
Peculiarities of Implementation of the Results of Actors' Solving of Political Tasks

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Abstract:

A politics maker is any person who is somehow involved in it. It is the peculiarities of thinking of a political person (hereinafter will be referred to as actor) that our research is dedicated to. The effectiveness of political activity is determined by the way actor realizes the political situation and his own self in politics, how and which exactly political tasks he produces, is ready to solve and actually solves. When interpreting political thinking we are based on the systemic and strategic approach, namely on the following: (a) general psychological concepts related to thinking as psychical function and as an integral form of cognitive activity; (b) specific features of political consciousness and its functioning in different types of political activity and behavior; (c) peculiarities of political activity as a separate type of activity and political thinking as a special type of activity, intellectual activity in particular; d) the idea of a subject's activity aimed at his overcoming of an uncertain situation (subjective and objective) in thinking activity.

Key Words: *Consciousness, Verification, Blocking, Political Specialization*

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1. Introduction

A politics maker is any person, who is somehow involved in it. It is the peculiarities of thinking of a political person (hereinafter will be referred to as actor) that our research is devoted to. The effectiveness of political activity is determined by the way the actor realizes the political situation and himself in politics, how and which political tasks exactly he produces, is ready to solve and actually solves. When interpreting political thinking we rely on the systemic and strategic approach, namely as follows: (a) general psychological concepts related to thinking as psychical function and as an integral form of cognitive activity; (b) specific features of political consciousness and its functioning in different types of political activity and behavior; (c) peculiarities of political activity as a separate type of activity and political thinking as a special type of activity, intellectual activity in particular; d) the idea of a subject's activity aimed at his overcoming of uncertain situation (subjective and objective) in thinking activity.

The central topic of the systemic and strategic approach in our research is the topic of the essence of organization and functioning of actor's political thinking. What is meant here is the integral process of thinking activity – from the emergence of ideas, and creative thoughts up to their embodiment in political contexts and discourses. In native psychology the systemic and strategic approaches are most actively used in the human creative activity research. Political activity has a powerful resource of creativity, which corresponds to its origin and is manifested at all levels of political activity of a person in the society. The fundamental components of our research are procedural and dynamic as well as individual and regulatory aspects of political activity.

Individual aspect of political thinking that is, in fact, its operational component, declares itself in subjective thinking strategies, cohesive and strategic organization of actor's thinking. Political activity presupposes the selectivity of intellectual actions (in particular, object selectivity), relevance (most essential) of the combination of mental and practical operations, which function in the process of constructing and structuring of a political task that, in its turn, is predetermined by the subjective features. Such factors direct the mental process of search by involving emotions, needs, knowledge, experience, attention, imagination etc.

The aim of the article is to present the results of the research of actor's political thinking at the stage of verification (implementation) of the concept when solving a political task.

2. Political Actors and the Process of Decision Making

If we interpret the task concept broadly enough, subject's activity can be presented as a system of task solving processes. Based on the methodological positions of the tasks theory (G. O. Ball, 1990), we call "political task" to be a task that is involved in real political activity; it necessarily contains certain novelty, it is always a problem that predetermines actualization and the process of mental acts; it potentially determines the search process direction although does not guarantee the correct and complete result. It means that first of all a practical task ("To participate in political events or not"?; "to ensure the program activity" etc.). A political task is an instance of a social task, since politics is one of the areas of the society existence. The procedural and dynamic component of political thinking functions as an integral form of synthesis of the subject's different psychic phenomena. It encompasses the whole mental process of search. Therefore, its study lasted throughout all the stages of solving political tasks.

