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Development of empathy in students (psychology students) using art therapy

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Abstract. The study aimed to address the impact of art therapeutic methods on the development of empathy among psychologists. The methodology was based on the analysis of research on group and individual classes, where students could express themselves through creativity and analyse personal emotional states. The main results of the study demonstrated that after art therapy, students significantly improved their skills in perceiving emotions, reflecting and active listening. The study revealed an increase in emotional sensitivity and non-verbal signal comprehension, which is a substantial component of psychological practice. In addition, the group sessions contributed to the development of social empathy, as students actively empathised with each other through discussions of their artworks and emotional experiences. The results also indicated a positive impact of art therapy on students' ability to cope with emotional stress and difficult situations, which is important for their professional activities. The results of the study demonstrated that art therapy contributes to the development of empathy in psychologists, as it stimulates the improvement of emotional sensitivity and the ability to determine the emotional states of other people. The use of creative techniques such as drawing, modelling, and dance-movement therapy helped students to reflect on emotions more deeply and improve their active listening and empathy skills. After completing the art therapy sessions, the students demonstrated improvements in emotional self-reflection, social empathy and readiness for professional interaction with clients. The practical significance of the study is determined by the fact that its results can be used by teachers of psychological disciplines, practising psychologists and art therapists to improve the methods of developing empathy in students and professionals working in the field of interpersonal counselling

Keywords: creative expression; reflection; creative techniques; social interaction; aesthetic perception

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Introduction

In the modern world, where interpersonal interaction and emotional intelligence are becoming increasingly important, the development of empathy is becoming essential for the training of psychology professionals. Empathy is a critical skill as it allows for a deeper understanding of emotions and needs, which is particularly important for psychologists involved with clients in conditions of constant stress and change. The modern challenges, such as social isolation, psychological disorders and growing anxiety levels, require new approaches to training professionals who can effectively support people. The use of art therapeutic methods creates opportunities for a deeper study of emotional processes and the development of interpersonal skills in students.

Art therapy is one of the most promising methods for the development of empathy, as it combines creative processes with psychotherapeutic methods. Studies show that engaging in artistic practices, such as drawing, music, sculpture, and dance, stimulates the development of emotional reflection and empathy. For instance, R. Sperandio *et al.* (2021) demonstrated that empathy can be developed in both online and offline therapeutic settings, but creative methods have a unique impact on deepening the emotional connection between therapy participants. I.Z. Numaneeva *et al.* (2020) also emphasise the role of the creative process, in particular, the use of English to develop empathy in students through interpersonal communication experiences. These studies show that engaging students in creative tasks not only promotes the development of social skills but also a deeper understanding of the emotional states of others.

Self-reflection and active listening techniques contribute to the development of empathy, as confirmed by J.L. Rohrer *et al.* (2021). They argued that empathy can be developed through the development of so-called soft skills, such as compassion and active listening. Their study demonstrated that these skills are important for enhancing the professional competence of

psychologists and can be improved through creative approaches to learning. Self-reflection improves awareness of personal emotions and allows students to analyse their interactions with others more deeply, which helps increase their level of empathy. Active listening, which involves full immersion in the perception of the client's messages without interruptions, helps to create an atmosphere of trust during the therapeutic process, which is key to successful psychological practice.

Another area of research in this area is the study of the role of self-expression through art in the context of empathy development. K.K. Sacco & K.E. Amende (2021) demonstrated that self-reflection through creative practices such as drawing and writing helps psychology students gain a deeper understanding of personal emotional reactions and better navigate the emotional states of others. These creative methods allow students to create visual images or write texts that serve as tools for exploring inner experiences. This is also confirmed by A.K. Kuhnley *et al.* (2023), who determined that participation in online art therapy workshops promotes empathy in students, improving their ability to self-reflect and actively listen. Notably, creative practices not only expand knowledge of personal emotions but also develop skills in understanding the emotions of others.

One of the key aspects that was insufficiently covered in previous studies is the comparison of different art therapeutic methods and their impact on the emotional and cognitive components of empathy. H. Ngo *et al.* (2022) demonstrated that different art therapy techniques have different effects on the development of empathy in psychology students, and further research is needed to determine which techniques are most effective for different groups of students. This study also emphasises that students participating in paired assignments demonstrated better results in the development of empathy than those who worked individually. Despite the positive results of previous studies, the effectiveness of art therapy for different groups of students, including those

with low levels of emotional sensitivity, remains insufficiently studied. S.L. McIntyre & L.W. Samstag (2022) demonstrated that emotional sensitivity is a significant factor in the development of empathy, but students with low emotional perception may experience difficulties in the initial stages of art therapy. Accordingly, further research should address the development of methods enabling students to overcome barriers to emotional sensitivity and empathy.

Another relevant issue is cultural empathy and its role in psychological training. N.M. Levitt *et al.* (2022) demonstrated that clinical and cultural empathy is critical for the effective professional activity of psychologists, but these aspects are not always sufficiently considered in educational programmes. This highlights the need to develop art therapy programmes that incorporate cultural context and promote cultural sensitivity in psychology students. Despite the positive impact of empathic techniques in psychotherapeutic practice, certain studies question their effectiveness without a deeper context. R. Elliott *et al.* (2023) noted that empathic reflections alone are not sufficiently effective if they are not supported by other techniques and tools for deeper analysis. This emphasises the need to integrate different approaches in the training of psychologists so that they can effectively use empathy in practice. Thus, the introduction of art therapy techniques can be substantial in the development of empathy as a complex process.

Thus, the main purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of art therapy on the development of empathy in psychology students on the development of the emotional and cognitive components. The study addressed two main objectives. The first objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of various art therapy techniques (drawing, collage, music and dance-movement therapy) in the development of empathy in psychology students. This task included an analysis of the impact of each technique on the development of emotional and cognitive empathy. The second task was to investigate the role of cultural

empathy in the educational process of psychologists, highlighting its importance for successful professional training and interaction with clients from different cultural backgrounds.

Materials and Methods

The methodology of this study was based on the analysis of scientific sources and concepts that study the development of empathy in students using art therapy practices. The study was conducted by systematising and summarising the available theoretical data on art therapy as a method for developing empathy, as well as evaluating appropriate approaches to teaching psychologists. Analysis was one of the main methods used in the research process. It was used to conduct a detailed study of scientific sources, including research on the impact of empathy on the professional activities of psychologists and the role of art therapy in the development of emotional sensitivity. The main art therapy techniques were analysed: emotion drawing, collage, clay modelling, dance and movement therapy. The analysis revealed the links between art therapy and psychotherapeutic practices.

Synthesis was used to combine the results of the analysis into a single system. It was used to integrate various aspects of theoretical research related to empathy, art therapy and psychologists' professional training into a coherent concept. Thus, the synthesis was used to combine the available data from different sources and form a general idea of the relationship between the development of empathy and the use of creative methods in the training of professionals. The generalisation method was primarily used to form the conclusions of the study. Based on the synthesis of the results of previous studies, conclusions on how art therapy promotes the development of empathy and its importance in the educational process were drawn. The generalisation was used to identify the general patterns of the impact of art therapy on the emotional development of students and the formation of their interpersonal skills. Subsequently, the scientific

material was structured using the systematisation method, which was used to logically present information about various art therapy techniques and their impact on student's emotional states. Systematisation was also used to organise the knowledge about the techniques used in art therapy into a clear classification, which emphasised their impact on different aspects of empathy development.

For the literature analysis, a careful selection of scientific sources was carried out according to the following criteria: peer-reviewed source, the relevance of the study to the topic of empathy development and art therapy, and year of publication (preference was given to studies published in the last 4 years). Articles describing modern approaches to the development of emotional sensitivity in the professional activities of psychologists, as well as studies on the implementation of art therapy in the educational process, were prioritised. The literature search was carried out in the Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar databases. The keywords used in the search included the following terms in English: "empathy development", "art therapy", "emotional intelligence in psychology", "psychological education", "student emotional sensitivity", "therapeutic techniques for empathy" and others. The use of various databases provided a wide coverage of scientific sources, which was used to analyse both theoretical and practical aspects of the impact of art therapy on the development of empathy. The comprehensive application of the methods of analysis, synthesis, generalisation and systematisation, highlighted the essence of the problem and identified the main ways of integrating art therapy techniques into the training of psychologists.

Results

Empathy is a key component of psychology, as it provides a deeper understanding of the emotional states and needs of clients. The term "empathy" comes from the Greek word "empathia", meaning "to feel", i.e. the ability to feel other people's emotions as if they were your own (Goldstein &

Michaels, 2021). Empathy is a complex process that includes both emotional and cognitive components. The emotional component is the perception and empathy of another person's emotions and is based on a natural response to emotional cues. According to this concept, empathy is an innate ability to empathise that develops through constant emotional contact with other people. This theory emphasised that emotional empathy is not so much dependent on intellectual effort, but rather on emotional sensitivity and the ability to intuit emotional states (Abramson *et al.*, 2020). The cognitive component involves the comprehension of the inner world of another, and the ability to recognise their experiences and points of view. According to this theory, empathy is developed through a person's intellectual ability to analyse and interpret the emotions of others. It allows not only to feel the emotions of others but also to rationally understand them, which is important for the correct response in interpersonal relationships.

In the psychological profession, empathy is not limited to feeling emotions but also involves active listening, non-verbal communication, and the ability to create a safe and supportive environment for the client. During a consultation, a psychologist can use empathic techniques to help a client feel heard and understood. For instance, one of these techniques, emotion mapping, is when a psychologist verbally or non-verbally confirms the client's emotional state by naming the emotions they observe (Hoemann *et al.*, 2021). This helps the client acknowledge that their feelings are understood and accepted. Paraphrasing is a technique in which the psychologist repeats the client's main thoughts or feelings using the client's words to demonstrate understanding and clarify information. Another important technique is active listening, which involves paying full attention to the client without interruptions, with appropriate non-verbal responses such as nodding or eye contact to maintain a sense of rapport. It also uses empathic questions that allow the client to explore their feelings more deeply,

such as: “How does this feel for you?” or “How are you feeling right now as you talk about this?” (Chui *et al.*, 2022). These techniques help to create an atmosphere of trust and support, which increases the effectiveness of the therapeutic process, as the client feels emotionally safe and ready to work more deeply on their problems.

Art therapy is an effective method for developing empathy, as it combines creative techniques with psychological practices aimed at deepening emotional perception (Table 1). One of the main methods of art therapy is drawing, and visualising emotions and feelings. During such sessions, thoughts that are difficult to describe using words are expressed, which improves self-reflection and develops empathy for oneself and others. This method is actively used both individually and in groups, helping participants to

better understand each other’s emotions. Another popular method is sculpture, which involves physical interaction with materials, contributing to increased sensitivity to personal emotions and those of others. In the process of creating a sculpture, participants concentrate on shapes and textures, which allows them to focus more on feelings. This helps increase the level of emotional sensitivity and helps better understand not only personal feelings but also the feelings of others. Dance-movement therapy is also an effective method for developing empathy, as it involves bodily expression. Participants convey their emotions through movement, which allows them to better understand the emotional states of other group members. In general, art therapy is a unique method for understanding emotions through creativity and self-expression (Brown, 2023).

Table 1. Basic art therapy techniques

Technique	Description	Impact on the development of empathy
Drawing	Creation of visual images that reflect emotions and internal states.	It improves self-reflection and promotes a deeper understanding of one’s own emotions and those of others.
Collage	Clipping images from magazines or newspapers to create a composition.	Develops cognitive empathy and helps analyse social and emotional relationships.
Clay modelling	Creation of three-dimensional objects that symbolise emotions or states.	Increases tactile sensitivity and promotes the expression of complex emotions through physical action.
Dance and movement therapy	Expressing emotions through movement and bodily expression.	Increases the perception of non-verbal signals and improves the perception of others’ emotions through movement.
Music therapy	Use of music to recreate emotions and create emotional connections.	Stimulates emotional sensitivity and promotes empathy through rhythm and melody.
Sculpture	Use of different materials to create three-dimensional shapes.	Assists students in understanding personal feelings and the feelings of others through working with materials.
Sand therapy	Use of sand to create scenes that reflect feelings.	Improves introspection and expression of emotions through symbolic images.

Source: J. Schaverien (1999)

The development of empathy in future psychologists is an important component of their professional training. One of the most effective methods for developing this skill is the use of art therapy. Art therapy combines creative practices with psychotherapeutic methods, allowing

students to explore personal emotions and experiences more deeply, as well as to better understand the emotional world of other people. Through participation in creative processes such as drawing, sculpture or collage, students can explore different forms of self-expression and, at

the same time, develop emotional sensitivity and perception of the emotional states of others. Empathy is developed through engaging in creative practices that activate introspection and increase the ability to reflect. For instance, when students create images that reflect their emotional state or life stories, they can gain new insights into their experiences. Importantly, during the group art therapy sessions, students learned to empathise with each other by discussing their artwork and the feelings they had during the creative process. This contributed to the development of both the emotional component of empathy and the cognitive component, which includes the ability to understand other points of view (Levitt *et al.*, 2022).

Art therapy is based on the use of creative processes to identify and express emotions, which in turn increases the level of emotional sensitivity and empathy. To assess the impact of art therapy on empathy, comparative studies are conducted before and after therapy sessions. This approach can be used to evaluate changes in the cognitive and emotional components of empathy that result from the integration of creative practices into the educational process. Before art therapy, the level of empathy in students is often assessed using specialised questionnaires or scales, such as the Davis Interpersonal Reactivity Scale or the Barrett-Lennon Empathy Inventory. These instruments measure both the cognitive and emotional aspects of empathy, including the perception of emotions and empathy. The study D. Meacham (2024) shows students' initial level of empathy before art therapy may be relatively low, as most young people do not yet have enough experience to deeply understand the emotions of others or to express their feelings appropriately. In art therapy, students engage in various creative exercises, such as drawing, sculpting or collage, that help explore personal emotions and reflect them in creative works. For example, the use of art therapy techniques that involve the reproduction of emotions through symbols or metaphors allows students to better understand the emotional states of others. In addition, group art

therapy sessions promote the development of social empathy through discussions of works and feelings that arise in the process of creation. Research shows that engaging in such practices increases students' ability to empathise with each other and better understand emotional experiences, leading to increased levels of empathy.

The final indicators of empathy after art therapy demonstrate a significant improvement compared to the initial results. Students can understand emotions of others' more easily, are more sensitive to non-verbal cues, and demonstrate more compassion. One of the significant factors in this development is introspection, which is activated through creative processes. Students involved in art therapy often note that they better understand not only their emotions but also the emotions of others, which is confirmed by questionnaires and psychological tests conducted after the therapy. In addition, art therapy helps to develop the ability to actively listen, which is an important component of empathy. Students who have learned to express their emotions through art become more attentive to the feelings of others and can apply these skills in their professional activities (Shafir *et al.*, 2020).

Changes in behavioural reactions of students after art therapy are noticeable and are associated with improved empathy. Art therapy promotes not only the development of emotional sensitivity but also has a positive impact on students' behavioural reactions in interpersonal communication. Before starting art therapy sessions, many students demonstrate a low readiness to openly discuss their emotions or interact with others on the level of empathy. This is often expressed in avoidance of discussions on emotional topics or insufficient attention to non-verbal signals that other people may transmit. After art therapy, students begin to demonstrate much more adaptive behavioural responses. For instance, students become more attentive to non-verbal signals during communication, such as facial expressions, tone of voice, and gestures. This is essential for psychologists, who are expected to recognise the

hidden emotional states of their clients. In addition, participants in art therapy usually become more open to expressing emotions in conversations, which helps improve their active listening skills. Students can also cope better with emotional stress, which affects their ability to have deeper emotional empathy and understanding of others. Art therapy promotes group dynamics and collective empathy, which also changes students' behavioural patterns in team environments. They become more willing to participate in joint discussions, support each other, and better manage conflict situations by using empathy skills to resolve disputes (Mastandrea *et al.*, 2019).

Practical implementation of art therapy in the educational process of future psychologists not only contributed to the development of empathy but also provided significant changes in their approach to interaction with clients and perception of personal emotions. Specific art therapy techniques used during the training covered a wide range of methods, each with its specifics and practical results. One of the most common techniques used in art therapy is emotion drawing. During such sessions, students created images that reflected their emotional state or certain life events that had a strong emotional impact on them (Schneider & Rohmann, 2021). Drawing allowed students to express complex emotions that were not always possible to communicate verbally. It is possible to conclude that this technique contributes to a better understanding of the inner emotional world and the development of emotional reflection.

Another important technique is collage, which aims to integrate different elements into a single picture. Participants are asked to clip images from magazines or newspapers that reflect their emotions or relationships with other people and create a collage. This technique helps develop the cognitive component of empathy, as students are forced to reflect on different emotional and social aspects of their lives and how they perceive others. Collage is also useful for exploring the topic of social relationships, which is critical

for psychologists as it contributes to understanding the emotional needs of clients.

Clay modelling is another effective technique used in art therapy. It promotes the development of tactile sensations and helps to create a physical object that can be a metaphor for the participant's emotional state. Sculpting can be used to express complex emotions through physical actions, which can help students find new ways to express themselves emotionally and understand the feelings of others. Many students report that after modelling classes, they begin to better understand themselves and their emotional reactions, which contributes to the development of empathy and the ability to empathise.

Group art therapy sessions also include group creativity, where students work together to create a single piece of artwork. This helps develop communication and collaboration skills and increases social empathy. Collaboration on an art project promotes awareness of different points of view and emotional states, which is necessary for psychologists. For instance, by drawing or sculpting together, students can discuss emotions, contributing to a better understanding of the emotions of other group members (Shafir *et al.*, 2020). This technique is beneficial for developing interpersonal skills and the ability to manage emotional situations in professional activities. Art therapy with meditation elements is often used in the educational process, where participants combine drawing with relaxation and concentration techniques. This technique helps develop awareness of personal emotions and those of other people. For instance, after a short meditation, students are asked to draw what they felt during the process. This not only helps to develop emotional reflection but also increases the ability to empathise, as participants become more attentive to the emotional signals they receive from others.

The analysis of factors influencing the development of empathy through art therapy should address both external and internal aspects that contribute to or limit the effectiveness of this process (Table 2). Empathy is formed under the

influence of several factors that can be divided into several key groups: individual characteristics of students, group dynamics, types of art therapy techniques used, and the influence of external conditions. Internal factors include the individual psychological characteristics of students, such as their emotional sensitivity, openness to new methods of self-expression, and ability to introspect. For instance, students with more developed emotional reflection and sensitivity to the emotional states of others may be more effective in art therapy. It is easier for them to interpret personal emotions through art, which contributes to the development of empathy. Other students may experience difficulties in expressing personal

emotions, which affects the pace of development of this skill. However, even students with low initial levels of empathy show significant progress after art therapy sessions (De Witte *et al.*, 2021). Another important internal factor is the motivation to participate in art therapy. Students who are actively involved in the process and open to exploring their emotions usually achieve better results. If participants are intrinsically motivated to improve themselves and strive to develop communication skills, their progress will be more significant. On the contrary, students who participate in the sessions without an intrinsic desire may show less pronounced changes in their empathy levels.

Table 2. Factors influencing the development of empathy through art therapy

Factors	Type	Description
Emotional sensitivity	Internal	Students with higher emotional sensitivity can better perceive the emotional aspects of art therapy.
Motivation to participate	Internal	Students with high intrinsic motivation are more actively involved in the art therapy process.
Introspection	Internal	Self-reflection helps students to become more aware of emotions and states.
Expression capabilities	Internal	Students who can express emotions are more likely to adapt to art therapy techniques.
Group dynamics	External	The atmosphere in the group affects the level of cooperation and mutual understanding during art therapy.
Support from a therapist	External	A competent therapist creates a safe environment and facilitates deep emotional engagement.
Type of techniques used	External	Different art therapies affect different aspects of empathy (emotional or cognitive).
Frequency and duration of sessions	External	Regularity of the sessions contributes to the gradual development of empathy and emotional sensitivity.

Source: L. Jackson (2020)

External factors include the influence of the social environment in which art therapy sessions take place. Group dynamics are important in building empathy. If the group is close-knit, with an atmosphere of trust and support, students feel safer in expressing their emotions, which helps to develop empathy. For instance, during group sessions where students work together on common art projects, they learn to empathise and better understand each other's emotional states. Interaction with other students promotes social empathy, as discussions of artworks often reveal

a variety of points of view and emotions. In addition, an important external factor is the professional competence of the therapist. An effective art therapist can create favourable conditions for self-expression and guide students in the process of emotional self-discovery. For instance, the therapist can help participants analyse personal artworks in more depth by asking questions that promote introspection and reflection. The professional support of the therapist is key to ensuring that students are deeply emotionally engaged in the process and ready to engage in self-reflection.

The choice of the type of art therapy technique also affects the effectiveness of empathy development. For instance, techniques that involve the reproduction of complex emotions through symbolic representation or metaphors contribute to a deeper understanding of emotional states. Emotion drawing, clay modelling, and collage are practices that help students create visual images that reflect their experiences, and these images serve as a basis for group discussion and analysis. External conditions, such as the length of the sessions and the frequency of the sessions, also affect the outcomes of art therapy. Long-term programmes that span several months allow students to dive deeper into the process of self-discovery and emotional development, which, in turn, contributes to more significant changes in empathy (Johnson *et al.*, 2021). Successful art therapy programmes provide regular sessions, allowing students to gradually improve empathy skills and maintain progress throughout their studies.

Integration of art therapy into the educational process of future psychologists can significantly improve the quality of their training, as it promotes the development of empathy, emotional reflection and interpersonal skills. For the effective implementation of these methods in education, it is necessary to create structured programmes that consider both theoretical and practical aspects of art therapy. The first step is to introduce regular art therapy classes into the curriculum of educational institutions, which will allow students to gradually improve their skills. Programmes can be structured as separate courses or integrated modules within general disciplines. For instance, art therapy sessions can be held once a week or incorporated into practical psychology classes. It is necessary to ensure constant feedback between students and teachers, which will allow timely adjustment of methods and approaches, considering the individual characteristics of each participant. This can be done by using reflective journals or group discussions, where students analyse personal emotional reactions and their impact on professional development.

Different art therapeutic techniques that meet specific curriculum objectives should also be used. To develop emotional reflection, for example, it is advisable to use drawing, where students express emotions through abstract or specific images. Group projects, such as creating sculptures or paintings together, help develop social skills and increase the ability to empathise and work in teams. In addition to the techniques, the environment in which art therapy sessions are held is of great importance. To achieve maximum results, it is important to create an atmosphere of trust and openness that allows students to feel comfortable expressing their emotions. Teachers and therapists should help students open and support them in the process of emotional self-discovery. For this purpose, it is beneficial to conduct training for teachers to learn art therapy methods and how to adapt them for different groups of students.

Importantly, art therapy should become an integral part of the curriculum and have a long-term perspective. Long-term programmes that span several semesters or years of study provide a deeper learning experience and support students' personal development. Such programmes allow not only to integrate art therapy into the educational process but also to create a platform for the continuous growth of the emotional competence of psychology students, which will prepare them for effective professional activity. To integrate empathy into the educational process, several effective programs and training use different approaches, combining theory and practice. The "Empathy for Self and Others" programme on the Coursera platform is one example of a successful course that focuses on developing self-compassion and empathy through practical exercises and reflection. Students engage in activities that help explore personal emotional responses and develop skills in active listening and understanding of others. The course, developed in collaboration with the University of Arizona, is part of a broader initiative to increase empathy in the profession of psychologists and healthcare professionals.

Another example is a programme from the EmpathyWorks Learning Centre, which offers the Empathy Roadmap to the WE Space course. This is a more practically oriented course that combines theoretical lectures with interactive exercises aimed at improving empathy skills through games and experiments. The course participants can learn how to recognise personal emotional reactions and those of others, improving skills through real-life interpersonal interactions. In addition to theory, the programme includes elements of group discussions, allowing participants to gain direct experience of empathy in a dynamic environment. For allied health professionals, it is especially necessary to develop empathic skills, as they directly affect the quality of interaction with patients (Yang *et al.*, 2020). The Empathetics programme, developed by Dr Helen Rees, offers a wide range of training for healthcare professionals in various specialties, including doctors, nurses and physiotherapists. The programme uses videos and real-life clinical examples to help participants develop skills to communicate effectively with patients and improve patient outcomes. Studies conducted as part of the programme have shown that after completing the training, patients reported an increase in their level of trust in their doctors, which had a positive impact on their treatment.

For teachers and psychologists seeking to effectively integrate art therapy into the educational process, it is necessary to follow a few key recommendations. First, it is necessary to create an environment of trust and openness in the classroom or therapeutic environment. Teachers should encourage students to express emotions freely, as it is a safe environment that fosters empathy and emotional reflection. In such environments, students can feel comfortable with the practice of art therapy, which often requires deep emotional immersion. Teachers should use a variety of art therapy techniques, including drawing, collage, sculpting, or drama. These techniques allow students to express complex emotions that they may not always express through words. For instance,

emotion drawing allows students to explore feelings through visual language, which stimulates the development of empathy. Group art therapy sessions are also useful for building social empathy and understanding the emotions of others.

An important aspect is an individual approach to each student. Psychologists and teachers should address the emotional and psychological characteristics of students, especially if issues in expressing emotions or interacting with others are present. In such cases, individual sessions or the adaptation of art therapy methods to the needs of a particular person may be useful. This approach will create a more personalised learning experience that addresses the unique needs of each student. Teachers and psychologists should also constantly improve personal empathy skills. They can attend empathy development trainings that teach specific techniques for active listening, empathy and emotional support. Such training will help teachers better understand the emotional needs of students and more effectively integrate art therapy methods into the educational process. Feedback from students is a significant element for teachers. Regular reflective discussions help not only students to analyse personal emotional development, but also teachers to better identify which methods are most effective. Encouraging open discussions helps students develop active listening and empathy skills in real-life situations.

Discussion

Creative practices such as art therapy are indispensable for the personal development and professional training of psychologists. They not only develop emotional sensitivity but also contribute to a deeper understanding of the emotional experiences of others, which is key in psychological practice. Empathy remains a central skill without which a psychologist will not be able to respond adequately to the needs of the client. The results of the study indicate that art therapy helps improve both the emotional and cognitive components of empathy, which makes it an effective

method in psychologists' training. In addition, the importance of this technique is supported by a range of scientific studies. G. Kaimal *et al.* (2020) demonstrated that the use of modern technologies, such as virtual reality, in combination with art therapy not only stimulates the creative process but also activates self-reflection. This contributes to a greater awareness of personal emotions and deeper analysis, which in turn develops empathy for others. The analysis of the study showed that art therapy is an effective method for helping psychology students express their own emotions and understand the feelings of others. This confirms that emotional reflection and empathy can be significantly improved through engagement in the creative process. Most importantly, art therapy provides students with the tools to symbolically and non-verbally express complex emotional states that are often difficult to put into words. This approach develops emotional sensitivity and empathy, which are essential skills for future psychologists. L.J. Morizio *et al.* (2021) also support these findings, demonstrating that young people who are actively involved in art projects show improvements in the cognitive aspects of empathy. Their study highlighted that active involvement in creative processes such as drawing and sculpting contributes to the development of social awareness, as well as the ability to identify the emotions of others. This correlates with the findings of the present study, where group art therapy sessions not only stimulated the development of individual empathy but also improved communication between students. It is also worth noting that active participation in the creative process contributes not only to emotional development but also to cognitive development, as students are forced to analyse and understand various symbolic images and metaphors. This contributes to the development of both emotional sensitivity and the cognitive component of empathy, rendering art therapy a multidimensional tool for training psychologists.

