# Intercultural studies in the university community in the focus on social cohesion development

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**Abstract.** The present article continues the cycle of social cohesion research in education and society. In order to research the main principles of organized society, the main foundations of social cohesion and their applications in the educational sphere are very important. The main goal of the article is to consider the intercultural aspect of social cohesion and to provide intercultural study in the university community. This study starts with the first diagnostics of the cognitive focuses of intercultural communications in the university community of the National Pedagogical Dragomanov University. Cultural diversity is considered the foundation and the central part of intercultural studies. The purpose of the study is to provide a conceptualization of cognitive focuses in intercultural communications, to determine the actual level of intercultural competence, to test the author's questionnaire, and to determine the further steps for enhancing intercultural communications in the educational community. Methods that were used in the study are the author's questionnaire, math analytics, etc. There were 272 persons interviewed at the National Pedagogical Dragomanov University, namely 230 students and 42 teachers. According to the research results, the level of intercultural competence of students and teachers is relatively high, and all indicators are above average, which positively characterizes the attitude of students and teachers of the university to other cultures, their perception of other cultures, tolerance and willingness to cooperate and combine cultural activities. This is important at this time, because Ukraine is on the path to European integration, bravely defending its own choice, where one of the main values is respect and acceptance of cultural diversity.

*Keywords:* cognitive focus, cultural diversity, intercultural studies, social cohesion, organized society, university community

## Introduction

We live in a complex, unpredictable social reality with a fast-changing cultural landscape because of globalization and other crucial social transformation

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processes. Since the 24$^{th}$ of February, the beginning of the war in Ukraine, we are experiencing very hard geopolitical and social transformation processes. Ukrainian society has become a really organized society. An organized society should have a very high level of social cohesion and awareness [2]. Europe and the almost whole world stand with Ukraine, and the level of involvement is quite high. The geopolitical situation is fast changing and social transformative processes will continue. And we have to be prepared for the next social challenges of globalization, the formation of a whole sociocultural dimension based on European values. The social cohesion model of the Ukrainian society needs should correspond to the demands of a globalized world. To be adoptable to them, we need to improve our social communications, in particular, intercultural communication as one of the main focuses of social tension. In Article 2, "From cultural diversity to cultural pluralism" of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity we can find the following statement: "In our increasingly diverse societies, it is essential to ensure harmonious interaction among people and groups with plural, varied and dynamic cultural identities as well as their willingness to live together. Policies for the inclusion and participation of all citizens are guarantees of social cohesion, the vitality of civil society, and peace. Thus defined, cultural pluralism gives policy expression to the reality of cultural diversity. In dissociable from a democratic framework, cultural pluralism is conducive to cultural exchange and to the flourishing of creative capacities that sustain public life" [20]. This is very close to the understanding and meaning of the social cohesion concept, which has been investigated in our previous cognitive research [15; 14]. This article starts the cycle of the cognitive research of intercultural studies in higher education. This cycle continues the long-term investigations of the cognitive focuses of the various complex phenomenon of the social-cultural sphere, in particular, in the educational dimension. The cognitive studies are conducted in the laboratory of the social dimension of cognitivistics at the Research Centre of Cognitivistics. This Centre is operating at the National Pedagogical Dragomanov University since 2015 and governing by rector — professor Viktor Andrushchenko. Also, these researches have been conducted by authors in the frame of scientific investigations funded by the State Fund of Fundamental Researches of Ukraine — "Strategies of social cohesion development of the Ukrainian society: social cultural and educational dimensions" leaded by professor Viktor Andrushchenko). They are focused on the phenomenon of social cohesion, its cognitive base, and explications in education and civil society development. These investigations started in the frame of Jean Monnet Module SCEGES (Social Cohesion in Education and Governance: European Studies) which has been implemented in 2017-2020 at the National Pedagogical University. The scientific results of the Module opened new opportunities for deeper investigations in the social and cultural sphere. So, in 2020 professor Marja Nesterova became an academic coordinator of two scientific international projects - Jean Monnet Chair "Social and Cultural Aspects of European Studies" (SCAES) 620635-EPP-1-2020-1-UA-EPPJMO-CHAIR and Jean Monnet Project "EU Values of Diversity and Inclusion for Sustainable Development" (EVDISD) 620545-EPP-1-2020-1-UA-EPPJMO-PROJECT. These projects contain not only European Studies and their dissemination in the teaching courses regarding Intercultural Dialogue,

