

## PSYCHOLOGICAL DETERMINANTS OF ERRORS IN SOLVING POLITICAL TASKS

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### *Abstract*

*This article is devoted to the problem of rational orientation of actors in the political reality and the influence of political thinking on this process. The main objective of the study is the analysis of political errors made by the actors during the solution of political problems, and identification of the main factors that cause them. The following actors participated in the study: a group of deputies of different district and local councils of Ukraine, as well as students involved to a different extent into political activities, namely: a) students-political scientists; b) students having non-political and non-humanitarian profile (specialty: mechanical engineering, mathematics); c) Students specialized in psychology, religion, philosophy; g) students participating in political events on the Maidan during autumn 2013 - winter 2014. The participants had to solve four types of political information problems aimed at the analysis, forecasting, decision making, management. The study founded that the errors of political thinking were determined by the following factors: 1) the extent, quality of the functioning and the ratio of political thinking components (cognitive, operational, regulative and personal); 2) properties of political thinking (objectivity, notion-based thinking, practicality, creativity); 3) mental actions that provided staging and integrity of the search process (preparation, planning, evaluation, implementing, testing); 4) using mechanisms of solving the political problems, in particular strategic organization, particularly, the strategies of combination, analogy, reconstruction, universal or mixed, and the random act strategy; 5) the type of political problem. The study of this topic is highly relevant as political actors have great impact on the formation of the state and public policy in different areas. This study is especially relevant keeping in mind active political transformations in the Ukrainian politics, which directly influence the formation of the country's development strategies. The study results showed numerous errors made by the participants during the solution of problems. Thus we can conclude that preparation of strong and active political actors requires more thorough training,*

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*quality control of tasks which, in turn, will significantly reduce and prevent errors in the interpretation political reality by the actor.*

Keywords: tasks solving; actors; political thinking

## **Introduction**

The dramatic political context of the public life of Ukrainian citizens revealed a lot of problems among which there is a need for political orientation (understanding, realization, knowledge, identification) in the political reality field. This, in turn, is related to the development of their political thinking.

### *The latest publications and studies*

In the political and psychological science thinking, as a cognitive component, is included (mainly indirectly) into the numerous psychological phenomena of political psyche. The term "political thinking" is used, but it is ambiguously defined. Considering the evident experience of the study and research in the field of political thinking it is possible to specify several approaches, having different disciplinary origins, being adopted from philosophy, political sciences, sociology etc. In this regard such approaches as the descriptive, procedural and dynamic, social and psychological and the system approach could be discussed.

We define political thinking as the process of problem solution related to struggling for statuses and resources of the society (or its part). Any subject-oriented thinking, while acquiring the political and power-related context, is able to gain the features of political thinking, thus becoming politicized. At the same time, such thinking loses political sense without this context. The search for the predetermined connections in the subject content of a political problem (and task) forms the essence of political thinking as the intellectual activity related to politics. This search is regulated by correlation of these connections and realized through their use.

## **Objectives**

The objective of this article is to analyze the results of political thinking studies with regard to errors in the search process during the solution of political tasks.

## **Method**

### *Participants*

Our study involved 200 people, divided into several groups of 50 people each. Among them, there was a group of deputies from various district and local councils of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as GD). All other groups consisted of students who were involved to a certain extent in political activities, such as: a) those who are getting prepared to work in politics (students - political analysts) - hereinafter referred to as GSP b) students having non-political and non-humanitarian profile (specialty: mechanical engineering, mathematics) - hereinafter referred to as GSMM; c) students having the following specialties: psychology, religious studies, philosophy (hereinafter referred to as GSPS); d) the specific group of students who were the direct participants of political events on the Maidan during autumn 2013 - winter 2014 - hereinafter referred to as GMS.

### *Measures*

The study was carried out through observation, interviews and content analysis.