Four types of political tasks are used in the research: political analysis, political forecasting, political decision-making and management. The content of mental search acts depends on the stages of task solving – studying and formulating of the situation, searching for solution, and its verification. At these stages the procedural and dynamic component of political thinking is not only manifested, but is formed as well. In the research 200 persons, which formed several groups (50 persons in each), participated, among which there is a group of deputies from different district councils and city councils of Ukraine. The rest of the groups were formed by the students, who are in a certain way involved in political activity, namely: a) those, who prepare themselves for working in politics (who study political science); b) students, who study neither political science, nor liberal arts (those majoring in mechanical science, mathematics); c) students majoring in psychology, religious studies, philosophy; d) among the students' groups there was a group of students, who participated in the political events at Maidan in autumn 2013 – winter 2014.

In order to have a comprehensive idea about the procedural and dynamic nature of actors' search acts in the process of solving the political tasks we have analyzed the psychological structure of the whole political activity of an actor, studied its peculiarities and the role of each component of thinking in it. Verification actions are related first of all to the control function of the search process, as a result of which the latter is marked by permanent decision making as to relevance/irrelevance of a certain mental act.

In the concept implementation process as a component of a political task solution, its partial results, actor uses the system of knowledge, skills, and abilities etc., which constitute the cognitive component of political thinking. According to G.O. Ball, «knowledge comes across as a kind of activity tool, more precisely – task solving

tool. Thus, the value of knowledge is determined, on the one hand, by the breadth of the class of tasks facilitating its solution; on the other hand – by the degree of facilitation it provides ...in the different situations the correlation of these requirements is different» (Ball, 2008). At that, just as before, verification actions are subject to the individual and personal factors and thinking strategies.

When the task solving process was at the stage of verification actions, most actors knew the task content comparatively well that was evidenced by the range of the task's structural elements, which they singled out, as well as the correlation established between them. In its turn this made it possible to connect the problem situation and the requirements to it by a procedural «bridge» (the term offered by V.O. Molyako). As a result, the hypothesis evaluation and correction (in the case it was imperfect, unclear etc.) was made, that facilitated the specification and detailed elaboration of the solution concept.

So, what is meant here is actor's knowledge. The knowledge in the politicians' group contained a wide spectrum of contextual connections and problem schemes, which normally were generalized. Comparative analysis of the intellectual tasks solved by the politicians and students evidence that politicians' knowledge is broad and better organized. Their knowledge is structured by various connections between separate notions, while they promptly correlate the new knowledge with previous knowledge. Such knowledge is subject-specific since it was the result of regular practice in the area of political specialization. It preconditioned a steady subject-selective cognitive activity of a politician, when mental search was concentrated only on a specific area of the content. The thing that is meant here is the presence of such knowledge data base, which preconditioned the availability and the possibility to use the notions, relevant to a certain subject-specific area of the task situation. It is possible to presume that politicians demonstrated the so-called expert knowledge since their knowledge was structured. (This notion is popular in the expert knowledge theories (W. G. Chase, H. A. Simon, M. T. Chi, P. J. Feltovich, R. Glaser, D. Medin, E. Lynch, K. Solomon, J.-R. Richard, W. Schneider etc.).

In general, politicians' professional knowledge (as a broader notion compared to the notion of expert knowledge) is connected with the practicality of political thinking. Special meaning in it belongs to the multilayered generalization systems. According to Y. N. Kornilov, «unlike structures and schemes of theoretical thinking, the cognitions of practical thinking have certain parameters of the situation of acting in the generalized form that provides for their selective readiness for implementation in new situations» (Kornilov, 1997). It enabled the experienced politicians (24 %) to operate the knowledge, relevant both to a specific task situation and to the changeable contexts of a “field” political situation.

Such knowledge is universal in the terms of usage at all search stages. However, verification actions depended also on the formed procedural knowledge of politicians. This knowledge is not directly related to the task situation content, but it constitutes the main content of permanent verification actions, as if “technically restraining” the search process. Political tasks peculiarities (in particular, dynamism) precondition the circumstance that even a correctly formulated hypothesis is only partly verified. However, the necessary and sufficient conditions under which this construct (the image of a necessary real situation) can be considered the final solution was important to comprehend.