European Social Cohesion Policy, EU Cultural Policy, and others but cognitive research which is conducted by the author's team in the sphere of organized society, intercultural communications, value surveys, social cohesion, cultural diversity, inclusion, etc. The authors of the research follow the demand for value focus in their investigations. Values are drivers of human behavior and they should occupy the significant space of all social innovations, in particular, in education. One of the principles of value-based education is "connectedness"- quite an important dimension through shared goals and practices in values-based education, which leads to the development of mutual feelings of respect, trust, and safety; and varied opportunities for collaboration [21]. Earlier investigations of the phenomenon of social cohesion in education could be considered the focus on the own connectedness of the university community [15]. So, this principle of connectedness will be quite important for intercultural studies in educational communities. In general, the value-based focus of education is one of the actual answers to the challenges of the modern globalized world. The globalization process not only stimulates intercultural communication but, actualizes the problem of social cohesion and mutual understanding, accordingly. We can state that the cognitive focus of social cohesion is deeply connected with mutual understanding. At the same time, a mutual understanding is determined and focused on cultural values and principles of social interaction [12]. It is obvious because social cohesion as a social phenomenon is based on the set of individual and collective values, which help to integrate modern, diverse societies [3; 8]. Again, one of the key values for effective intercultural communication is "connectedness" and, at the same time, it could be considered as one of the social cohesion parameters based on trust [14]. Trust is a cognitive, evolutionary mechanism of connectedness, and its evidence we can observe exactly in intercultural communications. These communications in various ways actualize the problem of trust in the context of "Own" and "Alien" [7]. Therefore, our intercultural studies continue investigations of the cognitive aspects of trust which are necessary for monitoring, analytics, and related corrective actions for the development of an effective educational environment. It has been shown that the level of trust is directly correlated with the level of social cohesion (in particular, the level of "connectedness") in university communities. The problem of the development of an effective educational environment based on values (trust, tolerance, understanding, etc.) is quite complex in the era of the annihilation of traditional values and the aggressive nature of the information environment [14]. This conclusion is supported by practical implementation of the best EU practices and techniques of social cohesion development technologies that have been received as scientific results of the Jean Monnet Module SCEGES implementation at the National Pedagogical Dragomanov University (2017 — 2020). Some general conclusions have been provided after the research of European best practices of civic-normative education models and value-based education models. They lie in the fundament of social links, social cohesion, social cognition, etc. These social innovative education paradigms aim to contribute to strengthening social cohesion and finding common sense. The common senses should be based on common and shared values, community, and overall polity-society alignment. Speaking about cohesion as a driver of the culturally and normatively pluralizing world context we have to take into consideration the

value-oriented focus of intercultural communications. Values launch the process of normative, ideological, and worldview convergence. It is important to notice that value-oriented convergence keeps the cognitive focus on diversity and inclusion, in particular, in the case of intercultural dialogues [16].

The modern world is based on the economics of knowledge and the needs of the global labor market. So, intercultural communication is a request for our daily practices [15]. These social practices are connected with the basic attitudes and behavior patterns, the main social dimensions of the cognitive sphere of humans. So, it actualizes the research of the different levels of intercultural communications as a complex social and cognitive phenomenon. Besides this methodological interest of the above investigation, there is a more pragmatic interest to conduct such research. There is a question about the importance and perspective of teaching intercultural communication as a learning course and its implementation in the teaching plans. The following research is similar to the approach to analyzing how implemented in the learning programs course of Intercultural Communication will help students to interact in an effective, healthy, tolerant, and respectful manner. This type of research is focused on the development of intercultural communications skills of students when pursuing higher education. The above approach presumes that miscommunication and lack of tolerance can be a result of ethnocentric behavior. This kind of behavior could be obtained in communications with people from various cultural backgrounds. This situation is quite common in the modern higher educational environment worldwide because of globalization processes, migration, and local war conflicts).