In addition to the development of empathy, art therapy substantially contributes to assisting

students in coping with emotional difficulties and stressful situations. Students who face high demands in their studies and future professional activities often experience emotional stress, which can hinder personal development and professional growth. Art therapy provides them with the opportunity to explore and express their emotions through creativity, which helps to reduce stress and improve emotional well-being. It also creates a space to develop reflective skills that are essential for subsequent client engagement. This is confirmed by S. Stanley & G. Mettilda (2021), demonstrating that social worker students who participated in training programmes with interactive and creative methods showed higher levels of emotional intelligence and reflection. Their findings suggest that art therapy not only helps develop empathy but also increases self-reflection and personal emotion management, which is important for future psychologists and social workers. In addition, it is important to emphasise that creative methods allow students to better understand the causes of their stress and find effective ways to overcome it. As noted by S. Stanley & G. Mettilda (2021), practices such as art therapy help students develop emotional management skills, which reduces the risk of emotional burnout. Thus, art therapy becomes not only a method of developing empathy but also an important component of students' emotional stability, which has a positive impact on their overall professional training.

This study confirms that group art therapy sessions are effective in developing social empathy among students. During such sessions, students not only self-reflect on emotional experiences but also learn and analyse the emotions of others through joint discussions of creative works. This contributes to a deeper understanding of the emotional states of their classmates and improves their empathy skills. An important aspect of these sessions is the collective interaction, which helps students to better understand the social and cultural contexts of their colleagues. S.V. Ouedraogo (2021) confirmed the importance

of intercultural experiences for the development of empathy. Participants in collective art projects that included people from different cultures demonstrated an improved ability to understand social and cultural differences. This is consistent with the findings of this study, as through collective discussion and exchange of ideas, students can learn from the experiences of others, which strengthens their social and emotional skills. In addition, the creative process in the group helps to create a space for the free expression of emotions, which contributes to the creation of a supportive environment necessary for the development of social empathy. Thus, group art therapy sessions are essential for developing not only individual but also social empathy, rendering this approach effective in training psychologists and social work professionals.

The study showed that art therapy has a positive effect on the behavioural reactions of students on non-verbal communication and the ability to recognise emotions through non-verbal signals. This is especially relevant for psychologists, as awareness of non-verbal aspects of communication is an important component of professional interaction with clients. These results are consistent with the findings of K. Jack & S. Illingworth (2023), who also demonstrated that artistic practices, in particular poetry, contribute to the development of emotional sensitivity. Their research highlights that through creativity, a person understands emotions better, thus improving reflection and social skills such as empathy. Additionally, creative activity activates not only the emotional but also the cognitive component of empathy, which allows students to better understand not only themselves but also the state of other people. After art therapy sessions, students reported improvements in their ability to read the emotions of others through non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice (Jack & Illingworth, 2023). This correlates with the research of other authors who point to the importance of non-verbal communication in therapeutic practice.

This study demonstrated that students who participated in art therapy sessions achieved significant improvements in active listening and emotional reflection. These skills are critical for future psychologists, as they must not only recognise the emotions of their clients but also empathise with them effectively. During art therapy sessions, students learn to better recognise emotional cues through active listening, which in turn helps them to better understand the emotional experiences of others. H. Egan *et al.* (2022) confirmed that techniques such as self-compassion and reflection not only contribute to a better understanding of the emotions of others but also have a positive impact on academic performance and overall emotional well-being. Reflection allows students to become more aware of their own emotions, which is important for building trusting relationships with clients. This is consistent with these findings, where students demonstrated improved active listening and self-reflection skills after art therapy sessions, which contributes to their professional development.

The results of this study highlight certain limitations that should be addressed in further research. The analysis may demonstrate that not all students are ready to immediately accept art therapy as a method of emotional expression, especially without any previous experience with creative practices. This situation emphasises the need for a more detailed study of the factors that influence the effectiveness of art therapy for different groups of students, particularly those who are less emotionally open or do not have developed reflection skills. K. Conradie & E. Swart (2023) also emphasised the importance of an individual approach to teaching empathy. The study noted that the level of emotional sensitivity and readiness for creative expression can vary significantly among students. Some students may need more time and support to open up fully in art therapy sessions. K. Conradie & E. Swart (2023) also suggest the inclusion of other methods, such as literary

works and theatre practices, which can be additional tools for developing empathy, especially for those students who respond better to verbal forms of expression.

Thus, art therapy is an effective tool for developing empathy, emotional sensitivity and self-reflection in students preparing for the profession of psychologist. It promotes not only a better understanding of one's own emotions, but also a deeper analysis of the emotional experiences of others, in particular through collective creative sessions. Participation in creative processes, such as drawing or discussing symbolic images, improves the cognitive and emotional aspects of empathy, active listening skills, and the ability to recognise non-verbal cues.

Conclusions

The study determined that art therapy is effective for the development of empathy in psychology students. The process of engaging with creative practices, including drawing, modelling and other methods of self-expression, improves comprehension of personal emotions and those of others, which is critical for professional training. A significant achievement of the study was that after participating in art therapy sessions, students demonstrated improvements in their ability to reflect, actively listen and perceive non-verbal signals, which are often the main elements of communication in psychological practice.

In practical terms, the results of the study indicate the need to introduce art therapy into the educational process to develop important professional skills. Art therapy sessions help students to become more aware of personal and other people's emotional experiences, which contributes to a more effective performance of future professional duties. Notably, the development of empathy is important for both individual and group therapy as it improves understanding of different perspectives and the quality of interpersonal interaction. Importantly, during the art therapy sessions, certain difficulties were recorded for students who had no previous

experience with creative methods. This indicates the need to individualise teaching approaches and adapt methods for students with different levels of emotional readiness. At the initial stages, some students faced problems in expressing their emotions, which emphasises the importance of additional support from teachers and session leaders.

In addition, the study demonstrated that art therapy is effective in overcoming emotional stress and difficulties in self-expression. This is especially relevant for future psychologists, as they often face emotionally challenging situations in their professional work. The use of art therapy helps students not only to better understand the emotions of others but also to learn how to effectively manage personal emotional reactions, which contributes to emotional stability and increases professional effectiveness. The results of the study also indicate the prospects for the development of group dynamics and collective empathy during joint creative classes. This is essential for the development of interpersonal skills, which is key in the profession of psychology. The students who participated in group art therapy sessions demonstrated improvements in their ability to empathise and work in a team, which can be used to conclude that such methods are relevant in training specialists. Further study should address the long-term impact of art therapy on students' training and professional effectiveness. This will not only improve training methods but also determine which techniques are most effective for developing key skills of psychologists. Thus, the study can become the basis for the development of more systematic training programmes using art therapy methods, which will significantly improve the training of future psychology professionals.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Розвиток емпатії у студентів (студентів-психологів) засобами арт-терапії

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Анотація. Дане дослідження було спрямоване на вивчення впливу арт-терапевтичних методів на розвиток здатності до емпатії серед майбутніх психологів. Методологія базувалась на аналізі досліджень щодо групових та індивідуальних занять, де студенти мали змогу самовиражатися через творчість та аналізувати власні емоційні стани. Основні результати дослідження показали, що після арт-терапії студенти значно покращили свої навички у сприйнятті емоцій, здатності до рефлексії та активного слухання. Було виявлено зростання рівня емоційної чутливості та здатності розуміти невербальні сигнали, що є важливою складовою психологічної практики. Окрім цього, групові сесії сприяли розвитку соціальної емпатії, оскільки студенти активно співпереживали одне одному через обговорення робіт і емоційних переживань. Результати також свідчили про позитивний вплив арт-терапії на здатність студентів справлятися з емоційним стресом і складними ситуаціями, що є важливим для їхньої майбутньої професійної діяльності. Результати дослідження показали, що арт-терапія сприяє розвитку емпатії у майбутніх психологів, оскільки стимулює покращення емоційної чутливості та здатності розуміти емоційні стани інших людей. Використання творчих технік, таких як малювання, ліплення та танцювально-рухова терапія, допомагало студентам глибше рефлексувати свої емоції та вдосконалювати навички активного слухання та співпереживання. Після проходження арт-терапевтичних сесій у студентів спостерігалось покращення в емоційній саморефлексії, соціальній емпатії та готовності до професійної взаємодії з клієнтами. Практичне значення даної роботи полягає в тому, що її результати можуть бути використані викладачами психологічних дисциплін, практикуючими психологами та арт-терапевтами для вдосконалення методик розвитку емпатії у студентів і фахівців, що працюють у сфері міжособистісного консультування

Ключові слова: творче самовираження; рефлексія; креативні техніки; соціальна взаємодія; естетичне сприйняття



Educational and methodological approaches to teaching disciplines of the cultural cycle in National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

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Abstract. The study explored the experience of the Department of Cultural Studies of the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine in teaching disciplines of the cultural cycle. The relevance of this study was primarily conditioned by the need to consider changes in educational programmes for training specialists. The purpose of this study was to develop methods that allow obtaining the most effective results of cultural education and socialisation of students. The disciplines taught by the Department of Cultural Studies are divided into two areas: "History and Theory of Culture" (which includes "Ethnocultural Studies", "Ukrainian and Foreign Culture") and "Artistic Creativity" (includes the disciplines "Folk Song Culture", "Folk Dance Culture", "Choreographic Academic Culture", "Theatre Arts and Acting Culture", "Ukrainian Pop Culture", "Solo Singing Culture", "Ballroom Dance Culture", etc.). The disciplines of the first area are conventional/academic disciplines of the cultural cycle, the second is the objectification of learning outcomes directly in classes in art studios and creative teams. The study employed a competency-based approach, philosophical and

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socio-cultural analysis, the method of interdisciplinary synthesis, and the biographical method. It was noted that the use of the department's capabilities contributes to a better immersion of students in the educational process, and, consequently, their greater interest in the disciplines they study. The combination of students' academic work in lectures and seminars with work in creative teams and circles allows improving the assimilation of educational material, deepens interest in Ukrainian ethnic culture, develops creativity, and forms practical skills for translating folk traditions into their activities. This is also facilitated by masterclasses, meetings with artists, and visits to museums. The synthesis of theoretical and activity-based approaches to learning ensures that the concrete needs of students are met: the first type of learning is to receive information as a reflection of reality; the second type is to influence reality through its transformation in the creative process. The findings of this study can be used in teaching disciplines of the cultural cycle in higher education institutions of I-II and III-IV accreditation levels, development of programmes and syllabi of disciplines of the cultural cycle

Keywords: culture education; socialisation; artistic activity; creative work; subject activity; cultural disciplines

Introduction

The relevance of this study was primarily conditioned by the fact that in recent years, fewer hours have been allocated to the disciplines of the cultural cycle in the university curricula, their list has been reduced, and their status has changed from compulsory to elective. This is primarily caused by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 1392 "On the Recognition of the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 642 of 09.07.2009 as Invalid" (Decree, 2014). According to this Order, the list of humanities disciplines that were compulsory for study in higher education institutions was cancelled, including the History of Ukrainian Culture (Decree, 2009). This state of affairs requires new approaches to teaching to ensure its proper level. Furthermore, it is necessary to consider the social challenges facing Ukraine, including in the educational sphere.

Notably, the purpose of the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine (NULES), apart from providing professional knowledge and skills, engaging students in research, is to educate a morally integral personality, a patriot. That is why the vast majority of bachelor's degree programmes at the univer-

sity include Ethnocultural Studies as an elective. Furthermore, among the list of general competencies in the training of specialists in all specialties, the first place is occupied by the fact that students will acquire "the ability to exercise their rights and responsibilities as a member of society, to understand the values of civil (free democratic) society and the need for its sustainable development, the rule of law, human and civil rights and freedoms in Ukraine" and "the ability to preserve and enhance moral, cultural, scientific values and achievements of society based on an understanding of the history and patterns of development of the society. The achievement of these objectives is the responsibility of teachers of cultural studies disciplines.

The relevance of issues related to the cultural sphere of education is also evidenced by the considerable amount of scientific and methodological literature on this topic. T. Byrkovych *et al.* (2021) studied the specific features of teaching professional skills to students in higher education institutions of artistic profile in the context of reform, which directly affects the future of art education in Ukraine. S. Vytkalov (2021) explored the issues of cultural education and the experience

of educational institutions in this area. Modern approaches to teaching cultural studies are presented in the textbook “Methods of teaching cultural studies” (Lytyvnenko, 2020). B. Green & A. Hickey (2022) discussed the general issues of interaction between cultural studies, education, and pedagogy, specifically aspects of non-formal education.

T. Vorova (2024) emphasised the significance of cultural studies in modern conditions, the need for cultural knowledge for personal development. O. Zelenska (2022) noted that “the role of cultural studies in the system of humanitarian knowledge is growing, which is explained by its aesthetic and anthropological features. Culturology has immense potential to influence people. It is the basis for the humanisation of modern education”. R. Davies & J. Trowsdale (2021) emphasised the significant bias in modern education towards technocratisation and the value of artistic disciplines, specifically in school education, but this is also relevant for higher education, adaptation of yesterday’s students to university life, communication skills, and creativity development.

L. Dovga & M. Lihus (2023) considered the issue of the content of the discipline “History of Ukrainian Culture”. The researchers criticised the standard content of the discipline, which is dominated by the presentation of artistic culture, and instead propose to “integrate historical and philosophical discourse into the study of the history of national culture”. However, the content of disciplines depends on many factors, including the status of the discipline – whether it is part of professional training, normative or elective, the number of credits provided by the curriculum, and, accordingly, should be different, for instance, for future cultural studies students, students of artistic specialities, and technical or agrobiological specialities. In other words, non-artistic institutions have their specifics, and researchers have also considered the issue of general cultural aspects of student training in such universities.

Considering the problems of teaching humanities disciplines in agricultural educational institutions, N. Oliinyk (2020) identified the

following: 1) inconsistency between the need for social and humanitarian training of students and the amount of teaching hours provided for the study of humanities; 2) oversaturation of programmes and manuals with factual material, and then an emphasis on the transfer of knowledge, skills, abilities instead of comprehensive and well-rounded personal development; 3) insufficient implementation of a personality-oriented approach to teaching; 4) conventional nature of the educational process due to conventional teacher training, lack of innovative teaching approaches, lack of awareness of the humanities. The purpose of the current study was to analyse methodological approaches that allow achieving the most effective outcomes in the areas of cultural development and socialisation of students.

Materials and Methods

Starting to study the disciplines of the cultural cycle, students have an idea of certain concepts and categories from their personal experience. To consider individual experiences and exchange already formed positions, the study employed a competence-based approach. At the first practical lesson, students were asked to consider problematic issues, analyse cultural phenomena, etc. For instance, students had to analyse the effects of global social and cultural processes on the development of Ukraine’s material and spiritual culture; point out current problems of national and ethnic relations in the world. When considering cultural phenomena, students had to analyse how they emerged, how they changed, and what their symbolic meaning was. The competency-based approach helped to identify how students think about the topic, how they understand the depth of the problem, what sources they use, and what conclusions they come to. During such work, teachers gained insight into the level of students’ awareness of the topic; their willingness to engage in discussion and defend their personal opinions; and their value systems. Students also learnt about the worldview of their teachers and each other. In further practice, this initial

knowledge about students helped teachers to work more effectively, adjusting the complexity of tasks for each student within the group. The application of the competency-based approach facilitated the interaction between the teacher and students, as classes became interesting due to the individual approach and useful because the teacher understood which competences were vulnerable or strong.

Changes in the cultural space are continuous, and the task of teachers is “not only to provide students with new knowledge, but also to expand and correct the basic knowledge according to the latest scientific views” (Puzyrenko, 2007). For this, the study was conducted using philosophical and socio-cultural analyses and the method of interdisciplinary synthesis. The philosophical analysis consisted of studying fundamental questions of being, knowledge, values, ethics, and aesthetics through cultural phenomena. The sociocultural analysis covered the study of the influence of culture on social processes and, vice versa, the influence of social factors on culture. The interdisciplinary synthesis included the integration of knowledge from various disciplines (history, philosophy, art history, sociology, etc.) for a comprehensive understanding of cultural phenomena.

There are topics in the curricula of the disciplines that required the use of the biographical research method. Specifically, this refers to the topics of Ukrainian music and theatre, Ukrainian architecture and fine arts, and Ukrainian literature. It is known that the study of the biography of artists and the socio-cultural and political contexts that influenced the development of their worldview is no less important than the styles, genres, and forms of the works themselves. In teaching the disciplines, students received both theoretical knowledge and practical skills, which required the use of an activity-based approach in the present study. This approach involved an emphasis on the active participation of students in the learning process through practical activities. The methodology of practical processing of theoretical material was borrowed after listening to

Professor Yaroslav Hrytsak’s course “Selected Issues in European History” on the Prometheus online platform (Hrytsak, 2024). The use of all these methods in combination enabled students to gain a deeper understanding of cultural phenomena, develop analytical and practical skills, and critically comprehend information.

Results and Discussion

It is known that the purpose of culture is revealed in several ways: on the one hand, it lies in the social space – to meet the needs of people, which it itself forms; on the other hand, it is the objectification of human life experience and its transmission from generation to generation. Culture shapes the human qualities of each individual, literally humanising them. O. Pavlova (2017) analysed the cultural practices of the university and their historical dynamics, identifying the specific features of the development of the university as the unity and opposition of cultural practices of the discipline and discourse. According to L. Kravchenko & M. Stepanenko (2015), the transition to a market economy requires the development of a strong level of general, aesthetic, and communicative culture in the individual. This necessitates cultural education for modern society, and the authors of the present study agree with the researchers on this matter. Y. Puzyrenko (2010) discussed the specific features of teaching cultural studies.

The task of teachers, along with the development of the intellectual potential of young people, is to nurture spirituality, which underlies value consciousness – moral, social, aesthetic, artistic. Among the effective ways to fulfil this purpose is the involvement of students in creative work and artistic activity. Artistic activity is not just the mastery of certain material means – line, colour, plastic object, sound, word. It is a distinct way of comprehending the world that lies in the sphere of consciousness, inherent only to humans. Through imaginative thinking, creative imagination, and emotional expression, students learn theoretical material better. Researchers of

aesthetic space note that visual, auditory, audiovisual arts, performing arts, and practices such as design and fashion are of great interest in society (Tormakhova, 2021).

When teaching disciplines of the cultural cycle in the training of specialists in all areas at NULES, teachers factor in the need of students for a variety of cultural experiences and practices. Specifically, along with conventional approaches to the educational process – lectures, seminars and workshops, independent work – they encourage students to engage in creative practice. This includes both artistic creativity and scientific and research practice with elements of a creative approach. The combination of the two types of work – theoretical learning and practical work – can be illustrated by the following example. When mastering the disciplines of the cultural cycle, students study the topic “Spiritual Culture of the Ukrainian People” (Ethnocultural Studies course), “Myth Consciousness as a Type of Social Consciousness” (Cultural Studies course), “Mythological Beliefs of Ukrainians” (History of Ukrainian Culture course). After listening to the lecture materials, students must pass the theoretical part – prepare reports and answer test questions. The next stage of learning is the practical study of the topic. One of the tasks is for students to monitor social media for historical, cultural, social, and political myths about Ukraine and Ukrainians, or other nations and ethnic groups. Students work in the familiar environment of social media, but they must perceive the content differently: not for entertainment purposes, but for research purposes. This task requires a systematic approach and critical thinking skills.

Another option for practical study of theoretical material is writing a paper. Students have to choose a myth that they have encountered in their personal life experience and analyse it. In completing the assignment, students can use literary works, films, etc. The choice of myth should be substantiated, and the briefly written assignment should demonstrate the performer’s personal view of the topic. Students should come

to an independent conclusion about the prevalence of myths in the modern information space and their types. This is in line with the reformative approach to teaching the discipline, the effectiveness of which is described by L. Dovga & M. Lihus (2023).

As noted above, the NULES of Ukraine includes the discipline “Ethnocultural Studies” in the list of university elective courses, which is taught to bachelor students. The curriculum of the discipline “Ethnocultural Studies” consists of three modules: basic concepts of ethnocultural studies; Ukrainian folk material and spiritual culture; types and genres of modern Ukrainian culture. The programme of the discipline includes the study of the specific features of the Ukrainian ethnos in the context of world ethnoculture, the development of a sense of ethnic identity, pride in belonging to the Ukrainian nation, and the instilling of a profound interest in the spiritual treasury of the Ukrainian people. The objectives include raising students’ ethnic awareness and preparing them for future work in a multicultural environment; promoting the development of knowledge and competencies based on the fundamentals of cultural studies; and understanding Ukraine’s place and role in world culture.

Therefore, apart from conventional lectures and practical classes, the Department of Cultural Studies holds classes in various areas of creative activity. Students are involved in the choral and ballet groups of the Stanislav Semenovskiy Kolos folk song and dance ensemble, the Berezil folk student theatre, the Octava folk women’s vocal ensemble folk men’s vocal ensemble “Amero”, folk art studio “Sim Skhodynok”, pop performance studio “Solospiv”, folk studio of pop, jazz, and academic performance, folk art studio “Holosiivska Palitra”, etc. During the classes, students learn performing skills under the guidance of experienced practitioners. Furthermore, they get acquainted with styles, trends of music, and theatre genres directly in performing them. Teachers of academic disciplines such as cultural studies, aesthetics, and family and household culture note a

greater level of knowledge and interest in learning among students who combine theoretical and practical approaches in the learning process. The explanation for this is seen not only in the field of intellectual effort, but, not least, in the actualisation of cognitive abilities. In practice, students are aware of what they are doing through goal setting, designing what they want, choosing the means necessary to complete a task, and achieving a goal.

Classes at the clubs “Cinema as an Art Form”, “Decorative Floristry”, “Art of Serving”, and the “Holosiivska Palitra” folk art studio are also synchronised with the students’ main activity, which is studying academic subjects. Although the name of these clubs refers more to the artistic and aesthetic direction, their work is also focused on the scientific understanding of artistic works. The purpose of the clubs is to learn about the history of cinema and fine arts, to teach the skills of a thoughtful viewer, and to promote personal development. Learning about cinema and visual arts requires a synthetic approach. The teachers leading the circles use methods of philosophical, historical, psychological, aesthetic, ethical, and other analyses. Therewith, classes in the clubs are “accompanied” by lectures and practical and seminar classes. The club leaders are also teachers of academic disciplines, and therefore they are well-versed in the curriculum of the courses. According to the lecture content of a particular discipline, they offer discussion topics and practical assignments to the participants of the clubs.

At the first lecture in Ethnocultural Studies, students learn the concepts of ethnicity, culture, and civilisation. Accordingly, one of the classes of the “Cinema as an Art Form” club is devoted to the analysis of films, both fiction and documentary (chosen by the student from a list suggested by the teacher), which reveal the essence of these concepts. Specifically, the list of films includes a reference to the “Baraka” documentary. Viewers get to know unique cultures; balance between the present future and the present past; are transported from the chaos of megacities to

the orderly world of the Amazonian jungle; learn about the ambiguity of the perception of the category of “time”; and discover the richness of beliefs and religions. Furthermore, the film vividly illustrates the problem of human consumerism towards the environment.

For a better understanding of the topic “Spiritual Culture of Ukrainians”, the participants of the circle are given the task of analysing the film “Earth” by O. Dovzhenko. The film’s visuals are full of symbolism, which requires an awareness of traditional culture, beliefs, and customs of the Ukrainian peasantry. Awareness of the mythological worldview helps to understand the richness of the meanings embedded by the director. While academic cultural studies courses consider the issues of mythological worldview mainly in historical retrospect, the work plan of the Cinema as an Art Form class allows for greater temporal and semantic variability. Thus, by studying the works of the film industry, students can observe the creation of the latest mythology. For instance, the topic “Ukrainian Ethnic Culture” is accompanied by watching films full of ethnographic colour, such as “Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors”.

According to the biographical method, the students are given the task of identifying the moments in their lives that were significant for the formation of the artists (writer and director). This task takes them beyond cinema and into the realm of fiction and historical literature. Here, the authors of this study agree with A. Pavlenko (2020) that as a cross-cutting method of the humanities, the biographical method is a valuable methodological tool for “humanising” scientific knowledge in the transition to a modern humanistic educational paradigm, a means of implementing the principle of humanisation and humanisation of education. The biographical method in pedagogy has great potential in the field of training, upbringing, and education of the individual and unique opportunities for its development.

The fuller the disclosure of all the nuances of a film, the more aspects – historical, political, cultural, religious, ethical – the students can cover.

Personal preparation and a willingness to learn new things are essential. During the discussions, the participants become their own reviewers and judges: they become aware of their personal knowledge – better or worse – on a particular issue. This encourages them to search for information and become more knowledgeable. In the clubs “Cinema as an Art Form”, “Decorative Floristry”, and “Holosiivska Palitra” art studio classes, students study artworks, discuss and analyse their thoughts to make them actualised. Engaging in the creative process gives them a depth of experience, and therefore they develop an understanding of culture, not just its consumption.

When drafting a thematic plan for clubs and studios, the topics of classes can be correlated with significant dates, holidays, and events. To diversify the classes and meet the creative needs of the participants, they are offered various forms of work – discussions, presentations, essays, and the creation of alternative scenarios or possible endings. A combination of theoretical and practical forms of education (choreography, vocal, theatre, etc.) helps to consolidate the material and promote active creative development. Students are particularly interested in topics related to Ukrainian folk art. This includes traditional life, folk decorative, and applied arts and crafts, as

well as oral folk art and Ukrainian rituals. Various workshops (the “Decorative Floristry” club, the “Holosiivska Palitra” folk art studio, the folk song and dance ensemble, etc.) are very useful here, as they resonate with students, as they not only receive information but also actively contribute to the preservation of folk traditions through creative activities. For instance, no one is indifferent to the opportunity to paint an Easter egg, make a motanka doll or cut out a vytynanka. And having learnt how to do it themselves, they can pass this knowledge on to their families, and thus the tradition lives on and is passed down from generation to generation.

Considering the relatively small number of classroom hours provided for the discipline of Ethnocultural Studies, teachers pay special attention to planning students’ independent work, supplementing their academic work with various forms of extracurricular activities. And the specifics of the “Ethnocultural Studies” discipline allows this to be effectively implemented, specifically, through the organisation of excursions, meetings with interesting people, competitions, etc. For instance, according to the syllabus, when studying certain topics, students are expected to visit museums in Kyiv (Table 1). The table also contains a list of museums that are optional.