The essence of verification as a stage is that the correlation of the system of produced knowledge and the subjective system of actor's knowledge takes place. The integration of the obtained knowledge into actor's experience and decision making as to the degree of the solution relevance takes place. So, actor again singles out the essence, the content of the problem; selects and interprets the aims; accentuates the methods and strategies of development; evaluates the alternatives according to the different groups of criteria; formulates possible (alternative, desired and undesired) solution variants. The solution is evaluated from the viewpoint of understanding of possible effects and the criteria singled out by the actor, and the belief about the solution adequacy emerges. All these phases are correlated with the stages of political decision making, offered by D. Vaymer and A. Wayning.

At the stage of concept implementation stage-by-stage selection of knowledge takes place. Understanding, comprehension and evaluation of the obtained result are correlated with the knowledge already selected. Mastering of knowledge is directly related to the process and result of the task understanding, and the belief that the obtained knowledge is authentic and connected with the process of its implementation. The belief about the knowledge is as follows: a) concurrence of the obtained knowledge and the knowledge that has already existed as a part of the experience; b) concurrence of conceptuality and interrelations preconditioned by the task; c) the obtained knowledge together with the previous experience is involved into the concept implementation; d) concept implementation can be fragmentary, probabilistic, and extended – but in any case it is aimed at verification of the formulated solution model quality. The need, possibility and quality of selection of verification and evaluation actions evidence about the state of understanding of the task and the necessary and sufficient actions for verification of the solution model relevance in relation to the main task. In its turn verification is the next micro stage of acquiring the new knowledge, i.e. what is meant is the obtained result study.

Effectiveness of the political thinking at the concept implementation stage is preconditioned by the organization (available scheme) of necessary actions, search and usage of relevant and original ways to verify etc. Actor has a belief concerning

the search chain parts: task situation – taken actions – task requirement. At thus in the research the social and psychological phenomena, which accompany the decision making, have been revealed. When actor has performed the evaluation and verification actions as a stage of search activity, subjective interest, motivation (eg. when politicians intentionally interpreted the task as “everyday political task”), and positive characteristics of hypothesis-solution grew in actor’s mind, while negative characteristics diminished. The lack of “professionalism” of politicians’ political thinking caused actions aimed at searching for convincing proofs that the solution is correct and the chosen hypothesis is the best one of all possible variants.

The concept implementation process is preconditioned by the value and motivation component of political thinking, regulatory and personal component of the search process. It is made up of general peculiarities of intellectual activity, and cognitive needs, which should be considered separately. Typical implications of the actors’ task situation content evidenced their actualized needs. It was directly reflected in the emotional accompaniment of solving the task. The hierarchies of subjective meanings of an object, present in the politicians’ minds, were interesting namely: reflected (i.e., those concerning the already existing objects – 62 %); predicted (those related to objects’ future states – 50 %); imagined (related to the objects, which never existed and which cannot exist – 10 %). Whereas in the Maidan participants group there is a reverse sequence of meanings: reflected (12 %), predicted (52 %), and imagined (80 %).

The model depicting the relation between the subjective meaning of an object of actor’s task and the needs which are essential for him exists in the form of subjective meanings. The subjective meanings perform the function of cognitive orientation in the social realm. «The better the reflected meanings of certain existing objects reflect their real state, the better the forecasted meanings forecast the future state of things – the more perfect is the mentioned orientation, which is a prerequisite of successful achievement of the subject’s goals. The meanings perform the function of value orientation in the situation and motivation of the subject’s activity» (Ball, 2008).

It has been found out that only for 16 % from the politicians’ group the meanings of the search process objects were important components of the task situation, and most relevant to their objective meanings given by the situation. The meanings of the search activity itself, in which social and cultural aspects of actors were brightly reflected, were interesting. The political science students demonstrated verification actions (56 %), since they intentionally interpreted the tasks, which should be solved as study tasks, but they lacked knowledge and political experience. At the same time the politicians showed that they were used to verify the constructed intellectual

models of a task situation by means of the “field” practice, understanding that it was flexible (72 %).