## Materials and methods

The general design of intercultural studies in the higher education system could be divided into two studies - one of them is research before teaching a course of Intercultural Communication. And the second part of the research will be conducted after the above course will be delivered to the concrete group of students. The rest of the students from the first study of research will be considered as the control group. This article reflects the results only of the first study of general research — the first diagnostics of the level of intercultural communications in the university community of National Pedagogical Dragomanov University. This research with the original author's methodology continues and deepens the cognitive research of social cohesion and trust [14; 13].

The methodology of the research is based on the theory of constructivism by John Rogers Searle (Searle J. R., 1996). According to it, stable structures of consciousness are designed by common definitions and names of objects and processes. Person, who knows such words and their meanings could interact with the environment, especially social. So, human activity is caused by words that mean sense and values. And because of the transformations of the content of these words, are changing intentions of activity. In other words, we could investigate the constructivist's triad "word-act-goal" according to the problem of the personal cognitive focus of intercultural collaboration. For this purpose, the author's approach to the conceptualization of cognitive focuses on intercul-

tural communications has been developed. In general, this research should analyze the level of tolerance, readiness, and perspective of action among students of the university community of National Pedagogical Dragomanov University (NPDU). The research aims to identify the level of acceptance of multicultural diversity in the community and to mark the weak points in the domains of it for further strengthening by appropriate training and other social and educational tools. The description of cognitive focuses is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Conceptualization of cognitive focuses
in intercultural communication

| Levels of analytics / Category | Differentiation | Conceptualization |
|---|---|---|
| knowledge/ opinion | **value of culture (CV)** knowledge of the value of the content of each culture <br><br> **value of collaboration (ColV)** knowledge of the value of interaction in a diverse field of cultures | understanding the value of culture in worldview principles and beliefs, knowledge of the values of one's own culture and other cultures |
| practice / activity | **motivation of activity (AM)** attitude to interaction in a multicultural environment <br><br> **realization of activity (AR)** real participation in intercultural communication | willingness to interact with representatives of other cultures, activity in the context of intercultural communication |
| promotion / perspectives | **plurality of cultures (PC)** belief in the uniqueness of each culture <br><br> **unity of cultural practices (CP)** belief in the possibility of integration into a single semantic field of different cultural practices | assessment of understanding and readiness to participate in intercultural dialogue in the context of education and self-realization |

# 1   First cognitive focus — Knowledge (Opinion)

The modern globalized world significantly stimulates the processes of intercultural communication, respectively, the problem of mutual understanding, that is, a single format for understanding cultural values and principles of social interaction [11]. This is extremely in demand, especially in the context of mass migration, other social disturbances, and conflicts that could be caused by local military conflicts and\or terroristic acts. We can notice that these

types of conflicts are launched by the lack of trust in interpersonal (trust in others) and social hierarchy (trust in institutions) communication [13].

Communication in a broad sense is carried out in a specific cultural context. An individual as a storage medium of a certain type of culture makes communication on the basis of the so-called "Background knowledge", that is, a worldview formed in a certain ideological and value environment. In the scientific literature are used various terms to describe this phenomenon: "frame", "scheme", "coordinate system", "prism", "network", and "lattice". What these statements have in common is an affirmation that a certain type of culture forms the appropriate procedures for the perception and verification of any information with which an individual interacts. Because of the mismatch of such background knowledge among the communication participants emerges a misunderstanding, and as a result, conflicts.

As we noticed this problem is associated with the cognitive dichotomy of "Own" and "Alien" in intercultural communications [6]. The spectrum of solutions to this contradiction is diverse: from the successful unification of individuals on the basis of a new identity (USA, EU) to radical orthodox communities and movements. Accordingly, the first level of our research "Opinion" involves the reflection of one's own background knowledge and attitudes in intercultural communications, which is due to the traditional unconscious nature of worldview patterns. At each level of research, a differentiation of the vector of personal orientation is provided: focus on the particular or the general, unique or universal in culture. Thus, the orientation of the individual towards the value of culture confirms the presence of tolerance, but selectivity. The focus on the value of interaction testifies to the "decentralization" of the worldview [17], and the absence of ideas about the center and the periphery.