Table 1. Extract from the syllabus of the “Ethnocultural Studies” discipline

Subject No.	Subject name	Museums recommended for visiting according to the syllabus	Museums offered for optional visits (elective visits)
1	Culture and ethnicity. Historical and regional characteristics of culture.	Bohdan and Varvara Khanenko National Museum of Art	Archaeological Museum of the IA NAS of Ukraine
2	Ukrainian ethnic culture	National Museum of History of Ukraine	Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra National Reserve
3	Material culture of Ukrainians	National Museum of Decorative Arts of Ukraine	National Museum of Folk Architecture and Life of Ukraine
4	Spiritual culture of Ukrainians	National Centre of Folk Culture ‘Ivan Honchar Museum’	National Conservation Area ‘St Sophia of Kyiv’
5	Ukrainian musical and theatrical art	Museum of Theatre, Music and Cinema of Ukraine	Museum of prominent figures of Ukrainian culture Lesya Ukrainka, Mykola Lysenko, Panas Saksaganskii, Mykhailo Starytskyi
6	Ukrainian architecture and fine arts	National Art Museum	National Museum of Taras Shevchenko

Table 1. Continued

Subject No.	Subject name	Museums recommended for visiting according to the syllabus	Museums offered for optional visits (elective visits)
7	Ukrainian literature	National Museum of Literature of Ukraine	Kyiv Literary and Memorial Museum of Maksym Rylsky/ Museum of Books and Printing of Ukraine

Source: developed by the authors of this study based on the syllabus of the “Ethnocultural Studies” discipline in NULES of Ukraine

Before visiting museums, students receive a list of questions and practical tasks, and in class they make reports and presentations based on the results of their visits. This allows them to put theoretical knowledge into practice and contributes to better learning. Furthermore, the teachers of the Department of Cultural Studies practice organising creative meetings with figures of Ukrainian history and culture. Thus, since the department was founded, Ivan Drach, Pavlo Movchan, Mykola Som, Viktor Baranov, Leonid Horlach, Levko Lukianenko, Volodymyr Talashko, Raisa Nedashkivska, and others have been guests of the students. Moreover, the professor of the department is People’s Artist of Ukraine Vadym Kryshchenko, who in his creative workshop introduces students not only to his personal creative work, but also invites performers of his works – People’s Artist of Ukraine, Hero of Ukraine Anatolii Palamarenko, People’s Artists of Ukraine Oksana Bilozir, Ivo Bobul, Oleksandr Vasylenko, Alla Popova, Nadiia Shestak, Oleksandr Vasylenko, etc. All this contributes not only to the development of students’ communication skills, but also to the development of students’ personality, which can be considered in a broader sense, when a person can make a conscious choice that forms the paradigm not only of interpersonal communication, but also influences the development of dialogue in the communicative space of society, determines the guidelines of communicative culture (Vakulyk, 2024).

Another example is the teaching of the “Ethics and Culture of Nutrition” discipline, where students acquire knowledge about the basics of ethics and culture of nutrition, investigate

the place and significance of nutrition and food culture in the global and national cultural and historical process, hospitality etiquette, and the culture of table setting and decoration. In practical classes, they learn simple techniques of table setting, napkin folding, decorating, carving, and cooking Ukrainian specialities, and in the “Art of Serving” club, they learn more complex techniques, have room for experimentation, and gain specialised knowledge.

Various festivals and competitions are special forms of educational work. These include the International Festival “Holosiivska Vesna”, which includes concerts in various genres – academic, pop, folk; “Song Battles”, where students are encouraged to learn and sing Ukrainian folk and contemporary songs; exhibitions of fine, decorative, and applied arts and photography “NULES is our home”, “Holosiivskyi Bestiary”. Such events allow students to update the knowledge and skills acquired while studying the disciplines “Ethics and Aesthetics”, “Ethnocultural Studies”, as well as the disciplines of the artistic cycle – “Folk Song Culture”, “Folk Dance Culture”, “Choreographic Academic Culture”, “Theatre Arts and Acting Culture”, “Ukrainian Pop Culture”, “Solo Singing Culture”, “Ballroom Dance Culture”, etc. Notably, such activities integrate NULES of Ukraine into the national cultural space, as the artistic events organised by the Department of Cultural Studies are open to the public. This contributes to the development and functioning of the cultural sphere of Ukraine, which may be of interest for further research in this area. According to M. Pashkevych *et al.* (2023), there is a lack of such works now. Thus, the synthesis of theoretical learning and

mastering practical skills in circles and creative studios according to the curricula of academic disciplines is proving to be effective.

Conclusions

The humanisation of the educational process contributes to the assimilation by students of a certain set of values and traditions, the continuity of which is the basis of any society, and the development of their personal identities on their basis. Despite the reduction in the number of hours allocated for the study of cultural studies, the quality of education is maintained through the involvement of students in the scientific and creative circles of the Department of Cultural Studies. The method of combining two types of work – theoretical learning and practical work – has proven to be an effective tool for achieving the primary objective of higher education. Through the involvement of students in the creative process, the need for knowledge is formed and a conscious attitude towards reality, themselves, and society is formed. Various types of creative activities release strong emotional feelings: the knowledge gained through sensory experience becomes more reliable than the knowledge gained rationally.

Among the courses that demonstrate their effectiveness in the learning process are “Ethno-cultural Studies”, “Myth Consciousness as a Type of Social Consciousness”, “History of Ukrainian

Culture”, and “Ethics and Culture of Nutrition”. During the classes, students not only listen to lectures, but also perform theoretical and practical tasks, which develops critical thinking, understanding of themselves and the world around them, and understanding of culture. Classes in the clubs “Cinema as an Art Form”, “Decorative Floristry”, and the “Holosiivska Palitra” art studio are also popular among students. Furthermore, the authors of the present study emphasise the significance of students visiting thematic museums and communicating with figures of Ukrainian history and culture, holding festivals and competitions.

The experience of the Department of Cultural Studies of the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine is promising for the development of a civic position of a future specialist and patriot of Ukraine and can become a basis for further research in the context of studying the interaction of formal and non-formal education, the impact of cultural and artistic practices on the development of students' creativity, their emotional state and academic achievements.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Навчально-методичні підходи до викладання дисциплін культурологічного циклу в НУБіП України

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Анотація. Стаття досліджувала досвід кафедри культурології Національного університету біоресурсів і природокористування України з викладання дисциплін культурологічного циклу. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена передусім необхідністю врахування змін в освітніх програмах підготовки фахівців. Метою роботи було напрацювання методик, що дають можливість отримати найефективніші результати культурації та соціалізації студентської молоді. Дисципліни, що забезпечує кафедра культурології, становлять два напрями: «Історія та теорія культури» (куди входять, зокрема, «Етнокультурологія», «Українська та зарубіжна культура») та «Художня творчість» (включає дисципліни «Народнопісенна культура», «Культура народного танцю», «Хореографічна академічна культура», «Театральне мистецтво і акторська культура», «Українська естрадна культура», «Культура сольного співу», «Культура бального танцю» та ін.). Дисципліни першого напрямку – це традиційні/академічні дисципліни культурологічного циклу, другого – це опредметнення результатів навчання безпосередньо на заняттях у мистецьких студіях і творчих колективах. У дослідженні застосовано компетентнісний підхід, філософський та соціокультурний аналіз, метод міждисциплінарного синтезу, біографічний метод. Зазначено, що використання можливостей кафедри сприяє кращому заглибленню студентів у навчальний процес, а, відтак, їх більшому інтересу до дисциплін, що вивчаються. Поєднання навчальної роботи студентів на лекційних та семінарських заняттях з роботою у творчих колективах та гуртках дає можливість покращити засвоєння навчального матеріалу, поглиблює інтерес до української етнокультури, розвиває креативність та формує практичні навички для трансляції народних традицій у власній діяльності. Цьому також сприяє проведення майстер-класів, зустрічей з творчими особистостями, відвідування музеїв. Синтез теоретичного та діяльнісного підходів до навчання забезпечує реалізацію конкретних потреб студентів: перший вид навчання – отримання інформації як відображення дійсності; другий вид – вплив на реальність через її перетворення у творчому процесі. Результати роботи можуть бути використані при викладанні дисциплін культурологічного циклу у вищих навчальних закладах I-II та III-IV рівнів акредитації, розробках програм та силабусів дисциплін культурологічного циклу

Ключові слова: культурація; соціалізація; художня діяльність; творча робота; предметна діяльність; культурологічні дисципліни



Formation of digital competence of future primary school teachers by using artificial intelligence

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Abstract. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of using artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to develop the digital competence of future primary school teachers through the development and implementation of training modules that include theoretical and practical classes. The research methods included the use of AI basics tests and project work, as well as statistical analysis of the results using the Student's t-test for paired samples. Initial and final tests were conducted among students who participated in the training modules and the control group without the modules. The implemented training modules included theoretical classes, practical exercises and project work. The results of the study showed a significant improvement in the knowledge of students in the main group after the implementation of the training modules. On average, test scores rose from 45 to 75 (out of 100), and average project scores rose from 60 to 85 (out of 100). Statistical analysis revealed significant improvements in knowledge and skills, with average gains being statistically significant ($t \approx 15.8$ for testing and $t \approx 10.96$ for projects). No significant changes were recorded in the control group. The analysis of the results of the pre- and post-tests showed that the participants who had completed the new modules showed significant improvement in all key aspects of digital competence. In particular, the level of knowledge about using digital tools and platforms for communication and collaboration increased by 30%, and skills in creating multimedia content and managing digital projects improved by 25%. The increase in knowledge of data security and information protection was 20%, indicating the effectiveness of the training modules in raising awareness of the importance of

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protecting personal information. In addition, it was found that the participants became more confident in solving technical problems, which indicates the practicality of the implemented technologies and their ability to improve self-learning and problem-solving skills. The findings confirmed the effectiveness of AI in developing digital competences in future primary school teachers, which opens up new opportunities for further development and improvement of curricula in this area

Keywords: digital technologies; teacher education; educational modules; statistical analysis; learning outcomes

Introduction

In an era of rapid technological progress, digital competence has become a key aspect of teachers' professional responsibility. It is important that future primary school teachers have the skills to use digital tools and resources that improve the quality of education and the efficiency of the learning process. One of the promising areas in this context is the introduction of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies into educational practice. This necessitates the development of innovative methods for transferring digital skills to future professionals through modern educational practices.

AI is already being used in many areas of human activity, such as education. Integrating AI technologies into education allows automating repetitive tasks and facilitates a personalized learning experience that meets the unique requirements of each student. With the help of AI, it is now possible to develop interactive educational resources, create intelligent systems for knowledge assessment, and create adaptive learning environments. For future primary school teachers, it is important to understand the principles of AI technologies and be able to use them effectively in their professional activities. Developing such skills requires a comprehensive approach that includes theoretical training. Teacher education should create the necessary conditions for the development of digital competence.

R. Bucea-Manea-Țoniș *et al.* (2022) conducted a study that showed the significant potential of AI to improve the educational environment in higher education institutions in Romania

and Serbia. It is emphasised that AI facilitates personalized learning and adaptation of teaching methods, which increases critical thinking and student autonomy. M.J. Sousa and Á. Rocha (2019) investigated the impact of digital learning on the development of skills required for the digital transformation of organisations. The development of digital competences is identified as a key factor in adapting to modern challenges and improving the efficiency of organisations. M. Ashok *et al.* (2022) developed an ethical framework for the introduction of AI and digital technologies in educational processes, focused on the preservation of ethical standards. The authors point out the need to comply with ethical standards to ensure a balanced approach to educational technologies. The use of learning analytics is defined as a tool to increase the motivation and efficiency of the educational process through individualised learning.

The training of future primary school teachers can be improved with the use of AI. The development of skills in data analysis, informed decision-making, and effective management of the educational process can be achieved with the help of intelligent educational systems, virtual assistants, and other AI tools. Future teachers can be prepared for the challenges of modern education by being confident in the digital world. One of the key aspects in developing digital competence is favourable conditions for experimentation and innovation. Future teachers should have the opportunity to learn AI technologies in practice through participation in various projects.

This approach promotes critical thinking, creative problem-solving, and readiness for continuous professional development.

L. Jiang and N. Yu (2024) developed and validated a model of teachers' digital competence and a self-assessment tool for secondary school teachers in China. The study highlights the importance of digital skills in modern education, which helps teachers to integrate technology more effectively into the learning process. K. Elliott *et al.* (2021) studied AI and corporate digital responsibility in the context of achieving digital equality. The paper highlights how AI can be used to address digital inequality and ensure fair access to technology in society.

The impact of information technology on modern education is one of the reasons for the relevance of the research topic. Digital competence has become an important part of the professional activity of teachers, especially those working with the youngest pupils. AI can be used to transform the learning process, improve the quality of education, and increase the efficiency of teachers. Modern students growing up in a digital environment require new approaches to learning. The need to integrate AI into educational practice requires relevant knowledge and skills, which poses new challenges for teachers. Developing the digital competence of future primary school teachers through the use of AI is not only an important aspect of their training, but also a strategic task for education in general. Integration of AI into the teacher training process contributes to the adaptability and innovation of the educational system. This allows future teachers to use technology and teach students critical thinking, creative problem-solving, and other skills required in the modern world. The research topic is relevant to global educational trends aimed at introducing innovative technologies into the educational process and training teachers to meet the challenges of the digital era. The aim of the study was to assess the effectiveness of AI technologies in the development of future primary school teachers' digital competence.

Literature Review

The topic of integrating AI technologies into the educational process is gaining popularity and is the subject of active research in many countries. Such technologies have the potential to change educational practice. There are different approaches to integrating AI into the educational process, from the development of adaptive learning systems to the integration of intelligent assistants to support students.

The study by Y. Zhao *et al.* (2021) examined how digital competence in higher education is developing through the introduction of new technologies. When curricula include elements of active use of digital tools and platforms, the effectiveness of integrating digital technologies into the learning process is significantly increased. The authors found that students who have access to modern digital resources and have acquired practical skills in their use demonstrate significant improvements in their digital competence. B. Wang *et al.* (2023) studied the assessment of users' competence in using AI by investigating the validity and reliability of the AI literacy scale. The results highlighted the effectiveness of the developed scale in assessing users' AI-related knowledge and skills, covering such aspects as fundamental conceptual understanding, technological knowledge, and ethical awareness.

M. Lucas *et al.* (2021) explored the relationship between in-service teachers' digital competence and the personal and contextual factors that influence this competence. Their findings highlighted the significant influence of personal factors, such as motivation for professional development and previous technological experience, as well as contextual elements, such as access to resources and support from educational institutions. Similarly, M. Lindfors *et al.* (2021) investigated the prerequisites for developing professional digital competence among teacher educators. The results highlighted the importance of adequate training, resources and institutional support for the development of teachers' professional digital competence.

In the study by F. Caena and C. Redecker (2019), the authors examine in detail the need to adapt competence frameworks for educators to meet the demands of the 21st century, emphasizing the European Digital Competence for Educators (DigCompEdu) as a systematic approach to meet the changing digital landscape and educational requirements. The study by T. Chiu *et al.* (2021) focused on the development and evaluation of an AI curriculum for pre-university education levels. Their findings highlighted the success of the programme in integrating basic AI concepts into the school curriculum, providing students with both theoretical knowledge and practical applications through various learning modules and project assignments.

A. Rahimi (2024) explored the multifaceted factors influencing EFL teachers' digital competence for 21st century skills development, emphasizing the importance of not only teachers' general digital competence but also personal and contextual determinants for effective digital skills' instruction. In addition, the study by M. Ally (2019) on the competences important for digital and online teachers highlighted the need for teachers to have technical knowledge along with the ability to integrate digital technologies into teaching, adapt to new learning formats and facilitate meaningful interaction with students in an online environment.

The research by M. Bearman and R. Ajjawi (2023) was devoted to outlining pedagogical approaches and strategies related to effective learning in an era characterized by the growing influence of AI. The researchers delved into the ways in which educators can adapt their pedagogical practices to embrace the expansion of AI in the learning paradigm and equip students with the necessary abilities to work with technologies that are often seen as inscrutable black boxes. The study's findings highlighted the importance of integrating AI into curricula in a way that not only includes the use of technology, but also promotes a comprehensive understanding of its multifaceted impact on various aspects of life and professional endeavours.

Research by R. Yilmaz and F. Yilmaz (2023) showed that the introduction of generative AI tools significantly improves students' computational thinking skills, boosts their confidence in programming abilities, and fuels their motivation to participate in programming education. The study found that students who use AI tools in their classes demonstrated better abilities in solving algorithmic thinking problems compared to their counterparts who studied without such tools.

S.Z. Salas-Pilco *et al.* (2022) investigated the integration of AI and learning analytics into a learning mode for future educators. The conclusions showed that this combination has significant potential to improve the efficiency of the educational process, provide a more adaptive and personalized approach to learning, and increase the overall level of teacher education. L. Chen *et al.* (2020) conducted a study on the role and implications of AI in education, covering research on current applications including intelligent tutoring systems, automated assessment, personalized learning, and decision support in learning environments. The study highlighted the significant potential of AI in improving learning efficiency, adapting learning materials to individual student requirements, and facilitating a more interactive and immersive learning environment.

In another research attempt, P. Lameris and S. Arnab (2021) delved into the role of AI in education and its potential to empower educators. The authors provided an overview of modern approaches to the implementation of AI in the educational environment and explained how these technologies can strengthen educators in their professional skills. The research covered various aspects of AI's impact on education, including optimisation of administrative tasks, personalization of learning experience, support for teachers in creating educational materials, and implementation of adaptive teaching methodologies. At the same time, researchers A. Ismail and R. Hassan (2019) have launched a study of the technical skills required to skilfully perceive the challenges and opportunities presented by the

Fourth Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0). The study emphasises that the successful integration of new technologies into production and business processes requires a concerted focus on developing technical skills in programming, data analysis and digital systems' management, as well as promoting general digital literacy.

T. Chiu & C. Chai (2020) delved into the creation of sustainable AI curricula based on the principles of self-determination theory. Studies have shown that learning approaches that satisfy students' desire for independence and promote their intrinsic motivation yield better results in the long run. The authors also emphasised the importance of creating an educational environment that encourages critical thinking, creativity, and an interdisciplinary approach to AI learning. The results of the study conducted by C. Chih-Ming & L. Ying-You (2020) demonstrated that a model for predicting competence in computer-mediated communication based on learning behaviour characteristics is a reliable tool for assessing and improving students' abilities in this area. It was found that the model provides a more accurate assessment and prediction of students' abilities in this area based on their learning activities and behavioural tendencies.

N. Upadhyay *et al.* (2022) studied the models of AI adoption and digital entrepreneurship. The researchers focused on explaining the theoretical basis of how and why entrepreneurs and organisations implement AI in their business operations. The study results showed that the successful integration of AI into digital entrepreneurship depends on the understanding of its potential benefits and ability to increase the efficiency of business operations. In particular, it has become clear that organisations and entrepreneurs that understand the benefits of integrating AI into their operations are more likely to successfully implement the technology and gain a competitive advantage.

However, the impact of different cultural and organizational settings on the adoption and incorporation of AI into business operations has not

been thoroughly researched. It is crucial to understand how cultural characteristics and organizational environments can affect the readiness and effectiveness of AI technology adoption. It also requires a thorough examination of how different levels of infrastructure and technological support in different regions can affect the outcomes of AI integration. These issues require additional research to gain a more complete understanding of the factors that contribute to the success of AI adoption in different contexts and conditions.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted from September 2023 to June 2024. To achieve the aim and objectives of the study, the sample included students of pedagogical specialities preparing to become primary school teachers. The sample consisted of two groups: the main and control groups. The main group included 50-70 students of 2-3 years of pedagogical specialities from the Mykhailo Drachomanov Ukrainian State University (Kyiv), randomly selected to ensure representativeness. The control group consisted of the same number of students of similar specialities and courses who did not participate in the AI training modules.

A set of methods was used, including quantitative and qualitative approaches, including specialized tests, questionnaires and statistical methods. At the initial stage, questionnaires, and tests were conducted to determine the initial level of digital competence of the participants. The following tools were used:

1. Digital competence questionnaire based on the DigComp model: this questionnaire assesses digital skills and knowledge in line with the European Digital Competence Framework. It includes questions on the ability to use digital tools, problem-solving with technology and personal data protection (Table 1).

2. AI fundamentals test: assessing the level of students' knowledge of AI concepts and applications in the educational process. The test consisted of sample questions, matching tasks, and short descriptions (Table 2).

Table 1. Digital competence questionnaire based on the DigComp model

Digital competence	Question	Answers
Information literacy	How would you rate your ability to effectively find, verify and select relevant information on the Internet?	a) very good; b) good; c) satisfactory; d) bad; e) very poor.
	What tools do you usually use to check the reliability of information sources?	a) search engines; b) actually verified resources; c) social media; d) other (please specify).
Communication and cooperation	How often do you use online communication platforms (e.g. email, instant messengers, video conferencing) for work or study?	a) daily; b) weekly; c) monthly; d) rarely; e) never.
	What tools do you use to collaborate on documents in real time?	a) Google Docs; b) Microsoft Office 365; c) other (please specify).
Creating digital content	What is your skill level in creating and editing text documents (e.g. Word, Google Docs)?	a) very high; b) high; c) medium; d) low; e) very low.
	What software or tools do you use to create multimedia content (e.g. graphics, video)?	a) Adobe Photoshop/Illustrator; b) Canva; c) iMovie/Windows Movie Maker; d) other (please specify).
Safety and security	What is your level of knowledge about the importance of using strong passwords and two-factor authentication to protect personal data?	a) very high; b) high; c) medium; d) low; e) very low.
	How often do you scan your devices for malware or viruses?	a) regularly; b) sometimes; c) rarely; d) never.
Problem-solving	How would you rate your skills in solving technical problems that arise when using digital technologies (e.g. computer crashes, problems with internet connection)?	a) very good; b) good; c) satisfactory; d) bad; e) very poor.
	What resources or methods do you use to learn independently and solve technical problems?	a) online courses and video tutorials; b) forums and communities; c) reference books and manuals; d) other (please specify).

Source: compiled by the authors

Table 2. Test on the basics of artificial intelligence

Question	Answers
What is artificial intelligence (AI)?	a) technology for creating computer games; b) a system that simulates human cognitive functions; c) database management software; d) operating system for mobile devices.
Which of the following algorithms is an example of machine learning?	a) Naive Bayes classification; b) data encryption; c) editing the text; d) energy management.

Table 2. Continued

Question	Answers
What is a neural network in the context of artificial intelligence?	a) a computer program for creating graphs; b) a model that mimics the way the human brain processes information; c) a database for storing customer information; d) a module for video processing.
Which of the following is an example of a machine learning problem?	a) sorting emails into categories; b) correcting spelling mistakes in the text; c) face recognition in photographs; d) software updates.
Which of the following terms refers to unsupervised learning methods?	a) linear regression; b) clustering; c) logistic regression; d) decision tree.
What is "deep learning"?	a) a subset of machine learning that uses multi-layer neural networks; b) equipment for storing large amounts of data; c) methods for optimizing search algorithms; d) a method for verifying data integrity.
Which of the following approaches is an example of a reinforcement learning algorithm?	a) a chess game where the computer learns based on the results of the game; b) creating a shopping list based on previous purchases; c) text processing to remove duplicates; d) sorting products into categories in a supermarket.
Which of the following tasks is not typical for artificial intelligence systems?	a) text generation; b) weather forecasting; c) assessment of image quality; d) repair of physical equipment.
What is "transferable learning"?	a) a method that uses knowledge gained from one task to improve results in another, similar task; b) techniques for reducing the size of data; c) the process of changing the learning algorithm; d) a method for optimizing processing resources.
What data is usually used to train artificial intelligence models?	a) only numerical data; b) text data; c) a variety of data, including text, images and numerical indicators; d) data from only one area of expertise.

Source: compiled by the authors

3. The main group of students completed training modules developed using AI technologies (Table 3). These modules included: theoretical classes – lectures and seminars on topics related to the use of AI in the educational

process; practical exercises – working with intelligent learning systems (e.g., adaptive learning platforms) and virtual assistants. Modules for creating learning projects using AI tools have been introduced.

Table 3. Programme of training modules using artificial intelligence technologies for future primary school teachers

Module	Topics	Format	Duration
Module 1. Introduction to artificial intelligence	<p>Topic 1.1. Fundamentals of artificial intelligence: 1. Definition and history of AI. 2. AI classification: weak, strong, machine learning, deep learning. 3. Principles of AI algorithms.</p> <p>Topic 1.2. Application of AI in education: 1. Using AI to personalize learning. 2. AI in the creation of educational materials. 3. Advantages and limitations of using AI in the classroom. Formats: lectures, case discussions, reading articles.</p>	Lectures, case discussions, reading articles	2 weeks

Table 3. Continued

Module	Topics	Format	Duration
Module 2. AI tools for learning	<p>Topic 2.1. Tools for creating interactive learning materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review popular content creation tools and platforms (e.g., Canva, Edmodo). 2. Practical lesson on developing interactive tasks. <p>Topic 2.2: Virtual assistants and chatbots:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction to the concept of chatbots. 2. Developing simple chatbots for educational purposes. <p>Topic 2.3: Tools for data analysis:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The basics of working with data. 2. Using AI to analyse and visualize learning outcomes. 	Lectures, demonstrations, practical classes, work with real instruments	3 weeks
Module 3. Developing and implementing AI projects	<p>Topic 3.1. Development of educational projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stages of project development: planning, implementation, evaluation. 2. Selection and integration of AI for projects. <p>Topic 3.2. Practical work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create projects using AI tools. 2. Testing and demonstration of projects. <p>Topic 3.3: Project evaluation and improvement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate projects based on their effectiveness and impact on the learning process. 2. Making adjustments based on feedback. 	Practical classes, group work, presentations	3 weeks
Module 4. Ethics and security in the context of AI	<p>Topic 4.1: Ethical issues in the use of AI:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confidentiality and data protection issues. 2. Ethical aspects of AI application in education. <p>Topic 4.2. Safety when using digital tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recommendations for the protection of personal information. 2. Practical training on creating a safe digital environment. 	Lectures, case discussions, seminars	2 weeks
Module 5. Evaluation and feedback	<p>Topic 5.1. Assessment of learning effectiveness:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Methods of assessing knowledge and skills. 2. Conducting testing and surveys. <p>Topic 5.2. Analysis of results and correction of training:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analysis of test results and practical tasks. 2. Making adjustments to the training modules based on the data obtained. 	Testing, surveys, data analysis	2 weeks
Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Theoretical testing: 30% (Assessment of knowledge based on tests after each module). 2. Practical work: 40% (Assessment of the quality of projects and assignments). 3. Project work: 20% (Assessment of AI project implementation). 4. Feedback and participation: 10% (Assessment of participation in discussions and activity). 		

Source: compiled by the authors

Upon completion of the training modules, a final test and questionnaire were conducted:

1. Re-testing: tests on the same topics as at the initial stage to assess changes in students' knowledge and skills.

2. Learning experience evaluation questionnaire: assessed the experience of using AI, the effectiveness of training modules, and changes in the level of digital competence. The questionnaire included open and closed questions, as well as a Likert scale to assess attitudes towards AI technologies.

The following statistical methods were used to analyse the data:

1. Descriptive statistics: for analysing basic sample characteristics, such as means and standard deviations of test results.

2. Paired t-test: to compare test results before and after the implementation of training modules in the main group and between the main and control groups.

3. ANOVA (analysis of variance): To compare test and questionnaire results between different groups of students, as well as to determine

the impact of different training modules on the results.

Before the study began, all participants voluntarily gave informed consent. Students received detailed information about the study objectives, stages, potential risks and benefits in a clear and understandable manner. All procedures were conducted in accordance with the American Sociological Association's Code of Ethics (1997).