In order to understand the course of study it is necessary that the results of the research methodology be considered in detail. The selected criteria for distinguishing specific features of political thinking and its strategic planning are based on the research methodology related to the specific features of solving creative tasks, which was elaborated in the scientific school of V.O. Molyako. These problems include kinematics as well as educational, technical, mathematical, literary and other problems. They formed the basis of the schemes aimed at intellectual behavior observation and evaluation of using political thinking strategies. The scheme contains a qualitative analysis of solution, which is implemented with regard to certain areas of components reflected in the structure of such strategies. These are procedural components of political thinking (the actor's willingness to solve new problems, to study the problem situation, their understanding, generation of the action plan, solution of the problem and its realization or verification); strategic planning of political thinking, emotional attitude to solving problems, and intellectual will activity of actors and the efficiency of problem solution. Each of these areas of analysis consists of a series of indicators of political thinking strategies display. These

indicators have quantitative evaluation scale and the description of their empirical display indicators, corresponding to the evaluation level. The example of this methodology is described in the publication “The creative activity strategies: V.O. Moliako School” (Molyako, 2008). This methodology was improved and adapted for the study of political thinking. Part of this research methodology is given below.

*Procedural indicators of problem solution and their merit scale. Mental activity during problem solution*

*1. Intellectual readiness to solve new problems*

Ordinal assessment scale: 0, 1 point (0 points - the actor is not ready to solve new problems having political content. This is displayed in an open statement of ignorance, unwillingness to try to use his/her knowledge and capabilities, no signs of readiness or unreadiness; 1 point - the actor demonstrated certain readiness to solve the problem).

*2. Study the political problem situation (understanding of situation)*

2.1. Orientation in the problem situation, its study, finding the benchmarks, search for similar situation, their combination, the use of knowledge of the subject of mental activity. Ordinal assessment scale: 0, 1 point. Ratings are singled out in the process of problem solution monitoring (0 points - the actor formulated the problem situation and considered them as rather complicated only after the experimenter’s motivations; after reading the problem situation immediately offered solutions of which could not give a clear picture whether the problem was solved or not; no displays of mental thinking actions, indicating preliminary steps towards studying the problem situation; 1 point - evident, detailed process of orientation in the problem, the wide associative array).

2.2. The actor has apparent clarifications for himself/herself or clarifying questions to the experimenter. The actual assessment scale according to the experiment results: 0, 1 point. Nominative assessment scale, the actor was getting points according to the number of these clarifications: 0 points - no clarification; 1 point - apparent clarification.

2.3. Request for information required for solution, this information is so far unknown to the actor (questions put to himself/herself or to the experimenter). The experimenter should give neutral answers that do not include tips, but promote the intellectual activity of the actor. The actual

assessment scale according to the results of the experiment: 0, 1 point. Nominative assessment scale, points were given pursuant to the number of such requests: 0 points - no requests; 1 point - apparent requests.

### *3. Understanding of the problem situation*

This stage is directly related to the stage of studying the problem situation, some of its components are intertwined with this preliminary stage, and some of them are included into the subsequent stages, namely generation of the action plan and the solution.

3.1. Explanation (for oneself and for others). Ordinal assessment scale: 0, 1 point. Ratings are singled out in the process of problem solution monitoring. 0 points - no explanation from the actor. 1 point - the presence of situational explanations (not always correct); apparent explanations related to the so-called focal points of the problem solution (analysis of conditions, conception, solution, verification); reformulating the experimenter's questions; thinking aloud; correctness of explanations; the actor's attempts to explain his/her conception to the experimenter.

3.2. Singling out the contradictions. The actual assessment scale according to the experiment results: 0, 1 point. Nominative assessment scale, points were given pursuant to the number of contradictions (0 points - no contradictions; 1 point - the presence of any kind of contradiction).

3.3. Selection of useless information. The actual assessment scale according to the experiment results: 0, 1 point. Nominative assessment scale, points were given pursuant to the number of registered cases of screening useless information ("This is a must ...", "It will do nothing, because ...", "Why touch it ..." "Be sure to find out ..."). 0 points - information was not screened. 1 point - information was screened to a certain extent.

3.4. Reformulating the problem situation. The actual assessment scale according to the experiment results: 0.1 point. Nominative assessment scale, points were given pursuant to the number of registered cases of reformulating the problem situation ("Thinking this way means that ...", "So? Generally we are talking about ..." What if you call it ..."): 0 points - no reformulating and 1 point - the problem was reformulated.