## 2    Second cognitive focus — Practice (Activity)

Background knowledge, or patterns of lifestyle, are actualized and manifested in acts of interaction between representatives of different cultures. If the content of such patterns is not similar, a situation of misunderstanding and conflict is potentially possible. However, being aware of these differences significantly reduces the potential risks. So, it is possible to create effective cooperation in intercultural communication based on a common field of knowledge and action, interest, and trust. This space of dialogue produces the formation of intercultural communicative competencies, the presence of which ensures the effectiveness of communication. In other words, knowledge reveals its purpose in action. Consequently, the activity level of intercultural interaction presupposes not only awareness of the specifics of other cultures, but also a positive emotional perception of foreign cultural phenomena, stable motivation for cooperation, and cosmopolitan beliefs. Therefore, the second level of research ("Activity") is aimed at identifying the readiness, interest, and direct participation of the respondents in intercultural projects and events. Differentiation at this level involves showing the distinction between public opinion regarding intercultural communication (motivation for activity) and personal participation in such projects (realization of activity). This problem is described certainly by Jonathon P. Hutchinson [8].

# 3   Third cognitive focus — Promotion (Perspectives)

The third cognitive focus of intercultural communication is perspective intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is a dynamic structure, the content of which should be influenced by the methods of educational practices. The correlation of individual actualization in intercultural dialogue with the prospects for self-realization in a globalized world is an essential factor in motivating the development of intercultural competencies. There are many projects and organizations that carry out intercultural communication in the context of religion, education, politics, and law. Their goal is to overcome negative stereotypes and attitudes in intercultural cooperation, mutual adaptation and integration of cultures, and the formation of universal cultural values. In addition, this practice directly affects the social life of various ethnic groups in the form of the institutionalization of such universal values and principles. Accordingly, there is a significant worldview turn: the "Other" as a storage medium of another culture, becomes not an enemy, but rather a partner in common goals, ideals, and aspirations. Differentiation at this level means testing the possibility of synthesis of cultures, but not their sum in multicultural education.

This specificity is due to the challenges of the modern sociocultural environment, for the solution which, both at the global and local levels, are necessary for integration and optimization of intercultural relations and interactions. And it is logical to call education one of the most effective tools for such a positive influence, especially in the context of the contemporary widest possible meaning of this term. Therefore, the third level of research ("Perspectives") is aimed at studying not an actual, but a long-term plan of intercultural communication of recipients. In other words, there is the study of the level of awareness and readiness to develop intercultural competencies in the context of educational practices and self-realization.

The questionnaire was prepared in accordance with the study of acceptance of multicultural diversity and adapted to the educational establishment.

So, with this methodology, we are going to identify the specifics of knowledge, and practical and promotional level of intercultural tolerance in an educational environment. In our case, it is students of the National Pedagogical Dragomanov University (Kyiv, Ukraine). The general logic for verifying the results is as follows: the more positive answers and the higher the degree of approval, the higher the level of intercultural competencies of the recipients in terms of knowledge (opinion), practice (activity), and promotion (perspective). A greater level of acceptance in intercultural communication leads to a greater level of social stability, economic growth, and the value of cultural diversity.

18 questions of the questionnaire are evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 disagrees, 2 rather disagree, 3 difficult to answer, 4 rather agree, and 5 agreed. The scale of evaluation of the results is divided into three levels: low, average, and high degree of intercultural acceptance. According to the proposed options, the answers 1 "disagree" and 2 "rather disagree" show a low level of intercultural tolerance, answer 3 "difficult to answer" goes to the average level of it, and answers 4 "rather agree" and 5 "agree" show a high level of the respondents' intercultural competences.

There were 230 students and 42 lecturers of National Pedagogical Dragomanov University interviewed. In common 272 people took part in the research.

## 4    Results

During our intercultural studies in the university community, we analyzed the answers of 272 respondents and the results of these studies are presented in Table 2.

Arithmetical mean and standard deviation were used for data processing, which allowed us to analyze the general sample and make a qualitative analysis. We present the results in summary table 2.