Results

The study focused on assessing the effectiveness of AI training modules in developing digital competence of future primary school teachers. To achieve this, a detailed analysis of the results was conducted using descriptive statistics and a paired t-test based on data from the DigComp Digital Competence Questionnaire and the AI Basics Test.

At the initial stage of the study, students' digital competence was assessed using the Digital Competence Questionnaire based on the DigComp model. The results before the introduction of the training modules showed that the average level of digital skills in the intervention group was 52.3, while in the control group, it was 51.8. These results indicate that both groups had similar levels of basic digital skills. The lowest values (minimum 40) in the intervention group and the control group (minimum 42) indicate the existence of students with insufficient knowledge, while the highest values (65 in the intervention group and 64 in the control group) indicate the presence of students with a high level of competence.

After implementing the AI training modules, the average value in the main group increased to 68.5, which is a statistically significant improvement. The results showed a decrease in variability (standard deviation decreased to 6.5), indicating a more homogeneous improvement among students. The minimum value increased to 55 and the maximum value reached 85, indicating a significant increase in skill levels at both lower and higher levels. In the control group, where AI training modules were not used, the average

value remained at 52, which indicates no significant changes. The minimum value remained at 44, and the maximum value was 66. This confirms that traditional training did not lead to significant improvements in digital skills.

A paired t-test was used to test the statistical significance of the changes in digital competence in the main group. The results showed a t-value of 15.32 with a p-value of 0.0001, indicating a significant improvement. This highlights that the introduction of AI training modules had a significant impact on improving students' digital skills. The paired t-test confirmed that these changes are statistically significant, which means that the integration of AI into the learning process has indeed contributed to the improvement of competencies.

The AI Basics Test was used to assess students' knowledge of AI before and after the training. Before the modules were implemented, the average score in the main group was 45 out of a maximum of 100 points, which indicates an initial level of knowledge. The standard deviation (10.5) indicates a dispersion of knowledge among students. After the implementation of the modules, the average score increased to 75 and the standard deviation decreased to 9, indicating a significant improvement and less variation in knowledge. This shows that students have become better versed in the AI topic. The correlation analysis showed a strong positive correlation between AI knowledge and overall digital competence. The correlation coefficient was 0.75, which indicates a close connection between the increase in AI knowledge and students' general digital skills. This supports the hypothesis that AI training not only improves knowledge in this area but also contributes to the overall improvement of digital competences.

Data analysis revealed that the overall average digital competence score was 64.3% ($\sigma = 10.7$). Using the Shapiro-Wilk test, the normality of the distribution of the results was checked, and it was found that the data followed a normal distribution ($p = 0.12$), which allowed to apply parametric methods for further calculations. It was

found that 40% of students showed a high level of digital competence, 45% had an average level, and 15% had a low level. The results are presented in Figure 1.

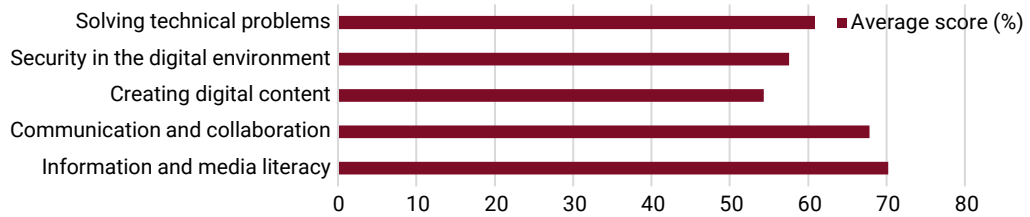


Figure 1. Average digital competence scores of future primary school teachers

Source: developed by the authors

The average score in the category of information and media literacy was 70.2% ($\sigma = 9.8$), which indicates a good level of skills in searching for, analysing and evaluating information. At the same time, 55% of respondents demonstrated a high level of ability to use digital sources of information. Answers to the questionnaire on assessing the reliability of sources revealed that 35% of students often face difficulties in verifying facts or sources of information. The correlation analysis between the frequency of using information resources and the results in this category showed a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.41$, $p < 0.01$), which indicates that regular use of resources contributes to better information literacy.

The results of the Communication and Collaboration category showed an average score of 67.8% ($\sigma = 8.5$). The survey revealed that 48% of respondents actively use digital tools for collaboration and communication, but only 30% have sufficient skills in organizing online teamwork. Statistical calculations using Fisher's test revealed that the difference in results between groups with different experience of using communication tools is significant ($F = 5.78$, $p < 0.05$). This confirms the assumption that practice is important for the development of this competence.

One of the lowest scores was recorded in the category "Creating digital content" – 54.3% ($\sigma = 12.1$). Only 25% of students were able to cope with the tasks related to the creation of complex

digital materials, such as interactive presentations, videos, and infographics. According to the survey, the majority of students (60%) experience difficulties when using software to create learning materials. Regression analysis showed a significant correlation between the frequency of use of creative tools and the results in this category ($\beta = 0.53$, $p < 0.01$), which indicates the need for more active implementation of these tools in the learning process.

The category "Security in the digital environment" demonstrated an average score of 57.6% ($\sigma = 11.5$), which indicates an insufficient level of awareness of the importance of cybersecurity. According to the survey, 45% of students admitted that they rarely change their account passwords, and 30% do not know how to protect their data from cyber threats. Statistical analysis using the Mann-Whitney U-test showed a significant difference between students who had taken cybersecurity courses and those who had not ($U = 512$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates the need to strengthen cybersecurity education.

The average score in the category "Solving technical problems" was 60.9% ($\sigma = 10.3$), indicating a generally satisfactory level of technical skills among students. However, 40% of respondents indicated that they were not confident in their ability to solve technical problems without assistance. The survey also showed that 35% of students contact technical support when they have problems with software or hardware.

An ANOVA test revealed a significant difference in the results between students with different experience of using digital technologies ($F = 6.84$, $p < 0.01$).

The analysis of the questionnaire data provided a deeper understanding of the level of digital competence. The questions covered five key areas and were assessed on a four-point scale, where 1 meant “not at all” and 4 meant “highly proficient”. The average score for all questions was 3.1 ($\sigma = 0.6$), which corresponds to an average level of digital competence. The questions related to the use of tools for teamwork and digital content creation received the lowest scores, with an average score of 2.8. The highest scores were obtained for the questions on information search and critical evaluation, with an average score of 3.5.

When analysing the responses, it was found that students who actively use digital technologies in their daily lives and studies demonstrated a higher level of digital competence. The correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation between the level of competence and the frequency of using digital tools ($r = 0.39$,

$p < 0.01$). The responses also showed that 25% of respondents consider their training in digital competencies to be insufficient for their future professional activities. Various statistical methods were used in data processing to ensure the accuracy of the results. The Tukey’s test was used to compare differences between separate groups of respondents, which allowed to determine that students with more experience in using digital tools demonstrate a significantly higher level of competence in all categories. Linear regression showed that experience in using digital technologies explained 42% of the variation in the results ($R^2 = 0.42$, $p < 0.01$). The overall analysis of the results suggests that although the majority of future primary school teachers have a satisfactory level of digital competencies, there is a need to improve the curriculum, especially in the areas of digital safety and digital content creation.

The results of the study show significant changes in students’ knowledge after the introduction of the new training modules. Comparison of the initial and final tests shows an improvement in all parameters (Fig. 2).

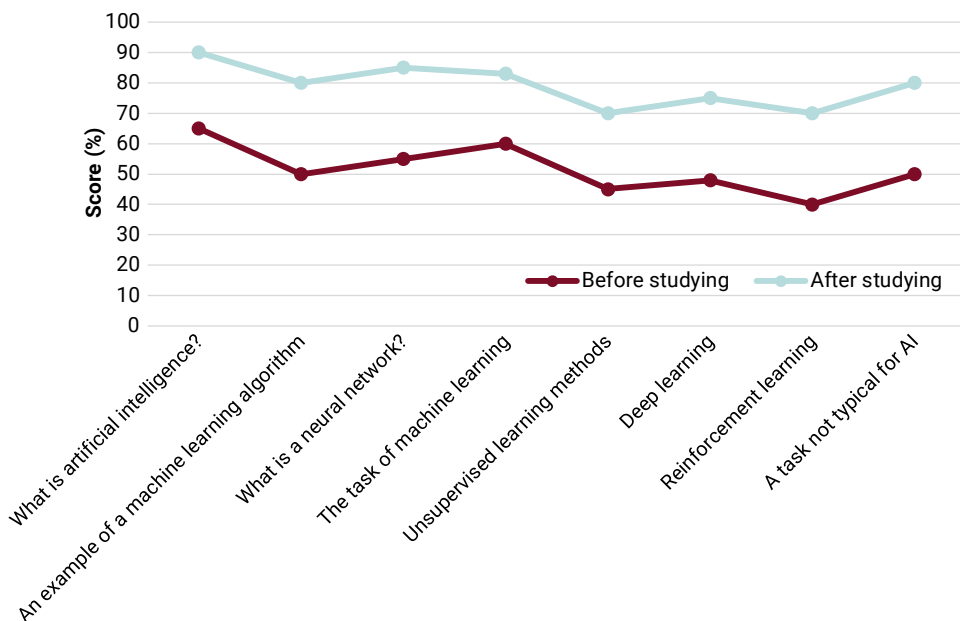


Figure 2. Comparison of initial and final test scores after AI module implementation

Source: developed by the authors

The average score of students on the initial test was 4.5 out of 10. This indicates basic knowledge, but at the same time shows a lack of understanding of important aspects of AI, which was expected at the beginning of the course. The first question on the basic definition of AI showed that 65% of students in the initial test were able to correctly identify AI as a system that mimics human cognitive functions. However, the remaining 35% chose the wrong options, indicating a lack of understanding of the basic concept. After completing the training modules, this indicator improved significantly, and 90% of students answered this question correctly during the final test. This indicates that the basic concepts have been effectively learned after the training.

The second question was about machine learning algorithms, and the initial results were lower, with only 50% of students being able to identify the Naive Bayes algorithm as an example of machine learning. The rest of the students confused this algorithm with data encryption and text editing tasks, which indicates a lack of clear understanding of the specifics of machine learning. However, after the training, the situation changed: 80% of the respondents gave the correct answer, which indicates a deeper understanding of the topic. The third question on neural networks showed that before the training, only 55% of students knew that a neural network is a model that mimics the way the human brain processes information. After the training modules, this figure rose to 85%, indicating a significant improvement in knowledge in this area. This indicates that students were able to better understand the principles of neural networks after the integration of the new training modules. The fourth question was aimed at assessing the understanding of practical applications of machine learning. Initially, 60% of students correctly answered that face recognition in photos is an example of machine learning. After the training modules, this figure increased to 83%, which demonstrates an improved understanding of real-world applications of AI technologies. This

shows that the modules were effective in teaching practical aspects.

In the question about unsupervised learning methods, only 45% of students knew that clustering was an example of such a method before the training. This indicates that students found it difficult to distinguish between supervised and unsupervised learning methods, which may be due to a lack of practical experience. After the training, this figure increased to 70%, indicating a significant improvement in knowledge. The training modules focused on clearly explaining the difference between different teaching methods, which allowed students to better absorb the material. The sixth question, on deep learning, showed that only 48% of students were able to correctly identify it as a subset of machine learning that uses multi-layer neural networks before the training. This indicates a general tendency towards a lack of understanding of deep learning as a complex topic. However, after the training modules, this figure increased to 75%, which demonstrates a significant improvement in students' knowledge in this area. The modules on deep learning included practical examples, which helped students to better understand the topic.

The question on reinforcement learning showed that before the course only 40% of students were able to correctly select an example related to learning from chess results. This indicates that reinforcement learning remained a difficult topic for students at the beginning of the course. However, after completing the modules, 70% of students were able to answer this question correctly, indicating that they have made significant progress in learning complex concepts. The question about tasks that are not typical for AI systems showed that only 50% of students knew that repairing physical equipment was not a typical task before the training. This indicates a general tendency to confuse the physical and digital aspects of these technologies. However, after the training, this figure improved to 80%, indicating a better understanding of the limits of AI in the real world. The question about

transferable learning revealed that before the training, only 42% of students correctly understood this concept as a method that uses knowledge gained from one task to improve results in another. This result indicates the difficulty of learning this concept without proper teaching. However, after the training, the score increased to 70%, demonstrating an improvement in understanding of this complex topic. The training modules effectively explained the application of transferable learning in practice, which contributed to the improved results. Finally, a question about the types of data used to train AI models showed that only 53% of students knew that a variety of data is used for this purpose, including text, images, and numerical values. This indicates basic knowledge but a lack of understanding of the importance of different types of data in training AI models. After the training, this figure improved to 80%, which indicates a better understanding of this topic after the implementation of the modules.

Thus, the results of the study indicate a significant improvement in the level of students' knowledge in all AI-related topics after completing the training modules. The average score on the final test was 7.8 out of 10 possible, which is a significant improvement compared to the initial results, where the average score was 4.5. This demonstrates that the implemented training modules have effectively contributed to the improvement of students' AI knowledge. All the categories covered by the test showed positive changes, which indicates the success of the learning process. In addition to the overall improvement, it is worth noting that particularly good results were achieved in questions related to basic AI concepts, machine learning algorithms, and practical applications. These topics were obviously more understandable to students after completing the respective modules. At the same time, the topics related to deep learning and unsupervised learning, although they showed improvement, remain somewhat more difficult for students, which may require additional attention in the learning process.

Thus, the results of the study confirm the effectiveness of the implemented training modules, which have significantly increased the level of students' knowledge in the field of AI.

The analysis of the DigComp Questionnaire results showed that the greatest improvement occurred in the following areas:

1. Information and media literacy: After the implementation of the modules, students improved their skills in finding, evaluating and using information. This is confirmed by the increase in average scores in the relevant categories of the questionnaire.

2. Communication and collaboration: a significant improvement in the use of digital tools for communication and collaboration showed that AI modules contributed to the development of effective communication skills in a virtual environment.

3. Digital content creation: high results in this category indicate that students have become more competent in creating digital content, which is critical for the modern learning process.

4. Security: Increased awareness of data protection and privacy highlights the importance of integrating security topics into AI training.

The study has shown that the introduction of AI training modules has a significant positive impact on the formation of digital competence in future primary school teachers. The results of descriptive statistics and paired t-tests, along with the data from the AI Fundamentals Test, confirm that its integration into the educational process has contributed to a significant increase in both digital skills and knowledge in this area. The correlation analysis also showed that AI knowledge is closely related to the improvement of general digital competencies. This confirms the effectiveness of using these technologies to develop key digital skills in modern educational settings.

The effectiveness of the developed training modules was assessed by comparing the results of the initial and final tests using the statistical method of the Student's paired samples test. The main purpose of this analysis is to

determine how significantly students' knowledge has improved after the implementation of the training modules.

In the main group, the initial AI basics test showed an average score of 45 out of 100. The standard deviation was 10.5, indicating some variation in students' knowledge. After the implementation of the training modules, the average score rose to 75 out of 100, and the standard deviation decreased to 9. This decrease in standard deviation indicates that the level of knowledge of students became more homogeneous after the training. The minimum score increased to 60 and the maximum score to 90, demonstrating an overall improvement in knowledge.

To determine whether these changes are statistically significant, the authors apply a paired-sample t-test. Calculating the standard error of the mean increase is critical to the Student's test. The standard deviation of the increment is close to the standard deviation of the initial test (10.5). This value is significantly higher than the critical t value for the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, which is approximately 2.045. Thus, the result is statistically significant, indicating a significant improvement in knowledge after the implementation of the training modules.

For the control group, the pre-test showed an average score of 46 out of 100, and the post-test showed an average score of 47 out of 100. The standard deviation remained almost unchanged (11 for the pre-test and 10.8 for the post-test). The absence of significant changes in the mean score indicates that the control group did not benefit significantly from the training modules, which confirms the effectiveness of the modules in the intervention group.

The authors conduct a similarly detailed analysis for project work. Before the introduction of the modules, the average score of the main group's projects was 60 out of 100, with a standard deviation of 12.5. After the implementation of the modules, the average score rose to 85 out of 100, and the standard deviation decreased to 8.7. This significant improvement in project quality

and reduction in variation is evidence of the successful implementation of the modules.

To assess the statistical significance of this improvement, the authors calculate the average increase: $85 - 60 = 25$. The calculation of the standard error of the average increase is similar to the previous test. For the purposes of this discussion, it is assumed that the standard deviation of the increase is approximately equal to the standard deviation of the initial projects (12.5). This value is also significantly higher than the critical t value, which confirms the statistical significance of the improvement in project quality. In the control group, the average score of projects before the implementation of the modules was 61 out of 100, and after – 62 out of 100. The change in the standard deviation (13 to 12.8) is also not significant, indicating that there was no improvement in the quality of projects without active implementation of the modules.

Thus, a detailed analysis of the results shows that the training modules have significantly improved the level of knowledge and practical skills of students in the intervention group, and these improvements are statistically significant. The absence of significant changes in the control group underlines the effectiveness of the developed training modules. Based on the results of the study, recommendations for educational institutions on the integration of AI technologies into the educational process may include the following aspects:

1. Integration of educational modules: it is recommended to develop and implement educational modules that include theoretical and practical classes using AI. The modules should be adapted to the specific needs of students and integrated into the curriculum, ensuring systematic and gradual mastery of new technologies.

2. Professional development of teachers: educational institutions should provide professional development for teachers to improve their skills in using AI technologies. This may include trainings, workshops, and seminars to help teachers effectively integrate new technologies into the learning process.

3. Evaluation of effectiveness: it is recommended to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented modules and technologies through the use of various assessment methods, such as tests, project work and student surveys. This will allow for timely adjustments to the curriculum and ensure that it meets modern educational requirements.

4. Technical support and resources: educational institutions should provide adequate technical support and resources for the effective use of AI technologies. This includes hardware upgrades, access to specialized software products and resources, and technical assistance to solve possible problems.

5. Innovative teaching methods: it is recommended to implement innovative teaching methods that use AI, such as adaptive learning, personalized recommendations, and automated assessment systems. This will help ensure more effective learning and support an individual approach to each student.

6. Cooperation with industry: educational institutions should establish cooperation with companies and organisations specializing in AI to obtain up-to-date information on the latest technologies and practical recommendations on their use in education.

7. Analysis and improvement: It is important to ensure that learning modules and technologies are continuously analysed and improved based on feedback from students and teachers. This will ensure that the curriculum is constantly updated and kept relevant in a rapidly changing technological environment.

The integration of AI technologies into the educational process is aimed at improving the quality of education and preparing students for modern challenges in professional activities, which is critical to ensure competitiveness and success in their future careers.

Discussion

The study found that the introduction of AI technology into the educational process has a

significant impact on the development of future primary school teachers' digital competences. Firstly, it was noted that the use of AI in educational modules contributes to a significant increase in the level of knowledge and skills of students in the areas of information literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, data security and protection, and technical problem-solving.

The study by I. Sanusi *et al.* (2022) analysed the importance of students' competences in the context of AI education. The authors of the study found that a high level of digital competencies, such as knowledge of algorithms, data processing, and analytics, has a positive impact on students' performance in AI education and their ability to effectively apply these technologies in practice. The study also found that the introduction of training modules using these technologies has a significant impact on the development of digital competences in future primary school teachers. The results showed a significant improvement in the participants' skills in information literacy, communication, digital content creation and data security. Similar to the study by I. Sanusi *et al.*, the present study confirmed that the integration of practical tasks and projects into the curriculum significantly improves the level of competencies of participants. In addition, it was observed that participants who were trained using AI technologies became more confident in solving technical problems and self-study, which indicates the practicality and effectiveness of the implemented modules.

The study by M. Guitert *et al.* (2021) focuses on the development of digital competences in European primary and secondary school curricula. The results indicate that the main components of digital competences include information literacy, communication, content creation, safety, and problem-solving. The study also found that the effective implementation of these competences depends on the integration of the latest technologies and educational practices adapted to the needs of students and teachers. One of the main conclusions was that the systematic use of

digital tools and resources in the learning process can significantly increase students' competence, especially in the areas of information literacy and communication. The present study confirms these findings and shows that the introduction of AI technology into the training modules for future primary school teachers contributes to the improvement of digital competence in all key aspects according to the DigComp model. The analysis of the results shows significant benefits in information literacy, content creation, and data protection skills, which is consistent with the findings of M. Guitert *et al.* This study also confirmed that the practical integration of technologies such as AI into the learning process is an effective means of improving digital skills in line with European standards. Thus, both studies emphasize the importance of adapting curricula and resources to support and develop digital competences in modern education.

F. Pedro *et al.* (2019) studied the impact of AI on education, focusing on the challenges and opportunities associated with the introduction of new technologies. The study showed that this technology can significantly improve the learning process through personalized learning, automation of administrative tasks, and improved assessment methods. However, some challenges were also identified, including the need to train teachers to use new tools and ethical and privacy concerns. One of the key conclusions is that for AI-based education to be sustainable, these challenges need to be addressed and the infrastructure to support them developed. This study, in comparison to F. Pedro *et al.*, confirms that the introduction of this technology into future teacher-focused curricula also offers significant opportunities to improve teachers' digital competence and educational outcomes. The results of this study show improvements in participants' skills in information literacy, content creation, and data security, which is consistent with the findings of F. Pedro *et al.* regarding the positive impact of AI on the learning process. However, this study also revealed challenges, such as the need for

additional teacher training and ethical standards. This confirms that these issues need to be addressed in order to achieve a sustainable and effective implementation of AI in education.

The study by B. Bonami *et al.* (2020) focuses on the use of big data and AI in education, analysing how these technologies can be implemented through digital platforms. The study found that the use of big data in conjunction with these technologies allows for detailed monitoring and analysis of learning processes, which in turn can help personalize learning and improve student outcomes. The study also highlighted the importance of using mixed methods to gain a more complete picture of the impact of AI on educational platforms and practices, including the effectiveness of data-driven learning tools and approaches. In the present study, the results confirmed that the introduction of these technologies into training modules for future primary school teachers helped to significantly improve their digital competencies, similar to the findings of B. Bonami *et al.* The increase in information literacy, content creation, and data security skills was significant, indicating the successful application of AI in education. As in the case of the study by B. Bonami *et al.*, the findings point to the importance of data analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of training modules and approaches. However, this article focuses mainly on specific learning modules and their impact on future teachers, which differs from the more general approach to analysing educational platforms and big data in the work by B. Bonami *et al.*

A study by M. Sá & S. Serpa (2020) studied the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the development of digital competences in education. The study showed that the pandemic has significantly accelerated the integration of digital technologies into the educational process, forcing educational institutions to quickly adapt to online and distance learning formats. This has created new opportunities for the development of digital competences for both teachers and students. Key outcomes have included the recognition of the

importance of skills such as the use of digital tools, online communication, and managing learning content in new environments. The pandemic has also exposed inequalities in access to technology and the need to strengthen digital infrastructure. This study, in comparison with the results of M. Sá & S. Serpa (2020), confirmed that the introduction of AI technology into training modules for future primary school teachers can help improve teachers' digital competence in the context of modern challenges. The results showed that this technology not only improved the participants' skills in information literacy, content creation, and data security, but also helped them overcome some difficulties associated with the transition to distance education, especially through the integration of new technological tools. Similar to the findings of authors, this study demonstrates that AI technology can effectively support the development of digital competences in challenging environments, highlighting its importance in modern educational practice.

Thus, the study has shown that the introduction of AI technologies into training modules for future primary school teachers has significantly improved their digital competences. It was found that the study participants made significant progress in such areas as information literacy, digital content creation, and data security. This confirms the effectiveness of using AI as a tool for developing key digital skills in teacher education. The findings of this study indicate that these technologies can not only improve the learning process but also help solve some existing challenges in education, such as adapting to new technological conditions and increasing the level of digital competencies among teachers.

Conclusions

The study has confirmed the high efficiency of developing a training module using AI technology to develop digital competences of future primary school teachers. As a result, the statistical data confirmed that the knowledge of the main group of students improved significantly

after the module implementation. Comparison of the results of the initial and final tests showed a significant increase in the average score, which indicates the positive impact of the module. Statistical analysis using Student's t-test in paired samples showed that the improvement was statistically significant, confirming the effectiveness of the module in improving students' knowledge and skills. The success of the module development in the main group is underlined by the fact that the control group, which did not take the module, showed little change in the results of test and project work.

Comparison of changes in mean scores and standard deviations confirms the effectiveness of the module in improving the quality of students' knowledge and skills. The improvement in the quality of the project work, especially the increase in the average score from 60 to 85, also indicates the significant progress made by the module implementation. The practical significance of the findings confirms the effectiveness of using AI to improve the digital competence of pedagogical students. The findings suggest that innovative pedagogical modules can significantly improve the training of future teachers and better prepare them to work in the modern educational environment. Prospects for further research include expanding the topics of the modules, integrating AI into other educational contexts, such as distance learning and hybrid forms of education. This could also include the study of the impact of AI on student assessment processes and the automation of learning tasks. In addition, it is important to study the impact of AI on teachers' professional activities not only immediately after training, but also in the long term to understand how such modules affect their professional development.

Limitations of this study include the limited sample of students from one institution. In addition, the modules developed were adapted to the specific needs of this group of students, which may limit their effectiveness in other settings. The limited duration of the study does not

allow for a full assessment of the long-term effects of the modules.