3.5. Apparent reasoning and preliminary conclusions, generation of the main image. The actual assessment scale according to the experiment results: 0, 1 point. Nominative assessment scale, where points were given pursuant to the number of registered cases of reasoning and clarifications ("If we assume that

the actions of ... are correct ... then ..." , "If this is true, then ..."): 0 points - clarifications were not registered and 1 point – the participant made clarifications during the study.

3.6. Theoretical generalization. Nominative assessment scale, points were given pursuant to the number of registered cases of such generalizations. The following statements became typical: "If a politician does this, it should be understood why he does this", "In order to achieve this objective, one should take into account not only the objective but also specific situation regarding the person who will do all this , because this is a good plan ...". The actual assessment scale according to the experiment results: 0, 1 point (0 points – the participant did not generalize; 1 point – the participant generalized something).

3.7. The logic. Ordinal assessment scale: 0, 1 point. Ratings singled out in the process of monitoring the problem solution (0 points - no logic at all or it is difficult to find it; 1 point - the presence of logic (sequence of thinking)).

3.8. Intellectual reflection. The actual assessment scale according to the results of the experiment: 0, 1 point. Nominative assessment scale; points were given pursuant to the number of the actor's statements, which showed his/her intellectual reflection ("Of course, there is something useful here, but I cannot grasp the idea at once, it is possible if ... (the actor starts to structure graphically the problem situation)", "One should know the legislation to answer the question, however proceeding from my situation, I would chose the option that ..." , "The situation is such that we should understand whether one could find Yanukovych completely guilty in dispersing the Maidan on 29 November 2013? Given the actions of the opposition ... " , "Given the possibility of another world war, it would be interesting to know which countries will provoke it, what criteria can determine its starting point ... " (0 points – the participant did not show any signs of intellectual reflection; 1 point - intellectual reflection was recorded).

3.9. Making the decision on understanding the problem situation. The actual assessment scale according to the experiment results: 0, 1 point. Nominative assessment scale, points were given pursuant to the number of taken decisions (0 points - no understanding of the problem situation; 1 point - understanding and awareness of the problem situation).

There are totally 70 indicators, reflected in paragraphs of this methodology.

The experimenter assessed the presence or absence of indicators pursuant to the following rating: 1 – the indicator is present, 0 - the indicator is absent. Hereinafter the values displayed by each indicator were added and considered during the analysis.

Data input and analysis was carried out using statistical tools package IBM SPSS Statistics, version 20.0

### *Procedure*

The main idea of the experimental study is that both the process and result of solving the political problem depend on two factors: the political task specificity and maturity of the subject's strategic political thinking. The author proceeded from the fact that political thinking appears only when the subject is the real actor in the given situation. It is not the case of some kind of artificial situation "from outside", the case in point is the situation where the actor is its direct participant and designer. Therefore, the problem had variable content and the experimenter set its type. Based on the problem theory (according to Ball, 1990; Dunckel & Parnham, 1984) according to the types of political activity the author singled out the political information problems aimed at the analysis, forecasting, management (or self-management), political decision-making.

The experimental situation was the experimenter's task as regards the general direction of mental activity. This implied that while talking about politics, certain information construction (political problem generated from certain open-source information) was put as a task for the participant. Thus, solving political problems of different types the participants found themselves in situations determined by the intellectual political activities. That contributed to the production of various methods of searching political content.

The political problem had to meet the following criteria: 1) be subject-oriented, where the resolver is part of the real political situation; 2) be accessible, which means that the actor had total command of the current political information and had the appropriate level of information and knowledge, which is defined (by curriculum - in the case of students) by the degree of humanitarian awareness of the policy and society; 3) have the required and sufficient complexity level; 4) require the use of apparent knowledge and political skills from the previous experience to perceive socio-political information and to solve all four types of problems; 5) its content should correspond to the information capabilities of the actor; 6) include

novelty, that is, its content should be absolutely new for the participant; 7) could illustrate the detailed process of solving the political problem; 8) allow to get results that could be assessed.