It has been revealed that the essential normative meanings of the search activity were manifested in preserving and broadcasting of the political meanings, which corresponded to the ideological doctrine. The latter sets the social and cultural, “civilization functions” of political activity as a type of human activity as well as so-called “borderline meanings” of politics (manifested in actor’s beliefs and attitudes). Search activity was also preconditioned by the ideal norms, which determined the «possibility frontier» in thinking (according to K. Popper). It has been discovered that politicians are able to neglect them (84 %) and even neglect the standard norms solving typical tasks (76 %). It led to the loss of political subject of the task – i.e. it was solved as economic, and personal ones etc.

The students however were concerned with the normative meanings (meanings-ideals: “democratic country”, “European values”) as a result of which the formulated hypotheses were not quite concise, unfinished, contradictory, and metaphorical models. Therefore, verification actions helped to specify and improve them only partially. “The knowledge implications and personal, affectively colored meanings rooted in everyday living are merged together» (Zinchenko, 2000). The higher the level of a person’s personal development is, the better he is able to manage the system of his knowledge, actualizing the knowledge mostly needed for solving the current tasks (and for implementing the important meanings) and forcing out those, which may hinder this. It was shown that the politicians (38 %) had a systemic organization of knowledge and the habits of managing it. The knowledge functioned as interrelated and coordinated constructs (models). It was proven that actors were able to select the most relevant knowledge for solving each of the tasks.

Important motives of the hypotheses verification proved to be the following ones: the need to find a solution (politicians – 86 %, others– 56 %); the need for permanent performance of verification actions (politicians – 70%, others – 22 %); the need for final checking (politicians – 30 %, others – 40 %); the need to make sure that the solving process is correct; the need for new knowledge etc.

Thus, in the politicians’ group the hypotheses had the complex structure (several meaning centers, different degrees of structuring, sequence and duration of connections etc.). Binary structure with the necessary, subjective desired and undesired situation meanings turned out to be typical. And if a politician managed to avoid the undesired without having affected any other dominants, he considered the task to be solved.

The technology of verification actions, as well as the search operating mechanisms, was preconditioned by the further strategic organization of the search process.

Operational component of the concept implementation lies in the tactical (methods) and strategic organization of verification process. Strategies are manifested in the methods of knowledge application in a situation. During the experiment the following regularities were used: politicians first structure the problem field (in various discourses and contexts), represent and simulate problems, and only then start solving them (which looked as: “I need to think”).

According to the researchers, the strategy climax is in the process and at the stage of the concept formation, and it is finished at subjective stage of verification actions, and subjective belief that the task is solved (V. O. Molyako). The researchers suggest considering such belief to be a subjective criterion of verification, since it directs the approbation process in the course of searching for solution. The dynamics of correlation for orientating and controlling the actions, understanding (or «blocking») and correcting the errors in the search process are the indicators of development of verification actions.

If the process of solving and the process of verification take place simultaneously, plan-making actions perform implementation functions, thus becoming implementation (operational) actions. The latter, which also perform the functions of controlling and verification, can be considered verification actions as well. In this case during the whole process of solving actor is accompanied by the belief that the solution is correct. Thus, the solution could be both incorrect (others – 62 %, politicians – 46 %, students majoring in mechanical science, mathematics – 32 %), and relevant (accordingly: 30%, 42 %, and 30 %). In this case there was no need for a separate step of hypothesis verification (implementation). It means that implementation actions coincided with plan-making actions owing to which the solution hypothesis was formed.