A further direction of research would be to expand the sample to include students from different institutions and regions, so that the generality of the effects of the training modules and their adaptation to different educational situations can be assessed. It is also important to investigate the impact of AI technologies on different categories of students and in other educational fields to determine the universality of the developed modules. Further research should focus on the use of different evaluation methods, such as student surveys and interviews, to obtain

more comprehensive information on the long-term effects of the module implementation, as well as on the development of new methods for integrating AI into the educational process. This would allow to more accurately determine the duration and sustainability of the progress made and the effectiveness of the implemented technologies in different educational contexts.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Формування цифрової компетентності майбутніх учителів початкових класів засобами використання штучного інтелекту

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Анотація. Мета дослідження полягала в оцінці ефективності використання технологій штучного інтелекту (AI) для формування цифрової компетентності майбутніх учителів початкових класів через розробку і впровадження навчальних модулів, що включають теоретичні і практичні заняття. Методи дослідження включали використання тестів на знання основ AI та проектних робіт, а також статистичний аналіз результатів за допомогою тесту Стьюдента для парних вибірок. Початкове та підсумкове тестування проводилось серед студентів, які брали участь у навчальних модулях, і контрольної групи без модулів. Впроваджені навчальні модулі містили теоретичні заняття, практичні вправи та проектні роботи. Результати дослідження показали суттєве покращення знань студентів основної групи після впровадження навчальних модулів. У середньому, бали за тестування зросли з 45 до 75 (зі 100), а середні бали проектних робіт піднялися з 60 до 85 (зі 100). Статистичний аналіз виявив значні покращення у знаннях і навичках, зокрема, середні прирости були статистично значущими ($t \approx 15,8$ для тестування і $t \approx 10,96$ для проектів). В контрольній групі не було зафіксовано суттєвих змін у результатах. Аналіз результатів початкового та підсумкового тестувань показав, що учасники, які пройшли навчання за новими модулями, продемонстрували значне покращення в усіх ключових аспектах цифрової компетентності. Зокрема, рівень знань про використання цифрових інструментів і платформ для комунікації і спільної роботи зріс на 30 %, а навички у створенні мультимедійного контенту і управлінні цифровими проектами покращилися на 25 %. Підвищення рівня знань про безпеку даних та захист інформації становило 20 %, що вказує на ефективність навчальних модулів у підвищенні обізнаності про важливість захисту особистої інформації. Крім того, виявлено, що учасники стали впевненіше у вирішенні технічних проблем, що свідчить про практичність впроваджених технологій та їхню здатність покращувати навички самостійного навчання і розв'язання проблем. Отримані результати підтвердили ефективність використання AI у формуванні цифрових компетентностей у майбутніх учителів початкових класів, що відкриває нові можливості для подальшого розвитку і вдосконалення навчальних програм у цій галузі

Ключові слова: цифрові технології; педагогічна освіта; освітні модулі; статистичний аналіз; навчальні результати



Ukrainian and international practices in preventing and combating bullying in student communities

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Abstract. Contemporary society faces a significant rise in instances of violence, discrimination, and psychological pressure, particularly among young people. Bullying within student communities has emerged as a serious social issue, adversely affecting students' physical and mental health, academic performance, and overall quality of life. The issue of bullying among students has become increasingly relevant, prompting measures aimed at establishing a safe educational environment. This study aimed to analyse Ukrainian and international practices in preventing and addressing bullying within student communities to identify effective methods, strategies, and practices for fostering a safe and supportive educational environment. In Ukraine, educational institutions have implemented training sessions, interactive discussions, and anonymous reporting channels for bullying incidents, promoting experience-sharing among students. The experience of other countries, particularly in Europe, highlights a diverse range of effective programmes, including legislative initiatives, psychological support, and the active involvement of all participants in the educational process. Bullying prevention was viewed as a multifaceted process requiring a comprehensive approach, encompassing awareness-raising efforts and the creation of an inclusive environment. Emphasis was placed on the importance of collaborative efforts among universities, students, educators, and parents in combating bullying, which is essential for fostering a positive learning climate. Recommendations were provided for the adoption of successful international practices that could help reduce bullying rates among university students. Examples of effective programmes from countries such as Sweden, Norway, the United Kingdom, and Germany were examined, showcasing systematic approaches to bullying prevention through education, mediation, and cooperation among all stakeholders in the educational process. The active engagement of all interested parties in anti-bullying efforts was underscored, as only through joint actions can a safe and supportive educational environment be established.

Keywords: violence; students; educational environment; psychological support; anti-bullying programme; inclusivity; safety

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Introduction

Creating a safe environment that fosters democratic values is fundamental to building a strong society. The issue of bullying in higher education is particularly pressing, as there is an urgent need to ensure a safe and non-violent learning environment. Higher education institutions aim to facilitate the all-round development of their students and create conducive conditions for learning effective interpersonal communication. However, frequent instances of bullying and elevated levels of conflict among peers hinder the full realisation of these goals.

The classification of bullying helps to grasp the scale of this social phenomenon, which continues to evolve in new forms. The particularity of the problem lies in the fact that young people are one of the most vulnerable segments of the population. During socialisation, young people develop normative and ethical standards for interacting with others in their social groups. The youth environment is characterised by instability, with frequent changes in behavioural rules and communication norms. Despite this, the issue of bullying among young people remains insufficiently researched and developed in Ukraine. Meanwhile, the phenomenon has gained social and psychological dimensions, becoming an international term recognised by professionals in psychology, education, and law. In addition to traditional bullying, new forms of harassment, such as cyberbullying and internet trolling, have emerged, causing psychological trauma to victims. It is important to emphasise that the serious consequences of bullying affect not only the victims themselves but also their social environment.

Research in the field of social pedagogy indicates that the problem of aggressive behaviour and its prevention among young people has become a focus of study for many researchers. V. Andreenkova *et al.* (2019) and M. Chaikivskyi (2024) note that bullying is the repeated and intentional use of physical, verbal, or psychological aggression by one person or a group of people to harm another. M. Hysing *et al.* (2021), having analysed

recent studies, observed that bullying among university students is associated with a range of psychological problems, such as depression and anxiety, which can be exacerbated by academic pressures. M. Tight (2023) argues that bullying in educational institutions is a serious social problem that can have long-term negative consequences for students' mental health. J. Gómez-Galán *et al.* (2021) also claim that bullying in higher education is often overlooked but remains a serious issue, and students who are perceived as "different" due to their ethnicity, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status are particularly vulnerable. L. Mikheieva & O. Kuleshova (2022) emphasise that bullying can lead to serious psychological consequences for students, such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and even suicidal thoughts. A survey of higher education students conducted in 2022 revealed that 38% of students had experienced bullying during their studies (Hrytsenko, 2022). The author notes that higher levels of bullying are found among senior students, which is linked to increased competition and stress during exams.

N. Melnyk (2020) highlights the factors contributing to bullying in the Ukrainian student environment. She draws attention to social stereotypes and cultural norms formed during school, where bullying can be normalised. Research on this topic was conducted by scientists S. Sayed *et al.* (2023) who analysed how online education and changes in the learning process due to the pandemic have affected the level of bullying among students. The study of researchers S. Ali & N. Begum (2022), who studied the role of student unions and organisations in combating bullying, is also significant. They note that active student initiatives aimed at raising awareness of bullying and developing a culture of mutual support can significantly reduce the manifestations of bullying in universities. O. Havrysh (2022), who studied the phenomenon of bullying in Ukrainian educational institutions, emphasises that most cases of bullying in Ukrainian institutions go

unpunished due to a lack of effective mechanisms for combating bullying, as well as stereotypes that bullying is a normal phenomenon in the competitive environment of higher education.

According to a UNICEF survey (UNICEF, 2019), approximately 39% of young people in Ukraine in 2019 experienced bullying. This phenomenon poses a serious threat to the physical and psychological well-being of victims, as well as to social harmony in society. Addressing this issue requires in-depth analysis, effective preventive measures, and concrete actions to combat bullying. In educational settings, bullying can manifest in various forms, from isolated incidents to systematic aggressive behaviour. Regardless of its specific manifestations, such actions harm the mental and physical health of all involved. Detecting incidents of violence in educational institutions is a challenging task, as they often occur in places with insufficient adult supervision.

Many universities and educational institutions are developing and implementing specific strategies, programs, and initiatives aimed at ensuring the safety and psychological well-being of students. Key elements of these initiatives include education and raising awareness about bullying, creating mechanisms for reporting incidents of violence and providing support to victims, psychological support, disciplinary measures against perpetrators, and fostering an inclusive environment for all students. Bullying is a complex and painful phenomenon, and the optimal solution to the problem is not always obvious when it arises. An effective anti-bullying strategy involves not only responding to incidents of violence but also actively preventing its occurrence through the implementation of specific measures and programs.

This study aimed to investigate Ukrainian and international practices in combating bullying in higher education institutions and to analyse the need for creating a safe learning environment to prevent violence. To explore Ukrainian and international practices in preventing and combating bullying among students, the author employed a comprehensive interdisciplinary

approach, considering the sociological, pedagogical, psychological, and legal aspects of the phenomenon. Specifically, the research analysed normative documents, scientific studies by Ukrainian and international scholars, statistical reports, and the results of surveys, questionnaires, and interviews. The experiences of Ukraine and international practices in combating bullying were systematised through a review of scientific publications, monographs, conference materials, and reports. A comparison of approaches to bullying prevention in different countries was conducted, particularly in the areas of legislation, educational programs, psychological support, and the involvement of community initiatives. The use of these methods allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the state of bullying in the student environment, as well as the identification of the most effective strategies for its prevention and counteraction, which can be adapted to the Ukrainian context.

Ukrainian experiences in preventing and combating bullying among students

The problem of bullying among Ukrainian students is becoming increasingly pressing, leading to the implementation of various preventive and counteractive measures. Research on bullying in the Ukrainian student environment has employed diagnostic methods to identify cases of bullying among students. Specifically, researchers have used psychological tests, questionnaires, and interviews to identify the nature, forms, and consequences of bullying. For instance, T. Fedorchenko (2023) conducted a diagnosis of bullying among Ukrainian higher education students, utilising various psychological techniques and questionnaires to assess levels of aggression, stress, anxiety, and depression. G. Pishchenko & O. Solovey (2022) also explored bullying through the lens of sociocultural factors. The researchers emphasise that bullying is a global issue, and Ukraine is among the top ten European countries in terms of bullying prevalence among 11-15-year-old adolescents. The authors also

outline types of bullying: psychological, physical, economic, and sexual.

Educational institutions are actively developing programs to foster a safe learning environment. For example, trainings and information sessions are conducted where students can learn about the nature of bullying, its consequences, and prevention methods. For instance, the Volodymyr Vynnychenko Central Ukrainian State University held a training session in the format of an interactive discussion with students on the topic "Life without bullying" (ISCM, 2021). During the moderated discussion, participants evaluated the importance of this issue in society, actively engaging in the conversation.

A key aspect is the active engagement of students in discussions on this topic, creating a platform for open communication. Organising discussions, seminars, and interactive lectures allows young people to share experiences and seek joint solutions to combat bullying. Additionally, many educational institutions are implementing anonymous channels for reporting bullying incidents, providing students with the opportunity to seek help confidentially. For instance, the Izmail Agrotechnical Applied College held a discussion on "Counteracting Bullying in the Educational Environment" (NULES, 2023). Students were introduced to the concept of bullying, its legal consequences under the Criminal Code of Ukraine, and participated in a survey. Furthermore, students attended a UNICEF workshop, completed a friendship test, engaged in exercises to identify bullying, and learned about the dynamics of this phenomenon in Ukraine. They also watched a video about Nick Vujcic, a renowned motivational speaker and founder of the "Life Without Limbs" organisation, which served as a powerful example of overcoming bullying.

Combating bullying is considered a multi-stage process requiring concerted efforts from the government, universities, student organisations, educators, parents, and students themselves. Only through coordinated actions and the implementation of comprehensive measures can

success be achieved in this struggle and the best conditions created for the learning and personal growth of the younger generation. Psychological support is a crucial component in the fight against bullying. Universities are organising counselling sessions for students, where they can receive professional help. This benefits not only victims but also perpetrators who also need support in addressing their issues. Overall, Ukraine is beginning to recognise the importance of a comprehensive approach to the problem of bullying, which includes education, support, and creating a safe environment for all students. In response to the growing interest in social interaction and the psychological climate in educational institutions, the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 1646 (2019) approved the Procedures for Responding to Bullying Cases and the Procedures for Applying Educational Measures. Additionally, the Ministry of Education, in partnership with UNICEF, developed a methodological manual titled *Combating Bullying in Educational Institutions: A Systemic Approach* (Andreenkova *et al.*, 2019).

One effective method of preventing bullying in higher education is through dialogue, a complex process of organising cognitive activity (Yanishevska & Tymoshenko, 2018). It involves a step-by-step discussion of material in a question-and-answer format. If even a small part of the information is overlooked, knowledge becomes incomplete, leading to a loss of interest and motivation. Therefore, this form of prevention is widely used in many higher education institutions. When studying the psychological aspects of bullying and methods of prevention, it is essential to consider the role of communication and psychological discussions as important tools (Shatyрко & Moizrist, 2023).

Additionally, collaboration between universities, professional organisations, and student and faculty associations is a crucial component of bullying prevention. Such initiatives help foster critical thinking in young people and the ability to recognise instances of bullying, as well as

understanding their role in preventing it. It is also important to provide access to anonymous reporting channels, allowing students to report bullying incidents without fear. This creates a safe environment for those who have experienced bullying and encourages witnesses to take action. Anonymity reduces the fear of potential repercussions and increases the likelihood of incidents being reported. Equally important is the involvement of parents in bullying prevention. They can participate in seminars and information campaigns, helping to create a unified stance against bullying and strengthening the relationship between educational institutions and families.

Thus, the combined efforts of all participants in the educational process foster a culture of zero tolerance for bullying, which is crucial for creating a safe and supportive learning environment. For example, the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine (NULES, 2023) has implemented educational activities aimed at preventing bullying and fostering a legal consciousness among students. As part of this work, a thematic lecture entitled "No to Bullying!" was conducted. Similarly, the Dragomanov Ukrainian State University demonstrates a responsible approach to creating a safe learning environment, organising an event titled "For the Safety of the Higher Education Institution" (Dragomanov..., 2023). University initiatives to create an anti-bullying environment aim to prevent and counteract this phenomenon. During these events, a system of anonymous complaints was introduced, allowing students and staff to report incidents of bullying without fear of retaliation or reprisals (Sovenko & Balkova, 2024). Additionally, universities are actively collaborating with experts in psychology and pedagogy to conduct trainings designed to raise awareness among faculty and students about bullying prevention. These measures not only ensure a swift response to potential bullying incidents but also contribute to creating a positive and friendly learning environment where everyone can feel confident and protected.

International experiences in combating bullying in educational institutions

International experiences in preventing and combating bullying in educational settings demonstrate a wide range of approaches and strategies successfully implemented in various countries. Many European Union countries and the USA have national anti-bullying programs aimed at reducing incidents of bullying among students. These programs encompass parental workshops, playground supervision, and intensive educational activities for both adults and children, including specific disciplinary measures.

Sweden stands out among European countries, with its anti-bullying programs demonstrating exceptional effectiveness. Sweden was one of the first countries to recognise bullying as a significant issue. The country's approach involves the active participation of all stakeholders at all stages of anti-bullying measures, making it an integral part of the educational process. In 2006, Sweden enacted the "The Act Prohibiting Discrimination and Other Forms of Degrading Treatment of Children and School Students" (2006). This law mandated educational institutions to implement anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policies. It required schools and universities to develop equality plans aimed at preventing all forms of bullying and ensuring a safe learning environment. In 2008, the law was consolidated with other anti-discrimination acts within the new Discrimination Act (2008), which encompasses a broader range of measures to protect against discrimination and bullying.

In the USA, the primary focus of bullying prevention and intervention efforts is on empowering educators and mentors, supported by professional and medical organisations, to raise awareness about bullying both in and outside of schools and to highlight its negative impacts on students' health and society as a whole. Key aspects include student education, the implementation of anti-bullying policies, active reporting of incidents, and the provision of support services. Many US universities have implemented effective

anti-bullying initiatives through programs such as “Not on My Campus” (ADL, n.d.), which aim to foster a culture of respect, understanding, and reporting of bullying incidents.

In Germany, where, according to S. Fischer & L. Bilz (2024), 14% of surveyed students have experienced bullying at school and 7% have reported cyberbullying, online platforms are used to report bullying incidents and provide psychological support to victims. These resources allow students to anonymously report potential bullying cases, increasing comfort and safety for those who wish to share their experiences. Psychological support can also be accessed through these platforms, where victims can receive confidential counselling from professionals.

In the United Kingdom, the issue of bullying is addressed from the very first day of school. Strategies to combat this issue have been developed since the 1980s, and all educational institutions are mandated to have anti-bullying policies in place (Harrison *et al.*, 2020). Many countries, including the USA, Canada, and the United Kingdom, have implemented specialised programs aimed at raising awareness about bullying among students and staff. One such example is the “Bystander Training” program, which educates students on how to intervene actively when they witness bullying (Wolke & Lereya, 2015). Furthermore, universities in the USA, Germany, and Canada offer a variety of psychological support programs for students who have been victims of bullying. These programs may include individual counselling, group therapy, and specialised sessions for students experiencing stress related to bullying (Waseem & Nickerson, 2023). Psychologists and social workers conduct training sessions for students, discussing conflict resolution strategies and developing emotional intelligence skills.

In Kazakhstan, where specific legislation to address bullying in educational institutions is absent, incidents are handled by a special council composed of elected academic staff (Nazarchuk, 2021). One approach to bullying prevention involves programs focused on developing

communication skills, conflict resolution abilities, and resilience. Successful anti-bullying initiatives such as the “Bullying Prevention Program”, “KiVa”, “Friendly Schools”, “Anti-bullying – prevention and intervention”, and the Farsta Method, implemented in Norway, Finland, the USA, and Sweden, incorporate role-playing activities where participants assume the roles of both victim and bully, as well as writing exercises exploring the victim’s perspective (Olkhova, 2023).

Norway provides another successful example. The programme by D. Olweus (2009) has demonstrated high effectiveness, reducing bullying incidents by 30-50%. This initiative made mandatory for all educational institutions, emphasises peaceful communication within defined boundaries rather than punitive measures. In Norway and Sweden, a three-way agreement is signed at the beginning of the academic year by students, their parents, and the school administration. This agreement fosters greater accountability and commitment among all stakeholders (Nazarchuk, 2021).

Spain has also been actively addressing the issue of bullying. The country has implemented programs that involve role-playing exercises, workshops, and group discussions, allowing students to explore different aspects of bullying. These activities provide students with opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings, as well as learn how to support each other in challenging situations. Under the Organic Law of Spain (2015), bullying is classified as a crime punishable by imprisonment of between three months and two years. Moreover, bullying is one of the most prevalent forms of aggressive behaviour (Saneleuterio *et al.*, 2023).

Each of the approaches discussed reflects a unique strategy for combating bullying in universities and schools. However, a common factor is the active support from administration, faculty, students, and psychological services, contributing to effective bullying prevention and intervention. Thus, international experiences demonstrate that effective bullying prevention and intervention

require the integration of various aspects – from education and support to legislative initiatives and active participation of all members of the educational community. This comprehensive approach enables the creation of a safe and supportive environment for all students.

Conclusions

Bullying remains one of the most pressing and concerning issues in educational settings, as it has a direct impact on the physical and psychological well-being of young people, posing serious threats to their development. According to UNICEF data, a significant proportion of students in Ukraine are victims of bullying, necessitating immediate and comprehensive measures to address this problem. Bullying not only affects the personal well-being of victims but also has long-term consequences, which may include depression, anxiety disorders, and low self-esteem. Given this, preventive measures aimed at raising awareness of bullying, creating effective mechanisms for anonymous reporting of incidents, and providing timely support to victims are of paramount importance.

The implementation of successful anti-bullying programs, such as those in Norway and Sweden, demonstrates the effectiveness of a systematic approach to addressing this issue. Programs that emphasise collaboration among

all educational stakeholders foster a culture of responsibility, mutual understanding, and respect among students and staff. They not only facilitate prompt responses to bullying incidents but also actively prevent them through education, training, and psychological support. Combating bullying is a complex and multifaceted challenge that requires the combined efforts of universities, students, faculty, parents, and even the wider community. Only through the integration of comprehensive measures, including the adoption of international experiences and practices, can a safe and supportive educational environment be created. This approach will enable young people to develop in a setting where they can learn and self-actualise without fear, anxiety, or psychological pressure, thereby fostering their holistic development. Future research should focus on evaluating the effectiveness of specific interventions, such as training programs, interactive activities, and anonymous reporting channels. This will be crucial in identifying the most effective practices for preventing and addressing bullying.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Український та міжнародний досвід профілактики та протидії булінгу у студентському середовищі

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Анотація. Сучасне суспільство стикається з різким зростанням випадків насильства, дискримінації та психологічного тиску, особливо серед молоді. Булінг у студентському середовищі став серйозною соціальною проблемою, що впливає на фізичне і психічне здоров'я студентів, їхні академічні досягнення та загальну якість життя. Проблема булінгу серед студентів стає дедалі актуальнішою, і вживаються заходи для створення безпечного освітнього середовища. Метою дослідження був аналіз українського та міжнародного досвіду профілактики та протидії булінгу у студентському середовищі заради визначення ефективних методів, стратегій і практик для створення безпечного та підтримуючого освітнього середовища. В Україні заклади освіти впроваджують тренінги, інтерактивні дискусії та анонімні канали для повідомлення про випадки цькування, сприяючи обміну досвідом серед студентів. Досвід інших країн, зокрема країн Європи, демонструє широкий спектр ефективних програм, включаючи законодавчі ініціативи, психологічну підтримку та активну участь усіх учасників освітнього процесу. Профілактика булінгу розглядалася як багатогранний процес, що вимагає комплексного підходу, включаючи підвищення обізнаності та створення інклюзивного середовища. Акцентовано увагу на важливості спільних зусиль університетів, студентів, викладачів і батьків у боротьбі з булінгом, що є критично важливим для формування позитивного навчального клімату. Також подано рекомендації щодо впровадження успішних міжнародних практик, що можуть допомогти знизити рівень цькування серед студентської молоді. Розглянуто приклади успішних програм у таких країнах, як Швеція та Норвегія, Велика Британія, Німеччина, які реалізують систематичний підхід до профілактики булінгу через навчання, медіацію та співпрацю між усіма учасниками освітнього процесу. Закцентовано увагу на активній участі всіх зацікавлених сторін у боротьбі з булінгом, адже лише спільними зусиллями можна створити безпечне та підтримуюче освітнє середовище

Ключові слова: насилля; студенти; освітнє середовище; психологічна підтримка; антибулінгова програма; інклюзивність; безпека



Changes in the national identity of Ukrainians during the war

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Abstract. The article addressed the reconfiguration of the national identity of Ukrainians as a consequence of the Russian-Ukrainian war and its impact on the social and political climate within society. The study aimed to analyse the changes in the national identity of Ukrainians under the influence of full-scale Russian aggression. The article was based on the findings of the research project entitled “Intercultural Communication in Social Practices as a Factor in the Formation of the Civilizational Identity of Citizens of Ukraine in the Post-war Period”. The study examined data from sociological surveys, statistical reports, and historical events. Methods employed included content analysis, ethnographic research, and the historical-comparative method. These methodologies facilitated a multidimensional analysis of the phenomenon and enabled the identification of causal relationships in the transformation of Ukrainian national identity. The correlation between the national idea and national identity was explored. It argued that the content of the national idea has varied throughout different periods of the Ukrainian state’s existence. The article examined changes in the primary markers of identity under the influence of the Russian Ukrainian war. The dynamics of national identity development were analysed, with a focus on its connection to the establishment of civil society and civic identity. It was noted that the Ukrainian intelligentsia, cultural figures, military personnel, and spiritual leaders have always played a pivotal role in shaping national identity. The main markers of Ukrainian national identity that have become prominent during the war include societal homogeneity, overcoming the “East West” divide, the expanded use of the Ukrainian language, and the Ukrainocentric stance of internally displaced persons. All these aspects of national identity reflect positive changes towards the consolidation of the nation. One of the challenging consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian war is external migration and unfavourable demographic forecasts, as evidenced by data from sociological surveys

Keywords: regional identity; transformation of national identity; Russian-Ukrainian war; identity politics; factors of identity change; civic identity; social practices

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Introduction

The Russian-Ukrainian war, whose hybrid phase predates the full-scale invasion of 24 February 2022, has triggered social processes that have yet to fully manifest. Undoubtedly, scholars from various disciplines will continue to study the societal transformations induced by this conflict for years to come. Not only has the global geopolitical landscape been altered; the period of sluggish reforms that characterised the pre-war phase of Ukrainian independence has definitively ended. Russian aggression has fostered domestic consolidation, decolonisation of Ukrainian consciousness, and national mobilisation against an external enemy. The recommendations of Russian “experts”, upon which decisions to annex Crimea, invade Donbas, and later, Kharkiv, Kherson, Kyiv, Sumy, and other regions were based, have proven to be erroneous and failed to accurately assess the real situation in Ukrainian society. It has become apparent that over the years of independence, a new generation of Ukrainian citizens has emerged that does not suffer from nostalgia for the USSR and does not dream of its revival. Processes of identification and formation of a political nation have accelerated significantly.

The study of the transformation of value orientations within Ukrainian society during the fullscale war is particularly relevant, given the need to understand the processes of national consolidation and the strengthening of national consciousness amidst external aggression. It also seeks to identify new dimensions of national identity shaped by contemporary challenges (Dodonov, 2024). Events since 2014, linked to Russian aggression, shifts in Ukraine’s foreign policy course, and socio-cultural transformations, have acted as a catalyst for qualitative changes in Ukrainian society, as reflected in academic publications. National identity is a multifaceted construct – a cultural-anthropological, sociological, psychological, and political-ideological phenomenon composed, according to E. Smith (1994), of numerous components including ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic, and politico-legal elements.

Moreover, identity does not merely consist of a strong or weak self-identification with one’s nation but rather of understanding what that nation represents. As M. Ryabchuk (2019) notes, identity lies in “identifying oneself with values, culture, history, symbolism, and to a certain extent, with other state and legal institutions, political and economic interests of national unity”.

National identity is not merely a collection of combined identities but rather a system of multiple identities that interact with each other in specific ways and influence one another, forming intercultural communication. Genuine intercultural communication allows for the identification of shared values, worldviews, and traditions, such as respect for human rights and life, freedom, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and care for the environment. The cultural diversity of Ukrainian society encourages each individual to engage in constructive interaction, fostering a positive attitude towards representatives of other ethnic groups and developing knowledge about surrounding cultures.

The question of national identity has been the subject of intense scholarly attention since Ukraine gained independence. Of particular interest to theorists is the relationship between ethnic and national identity. Researchers have identified various types of collective (social) identities, including ethnic, national, civic, religious, regional, sociocultural, linguistic, territorial, civilisational, political, and historical. According to N. Elias (2001), individuals seek to overcome the contradiction of “I” without “We” as a rootless, absolutely isolated person through a “strategy of encapsulation”, during which an emotional attachment to a national “We-group” is formed. This “We-identity” is embedded in the individual’s personality structure. The formation of collective identity is a result of the socialisation process, grounded in shared collective memory, history, symbols, values, language, and culture. As V. Fadeyev (2023) notes, national identity often assumes the function of collective identification, weakening identification with one’s native area, family, or ethnic group.

The question of civilisational identity is a pressing issue within contemporary identity studies. As O. Rafalskyi *et al.* (2022) note, that Ukrainian civilisational identity is a complex, multifaceted, and transitional phenomenon, its foundations laid by generations of Ukrainians and spanning millennia. The authors emphasise that Ukrainian civilisational identity is a “historically formed and established integrity, a higher form of ethnic, social, cultural, civic, and national identities, grounded in the awareness of the civilisational nature of its national values, cultural-historical, religious, and mental traits that characterise Ukraine as a regional civilisation, aligning Ukrainians with the peoples of European civilisation”.

Scholars at the National University of Kyiv Mohyla Academy have also addressed this topic. R. Demchuk (2016, 2017) examines national identity in the context of language policy and linguistic self-awareness. She analyses factors influencing perceptions of linguistic identity in Ukrainian society and the role of myths in constructing national identity. I. Lysy (2013) focuses on understanding the historical and cultural aspects of national identity. He analyses the impact of history and cultural traditions on the formation of Ukrainian national consciousness. Thus, the issue of identity is at the forefront of research by many contemporary Ukrainian scholars. This article aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the changes in the formation and development of Ukrainian national identity occurring under the influence of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The study examined the social, cultural, historical, and psychological aspects of this process, as well as key changes in Ukrainians’ perception of their own identity and their impact on national consolidation in the context of Russia’s full-scale invasion.

Materials and Methods

This publication was based on research conducted as part of the study titled “Intercultural Communication in Social Practices as a Factor in the Formation of the Civilizational Identity of Citizens of Ukraine in the Post-war Period” (state registration

number: 0124U001461). The research employed an interdisciplinary approach, combining qualitative and quantitative analysis with methods from sociology, cultural studies, psychology, and history. The primary data sources were the results of sociological surveys conducted by Ukrainian and international research centres since 2014. The study analysed the dynamics of changes in respondents’ answers regarding their national identity, language preferences, attitudes towards state symbols, and geopolitical orientations.

