina, E. V. (2018). The process of forming soft skills in a medical university. *Medical education and professional development*. https://www.rosmedobr.ru/journal/2018/protsess-formirovaniya-soft-skills-v-meditsinskom-vuze/

Valentin, E., Carvalho, J. R. H., & Barreto, R. (2015). Rapid improvement of students' soft skills based on an Agile-process. *2015 IEEE Frontiers in Education Conference (FIE)*. https://doi.org/10.1109/FIE.2015.7344408

Wheeler, R. E. (2016). Soft skills-the importance of cultivating emotional intelligence. AALL Spectrum 28. Boston, MA: Boston University School of Law. https://scholarship.law.bu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1129&context=faculty_sc holarship

Wilson, T. T., & Marnewick, A. L. (2019). A comparative study of soft skills amongst the Washington Accord Engineering degree graduates with industry expectations. *2018 IEEE International Conference on Engineering, Technology and Innovation (ICE/ITMC)*. https://doi.org/10.1109/ICE.2018.8436282