The experimenter recorded considerations of the participant on paper and asked questions if necessary. Right after the actor solved the problem his statements, thinking, solutions were generalized pursuant to the previously selected indicators provided by the methodology.

For example, the study suggested a scenario (plot), taken from the media, related to some well-known / topical social and political events and the participant was asked to describe and comment on this situation. Participants evaluated the political situation according to the number of parameters (which were inherently and independently specified by the participants) and determined subjectively meaningful fragments. During the conversation, the experimenter gave the participant additional information aimed at streamlining his/her thinking through the following system instructions and proposals:

- 1) to analyze events that were singled out with regard to his/her personal involvement in politics (problem aimed at analysis);
- 2) to describe prospects of the formulated situation (problem aimed at forecasting);
- 3) to determine the organization of his/her political behavior in certain situations (the problem aimed at self-management);
- 4) to draw conclusions regarding specific situations (the problem aimed at the adoption of intelligent decision).

It was specifically stressed that the impressions, suggestions and personal experience are not productive in solving political problems.

The main advantage of this methodology is the creation of experimental conditions, which allow to keep the integrity of the studied phenomenon, and at the same time give the possibility to obtain individual psychological characteristics of the participants.

## **Results and discussion**

### *Exploratory factor analysis*

The factor analysis was carried out with a view to reveal hidden psychological factors and phenomena, including their specificity, which



influenced the respondents during their task-solving process. It was carried out by using the principal components, along with Varimax return method and Kaiser normalization. The choice of this method provided the highest quality of the obtained model - high indicators of the explained dispersion part due to the obtained factors. Restrictions on the explanatory possibility of the factors (Eigenvalue) was set at the level exceeding 1. Thus, the most significant factors became vivid, namely: Factor 1 - "*system character*", 2 - "*routine*", 3 - "*populism*", 4 - "*intuitiveness*", 5 - "*rationality*", 6 - "*creativity*", 7 - "*situation factor*", 8 - "*psych factor*", 9 - "*rapid resolution factor*", 10 - "*standard*".

The errors in the thinking process were determined by: 1) the type of a political task; 2) development degree of the political thinking (subjectivity, conceptuality, practicality, creativity); 3) degree of development, quality of functioning and correlation of the political thinking components (cognitive, operative, regulatory and personal); 4) degree of mental acts development, which predetermined the stages and integrity of the search process (planning, evaluation, implementation, and verification); 5) degree of ability to use the mechanisms of solving the creative tasks (combination, reconstruction and analogy, the universal-mixed mechanisms, random actions); Now let's consider in details these groups of factors, which predetermined the errors of political thinking in the task-solving process.

During the study the actors solved four types of political information tasks aimed at analyzing, forecasting, decision-making, and managing (Traverse, 2013). The general specificity of political tasks predetermined the fact that each of them was transformed in a certain way for the actor, namely: a) became related or not; b) complicated or difficult; c) open or closed etc. (Ball, 1990; Bruner, 1977). Since political task is a dynamic one, the actor on the one hand had to be persistent and had to demonstrate will power; on the other hand, he had to show that his mind was flexible since the rigidity of thinking was the basis of errors. The situation, when the actor used effective methods of intellectual activity, was typical, but as a part of his habitual repertoire these methods predetermined individual style of political thinking that functioned as the "matrix of persistent pathologic condition" (Bekhtereva, 2010), which is worth ruining. In other words, a political task should be permanently reformulated, because the previous one ceases to be topical in relation to the situation change (Znakov, 1994).

The task solving productivity was different in all groups. Thus, the lowest task-solution productivity was revealed as regards the tasks related to (a) analysis and forecasting (GD and GMS); (b) decision-making and management (GSP); (c) managing and forecasting (GSMM); (d) all four tasks (GSPS).

This means that the relevant kinds of intellectual political activities were not sufficiently formed and developed.