This article utilised a comprehensive comparative study conducted by the Sociological Group “Rating” titled *How the War Changed Me and the Country. Summary of the Year (Rating Group, 2023)*; data from the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (Paniotto, 2022), an analytical note by the NASU Institute of Sociology of Ukraine titled *National and Regional Identity of Ukrainian Citizens in Connection with the Events in Donbas, 2014-2016 (2016)*; data from the *Strategy of Demographic Development of Ukraine until 2040*, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (2024); an analytical report *Autonomous Republic of Crimea: People, Problems, Perspectives (2008)* by the Razumkov Centre, and other studies. The analysis of these sources allowed for relevant conclusions on the research question.

This research employed content analysis to examine media discourse and information campaigns aimed at shaping or influencing Ukrainian national identity. Specifically, the study analysed publications in Ukrainian and international media, social media, and propaganda materials disseminated during the active phase of the war. Additionally, discourse analysis was used to understand the cultural and political context of the concept of national identity. Ethnographic research methods allowed for the study of the specifics of everyday practices among Ukrainians in different areas, considering both factors of regional division and differences between rural and urban populations. The application of the historical-comparative method facilitated the analysis of identity transformations in retrospect. The use

of these methods provided a multidimensional analysis of the phenomenon and allowed for the establishment of causal relationships in the transformation of Ukrainian national identity.

Results and Discussion

National identity and the Ukrainian national idea

Ukrainian researchers V. Troshchynskiy *et al.* (2018) assert that ethnic and national identities are not synonymous, arguing that there are no purely monoethnic nations in the contemporary world. They emphasise that while ethnic identity is not identical to national identity, it serves as a foundation for the formation of the latter. In this context, one can speak of different hierarchical levels of identity functioning. Ethnicity can be considered a lower level relative to national identity. In their study, the researchers note that ethnic identity is based on “blood ties” and is rooted in the psychological characteristics, temperament, and ethnodemographic potential of its bearers; it “creates the basis for national identity and resists the pressure of the cosmopolitanisation of social life”. Ethnic identity belongs to the realm of sociobiological communities, while national identity belongs to the political-legal sphere. A political nation is a collection of citizens of one state, not representatives of one, even titular, ethnic group. National identity does not depend on the ethnic origin of one’s parents. It is the result of a conscious choice by the individual and can form and even change throughout one’s life under the influence of many factors. If ethnic identity is primarily based on the genetic roots (ethnic origin) of a nation, is stable, independent of the person’s choice, and cannot be changed under the influence of circumstances, national identity presupposes a process of national self-awareness, a sense of belonging to a particular national community through a set of emotional, cultural, historical, and social connections. It is subjective, and variable depending on a whole complex of features.

The dynamics of national identity development should be linked to the formation of civil society and civic identity. The latter is based on

citizenship, constitutional rights and obligations of an individual, regardless of ethnic origin or blood ties, and involves self-identification with the citizens, rules, and laws of the state in which the individual resides. Such identity can be consciously chosen by a person and, in case of changing the country of residence, can gradually transform under the realities of another state. National identity is a phenomenon that arouses patriotism and a readiness to defend the borders of the state.

The Law of Ukraine “On the Basic Principles of State Policy for the Affirmation of Ukrainian National and Civic Identity” (2023) defines Ukrainian national identity as “a stable awareness of a person’s belonging to the Ukrainian nation as a unique community, united by a name, symbols, geographical and ethnosocial origin, historical memory, a complex of spiritual and cultural values, in particular the Ukrainian language and folk traditions”. At the same time, Ukrainian civic identity is defined by the Law as “a stable awareness of a citizen of Ukraine, a Ukrainian abroad of their political and legal connection with Ukraine, the Ukrainian people and civil society”. Consolidating factors for the strengthening of national and civic identities, according to the aforementioned Law, should be considered such public and state (national) values as unity – “unity, indivisibility of all territories of Ukraine, spiritual unity of Ukrainians”; the uniqueness of the Ukrainian people (national identity, uniqueness, originality) is determined by its history, culture, traditions, language; will – “ability, intention, directed effort, desire to achieve a goal”; dignity – “defending one’s spiritual and moral and state positions, awareness of one’s own weight and civic duty in the international community”.

The process of forming Ukrainian national identity is a long and complex one, intertwined with the influence of the national idea. As O. Doniy (2019) points out, “the national idea is a complex set of beliefs held by a large population group, based on shared myths of the past and shared dreams of the future”. The national idea conceptually shapes national identity, indicating what

the nation is rallying around and for. It should be noted that Ukrainian national identity is still in the process of formation and is going through a phase that other European states went through during the modern era. The Ukrainian state is still in the process of identity formation. This has led to uncertainty or vagueness in formulating the content of the national idea.

The formation of the Ukrainian national idea has been significantly influenced by generations of domestic intellectuals, creative elites, cultural figures, military leaders, and spiritual leaders of the nation. The Ukrainian national idea has undergone several transformations depending on the historical challenges faced; its content could not remain the same under conditions of statelessness, the struggle against the Empire, and during periods of independence, nation-building, and statebuilding. O. Doniy (2019), for instance, distinguishes between romantic, defensive, offensive, and competitive types of the national idea. S. Dembitskyi (2022a) proposes his own periodisation of the process of civic identity formation in Ukraine. He identifies six stages, including post-Soviet adaptation (1992-2002), the first civic mobilisation (2004-2006), political polarisation (2010), the second civic mobilisation (2014), national-civic crystallisation (2018-2019), and national-civic consolidation (2022), followed by national-civic fragmentation (2023-2024). In the stages identified by the scholars, where there were surges in the development of civil society and increased pro-Ukrainian identification among the population, a significant aspect can be traced: the culmination moments are linked to Russia's desire to keep Ukraine within its sphere of influence and, at the same time, the threat of another split among national elites under external pressure.

In the third year of the war, the Ukrainian intelligentsia is once again faced with the task of reformulating the content of the national idea to consolidate the current changes in the national narrative. The national idea must solidify the status of the "imagined community", which, despite its deep historical and sociocultural roots, is, in

fact, being shaped before one's eyes. In the face of an existential threat to Ukraine's existence as a state, processes are underway that are necessary to strengthen national identity: Ukrainian society is becoming more homogeneous, the "East-West" divide is being overcome, and a Ukrainian-language information and communication as well as cultural and symbolic space is being formed, among other things.

Ukrainian society is becoming more homogeneous

The diversity of Ukraine's political landscape, the historical specificity of the formation of the modern Ukrainian nation, and the different periods of individual areas (Crimea, Transcarpathia, Galicia, Bukovina, etc.) being part of the Ukrainian state did not allow sociologists to conclude that the Ukrainian nation was monolithic. This lack of homogeneity was further exploited by political technologists who, on the eve of every election, played the "separatist card", trying to attract local voters by speculating on partial regional problems. It was precisely on these separatist-minded Ukrainian citizens that the Russians relied on their plans for the secession of Crimea and Donbas, Kharkiv and Kherson, providing them with all kinds of support and financing relevant organisations.

This point is crucial, as there is a significant gap between the slogans of pre-election competition and the primary solution to regional problems and calls for violating the territorial integrity of the state. In the analytical note *National and Regional Identity of Ukrainian Citizens in Connection with the Events in Donbas, 2014-2016* (2016), as well as in the analytical report of the Razumkov Centre *AR Crimea: People, Problems, Prospects* (Socio-political, Interethnic, and Interfaith Relations in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, 2008), sociological studies conducted in various areas of Ukraine in 2008-2014 are analysed, the results of which did not record a critical surge in separatist sentiments. Moreover, the leaders of the separatists were representatives of marginal circles and even criminals. Thus, the

determining factor in the events in Crimea and Donbas in 2014 was not internal but external – Russian interference. The Kremlin managed to substitute the cause and effect, creating in the information field (at least at the hybrid phase of the war) the impression that it was not Russia that formed and financed the separatist movement in Crimea and the eastern regions of Ukraine, but that this movement was initial, spontaneous, and powerful. Russia merely “came to the aid” of its “compatriots”, saving them from the bloody “Kyiv regime”.

With the onset of the full-scale war, the masks were dropped. Ukrainians saw firsthand who was bombing their cities, killing their children, and robbing their property. They saw who the real enemy was and who was the defender. Residents of different areas, language groups, and electoral orientations united in the face of a common threat, which contributed to a strengthening of the sense of unity and consolidation of society in the struggle for Ukraine’s future.

In August 2023, the Ilko Kucheriv “Democratic Initiatives” Foundation, in collaboration with the Razumkov Centre, conducted a sociological survey (Sociological Monitoring “Ukrainian Society”, 2023). According to the results, 88.5% of respondents stated that they were proud to be citizens of Ukraine. Regional differences in responses had diminished: 95% in the West of the country, and 75.6% in the East (excluding the occupied territories). These figures indicate a reorientation in the minds of Ukrainians in favour of civic identity over ethnic identity. As noted by V. Kulyk (2023), previously, the overwhelming majority of respondents indicated a hereditary criterion, even when changing their nationality from Russian to Ukrainian, evidently driven by civic considerations. This, according to the author, testified to the persistence of Soviet ideas about nationality as a hereditary category. However, the national consolidation caused by Russia’s fullscale aggression has significantly undermined these ideas, meaning that people increasingly identify themselves as Ukrainians simply because they live in Ukraine, regardless of their origin, and transfer this civic

identity to the category of nationality, which was traditionally ethnic.

The sustainability of any political nation, its strength, and attractiveness depend on its inclusivity, that is, its ability to incorporate intercultural and multinational elements while remaining acceptable to representatives of other nations, and carriers of other cultures who are citizens of Ukraine or intend to become so. To a certain extent, inclusivity is opposed to xenophobia, determining the level of openness/closedness of a social community. In September 2023, 81% of Ukrainians surveyed by the Sociological Group “Rating” (Rating Group, 2023) reported that they had a negative attitude towards Russians; 52% – towards Belarusians. More than half of the respondents (58%) expressed the impossibility of reconciliation with the Russians. And 80% of Ukrainians believe that Russians should not be allowed into Ukraine, even as tourists.

On the one hand, such indicators are a sign of growing xenophobia, but on the other hand, they are quite predictable given the war crimes committed and continue to be committed in Ukraine by Russian servicemen. The polarity of assessments increases during wartime, but it is unlikely that outbreaks of interethnic conflicts within Ukraine should be expected, for example, between Ukrainian-speaking and Russian-speaking Ukrainians, ethnic Ukrainians and ethnic Russians who are citizens of Ukraine. It is sufficient to point out the large percentage of ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking Ukrainians who are defending their homeland in the Armed Forces of Ukraine (Paniotto, 2022). Interestingly, despite all the efforts of Polish farmers, the attitude of Ukrainians towards Poles has improved significantly compared to 2021.

Overcoming the “East-West” divide and expanding the use of the Ukrainian language

Ukraine is a divided country. This divide runs along the Dnipro River, symbolically splitting the territory of the state into the Right-bank West and the Left-bank East. The conflict potential of the

division into different types of identity has led to the weakening of the Ukrainian political nation, and harsh political confrontation, which was most acutely manifested during both Maidan protests, when the citizens of Ukraine were divided into two camps – for a European path of development for Ukraine or an economic and mental union with Russia. The social base of the camps, respectively, were voters from the western and eastern regions of Ukraine. As M. Ryabchuk (2019) notes, “for many years of independence, Ukraine, our society, has been characterised by the ambivalence of Ukrainian national identity, which is characterised by the existence of two national communities that can be defined as neo-Soviet/neo-colonial and Ukrainian/anti-colonial – with radically different cultural codes, symbols, historical narratives and value orientations”.

This ambivalence was concretised in Ukrainians' attitudes towards the country's foreign policy. The so-called West supported Ukraine's Euro-integration aspirations, while the conditional East saw its future in a Eurasian community led by Russia. Before the Revolution of Dignity, the majority of Ukrainians did not support the idea of Ukraine joining NATO. After the full-scale invasion, 87% of surveyed citizens stated that they agreed with Ukraine joining the EU, and 86% – NATO (Rating Group, 2023). According to V. Fadeyev (2023), “those painful issues that for a long time became a factor of political and electoral divisions in Ukraine are gradually losing their relevance today. The differences between the West and the East are diminishing, giving way to new ones – made public by the war, since today the main factor determining the division into friends and foes has become the attitude towards the war, which has pushed all other factors of division into the background”. Thus, the war has united most Ukrainians in the fight against a common enemy, contributing to national unity and solidarity.

A sign of the consolidation of the Ukrainian nation is the attitude towards the state language. After the full-scale Russian invasion, the process of switching from Russian to Ukrainian as the

language of everyday communication accelerated significantly. The Russian aggression has caused a change in the mindset of most Ukrainians regarding “the place of the Russian and Soviet in the socio-cultural life of the country”, including language aspects. The Ukrainian language has turned into a kind of marker of national identity, a public manifestation of one's national identity. It has become fashionable to speak Ukrainian.

This is especially true for previously Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine who have consciously switched to speaking Ukrainian. In general, 82% of citizens consider Ukrainian their native language, 60% speak it at home, 28% speak both Ukrainian and Russian, and 12% – Russian, notes V. Kulyk (2023). The author emphasises that even in the East and South of Ukraine, 72% aspire to only Ukrainian-language communication, 19% – any of the two languages of the visitor's choice, and only 1% would like state institutions in their locality to work in Russian.

During focus group discussions, sociologists recorded an increased demand from interviewees for a choice of language for communication. The audience notes a significant increase in Ukrainian-language content of various thematic orientations on social networks (YouTube, Telegram, Instagram, etc.) after the beginning of the full-scale war, as noted by H. Bogdanovych (2024). Everyday social practices of communication with relatives living in the Russian Federation have already lost their sharpness, characteristic of the first period of aggression. Communication is most often reduced to discussing neutral topics such as weather, health, interesting culinary recipes, and avoiding painful political topics. In this way, at least the illusion of family closeness between people is preserved.

National identity as a choice for displaced persons

The question of national self-identification has become particularly acute for internally displaced persons (IDPs): refugees, displaced persons, and migrants. After all, they often had to pay for their choice with their homes, property acquired throughout their lives, and even their own lives.

The decision to “stay with Ukraine” came at a high cost. It was much easier to recognise the authority of the victor, remaining “under Russia”. Precisely because the choice to leave or not to leave was made consciously, there is a higher percentage of patriotic sentiments among IDPs.

If the first wave of IDPs consisted mainly of residents of Crimea and Donbas (in 2021, about 1.3 million IDPs were registered), then after 24 February 2022, migration flows covered a much larger number of people from the entire Left Bank. According to the Strategy of Demographic Development of Ukraine until 2040 (2024), as of July 2024, there were 4.7 million registered internally displaced persons, of which 3.4 million people (73.5%) were displaced after the full-scale invasion. In 2022 alone, the number of IDP families increased from 124,000 to 739,000. As O. Zlobina (2016) points out in her research, looking at the distribution of internally displaced persons across the country, one can not only acknowledge the scale of the issue but also its nationwide character. Thus, in six regions, the number of displaced persons is approaching 100,000, and there is not a single region that has not accepted displaced persons from Crimea or Donbas. At the same time, the lives of more than 1,700,000 people were practically destroyed, and the question of their reintegration into society arose, the author adds.

According to the sociological survey conducted by Group “Rating” (2023), as a result of the war, 17% of the population changed their place of permanent residence, with 15% (9% in the East) planning to return in the near future, 27% (16% in the East) willing to wait, 37% (49% in the East) intending to return after the war, and 13% (15% in the East) not planning to return at all. In total, 55% of residents changed their place of residence in the East, and 21% in the South. At the same time, 88% of IDPs from the East left their area, and 10% remained within the region, while only 33% of IDPs from the West left the area, 25% remained within it, and 41% within the region. This study revealed a trend towards an increase in the number of those who identify themselves as citizens

of Ukraine, from 76% to 94%. Interestingly, sociologists have also recorded an increase in those who identify themselves primarily as Europeans. Group “Rating” (2023) claims that the number of such people reaches 50%, while the number of those who call themselves “Soviet people” has decreased to 10%. According to the monitoring data cited by S. Dembitskyi (2022b), self-identification as a citizen of the USSR has also fallen from 2.8% to 1.4%. There is a weakening of local identification in favour of national and civic identification, which can be considered a favourable factor for strengthening national consolidation.

External migration and demographic forecasts

External migration has become another serious problem triggered by the war. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the Strategy of Demographic Development of Ukraine until 2040 (2024), which provides the following figures: “Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, 34.39 million Ukrainians have left Ukraine and 30.91 million have entered (as of 31 May 2024). Thus, there are 3.48 million Ukrainians abroad who have left and not returned. In addition, according to surveys by the Centre for Economic Strategy, the number of Ukrainians who left through the Russian Federation to European countries is 7.4%, or 0.26 million. According to reports by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1.2 million Ukrainians have been deported or voluntarily left for the internationally recognised territory of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus. Accordingly, the total number of Ukrainians abroad is 5 million people. Additionally, at least 19.5 thousand children have been illegally deported to the territory of the Russian Federation”.

A high degree of correlation can be established between the self-identification of those who voluntarily left for Russia or Belarus and the forecasts regarding their return to Ukraine. Most likely, they are lost to the nation. It is more difficult to predict the behaviour of those who left for EU countries (Buzarov, 2023). At first glance, it seems that they were fleeing the war, and after

its end, when the threat to life disappears, these people should return to Ukraine. But it is not so simple. According to the Strategy of Demographic Development of Ukraine until 2040 (2024), in January 2024, 52.5% of respondents planned to return to Ukraine, 7.3% did not plan to, 15.8% were rather unlikely to return, and 24.5% were hesitant. It is clear that the longer the war lasts, the fewer refugees will return to Ukraine.

It should be noted that the European Union countries have created favourable conditions for the adaptation of Ukrainian refugees. Many of them have state programs to support displaced persons and provide social benefits. In other words, the EU is not interested in the return of Ukrainians home. At the same time, not all Ukrainian citizens have found themselves in Europe. In the focus groups conducted, they complained about the high level of bureaucracy in European institutions, excessive social control, and the lack of social mobility. Abroad, Ukrainians are reevaluating the effectiveness of state institutions in Ukraine and improving their assessments of government actions. It is necessary to work specifically with this category of migrants to encourage their return to their homeland. Among Ukrainians themselves, there is an ambiguous attitude towards those who left the country during times of crisis. Group "Rating" (2023) records a generally positive attitude among respondents towards women who left abroad with children, an indifferent attitude towards women who left without children, and the most negative attitude towards men of conscription age who fled abroad to avoid mobilisation.

Considering the research results, Ukraine's national elites should prioritise communication with Ukrainians who have left the country, to facilitate their return. Undoubtedly, the main factor influencing the decision to return will be the end of the war with Ukraine's victory. The second factor is positive trends towards changes in life towards European standards. However, analysing the experiences of everyday life abroad, and the negative practices that Ukrainians have

encountered in their search for a safe life, the country's leadership should reform the country taking into account the positive social practices that have formed in Ukraine.

Conclusions

The period since 24th February 2022 can be characterised as a new state of the Ukrainian political nation, where substantial changes have occurred in Ukrainians' understanding of their own identity. National identity has an "umbrella" nature, which can encompass, and hold under its "wing" very different identities: regional, ethnic, and individual. Its characteristic feature is that it cements a large group – a nation. This process occurs through intercultural communication both within the country and between countries, which are equally important for the awareness of national identity. Resistance to the Russian invasion was accompanied by a surge of patriotic sentiments in Ukraine, an increase in the cohesion of citizens around their belonging to a single Ukrainian nation, the idea of fighting for independence and democratic values. A peculiar catalyst for national consciousness, the formation of a civic identity among Ukrainians, and a surge of pride in belonging to the Ukrainian state was the feeling of an existential threat from Russia, fear of encroachment on national and personal security. Simultaneously, in the conditions of war, sociopolitical narratives that had dominated the national information and electoral space since the beginning of independence have completely lost any significance. The consolidation of Ukrainians during the war has made irrelevant the socio-political discussions that were considered vital before the Russian invasion. Such issues include regional, linguistic, ethnic, and confessional differences among Ukrainian citizens. The use of the Ukrainian language has expanded, and the Ukrainian people have realised that language defines spiritual and political boundaries. The Ukrainian nation has become more homogeneous, consolidated around shared values. Prospects for further research on this topic include an

analysis of the consequences of emigration and ways to return Ukrainians who have left abroad, as well as the integration of internally displaced persons into the social, economic, and cultural life of the country. None.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Зміни національної ідентичності українців під час війни

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Анотація. Стаття присвячена проблемі переформатування національної ідентичності українців внаслідок російсько-української війни та впливу останньої на соціальну і політичну атмосферу в суспільстві. Метою статті був аналіз змін національної ідентичності українців під впливом повномасштабної російської агресії. Статтю підготовлено за результатами науково-дослідної роботи на тему «Міжкультурна комунікація в соціальних практиках як фактор формування цивілізаційної ідентичності в повоєнний період». У роботі проаналізовані дані соціологічних опитувань, статистичні дані, історичні події. Використано методи контент-аналізу, етнографічного дослідження, історико-порівняльний метод. Використання цих методів забезпечило багатовимірний аналіз явища та дозволило встановити причинно-наслідкові зв'язки у трансформації української національної ідентичності. Розглянуто проблему співвідношення національної ідеї та національної ідентичності. Доведено, що в різні періоди існування української держави зміст національної ідеї був різним. Досліджено зміну основних маркерів ідентичності під впливом російсько-української війни. Проаналізовано динаміку розвитку національної ідентичності, яку пов'язують зі становленням громадянського суспільства і громадянської ідентичності. Зазначено, що визначну роль у формуванні національної ідентичності завжди відігравала українська інтелігенція, культурні діячі, військові і духовні лідери нації. Основними маркерами національної української ідентичності, які актуалізувались під час війни, є однорідність суспільства, подолання розколу «Схід-Захід», розширення поля використання української мови, україноцентрична позиція переселенців. Всі ці аспекти національної ідентичності демонструють сприятливі зміни на користь консолідації нації. Одним зі складних наслідків російсько-української війни є зовнішня міграція і невтішні демографічні прогнози, про що свідчать матеріали соціологічних опитувань

Ключові слова: регіональна ідентичність; трансформація національної ідентичності; російсько-українська війна; політика ідентичності; фактори зміни ідентичності; громадянська ідентичність; соціальні практики



Effective communication: Signs, factors, procedural characteristics

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Abstract. Scientific substantiation of the factors, as well as procedural and effective characteristics of effective communication, allows overcoming the contradictions between the content and form that arise in modern communication, and thus helps to reduce the elevated level of conflict, which is the greatest burden of large and small social groups. That is why the purpose of the study was to identify the features of effective communication to improve the quality of communication as a basis for optimising social interaction and developing interpersonal relationships. The methods employed in this study included thematic analysis, conceptual analysis, synthesis, abstraction, and modelling. A theoretical analysis of the conceptual provisions on effective communication was performed. It was found that the effectiveness of communication is determined by the abilities, qualities, and communication skills of the subjects of communication, congruence, and empathy, which are manifested in their communication behaviour. It was found that effective communication helps to achieve mutual understanding of interlocutors, convergence of their psychological positions, determines the mutual development of communication subjects, serves as the basis for normalising the mental state of representatives of social groups, ensures positive group dynamics, and the development of constructive strategies for interpersonal interaction. The findings of scientific research on external factors of effective communication were summarised. It was found that a strong level of communication effectiveness is manifested in those situations of social interaction characterised by stability, predictability, and a prominent degree of certainty. Effective communication is one of the features of those social groups characterised by a strong level of cohesion, clarity of the role structure, and the presence of jointly developed values that define the organisational culture. The practical significance of this study lies in the possibility of considering the findings in the practice of professional communication of psychologists, social workers, teachers, managers, civil servants, and healthcare professionals; their application in determining the causes of destructive conflicts in interpersonal relationships and group interaction, identifying ways to prevent them

Keywords: empathy; congruence; communication skills; communication situation; quality of communication

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Introduction

A feature of modern communication lies in the active use of information and communication technologies. In the digital era, communication is driven by values formed based on mass culture, scientific achievements, and the introduction of technical means. The development of technologies helps to expand the range of communication channels, simplifies the establishment of contacts, and overcomes spatial restrictions. At the same time, it leads to contradictions between the form and content; the means and depth of communication; the volume of messages and the ability of recipients to decode them adequately. Disagreements cause conflicts and increase social tension. The global burden caused by the growth of conflict is increasing in all countries, especially in Ukraine during the war. All the above necessitates the investigation of effective communication, which contributes to the normalisation of the mental state of various segments of the population and is a condition for enhancing social interaction.

The issue of effective communication is widely covered in science. The effectiveness of communication is interpreted from the standpoint of social and role relations. L. Orban-Lembryk & I. Oros (2021) associated the significance of communication with the establishment of contacts in business interaction, which is characterised by mutual changes in the socio-psychological situation, values, and intentions of participants. This is conditioned by the development of a common goal, as well as the motivation to achieve the outcome. The researchers of the above-mentioned study defined the key indicators of the effectiveness of business communication as follows: satisfaction with communication, relationships, negotiation competence, cooperation, communication skills, and rapprochement of partners. Supporting the significance of these conclusions, the author of the present study is inclined to argue that the interpretation of the signs of effective communication should also consider situations in which the positions of the subjects on important issues

of interaction diverge, which may cause dissatisfaction of the participants with the communication process.

L. Kalmykova *et al.* (2020) considered the problem of reasonable communication, which is close in nature to effective communication. The researchers associated the solution with internal speech, which is a mechanism of internal programming of the statement and its disclosure in the external manifestation of the sender, as well as perception and understanding by the recipient. The clarity of the internal speech programme and its understanding in the recipient's listening are the basis for the development of a coherent, holistic message and feedback. T. Marbun *et al.* (2023) concluded that effective communication is not limited to the exchange of information – it involves the ability to understand the emotional context of the message, the communicator's intentions, adequate decoding and feedback; it is based on the subjectivity of the participants and openness. Thus, mutual understanding and partnership are vital features of effective communication.

E. Donovan *et al.* (2021) substantiated the principles of an effective communicator: variability of the message volume; use of verbal and non-verbal means; consideration of the influence of physical and psychological contexts; adaptation of the message to the audience; multiple goals are the basis of interaction; consideration of communication in terms of content and relationships; communication can be learned by constant practice; a person cannot but communicate; the meaning of communication lies in the person; communication is irreversible; good communication is cooperation. Thus, an effective communicator should have the knowledge, skills, and practice to communicate effectively. In their study of communication effectiveness, M. Fuller *et al.* (2024) proved the significance of empathy as a communication competence. Its value lies in improving understanding, building relationships based on trust, and cooperation in various professional contexts.