Thus, the analysis of the entire sample (not grouping by subgroups) presented that "Opinion" (4.37 mean and 0.65 — standard deviation) was noticeably higher than other categories (Activity — 3.77; 0.75; Perspective — 3.76; 0.62, respectively). We can interpret it as acquired its importance for the respondents to realize the significance of their own culture, their knowledge and respect for other cultures, and tolerance in the perception of cultures of other peoples. Block analysis of this category showed that the value of cultures is more important than the value of cooperation (4.46 vs. 4.28), but the difference is not noticeable [5].

Table 2: Summary table of analyzed results

| Categories and blocks | Total | | Lecturers | | Students | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Arith mean | St. dev. | Arith. mean | St. dev. | Arith. mean | St. dev. |
| CV | 4,46 | 0,69 | 4,40 | 0,81 | 4,47 | 0,67 |
| CopV | 4,28 | 0,82 | 4,23 | 1,06 | 4,29 | 0,76 |
| Opinion | 4,37 | 0,82 | 4,32 | 0,87 | 4,38 | 0,61 |
| AM | 3,75 | 0,80 | 4,04 | 0,89 | 3,70 | 0,77 |
| AP | 3,79 | 0,91 | 3,99 | 1,13 | 3,75 | 0,87 |
| Activity | 3,77 | 0,75 | 4,02 | 0,94 | 3,72 | 0,70 |
| PC | 3,57 | 0,77 | 3,50 | 0,88 | 3,58 | 0,74 |
| CP | 3,96 | 0,73 | 3,82 | 0,82 | 3,98 | 0,72 |
| Perspective | 3,76 | 0,73 | 3,66 | 0,76 | 3,78 | 0,59 |

*Based on [5]

Activity which we can characterize as a willingness to collaborate across cultures acquires its special value in nowadays world. This category was equal to 3.77 (standard deviation — 0.75), the same about its blocks: activity motivation — 3.75 (0.80) and activity realization — 3.79 (0.91).

Another category — Perspective — is, what awaits cultural cooperation in the future according to the opinion and expectations of respondents. Thus, in our survey, this category received the lowest indicators (Fig. 1) — 3.76 (0.62), but it was not much less than the previous one. Blocks within the category showed that respondents tend to combine cultural practices (3.96) against cultural pluralism (3.57) [5].
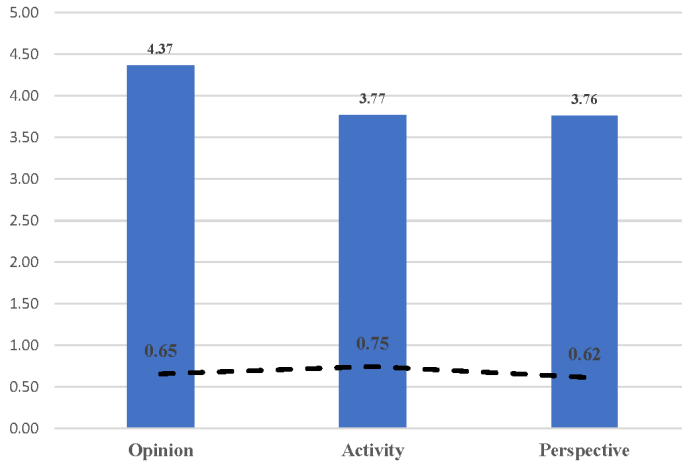
Fig. 1: Results of the analysis of intercultural communication throughout the sample

In general, we can say that all indicators were above average, which positively characterized the attitude of students and teachers of the university to other cultures, their perception of other cultures, tolerance, and willingness to cooperate and combine cultural activities. This is important at this time because Ukraine is on the path to European integration, where one of the main values is respect and acceptance of cultural diversity.

Summing up, it can be said that all indicators were above average, which meant a positive attitude of students and professors towards the cultures of others, their perception of the otherness of cultures, and their tolerance and readiness to cooperate and communicate. It is worth mentioning that taking into account the Ukrainian way to the European Union, our society has to be able to their values, one of which is respect and acceptance of cultural diversity.

Among the sample, there were two groups — students (230 people) and lecturers (42 people). Given the significant difference in the number of respondents from each group, it was not advisable to compare them, but all samples were representative, as evidenced by the results of the mean and standard deviation.