The low productivity of solving political tasks was predetermined by a number of errors specific for each group, and this is reflected in the content of political thinking. For example, for the GP group the specificity of errors during the solution of these problems, is as follows: solving problems on the basis of analogies (.412), Factor 10, intellectual unwillingness to solve the problem of this type (.408), Factor 6, (.304), Factor 7. The lack of: relevant guesses (.528), Factor 10; focus on the best solution (.553), Factor 9; focus on the result (.458), Factor 1; right solution options (.329), Factor 2 (the solution quality was sacrificed in view of the urgency to find solution "here and now". In fact, the politician tried to find a common, more or less relevant direction of solving the problem, but not the most expedient solution etc.); singling out inconsistencies (.329), Factor 6; vague plans (.322), Factor 2, (.354), Factor 3; knowledge of ignorance (.574), Factor 3, which increased populism and arrogance of the deputy; preparatory actions (.352), Factor 10; tactics aimed at the task situation (.379), Factor 2; structural-functional orientation tactics (.419), Factor 2, (.347), Factor 3; clarifications regarding decisions on the solution admissibility (.610), Factor 3 and others.

Functioning and correlation of cognitive, operational, and regulatory-personal components of political thinking gives reason to believe that the regulatory-personal component is the determining factor. In particular, as it turned out, a group of deputies disregarded standards (.637) Factor 5, which should be observed in the political activity. It is a violation of the order of stereotypical actions that revealed itself in deviations from regulatory, legislative framework that regulates the activity of any deputy. The expressed subjective system of senses (.938), sense of the object (.920), sense of the actual activity (.908), procedural knowledge (.920), the formation of sense of political objects based on subjective values (.929) in the Factor 1 suggest that the politicians are ready for the so-called extraordinary steps as regards the "possible in thinking" (the term introduced by Karl Popper). But the existing social norms not always play the role of crucial regulators of their political

activity. Moreover, awareness and orientation in the so-called uniqueness in the normative sense gives reason to rely on those mechanisms of policy legitimation that are historical by nature and are defined by the quality parameters of society.

However, in the GMS group the norms-ideals were the decisive ones. They demonstrated the conscious attempt to comply with standards of "peaceful, democratic resistance", "correct demonstration of disagreement with the governmental actions" and others (.802), Factor 1 and at the same time to ignore them (.330) Factor 5. Such value determination of political thinking created such a powerful dominant, which made it impossible to consider other values that are different from their current ones. We found that many students' parents did not approve their radical political position, realizing the danger and threat to the life of their own children. However, students ignored requests and prohibitions, of their relatives. The apparent orientation of the motivation towards the "standard" (.616) Factor 2, towards the ideal, can be explained by the peculiarities of value-motivational formation of youth personality, correlation of self-real and self-perfect, the formation of political consciousness and so on. The apparent self-focus (.905), Factor 2 and high degree of focusing on the others (.851) Factor 2, show awareness of one's own mandatory participation in the political events "for all", "for our business", "normal life in the country" "drive out corrupt people", "restart power" and so on, which led to outright disregard for their own lives.

The other two components of the political thinking also have specific errors. For example, the cognitive component of political thinking in the GSPS group was characterized by: lack of generalization (.992); vague formulation of initial conditions of the situation, taking decisions while understanding the conditions of the problem largely on the level of everyday political consciousness (.709); lack of knowledge of ignorance (.498), Factor 1 (.475) in the Factor 2 and others. This led to the fact that the scope of the political problem being solved underwent significant deviations, and the task therefore was losing political objectivity and was solved as a social or personal task. Views of most students were characterized by the "no-problem" phenomenon, which then was transformed into the "super-problem" one, while views of the politicians were characterized by the recognized system of coordinates where the search activity was carried out. Maturity of information basis of the political activity as the specifically professional and political one made it possible for

politicians to stay ahead of the events, to predict and to plan the possibility of problematic situations.

For the GSP group the typical errors were: reducing the scope of attention and action; adherence to algorithms of stereotypical actions, with regard to their learning activity, so the problem was solved as the educational and political one; the dominance of unconscious, irrational component of political thinking, when the student tried, keeping in mind his/her own previous experience, to single out certain rational decision to move it into solving political tasks and in fact took irrational decisions during sub-stages of the search process.

For the GSMM group exclusion from the problem, or its rather generalized interpretation because of abstraction, was one of the typical reactions.