J. Arendt *et al.* (2019) studied mindfulness in communication, its key components being attention and acceptance. Their manifestation lies in demonstrating a non-judgemental position, which contributes to the transition to a cautious, attentive reaction, which is decentralisation – the experience of emotions and thoughts as temporary mental phenomena. Hence the need to consider mindfulness in the study of communication. R. Ziegler *et al.* (2021) identified significant characteristics of modern communication: institutionalisation, diversification, increase in communication channels, and diversity. M. Siddiqi *et al.* (2022) emphasised the significance of considering these features, findings that the basis of countering cybercrime is the communicative competence and information technology awareness of the individual. According to the author of the current study, it is necessary to use the term “communicative competence” considering the latest features of communication. D. Krystallidou *et al.* (2024) proved that effective communication ensures the psychophysical normalisation of socially vulnerable groups of the population, contributes to their psychological support and stress resistance. N. Morelli *et al.* (2023) confirmed these findings, emphasising that communication effectiveness is a factor in family adaptability.

The purpose of this study was to perform a theoretical analysis of the problem of effective communication to substantiate the factors and procedural characteristics of this process. This purpose was fulfilled by solving the following tasks: to identify the signs of effective communication; to motivate its factors; to identify its procedural characteristics. The scientific originality of this study was to substantiate the features, factors, and procedural characteristics of effective communication.

Materials and Methods

The study employed theoretical research methods, particularly the method of thematic analysis, to investigate the features of effective communication. V. Braun & V. Clarke (2020) defined it as a

method, the essence of which lies in processing the textual data. The methodological framework of this method of scientific cognition is the understanding of language as a phenomenon that reflects universal or subjective (of a particular person) reality. Its procedure is based on interpretation through coding and identification of themes and patterns. This method helped to perform a qualitative in-depth analysis of the conceptual provisions of the researchers who investigated the problem of effective communication. This method was applied using a deductive approach, in which the analysis was performed from the top down: the study was based on theoretical positions that determined the understanding and explanation of the collected data. The literary sources were selected based on the following criteria: the presence of concepts of effective communication, the factors or signs of the social and psychological phenomenon in question, the degree to which the topics presented in the sources are related to the principal topic. This approach helped to conduct a wide search for scientific sources and select those that correspond to the subject of the study; determine the degree of research on the problem of effective communication, find out the level of coverage of the features and factors of effective communication, and conduct a qualitative analysis of the findings of scientific research on this topic. The use of thematic analysis helped to summarise scientific ideas about effective communication.

These methods were complemented by conceptual analysis, synthesis, comparison, and abstraction (Maksymenko & Nosenko, 2020). Conceptual analysis was employed to substantiate the terms “effective communication”, “signs of effective communication”; synthesis – to combine the identified factors into a single system of internal factors; comparison – to compare diverse conceptual approaches to the interpretation of the phenomenon under study; abstraction – specifically, isolation, to separate the procedural characteristics of effective communication, to determine the signs of effective communication, identification –

to create classes of “effective characteristics” and “procedural characteristics”, modelling – to create a model of effective communication.

The study was conducted in several stages: the first stage determined the purpose and substantiated the criteria for selecting scientific texts; at the second stage, the necessary scientific literature was searched; at the third stage, the selection was made according to the identified criteria; the fourth stage involved theoretical analysis of the materials; the fifth stage formulated the conclusions. The study was performed based on the following scientometric databases: Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, Google Scholar, as well as archives: Internet Archive Python Library, Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine. The total number of analysed sources was 131. Only 28 of them were selected to formulate the conclusions. The study presents literature in Ukrainian and English. The clarity, focus, determinism, reliability, and cost-effectiveness of the methods used helped to obtain valid research findings.

Results and Discussion

Process of communication as a social and psychological phenomenon

Communication is a process that determines the formation and development of a personality, it is a sphere of its socialisation, determining various aspects of life. The complexity of this process leads to a considerable number of its interpretations, which complicates the investigation of this

socio-psychological phenomenon. Communication was considered as a process of generating meanings by sending and receiving verbal and non-verbal symbols and signs that are influenced by varying contexts (Wood, 2019).

C. Lewin (1951) was one of the first scientists to investigate the problem of communication effectiveness. The researcher considered communication from the standpoint of field theory. According to C. Lewin, communication is determined by behaviour as a function of personality. The researcher defended the conceptual position that a person alone cannot objectively assess their communication with others or create an idea of the assessment of their communication by others. To understand their attitudes, test behavioural patterns and correct them, an individual must enter the context of group communication. Thus, the effectiveness of communication is determined by the reflectivity of the individual, their ability to self-regulation and self-development, and the context of group communication. This approach helps to identify certain intrapsychic factors of effective communication but does not reveal its features as a process.

Considering communication as a subject-subject process, N. Fiore (2010) differentiated the terms “effective” and “ineffective” communication. The researcher built his concept on the interdependence of communication and interaction processes. Only communication can be qualified as effective if it results in a deepening interaction. A comparison of these concepts is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of effective and ineffective communication

Communication type/components	Ineffective communication	Effective communication
Goals	Protection of exclusively one's individual plans, focus on achieving one's personal goals, and defence of one's own convictions.	Consideration of the views, opinions, beliefs, and plans of all interlocutors.
Style	Communication based on the philosophy of modelling a bipolar worldview in terms of “win-loss”, “right-wrong”, “good-bad”, without considering transitional states; ignoring the intentions and feelings of the interlocutor, striving to make the other person submit to the “right” position – one's own.	Showing attention, respect, considering the feelings of the subjects of communication, building communication on the awareness of the possibility of winning for both participants, the intention to understand their thoughts and at the same time hear their interlocutor.

Table 1. Continued

Communication type/components	Ineffective communication	Effective communication
Outcome	Conflict, resistance of interlocutors, loss of group interaction efficiency.	Mutual understanding, coherence, increased group effectiveness
Interpretation of success	A pause in the conflict, the interlocutor's retreat from their goals, aspirations, etc.	Mutual respect, deepening interaction

Source: developed by the author of this study based on the theory put forward by N. Fiore (2010)

Considering this position, the effectiveness of communication can be assessed only with the use of retrospective analysis. Researchers often determine the effectiveness of communication based on the model of communication proposed by H. Lasswell (1951). Signs of effectiveness are identified by analysing the sender's choice of communication channel, the content and volume of the message, and the recipient's feedback. Thus, communication is considered effective if an adequate communication channel is selected, the content of the message is clearly formulated and contains relevant information, and the feedback confirms the correctness of the message decoding (Wenxiu, 2015). At the same time, an accurate understanding of the received message requires an awareness of both the direct and hidden content of the information (Skrypchenko *et al.*, 2020).

The specific features of effective communication are also considered from the standpoint of speech influence. Developing the concept of M. Argyle *et al.* (1967), wherein the criterion of effectiveness is the ability to fulfil the purpose of communication, communication is considered as a multi-purpose process. Goal-setting in this process is marked by an existing feature – it is systemic. This property is conditioned by the fact that the sender primarily seeks to convey information in a coded message and check the correctness of its understanding. In addition, both the sender and the receiver are aware of the subject of their communication, which means that they receive something, influence each other's behaviour, persuade or form new knowledge/perceptions. Achievement of the substantive goal alone is a sign of productive communication. The aspect of interpersonal relations is also important for

effective communication. Both participants in the communication process, if it is effective, prefer to maintain sympathy in the relationship and develop it (Selivanova, 2012).

There are always at least two participants in the communication process, and therefore it is worth determining what purpose is being fulfilled. The author of the present study also considers it reasonable to ask whether the interlocutors are always aware of the purpose of their communication. Thus, the author supports the idea that effective communication is that which allows the interlocutors to achieve their goals while maintaining a balance in the relationship. It is also worth paying attention to whether communication is equally effective for all participants in the process.

Internal factors required for effective communication

The effectiveness of communication was also considered in the conceptual field of transactional analysis. According to the provisions of this approach, the unit of communication is a transaction – verbal and non-verbal interaction between two people. Its structural units are stimulus and reaction. The founder of this approach, E. Berne (1964) substantiated the position that in communication, when making a transactional stimulus or responding with a reaction, a person is in one of the ego states – Parent, Child, Adult (Fig.1).

When communicating, a person takes the position of one of these ego states at a particular time. The Child ego state is characterised by spontaneity, joy, and creativity, while at the same time it can be limited by rules and prohibitions or rebellion. Being in the Parent ego state, a per-

son shows care, reassures, approves of another or criticises and evaluates. A sign of the adult ego-state is a combination of the other two (Child, Parent); in communication, this position is manifested as objectivity, rationality, prudence, and analyticity. These ego states determine the communication strategy of an individual (Harris, 1967). If people in communication occupy

complementary positions (e.g., Parent-Child, Child-Child, Parent-Parent, Adult-Adult), they form additional transactions. Otherwise, there are cross transactions that lead to conflicts and termination of communication. Communication that is based on a common language is effective: Adult to Adult, Child to Child, Parent to Parent (Berne, 1964).

<p>Child spontaneity, joy, creativity, obedience, rebellion</p>	<p>Parent care, comfort, approval, criticism, evaluation</p>	<p>Adult Child+Parent objectivity, rationality, prudence, analytical approach</p>
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Figure 1. Manifestations of personality ego states in the communication process

Source: developed by the author of this study based on the findings of E. Berne (1964)

S. Rogers (1946) considered the problem of effective communication from the standpoint of humanistic psychology. According to the scientist, the essential features of an effective communicator are congruence, the ability to accept oneself, the ability to accept others, and empathy. In this concept, congruence is explained as openness in communication, lack of psychological defence, and masking of one's emotions. A congruent interlocutor is sincere and honest in expressing his feelings, modelling their behaviour on their values and beliefs, while maintaining their authenticity. Since a person's reactions, actions, and deeds are consistent with their internal state, they are predictable and stable in communication with others. Congruence also leads to integrity, harmony of the personality, and the absence of intrapsychic conflict. Congruence ensures the ability of a person to respond adequately to the situation that arises in communication, to coordinate their feelings and thoughts with the circumstances of interaction.

Self-acceptance is the ability of an individual to recognise themselves, to express unconditional love for themselves, the way they really are. Self-acceptance means showing self-respect, treating oneself as a person who can make independent choices, believes in oneself and one's capabilities, trusts oneself, and is worthy of respect.

This trust is not limited to the field of consciousness; it is not only faith in the power of one's intellect, but also trust in one's body, the ability to understand one's body. Aware of their psychophysiological integrity, a person becomes fully functional, which positively affects communication. Only a person who is ready to accept themselves can accept another. Acceptance of the other is the ability of a person to have an unconditional positive attitude towards the interlocutor: accepting and appreciating them as they are, without judgement or conditions. This attitude provides a person with a sense of psychological comfort and freedom in communication. Empathy involves expressing sensitivity to the emotions, experiences, and states of the interlocutor, the ability to be aware of these states, and to cognitively structure the affective sphere of communication. Sensitivity to the emotional state of another is the ability to perceive the state of another as if they were feeling it, and a penetrating understanding of the meaning of the state in which another is. Empathy provides an opportunity to support a person both at the entrance to the communication process and in its further course (Rogers, 1946).

The significance of empathy in communication is confirmed in further research. Its value is manifested in understanding the interlocutor.

Correct decoding of a message is impossible without awareness of the feelings and experiences of another, which is empathy in its essence. There are three possible manifestations of empathy in communication: empathic response, perspective taking, and sympathetic response. Empathic response is the experience of emotional reactions analogous to the real or expected emotional manifestations of another in observing them. Perspective taking is manifested as a person's imagining themselves in the other's shoes. Sympathetic response is care, compassion, and empathy. It differs from the previous two in that the individual does not sympathise with the interlocutor: the communicator's awareness of how the interlocutor feels leads to care, pity, and sadness (Verderber *et al.*, 2017). Consequently, congruence, acceptance, and empathy are essential factors of effective communication, as they give an opportunity for a person to deeply understand themselves and their interlocutor.

L. Durán-Terrádez & T. Baviera (2023) defined effective communication as communication that causes changes in the cognitive or affective sphere of the recipient. The principal way to achieve these changes is to transmit a message of informational, developmental, or educational content to the recipient. The outcome of such communication is a change in attitudes, improvement of knowledge, development of skills, and building of confidence of the recipient. However, the author of the present study believes that this approach lacks consideration of certain essential characteristics of communication. Specifically, the fact that in the communication process, the positions of the sender and the receiver are rather conditional, they are constantly changing, alternating. If one considers them as relatively stable, then, clearly, communication is considered narrowly – as a process that takes place only within the framework of social and role interaction, which is characterised by the subject-object system. Effective communication is nevertheless focused on mutual influence, which results in the development of all participants.

This suggests the significance of an individual's ability to overcome egocentrism. However, a considerable number of people lack the ability to understand the position of another in communication. According to T. Kesselring & U. Müller (2011), egocentrism (centrality) is interpreted as the inability to accept the position of another. Egocentric thinking has common features with autistic thinking: it lacks logical consistency, is dominated by images rather than concepts, and is characterised by a low level of awareness. This quality is inherent in children whose egocentric thinking and speech do not allow them to understand how their position in communication differs from others. They equate an objective communication situation with their own vision of it. In their research, the authors proved that egocentrism is overcome in a child's cognitive development. Thus, already at primary school age, a child achieves decentration. However, centration is also inherent in adults when they use naïve, spontaneous judgement, which is essentially the same as in children. Manifestations of egocentrism in communication lead to barriers, misunderstandings, and conflicts.

This allows identifying the procedural characteristics of effective communication. If people can understand the position of another, then as a result of communication, the interlocutors understand each other. This mutual understanding helps to reduce the uncertainty of the communication situation. Thus, the procedural characteristics of effective communication are the reduction of uncertainty and understanding of oneself and the interlocutor. The resultant features are the achievement of mutual understanding, deepening of relationships, and mutual development. Summarising the concepts discussed the internal factors of effective communication can be identified as follows:

- reflexivity of the individual, their ability to self-regulation and self-development;
- the ability to show attention and respect for the other in communication, to hear them, to consider their position;

- reliability of interlocutors;
- communication skills (specifically, the ability to choose an adequate communication channel, create clear and understandable messages, analyse feedback, understand direct and hidden meanings of messages);
- ability to determine and consider the position (ego-state) of the interlocutor;
- congruence;
- acceptance of self and other;
- empathy.

The identified factors contribute to a deeper understanding of effective communication and create the basis for identifying the specific features of communication of an individual.

External factors and signs of effective communication

Ukrainian psychology has substantiated external factors of effective communication. These include the situation of communication, the circumstances of communication, the specific features of the social group, and the presence of a common thesaurus (Moskalenko, 2008). No one can communicate without considering the communication situation. It is defined as the conditions under which communication takes place and the means used by the subject of communication. The components of the situation are the cultural environment, which appears in the system of social norms and values; social environment; material, tangible world. When starting communication, an individual is orientated in the communication situation. This orientation can be of two types: motivational and evaluative. A person must be capable of assessing the conditions in which communication takes place, adjusting the means of communication, determining the strategy, agreeing on the style of communication, structuring the model of communication, and possibly changing communication behaviour and communication goals. Therefore, a stable situation with a strong level of certainty and predictability is more favourable for effective communication. Conversely,

a threatening, conflictual situation can cause temporary disorientation. Communication is also affected by circumstances, whether they are official or intimate. To communicate effectively, an individual must match the means of communication, style, strategy, and method of self-presentation to the circumstances.

The social and psychological characteristics of a group that affect the effectiveness of communication are the group's composition, role structure, values, norms, level of group cohesion, and dynamics. N. Kellerman (1979), defining the most optimal group size, advocated the rule of eight. Groups with this number of members usually create effective communication systems that facilitate direct communication, during which attraction can manifest itself as the basis for a favourable psychological climate; this composition also prevents the formation of microgroups. In such groups, each member is aware of the significance of their social role, and these social roles determine the nature of communication: between a manager and a subordinate – subordination, between colleagues – parity. A vital regulator of communication is group norms, which define the boundaries of communication and regulate the communicative behaviour of participants in collective communication. The level of group cohesion determines the degree of control over group norms: the higher the group cohesion, the more control over their observance by all participants. Violations of the norms lead to contradictions, misunderstandings, conflicts, and destroy the effectiveness of communication.

Communication will also be effective if the group generates a common thesaurus – a recognised system of meanings that everyone will adhere to. As people become integrated into society, they belong to diverse groups: age, gender, ethnicity, and profession, which can lead to the use of different meanings that can cause distortions, misrepresentation of information in messages, and the inability to decode them correctly. External factors are especially significant to consider when organising communication between people

who do not know each other, for instance, during trainings, conferences, presentations, etc.

The analysis of various scientific approaches to understanding communication effectiveness, substantiation of internal and consideration of external factors of effective communication allow identifying its features: it promotes mutual understanding, deepening of interpersonal interaction and group effectiveness; makes provision for the possibility to consider the positions of all subjects of communication; is based on acceptance, commitment of individuals who carry it out; is caused by personal qualities of the subjects of communication; helps to prevent problems, destructive conflicts; is based on the communication abilities of the sender and the receiver; enables the development of communication subjects; promotes the development of confidence and resilience of communication participants; provides an opportunity to strengthen relations between partners; causes the following effects: expansion and deepening of participants' knowledge, improvement of their skills, change of attitudes, social, and psychological characteristics of the group – ensures the development of cohesion, internalisation of values and norms of the group by participants, promotes positive changes in the psychological climate.

Thus, the effectiveness of communication is determined by both external and internal factors that are not homogeneous. Some of them can be developed by influencing the subjects of interaction, while others are quite difficult to change, and therefore should be considered when organising group communication or interpersonal communication. Understanding the essential features of effective communication allows analysing this process, and considering the procedural characteristics, allows performing psychocorrection during its development, until its completion.

Conclusions

The effectiveness of communication depends on all its participants. Effective communication allows them to demonstrate their subjectivity,

helps to achieve mutual understanding, increase group and individual efficiency. Based on the theoretical analysis of the conceptual provisions on effective communication, the study identified the features of effective communication. These include promotion of mutual understanding, deepening of interpersonal interaction and group effectiveness; ensuring the possibility to consider the positions of all subjects of communication; based on acceptance, commitment of individuals who carry it out; conditioned by the personal qualities of the subjects of communication; promotion of prevention of problems and destructive conflicts; based on the communication abilities of the sender and the receiver; promotion of development of subjects of communication; ensuring the development of confidence and resilience of communication participants; providing an opportunity to strengthen relationships between partners; causing effects such as expanding and deepening participants' knowledge, improving their skills, changing attitudes, and social and psychological characteristics of the group – ensuring the development of cohesion, internalisation of group values and norms by participants, and promoting positive changes in the psychological climate.

Based on the consideration of conceptual provisions on the conditionality of communication by behaviour; ego states from the standpoint of which communication is carried out; the main aspects of persuasive communication, approaches to modelling the structure of the communication process, and the fundamental principles of humanistic psychology, the internal factors of effective communication were identified. They include abilities (to express attention and respect for others, to consider their position, to identify and account for ego states); reflexivity, reliability, congruence; interlocutors' communication skills, acceptance of oneself and others, empathy.

External factors of effective communication are the situation of communication (considering social norms and values by the subject of communication, motivational, and evaluative

orientation, correction according to the identified conditions, means of communication, style, communication strategy, change of goals of the communication strategy), the most favourable for effective communication is a stable situation with a strong level of certainty, predictability; social and psychological characteristics of the group: group composition, role structure, values, norms, level of group cohesion, dynamics; a common thesaurus that enables understanding and correct decoding of information.

Thus, effective communication is determined by internal and external factors. Its procedural characteristics include the reduction of uncertainty, understanding of oneself and the interlocutor, and its effective characteristics are the possibility of achieving mutual understanding, deepening of relationships, and mutual

development. Considering internal and external factors of effective communication is of practical significance, as it allows creating conditions that improve the quality of people's lives and their activities. The criteria for the effectiveness of communication of a particular person are their adaptability, self-efficacy, leadership potential, and sociometric status in the group. Prospects for further research lie in the development of training programmes for the development of effective communication skills for future specialists in socio-economic specialities.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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Ефективне спілкування: ознаки, чинники, процесуальні характеристики

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Анотація. Наукове обґрунтування чинників, а також процесуальних та результативних характеристик ефективного спілкування дає змогу подолати суперечності між змістом і формою, що постають в сучасному спілкуванні, а отже, сприяє зниженню високого рівня конфліктності, що є основним тягарем великих та малих соціальних груп. Саме тому метою дослідження було виявлення особливостей ефективного спілкування для покращення якості спілкування як підґрунтя оптимізації соціальної взаємодії, розвитку міжособистісних стосунків. У дослідженні застосовувалися методи тематичного аналізу, понятійного аналізу, синтезу, абстрагування, моделювання. Було здійснено теоретичний аналіз концептуальних положень про ефективне спілкування. Встановлено, що ефективність спілкування зумовлюється здатностями, якостями та комунікативними вміннями суб'єктів спілкування, конгруентністю та емпатією, що проявляються в їхній комунікативній поведінці. Виявлено, що ефективне спілкування сприяє досягненню взаєморозуміння співрозмовників, зближенню їхніх психологічних позицій, зумовлює взаєморозвиток суб'єктів спілкування, є підґрунтям нормалізації психічного стану представників соціальних груп, забезпечує позитивну групову динаміку, вироблення конструктивних стратегій міжособистісної взаємодії. Було узагальнено результати наукових досліджень зовнішніх чинників ефективного спілкування. З'ясовано, що високий рівень ефективності спілкування проявляється в тих ситуаціях соціальної взаємодії, що характеризуються стабільністю, передбачуваністю, високим ступенем визначеності. Ефективне спілкування є однією з ознак тих соціальних груп, що характеризуються високим рівнем згуртованості, чіткістю рольової структури, наявністю спільно вироблених цінностей, що визначають організаційну культуру. Практична значущість дослідження полягає у можливості врахування висновків у практиці професійного спілкування психологів, соціальних працівників, педагогів, менеджерів, державних службовців, медичних працівників; застосуванні їх при визначенні причин виникнення деструктивних конфліктів в міжособистісних стосунках та груповій взаємодії, виявленні шляхів їх запобігання

Ключові слова: емпатія; конгруентність; комунікативні вміння; ситуація спілкування; якість спілкування



Content and structure of the concept “culture of modern cyberspace usage”

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Abstract. The relevance of this topic is driven by the rapid development of digital technologies, which have become an integral part of contemporary daily life. The increasing volume of information available in cyberspace and the challenges associated with its efficient use necessitate new approaches to fostering a culture of interaction with digital resources. Developing a culture of cyberspace usage is a key factor in ensuring security, ethics, and productivity within the digital environment. This article aimed to highlight and analyse the issue of the culture of individual interaction in modern cyberspace, which lies at the intersection of multiple disciplines, including pedagogy, psychology, philosophy, and cultural studies. The study also sought to explore the content and structure of the central concept of “cyberculture” through the lens of related notions, such as general personal culture, digital culture, information culture, and media culture. The article emphasised that cyberculture, as a set of communication and behavioural norms within the information society in virtual spaces, is fundamentally grounded in communicative practices governed by specific requirements and frameworks. This regulation arises from the boundless and borderless nature of communication in virtual environments. The development of society is characterised by the widespread, rapid, and

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often uncontrolled involvement of individuals in virtual social spaces, the characteristics of which do not always align with real-world conditions. Consequently, the concept of cyber socialisation gains particular relevance as an indicator of cyberculture. The article highlighted the significant impact of cyberculture on societal content and individual consciousness, shaping stereotypes and behavioural patterns in real social environments. It introduces and reflects new demands and needs, influencing personality construction and factors affecting individual expression and social interaction. Additionally, the authors aligned with contemporary researchers' assertions regarding the limitless potential of digital spaces in interpersonal communication, particularly in scenarios where real-world conditions restrict self expression

Keywords: information culture; media culture; digital culture; cyberculture

Introduction

In a modern information-driven society, the challenges of navigating individual and societal existence within the digital realm are paramount. The culture of modern cyberspace usage has emerged as an indispensable component of overall personal culture, shaping how individuals function within an information-saturated society. This phenomenon should be understood as a comprehensive preparedness for individuals to adapt to new rules of usage and communication within the digital sphere. It involves, among other things, the construction of personal information landscapes, the development of worldviews, and the understanding of the global information space, including its potential for exploration, transformation, and adaptation to meet individual social, professional, and cognitive needs. The relevance of cultivating a culture of cyberspace usage as an integral part of personal culture is underscored by the fact that the ability to process vast amounts of information and, more importantly, to navigate it effectively, has become an essential skill for professionals across all sectors, regardless of their specific field or the demands of the contemporary labour market.

A significant portion of human activities across various domains is transforming, increasingly migrating into cyberspace. Cyberspace, as a unique system of interactions and communications, possesses a distinct structure, well-defined functionalities, and specific rules of usage. While

offering boundless possibilities for users, cyberspace also introduces previously unknown challenges and threats such as cyberattacks, cyberbullying, cybercrime, and hacking. Consequently, potential users must possess a well-developed set of knowledge and skills, collectively known as the culture of cyberspace usage. Analysing the content and structure of the concept of "culture of modern cyberspace usage" is crucial for understanding how to seamlessly integrate technology into society and create a safe and beneficial digital environment for all users.

Analyses of studies addressing the culture of cyberspace usage focus on several key aspects that reflect the interaction between individuals and the digital environment. It is widely accepted that the primary goal of developing Ukraine's information space aligns with European standards and developmental trajectories, as evidenced by the 2014 EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. The phenomenon of culture of cyberspace usage has also captured the attention of researchers from various disciplines, including education, cultural studies, political science, philosophy, and sociology. This issue, explored in various interpretations (e.g., information literacy, internet culture, cyberculture, digital culture), has sparked interest among scholars worldwide. Terms such as "internet", "virtual environment", and "cyberspace" have become social symbols, readily recognisable as characteristics of contemporary individuals who

are free from outdated stereotypes and lack of information access. For instance, the work of Ukrainian scholars E. Shabala & E. Klyueva (2023) outlines significant aspects of individual interactions with digital environments, examining cyberculture as a phenomenon of modern information society. Among other things, the authors analyse the concept's content and structure, the key challenges associated with it, and the role of education in shaping the culture of cyberspace usage. Researchers K. Sardaryan & D. Sardaryan (2021), investigating the personal aspects of cyberculture as a problem of identity, examine both the positive and negative sides of this phenomenon, touching on moral qualities such as anonymity, accountability, loss of authenticity, the influence of group dynamics, and multiple identities.

Yu. Palekha *et al.* (2020), in their research on information culture, clearly differentiate between “societal information culture”, “individual information culture”, and “organisational information culture”, thus emphasising the recognition of the pervasive influence of the digital environment on all aspects of human life. In their study, V. Bogush *et al.* (2020) explore the foundations of online communication, the characteristics of social network construction and functioning, and the social, psychological, and cultural aspects of cyberspace as a communication medium. They have also analysed and systematised information on the organisation of cybersecurity.

Examining the content of cyberspace usage culture, O. Shaykina (2011) highlights the role of information education for social media and virtual space users, identifying a range of general methodological principles for organising information education. Researcher V. Trofymenko (2022), investigating the characteristics and rules governing human and societal existence in cyberspace, emphasises the interest of foreign scholars in this field while also noting the absence of a unified research strategy for cyberspace. International experts study the culture of cyberspace usage as a global phenomenon. For instance, renowned sociologist M. Castells (2001), who has conducted

extensive research on the information society, also addresses cybersecurity issues in his research. He highlights the role of cyberspace in creating new forms of community, communication, and knowledge sharing, while also pointing out the risks of the digital information landscape. Castells notes that the development of digital technologies creates new risks for governments, corporations, and individuals. He views cyberspace as an open but vulnerable infrastructure that requires effective protection mechanisms. While placing the responsibility for cybersecurity on governments, the author also emphasises that internet regulation often conflicts with the principle of freedom of information, which is a cornerstone of the digital age.