First, we analyzed a group of lecturers. The first category "Opinion" (4.32; 0.87) also prevailed among teachers (Fig. 2), which was also the leader in other analyzed groups. The Culture value block was more important than the second "Cooperation value" block — 4.40 vs. 4.23, which showed more the importance of the value of cultures, and their perception, than the willingness to cooperate with people from other cultures. But this difference was insignificant given the rating scale. Both indicators were above average.

The category "Activity" was less important for lecturers — 4.02 and showed that they were less willing to participate in intercultural projects than the perception of the values of different cultures. That is, they respect different cultures, traditions, and worldviews, but are less inclined to actually cooperate with people from other cultures. The analysis of the blocks in this category found that lecturers were less likely to implement intercultural projects than
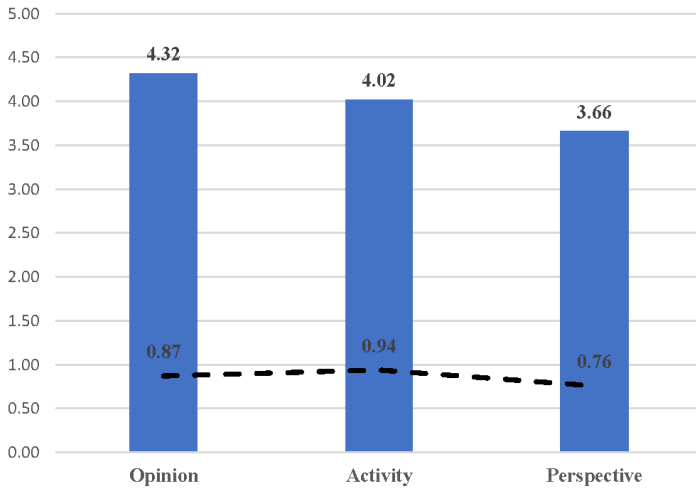
Fig. 2: Results of the analysis of intercultural communication throughout the lecturers

to be motivated to participate. Although in reality, this difference was insignificant (4.04 and 3.99 respectively).

The vision of prospects for the development of intercultural dialogue, and readiness for the development of intercultural competencies were the least important among the presented categories (3.66; 0.76). Cultural pluralism was less important here (3.50; 0.88) than Unity of Cultural Practices (3.82; 0.82), which means that lecturers are less inclined to see the preservation of cultural identity, and more inclined to combine cultural practitioners.

Students (Fig. 3): the vision, and the attitude of students to culture had approximately the same meanings as in the previously analysed groups, but here the differences were more distinctive. Thus, "Opinion" was also the leader and had an average of 4.38 (0.61), while "Activity" was — 3.72 (0.70), and "Perspective" was — 3.78 (0.59). That is, students had the most respect for the cultures of others, but were less willing to cooperate in intercultural projects and see fewer real opportunities for intercultural dialogue.

In summary, we can conclude that there was no significant difference in the analyzed groups compared to the general sample of respondents. In general, students, like lecturers, respected other cultures, had high cultural competencies, but respected different cultures more than were willing to cooperate with their representatives. In the second category "Activity" analysis showed that it was slightly less important than the previous one for lecturers, but more for students, i.e. lecturers, in reality, were willing and motivated to cooperate less than with respect for other cultures. The third indicator, which reflected the readiness to develop their intercultural competencies, had the lowest value for the group of lecturers but is dominated by Activity among students. This showed that in reality lecturers did not aim to develop their intercultural skills for collaboration in different projects. And students were more inclined toward this and the development of intercultural dialogue. This can be explained by the age group of respondents. The lecturers who participated were over 30 years old, i.e. less involved in the spread of global electronic networks, social
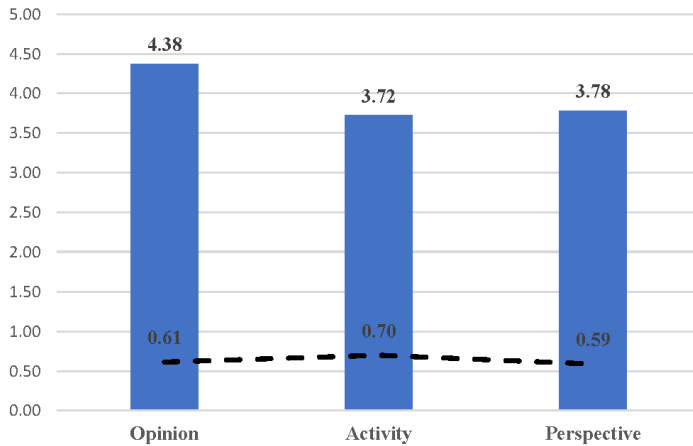
Fig. 3:Results of the analysis of intercultural communication throughout the students