For the GMS group political thinking by and large was not relevant enough in relation to the «field» political situation due to the undeveloped subjectivity and practicality. For example, with regard to the level of generalizations, the participant of Maidan demonstrated integrity and the structure-oriented search process that was preconditioned by social and political attitudes and other style aspects of political thinking. However, they were correct as regards the ideological and value aspect of the social (not political) situation that was evaluated mostly in the value-social context, which essentially differs from the political context.

It true that real practical situation as an integral part of cognition is not available for an ordinary actor – the participant of the "field" public political events. However, the understanding of this very fact as (a) reflecting upon one's own position, which was displayed through orientation towards others, logical interpretations; (b) interpreting of one's own status; (c) interpreting of one's own social and political roles and functions in different political contexts – one's own self-orientation (905), Factor 2, d) bright emotional feature of the thinking process (.825), Factor 2 etc.

By and large, the political task subjectivity was a barrier at the stage of understanding the task specification and the set connections of the task object. For example, the actor tried to reformulate the task: "Is it worth to go to Maidan" within the political subject limits: «Shall we oppose the power?», «What shall I gain as a result of my participation in politics? » or within the limits of other subject, singling out the available subjects, namely: «Is it worth

defending the position of students?» (social); «Do I need negative emotional experience?» (personal) etc.

Subjectivity as a feature was very significant at the problem-setting stage, during translation into the relevant language, and formulation of the plan. Considering psychological specificity of the political tasks, they all could be not just reformulated in their own language, but also extended (Maschbyts, 2000). It was most vividly displayed in structuring the «procedural bridge» (Molyako, 2007) and hypothesis formulation, when a feature of the situation was taken as system-creative, and a mental image was formed on its basis. However, considering just one feature was already a mistake. Moreover, differentiation of a task into the essential and non-essential features also led to errors in political thinking. Really, the actor a priori is unable to "grasp" all the contexts of political reality, that is why the so-called trivia may appear to be those connecting links with other political dimensions which are yet unavailable for the present empirical political thinking, but they should signal that these "other" contexts do exist.

In all other groups the following features of the political situation were mentioned among the most essential: a) regulations, laws that officially and unofficially regulate their activities; b) moral values, which are largely irrational regulators of political behavior etc. The following features were considered inessential: a) individual characteristics of a potential participant of the political situation. This happened due to several reasons: a) because of the socio-political insensitivity; b) inability to distinguish them for oneself and to specify them in another person; c) specification of only one quite abstract property like "honest man", "decent man" etc.

No attention was paid to: a) understanding and analysis of personal real resources of political activity (e.g. ... we are numerous); b) considering the dynamics and potential of the situation and etc. Here one can speak of the lack of ability to single out the situation units, their operative meanings and senses etc., which in its turn made it impossible to solve the task in a productive way.

The «Feeling of situation», which is the synthesis of subject-notional meaning of the thinking activity and its creativity and practicality, predetermined the effectiveness of the actors' political thinking in all groups. Its absence was the reason for: a) longer search process or its quick discontinuation; b) poor coordination of the search and thinking tactics; c)

inclination to extreme actions in the perception and understanding of the situation; d) inclination to monologues; e) stereotype thinking etc.

The development of mental actions that prompted phasing and integrity of the search process had different levels and consistency in the studied groups. For example, political thinking of the GMS group only moderate expression of evaluative (.564), Factor 2 and testing actions (.341), Factor 7; the GSPS group was characterized by the evaluative (.890), Factor 2, all other actions were underdeveloped.

It was found that the actions of generalization, which evolved in the course of solving political tasks performed different functions: a) the general regulatory function, which sets the general direction of the solution. This was a display of a mental setup, attitude, political bias etc. The analogy with the subsequent generalization performed the symbolic function and, in the long run - mythologizing, and in the worst case - archaic political thinking (which is typical for the GMS group); b) the specific regulatory function, which revealed itself in search tactics as the operational schemes of organizing the thinking process; c) formal function, in other words the one that didn't not actually influence the regulation of search activity.