In all cases (integration or singularity) operational actions were preconditioned by the subjective thinking tendencies which prevailed. Thus, it was at the stage of the concept implementation that it was possible to identify the presence or absence of the strategic organization of the search process. Preparative, plan-making and operational actions were preconditioned by the subjective thinking tendencies, which could have never been turned into appropriate strategies. For example, the prevalent thinking tendency that defines both operational meaning of the thinking hypothesis implementation process and the whole creative process is based on actions taken «by analogy, against analogy, combinatory actions or their combination. Transformation of thinking tendencies into the search tendencies takes place owing to the existence of subjective conviction that the search actions are correct. In its turn it is considered to be a psychological result of the implementation process. «At this stage the strategy development culminates, its adequacy and effectiveness is being proven», while actor, «as a rule, understands the essence of

the solution, its meaning, direction, and taken actions. The question should be solved as if it was a strategy or just its project.

Thinking tendencies are not of local nature and function in the process of solving in all types of political tasks (T. M. Traverse). They are of subjective nature and are preconditioned by the actor's intellectual and informational experience, which is manifested still at the beginning of the search process. Institutionalizing in the system of search sub-processes (understanding, and forming of solution hypothesis), and thinking tendencies become integral in the concept implementation sub-process. It means that the subjective belief that the solution result corresponds to its content appears there.

The solution concept verification stage is based on analogy, combination, and reconstruction actions. Sometimes, even unclear solution idea that existed at the stage of understanding of the task situation (politicians – 30 %, students majoring in mechanical science, mathematics – 84 %, Maidan participants – 80 %, students majoring in political science – 58 %, those, who study psychology – 62 %) is able to amplify, to turn into a concept – from the moment of appearance of the subjective belief that it corresponds to the situation and requirement at the verification stage), then – into the task solution (politicians – 90%, students majoring in mechanical science, mathematics – 34 %, students majoring in political science – 46 %, those who study psychology – 40 %, Maidan participants – 68 %).

When the concept implementation took place due to the actions by analogy, the concept verification model was formed based upon the analogy method. The thing meant here is the method similar to the method used in the hypothesis simulation. Interpreting the solution, the actor compared the result of the created situation that was similar to the task situation. Acting on the contrary, actor simulated the opposite situation, and constructing a new counter hypothesis, owing to which he was either convinced that the concept was correct, or corrected the errors – or singled out counter meanings, and built the opposite hierarchy of subjective meanings etc.

The regularity known from the research of other types of thinking has been found, namely: the mechanisms of concept implementation are preconditioned by the individual and personal peculiarities of the subject of political thinking and are connected with the content of the political task to be solved. Also, it has been revealed that the usage of strategic actions depends on the subjective meaning of the type of the political task to be solved. Since the task types represented four different types of intellectual political activity, a problem of general abilities of actor concerning forecasting, analyzing, decision making, self-management and politics specification appeared. There is a coincidence of the special abilities and task

meaning, a preconditioned brightness and intensity of manifestation of the strategic organization of actor's political thinking.

3. Conclusion

All stages (getting familiar with the situation, hypothesis formation, hypothesis verification) and processes (understanding, forecasting, implementing) of solving the political task are preconditioned by thinking tendencies and comply with them, which is manifested in actor's intellectual actions.

In actors' mental activity the hierarchies of intellectual actions, which evidence about the presence of inclination to a certain political thinking style, preconditioned by its strategic organization, have been found. Each of the respondents' groups has style peculiarities of political thinking. They are preconditioned by the prevailing strategies each formed to a certain degree that is manifested in the following strategy hierarchies: a) specialists-politicians – combinatory, reconstructing, universal (mixed) actions, analogy, casual substitutions (where analogy interposes with all strategies as a form of thinking), that is «conclusion by analogy» or as an action (shift); b) those, who study political science – analogy, combinatory, casual, reconstructing, and universal actions; students – Maidan participants – analogy, casual substitutions, reconstructing, universal, combinatory; students majoring in mechanical science, mathematics – analogy, reconstructing, casual substitutions, combination, mixed; students majoring in psychology, philosophy, religious studies – analogy, casual substitutions, reconstructing, combination.

Thinking tendencies are expressed in the subjective advantages as to performing the certain search actions, forming dominating constructs, which precondition the integral process of actor's political thinking.

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