networks, world development, and the globalization of all processes and people. While students were more involved in the abovementioned. That is, they saw in the future the development of intercultural dialogue and the improvement of their competencies in conducting it.

## Discussions

The problem of accepting cultural diversity presupposes the presence of "personal space" for representatives of different cultures in a separate social field. Therefore, the content of intercultural competencies lies in personal interest and empathy between members of the community. This phenomenon is called "decentralization of the worldview". It means that the patterns of perception and assessment of reality, or the collective experience of culture, in a collision cause not rejection, but interest and empathy. It is possible to achieve this effect through educational practices, raising awareness of such inconsistencies. Acceptance of the Other is very important both in the context of self-determination and in relation to the establishment of the order of the social system. Accordingly, intercultural diversity is the interaction of different value systems, principles of activity, and pretensions.

The obtained results suggest that the level of intercultural competence is quite high, as all indicators are above average, and taking into account the assessment scale (from 1 to 5), some of them can be considered high. Both students and teachers have a normal attitude towards other cultures, perception of their traditions, and tolerance of them. The current state of cooperation in the framework of intercultural projects and readiness for possible intercultural projects. The results showed that lecturers are more inclined to cooperate when this category has become the least important for students. But in all cases, the data obtained are at least 1 above average, so the level of intercultural competence is above average.

Most respondents say that they have respect for other cultures, but are less motivated to cooperate and are willing to participate in international projects.

At least students and, in general, the sample accept cultural pluralism and see its adaptation to our realities. Accordingly, the vision of the prospect of intercultural dialogue and the combination of cultural traditions is greater. We can assume that people are ready to unite their cultures in the modern world. But for more accurate conclusions it is necessary to conduct further research on the vision of the development of culture in the world and the study of cultural change at this time.

## Conclusions

Contemporary scientific research about intercultural communication pays much attention to various ways of defining the concept of tolerance. This is meaningful in the context of the so-called "passive tolerance", or indifference to the Other. Therefore, the concept of tolerance in the current scientific discourse is replaced by the term "intercultural diversity".

We could notice a significant change in the focus of perception and evaluation in this transformation of terminology. The primacy of tolerance (isolation and alienation, in fact) is being replaced by the belief that there are many cultural traditions and practices, as well as the need for such diversity. The principle of cultural diversity claims that the unification of cultural traditions and their leveling to a similar form is a radical mistake. In other words, tolerance is the norm of a civilized compromise, a toll on scientific and technological progress. And cultural diversity is the assertion of the value of each culture, the specificity of which enhances the effect and effectiveness of integrity. Therefore, the implementation of the principle of cultural diversity lies in such an organization of public life, where differences do not lead to a common norm, but a conviction about the dynamics of the content of normativity. This is due to the current state of civilization, which requires maximum diversity in the use of various resources, including social, cultural, and intellectual capital. In accordance with this conviction, various cultural identities must necessarily have certain social benefits, the lots of which have formed the unity of the worldwide community. Therefore, it is logical that the problem of cultural diversity in the current scientific discourse is presented mainly in the cognitive focus of personified perspective.

We can notice the obvious cognitive situation in social life — the gap between understanding (passive knowledge) and activity (practical actions of knowledge implementation). Therefore, the interactive and involving cognitive technologies of intercultural competence development are very actual and requested in educational communities.

In conclusion, the meaning of the cognitive focus of intercultural studies is very important as it could be the foundation of effective technologies of social sustainable development. Nowadays our complex social world requires more and more active investments, cognitive tools, skills of enlightened leadership, and powerful educational values for the practical steps in the direction of social innovations for common prosperity and social cohesion.

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### Conflict of interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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