At the same time the incompatibility or even contradiction between the theoretical and empirical generalizations was unproductive, as the effectiveness of procedures at the sub-stages of the decision-making process was provided by their relevant ratio (and empirical generalizations had even somewhat greater regulatory capacity, which is typical for GP and GMS groups).

The degree of knowledge related to the tactics and strategies (mechanisms) of solving political tasks predetermined the effectiveness of their solution. In particular, the participants from the GMS group were only partially able to specify the necessary and sufficient conditions that gave way to solve the task. As regards the indicators of the study the inconsistency of thinking tactics as regards focusing became vivid: a) familiar (.350) factor; (.912), Factor 4 or less familiar part of the problem (.397) Factor 1 (.821) Factor 4; b) on the senses (.358), Factor 2 or on values, or just on senses, due to underdevelopment of subjective values (.511) Factor 4; c) specification of functional or structural properties of task situations etc. Each tactic was used quite narrowly; the further solution was built only when one essential feature became vivid. Detecting other essential features (due to relevant correlation of characteristics in a single tactic), the actor could not generalize and systematize

them, and this led to misunderstanding (according to Znakov, 1994) or even to the suspension of solution.

However, mastering, and interpreting of the objects and events of the task space sometimes existed as the evident «simulacras» (Baudrillard, 1983), since the actor of the «post-modernist world» can only partially free himself from the illusions and hallucinations – the “hyper-reality” of political events. Simulations level down the difference between the truth and lies, between the real and the false (Baudrillard, 1983).

The process of political thinking is related to the general psychological model of the thinking process: mismatch - problem setting (understanding of the problem as certain stage divided into sub-stages) - problem situation - the actually solved problem, forming a hypothesis for solution (as a stage with relevant sub-stages) - the process of solution - implementation of the plan (as a stage) - the range of results and criteria for their evaluation - the transfer of solution (transmission to others, practical implementation etc.). Therefore, political thinking as the search process has three stages (understanding the plan formation (hypothesis of solution), and the implementation of the plan) and also a number of the necessary sub-stages, which had different intensity depending on their significance. This was revealed in the course of strategic organization of the thinking process, which had its peculiarities in different groups. In particular, the system-strategic organization of political thinking had different hierarchy of importance pursuant to the extent of strategic action in different groups: GD - combined actions, reconstruction, universal (mixed) actions the analogue-based approach, random substitution; GSP - the analogue-based approach, combined actions, random action, reconstruction, the universal action; GMS - the analogue-based approach, random substitution, reconstruction, the universal action, combined actions; GSMM - the analogue-based approach, reconstruction, random substitution, combination, the mixed action; GSPS - the analogue-based approach, random substitution, reconstruction, combining.

As it turned out, the non-professional actors used primarily the analogue-based approach. If this approach is considered with regard to the evidently dominant value "standards", there is a danger of false perception of the certain situation because any political values being present in ideology, are by and large one of many options, and thus inevitably simplify and lead to unilateral interpretation of the political reality.

### Conclusions

The political thinking as a phenomenon of political activity is a complex process which feels the impact of numerous factors. It consists of cognitive, operational, individual and personal components and could be displayed in the thinking actions with regard to situation (tactics) and person (strategy) within objectivity, practicality, and creativity of the political thinking. This conclusion represents the concentrated analysis of the studied data. In addition, it should be noted that political thinking is also determined by a number of personal qualities, such as the education level, political preferences, temperament, the type of thinking.

The quality of political thinking should be decisive for political actors, because these individuals have management responsibilities as regards various structural units (departments, ministries etc.) and they determine the domestic and foreign policy of the country, influencing the welfare of its citizens. Ordinary actors should also develop such quality, as this will enable their understanding of the basic provisions related to politics, awareness of their role as citizens, promote the development of political, and in particular, intellectual culture.

Considering all these aspects of the system approach to political thinking there are open opportunities for a more thorough study of the political thinking, and this could prevent even obvious mistakes in the interpretation of the actual political reality. This issue is especially important for Ukraine, which political machinery is being actively formed. Awareness of the importance of adequate political thinking is the key factor in building and maintaining the strong and well - balanced policy in different sectors.

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