Virtual environments enable people to communicate without the constraints of face-to-face interactions, which can foster greater openness. However, anonymity also poses risks such as cyberbullying and manipulation. This is highlighted by T. Zhosan *et al.* (2014) who, while analysing the benefits and drawbacks of social media and exploring solutions to associated problems, consider virtual communication to be an ambiguous phenomenon, leading to divergent interpretations among researchers. In parallel, I. Levin & D. Mamlock (2021) note that cyberspace influences the transformation of human relationships, cultural norms, and values, creating a unique “digital culture”. This environment demands new models of interaction and adaptation to virtual communication. Contemporary researchers analyse this concept at various levels: individual, group, and societal (global), and identify functions of cyberculture analogous to those of general culture: worldview, regulatory, cognitive, and others (Hoque & Bhuiyan, 2022).

The socio-philosophical concept of information culture and cyberculture as innovative factors shaping the existence of the modern individual and determining the trajectory of societal development is presented in the research of F. Vlasenko & E. Levchenyuk (2019). The researchers highlight the significant problem of the

dominance of mass consciousness in contemporary society, which, in turn, gives rise to standardised desires and beliefs, suppressing critical thinking and a critical attitude towards the vast amount of information in the virtual space. In the informatisation of society, the researchers identify both constructive consequences (accessibility and speed of obtaining diverse information, the possibility of using it in professional, domestic, social, and other spheres, the formation of online groups, associations, and societies, etc.) and destructive ones (cybercrime, cyberfraud, hacking, etc.). Thus, by studying the concept of behaviour in cyberspace, scholars interpret cyberculture as a new sociocultural phenomenon that exists in the context of global digitalisation. The goal of this research was to clarify the content and structure of the concept of “the culture of modern cyberspace usage” based on an analysis of existing scholarly research.

Materials and Methods

The research into the content and structure of the concept of “the culture of modern cyberspace usage” was grounded in an interdisciplinary approach that combined methods from the humanities, social sciences, and technical fields. To investigate the problem at hand, a complex set of methods was employed, including theoretical and sociological approaches. Theoretical methods involved analysis and synthesis (to analyse the research field of concepts and categories such as “cyberculture” and to synthesise the obtained information in order to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomenon under study), comparison, and generalisation for reviewing scientific literature and legislative and regulatory acts, as well as for a comparative analysis of researchers’ viewpoints to clarify the meanings of concepts such as “culture”, “information culture”, “media culture”, “digital culture”, “cyberculture”, and “the culture of modern cyberspace usage”. Sociological methods included content analysis of social media and blogs. Content analysis was used to study the information content, ethical,

and security aspects of the digital space. Particular attention was paid to identifying typical user behaviour patterns.

The research was based on a comprehensive information foundation, including legislative and regulatory documents, recommendations from international organisations on cyberculture, scholarly studies, publications in periodicals addressing the culture of using modern cyberspace, and websites featuring journalistic reflections on the issue. The analysis incorporated academic research examining the concepts of culture, digital literacy, information security, as well as psychological aspects of online behaviour. To investigate empirical aspects, data from surveys and analytical reports on cyberspace usage in various sociocultural contexts was employed. A systematic literature review was conducted to identify key approaches to fostering cyberspace usage culture. The analysis encompassed articles in academic journals, monographs, and conference proceedings from the past 20 years.

The use of various scientific methods of inquiry allowed for an exploration of the problem of cyberspace usage culture from different perspectives – ranging from conceptual understanding to practical implementation. This approach ensured the completeness and reliability of the results. The integration of these methods provided a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of the culture of modern cyberspace usage.

Results and Discussion

The concept of “culture of modern cyberspace usage” and its synonymous terms

The latter half of the 20th century is marked by a widely recognised shift into a new era of civilisational advancement, characterised by intensive technological and informational development across all spheres of society. Contemporary individuals cannot conceive of life without technology, the internet, social networks, search engines, and information and communication technologies. Researchers argue that a leading trend in human civilisational development at the turn of

the 21st century is the so-called massification of public and individual consciousness. The technological advancements of this period have created new conditions for societal and individual development, imposing new demands on personal development in a new society, simultaneously simplifying and complicating social connections and relationships. Both researchers and average internet users confidently and with relative understanding refer to concepts such as “e-learning”, “digital literacy”, “electronic government systems”, “virtual tourism”, and others. Concurrently, the culture of both the individual and society as a whole have acquired a new dimension, entering a new phase of development: it has migrated to the realm of the internet, social networks, interest groups, and chats, and is characterised by concepts such as “information culture”, “media culture”, “cyberculture”, and “culture of cyberspace usage”, which, in turn, shape a qualitatively new worldview with corresponding values, norms, social roles, and behavioural models of contemporary individuals. To comprehensively explore the content of the key concept, the authors of this study examine the terms in the synonymous series: culture, information culture, media culture, digital culture, cyberculture, and culture of cyberspace usage.

Given the research topic, it is appropriate to consider the concept of “21st-century culture” as defined in the terminological dictionary *Culturology*: “The culture of the 21st century refers to new forms and means of realising human achievements, including the implementation of fundamental scientific discoveries, the development of communication, space communication, and computerisation, breakthroughs in biotechnology, the application of new materials, and the emergence of new forms of internationalisation of social life and mass culture” (Grechanivska, 2015). Researchers consider the concept of “information culture” to be the broadest, interpreting it as the informational component of human culture in general, an objective characteristic of the level of all information processes in society and existing information relations (Darmoriz, 2012). However, according to

scholars, the concept of “information culture” is not unique to the modern world, as humanity has always operated with information at all stages of its development; only the methods of information transmission have changed.

F. Vlasenko & E. Levchenyuk (2019) define personal information culture as a comprehensive characteristic of “personal and professional qualities that meet the modern requirements of professional activity, where comprehensive information and knowledge serve as a determining factor, in turn shaping a corresponding system of thinking and worldview”. Sharing the viewpoint of these researchers, the authors of this study believe that the acquisition of information culture is a necessary condition for the development of any thinking individual, and its significance has grown significantly in the era of the widespread use of computer technologies.

A more contemporary concept that reflects the connections and behavioural culture of individuals within the information field of the present day, considering the characteristics of public mass communication in both real and virtual spaces, is what researchers L. Naidyonova & O. Baryshpolets (2009) term “media culture”. They identify two meanings of this concept: 1) the ensemble of information and communication tools and values that influence the formation of public consciousness and the socialisation of individuals, becoming part of humanity’s cultural and historical heritage, contributing to the formation of public consciousness and the socialisation of individuals; and 2) an individual’s ability to function effectively in an information environment, that is, the ability to identify, recognise, and interpret various types of information disseminated by the mass media, and to form an adequate response.

N. Zrazhevskaya (2022) interprets media culture as a “communicative phenomenon associated with the transmission of cultural artefacts and content in a social environment, the formation of images and signs through which ideological, political, and cultural influence is exerted on the audience”, thus highlighting the priority role of

media information in the development of individual culture. H. Onkovych (2008) interprets the concept of media culture as the ability of society to effectively and beneficially use media resources and apply advanced information technologies.

Regarding the concept of “digital culture”, researchers L. Gavrilova & Ya. Topolnyk (2017) tend to interpret its meaning as a “technological phenomenon”, partially equating it with the definition of “electronic culture” and defining it as certain rules for organising a unified information space, as frameworks for presenting the results of communication and certain human activities in the context of the constant use of IT technologies. The most appropriate interpretation in the context of this research is the understanding of “digital culture” presented by K. Litvinova (2016) in her DigitleBlog: it is “a system of rules for human behaviour when using information and communication technologies”.

The term “cyberculture” emerged due to the intensive development of communication technologies in the late 20th century, and it was introduced into scientific discourse at that time. Characterising cyberculture as a modern and unique type of culture for both individuals and society as a whole, researchers define it as 1) a new cultural model based on internet technologies; 2) a spontaneous internet culture, determined by the transience of online connections; 3) a product of internet development; and 4) a media form (Ardevol, 2005). Essentially, cyberculture is a kind of subculture based on computer technologies. Thus, cybersecurity culture is a certain system of interconnected norms, behavioural frameworks, knowledge, skills, and requirements for the professional and psychological qualities of users of virtual space. This system is based on ethical norms and aims to ensure not only a culture of communication in cyberspace but also effective interpersonal interaction and secure information activities in cyberspace (Tarasyuk, 2021). Therefore, cyberculture is a term used to describe the culture generated by the use of information and communication technologies in modern society.

Cyberculture has significantly influenced societal values, priorities, and lifestyles: the lines between the real and virtual worlds have blurred, with the virtual often complementing, extending, or even substituting for reality. Thanks to innovative technologies, geographical location, time zones, language barriers, and physical characteristics have become less significant for interpersonal or professional communication (Sardaryan & Sardaryan, 2021). The term “cyberculture” itself reflects a radical shift in the mentality of contemporary individuals.

The concept of “culture of cyberspace usage” is narrower but more specific compared to the previous terms. The virtual space offers vast opportunities for interpersonal communication, facilitating access to diverse information and fostering the development of intellectual abilities. However, as society has increasingly embraced the digital realm, it has also encountered a range of associated problems that often accompany technological advancements. Computer addiction, particularly among children and adolescents, is one of the most pressing global issues requiring urgent attention. Psychologists, medical professionals, and educators are sounding the alarm, drawing parallels between computer addiction and substance abuse. This problem is becoming more acute as society and technology advance. Therefore, individuals interacting in the virtual space face a variety of challenges, needs, and problems: the need to enhance their digital skills while also grappling with potential psychological and mental changes brought about by their new virtual environment.

V. Demchyk (2016) emphasises that, due to the accelerating pace of information and computerisation in society, an urgent need has arisen to study the impact of global informatisation on both individual users and society as a whole. Given that students are the most active users of cyberspace, targeted efforts to cultivate a culture of cyberspace usage among this demographic can help address the challenges of human-computer interaction.

Therefore, after analysing related terms, the authors of this study defined the concept of “culture of cyberspace usage” as a comprehensive personal characteristic reflecting an individual’s information worldview, values regarding information and online activities, and a set of competencies that enable the use of information technology while adhering to cybersecurity principles.

The component structure of the concept of “culture of modern cyberspace usage”

The necessity of fostering a culture of cyberspace use and developing personal qualities that will help prevent computer addiction is driven, among other reasons, by the fact that computer addiction lies within the individual itself. In the UN General Assembly Resolution (2003), nine interrelated principles of global cybersecurity culture are outlined, including 1) awareness (cyberspace users should be informed about the necessity of adhering to rules and behavioural frameworks in cyberspace); 2) responsibility (participants are responsible for the security of networks according to their

role); 3) adequate response (participants should take timely and collaborative actions to prevent incidents related to security, etc.); 4) democracy (relationships and security in virtual space should be based on the principles of equality and democracy, ensuring “freedom of exchange of thoughts and ideas, free flow of information, its confidentiality, openness, and transparency”); 5) risk assessment (participants should conduct periodic risk assessments to identify threats and vulnerability factors); 6) design and implementation of secure information exchange tools, and so on.

Guided by the methodology of scientific research, the phenomena and phenomena under investigation are broken down into components relating to 1) the informational field (cognitive or knowledge component); 2) the moral-ethical field (emotional, motivational, or moral-ethical component, etc.); 3) the activity-analytical field (activity component, behavioural, or reflective, etc.) (Sayenko *et al*, 2021). A constructive viewpoint is offered by K. Litvinova (2016), who identifies the following components of digital culture (Fig. 1).

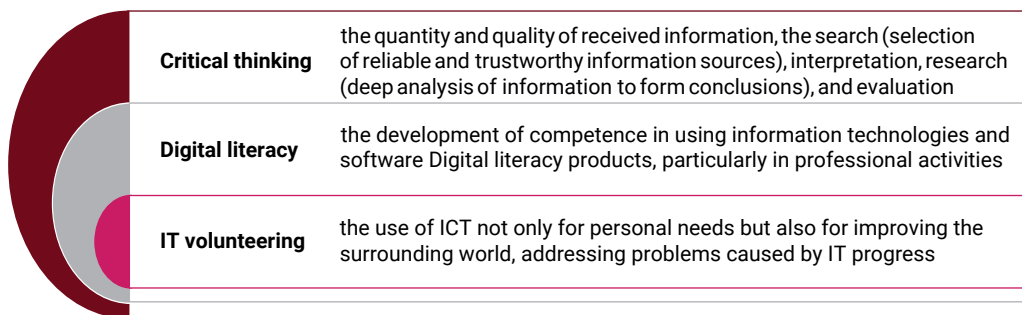


Figure 1. Components of digital culture

Source: K. Litvinova (2016)

In her book, K. Ala-Mutka (2011) identifies the following components of cyberculture and digital literacy based on a review of scientific research: 1) instrumental skills and knowledge, including the ability to safely use media environments; 2) advanced skills and knowledge of effective interaction, communication, and information management; and 3) understanding and

applying general principles of intercultural interaction, critical thinking, awareness of the capabilities of electronic tools, recognition and analysis of cybersecurity issues, and adherence to ethical communication in cyberspace. Building on the research of E. Shabala & E. Klyueva (2023), the concept of “culture of modern cyberspace usage” can be further broken down into the following as-

pects: 1) technical (access to the internet, various platforms, and software that enable user interaction in cyberspace); 2) social (methods of communication, interaction, and community building online); 3) psychological (examining the impact of cyberspace on mental health and user behaviour, preventing internet addiction, cyberbullying, and the effects of social media on self-esteem); and 4) ethical (issues of data privacy, cybersecurity, and digital privacy). Based on this analysis of scholarly studies, the following components of the culture of cyberspace usage can be identified (Table 1).

Table 1. Components of the culture of modern cyberspace usage

Component	Indicators of the manifestation of the researched quality
Informational	Awareness of information about virtual processes, information arrays, and modern communication tools; "understanding the essence of information and information processes, their role in understanding the surrounding reality and human creative activity (Antonchenko, 2004); understanding the terminology defining cyberculture: information resources, information behaviour, informational worldview, information environment, etc." (Ivanshina, 2012).
Moral-legal	Formation of a system of conscious rules and behavioural frameworks, ethical principles regarding interaction in virtual space, development of cybersecurity and cyber hygiene skills.
Behavioural	Formation of the ability to analyse information resources, and identify their possibilities; the ability to isolate, analyse, systematise, use, transform, adapt, store, integrate, and transmit information; the ability to use various software products; skills in applying modern information and communication technologies in professional activities.

Source: authors' development

Considering that the culture of using modern cyberspace has a complex structure of interconnected components, dictated by the challenges of the present, their content is constantly changing following technological, social, and cultural trends.

Conclusions

The issue of using modern cyberspace is particularly relevant in the context of globalisation, cyber threats, the digital divide between generations, and the growing influence of misinformation. The culture of modern cyberspace usage is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon encompassing technological, ethical, social, and legal dimensions, necessitating a comprehensive and integrated approach. Contemporary information and communication technologies offer individuals unprecedented access to information and knowledge, facilitating personal growth, enhancing quality of life, and enabling new levels of achievement. A digitally literate society, and its individual members, value information and information activities, possessing the knowledge and skills to independently utilise information

technologies while adhering to cybersecurity and cyber hygiene practices.

Based on the analysis of scientific research on the subject, it was determined that the culture of cyberspace usage is a comprehensive characteristic of an individual, which includes a system of knowledge, skills, values, and behavioural norms that ensure the appropriate, safe, and ethical use of digital technologies and resources in the modern informational environment. Like any other concept studied as a complex qualitative characteristic of an individual, the culture of using modern cyberspace has a component structure (informational, moral-legal, and behavioural components) and indicators of their manifestation. Considering that the issue of forming a culture of cyberspace usage is multifaceted and interdisciplinary, the prospects for further research lie in identifying effective ways to develop a culture of modern cyberspace usage. Specific attention should be given to issues such as personal data protection, cybersecurity, the development of critical thinking, and the ethical use of products in the information environment.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Зміст і структура поняття «культура користування сучасним кіберпростором»

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Анотація. Актуальність теми обумовлена стрімким розвитком цифрових технологій, які стають невід’ємною частиною повсякденного життя сучасної людини. Зростання обсягів інформації, доступної в кіберпросторі, та складність її ефективного використання вимагають нових підходів до формування культури взаємодії з цифровими ресурсами. Формування культури користування кіберпростором є ключовим чинником для забезпечення безпеки, етичності та продуктивності в цифровому середовищі. Метою статті було визначено актуалізацію та аналіз проблеми культури взаємодії особистості в сучасному кіберпросторі, яка стоїть у центрі перетину багатьох наук – педагогіки, психології, філософії, культурології та ін., а також розкриття змісту та структури ключового поняття дослідження – «кіберкультура» – через призму дотичних до нього понять (загальна культура особистості, цифрова культура, інформаційна культура, медіакультура). У статті акцентовано увагу на тому факті, що в основі кіберкультури як певного зведення правил спілкування та існування інформаційного суспільства у віртуальному просторі лежить комунікативна практика, що регулюється певними вимогами і рамками з огляду на те, що комунікація у віртуальному просторі не має кордонів і меж. Розвиток суспільства характеризується масовим, стрімким і часто безконтрольним залученням особистості у віртуальний соціум, характеристики якого не завжди відповідають навколишнім реаліям, а тому особливого звучання набуває поняття кіберсоціалізації як один із показників кіберкультури. У статті особливу увагу акцентовано на тому факті, що культура користування сучасним кіберпростором не може не впливати на суспільний контент та свідомість конкретної особистості, на її стереотипи і модель поведінки в реальному соціумі, створюючи і репрезентуючи нові вимоги і потреби, привносячи корективи у конструювання особистості та фактори її вияву і впливу на оточуючих. Поряд з цим автори статті погодились з твердженнями сучасних дослідників щодо безмежних можливостей цифрового простору в міжособистісній комунікації, особливо в ситуації обмеження спроможності реалізувати власне «я» в умовах реального соціуму

Ключові слова: інформаційна культура; медіакультура; цифрова культура; кіберкультура



Nietzsche's concept of revaluation of values and its potential application for rethinking postmodern constructs

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Abstract. F. Nietzsche's subjectivist approach to the nature of values and their revaluation remains pertinent within the framework of contemporary concepts emphasising the importance of individual worldviews and subjective perceptions of values, offering an alternative to objective interpretations of value and truth. This article aimed to examine the practical application of F. Nietzsche's concept of revaluation of values through the lens of postmodernism. A systemic approach, the historical comparative method, and the method of philosophical reconstruction were employed in this analysis. The axiological dimensions of F. Nietzsche's philosophy were scrutinised, with a particular focus on his critique of decadence values, viewed through the philosopher's subjectivist stance on value formation. The article explored the applicability of F. Nietzsche's idea of "revaluation of values" for critically analysing the "absurd" value systems propagated by postmodernism. These systems promote nihilism, relativism, scepticism, the rejection of absolute truth, existential purposelessness, fatalism, the denial of objective morality, and disillusionment with religion. Postmodern constructs were evaluated concerning their potentially detrimental impact on individual self-affirmation and social cohesion, as the absence of universal values and the rejection of truth's attainability foster ideological manipulations disguised as pluralism and multiculturalism. The practical contribution of this article lies in proposing an ontological criterion for assessing the authenticity of absurd value systems and social constructs

Keywords: absurd value systems; role of the subject in the revaluation of values; axiocentric subjectivism in Nietzsche; decadence values; value construction; nihilism; relativism

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Introduction

Values are the invisible threads that shape human choices, actions, and interactions with the world. Embedded within the framework of worldview beliefs, values serve as fundamental reference points for human activity. They guide decision-making and inform how individuals function in the world, representing what is considered important and meaningful. The question of revaluation of values and the practical application of revaluated values in real-world contexts is both significant and timely. The processes underpinning the formation of new values, the revaluation of old ones, and the destruction of outdated values are crucial for understanding contemporary postmodern value systems. F. Nietzsche's concept of the revaluation of values is central to these considerations, as it lays the groundwork for addressing axiological issues within Western European philosophy. F. Nietzsche highlights the distinctive features and potential of value revaluation, making his ideas pivotal in analysing modern value constructs. This article seeks to examine the applicability of F. Nietzsche's idea of the revaluation of values to the mainstream values and worldview constructs proposed by postmodernism.

The question of the nature of values and their interpretation in F. Nietzsche's philosophy has been extensively explored by researchers. For instance, I. Morrisson (2020) investigates the creation of value systems in F. Nietzsche's thought, emphasising that emotions are fundamental to the formation of such systems. Morrisson asserts that emotions operate at a functional level, forming the core of value patterns that are built around the perception of values. Similarly, D. Harris (2022) examines the notion of post-truth and argues that F. Nietzsche is synonymous with the postmodern conception of truth. Harris suggests that F. Nietzsche possesses a nuanced understanding of what is at stake when discussing truth. Furthermore, he contends that postmodern movements are predominantly concerned with the social, political, and epistemological dimen-

sions of truth rather than its validity or the binary distinction between truth and falsehood.

J. Mitchell (2024) investigates Nietzschean theories of emotion and argues that emotional experiences are crucial in the process of value formation. Such experiences reveal affective intentionality. Therefore, human emotional experiences serve as essential elements in the constitution of values. E. Yigit (2023) defends F. Nietzsche's views on suicide, focusing particularly on F. Nietzsche's conception of life as an aesthetic phenomenon. Yigit claims that F. Nietzsche's position provides epistemic grounds for an alternative concept of self-control and offers insights into understanding one's life. J. Berry (2023) examines F. Nietzsche's perspective on compassion, challenging the common interpretation that he is indifferent to human suffering. She argues that this interpretation is based on an oversimplified understanding of the relevant moral emotions. Berry asserts that a more nuanced reading of F. Nietzsche's key texts could improve comprehension of his critique of compassion and his attitude towards suffering. F. Chouraqui (2024) explores the concept of "the size of future history" as a normative criterion in F. Nietzsche's philosophy. The author argues that F. Nietzsche's critique of normativity and normative judgments becomes coherent when viewed through the lens of this criterion. Chouraqui further contends that this concept could provide a solution to the problem of normative inescapability.

T. Liutyi (2024) analyses the foundational principles of F. Nietzsche's perspective on the origins of nihilism, emphasising nihilism as a distinctive analysis of the modern world. Liutyi highlights that humans can become exponents of the will to non-existence and that the "death of God" symbolises the loss of values that once conferred meaning, purpose, and integrity to human life. R. Cristy (2023) investigates F. Nietzsche's views on cultural change, asserting that F. Nietzsche advocates for neither strictly hierarchical societies ("pyramid societies") nor pluralistic societies

("motley societies") but sees potential in combining aspects of both. She explains that pyramid societies are characterised by unified morality, while motley societies embrace diverse value systems. When combined, these forms can foster extraordinary individuals capable of creating new values and reshaping societies. P. Stewart-Kroeker (2023) examines F. Nietzsche's nihilism in the context of the complicity between Christian morality and modern atheism. The author argues that F. Nietzsche's concept of nihilism critiques Schopenhauer's pessimism, especially regarding the pursuit of truth and the ascetic will to the nothingness that underpins it. From the perspective of O. Stasevska (2021), the modern postmodern condition is marked by a blurring of sociocultural identity due to the erosion of traditional social norms and value systems. Stasevska suggests that this situation necessitates the construction of a sustainable model of identity. Researchers have examined various aspects of F. Nietzsche's axiology; however, greater attention should be directed towards the influence of Nietzschean axiological ideas – particularly the concept of the revaluation of values – on the modern worldview, which has been profoundly shaped by postmodernism.

The research aimed to analyse the peculiarities of applying F. Nietzsche's concept of the revaluation of values within the context of postmodernist ideas. These ideas presented an alternative to classical understandings of truth and values, as postmodernist values were interpreted as subjective and, therefore, relative and personalistic. This often has a negative impact on various forms of cultural and personal identification in human experience.

The article adopted a systemic approach to examine F. Nietzsche's axiological ideas, particularly the "revaluation of values", concerning contemporary philosophical and anthropological issues. The historical-comparative method and the method of philosophical reconstruction are employed to enable a comprehensive analysis of the potential application of F. Nietzsche's axiological theories to the critique of postmodern

constructs. The article focused on the principle of *F. Nietzsche's axiocentric subjectivism*, which highlights the subjective origin of values. It examined F. Nietzsche's constructivist approach to values, emphasising that their revaluation occurs within the framework of self-consciousness. Additionally, the principle of F. Nietzsche's *axiological nihilism* was explored, analysing the essence of the Nietzschean "axiological turn" in philosophy, with particular emphasis on the subject. It is argued that nihilism underpins the secularisation of values. A phenomenological approach was utilised to elucidate the nature of values in F. Nietzsche's philosophy. It was demonstrated that the will to power constitutes the phenomenological foundation of his axiology. Using these approaches, the article analysed the destructive dimensions of the nihilistic understanding of values as reflected in the postmodern worldview.

1. The significance of the subject in the possibility of the revaluation of values.

F. Nietzsche was a pivotal philosophical figure in shaping axiology and values within Western European philosophy. He was among the first philosophers to focus on the specifics of value formation and the first who "asked a question about the origin of values..." (Joas, 2001, p. 22). According to F. Nietzsche (2001), values "...do not possess the value in itself"; objects hold value only when "...assign or attribute the meaning of value" to them. He asserts, "Whatever has value in our world now does not have value in itself, according to its nature – nature is always valueless". Instead, whatever has value "has been given value at some time, as a present" (p. 301). Consequently, objects acquire meaning and value if, as creative subjects, these are assigned to them.

In value theory, F. Nietzsche is among the first to emphasise the role of the subject and its creative potential in constructing values, much as I. Kant highlights the subject's capacity to construct knowledge in his theory of cognition. Within F. Nietzsche's framework, values emerge through subjective creation and self-comprehension.

He calls for a new creation of values: "...let the value of all things be fixed anew by yourselves!" (Nietzsche, 1899, p. 107). In this vein, he asks: "...Is it not possible... that the necessity may now have arisen of again making up our minds about the reversing and fundamental shifting of values, owing to a new self-consciousness and acuteness in man..." (Nietzsche, 1929, p. 38). Thus, within his philosophy, values are created by humans – the subjects – who serve as the sources of values and are engaged in the process of self-cognition. Accordingly, values are generated by the subject through their fundamental attribute – thinking. This subjectivist approach to the essence of values stands in contrast to the secularising tendencies of Western European philosophy, which posits that values have a transcendent origin and are eternal.

To consider the perspective from which the "reference point" determines the essence of values, it is necessary to explore the characteristics of values to understand the role of the reference point in the hierarchy of values. According to F. Nietzsche, values possess several key features. First, they are "hierarchical", meaning that some values hold greater importance to individuals and represent things that are dearer to the heart, while others are of relatively lesser significance (Kranak, 2014, p. 4). Secondly, values are not independent but are instead "...determined by valuing beings". Thirdly, values are "...completely relative", such that something becomes valuable only when there is a reference point from which its inherent value can be identified and assessed as more or less significant. In F. Nietzsche's view, "when we speak of values, we speak under the inspiration, under the perspective of life: life itself forces us to value to be set, life itself posit values by us, if we estimate values ... (the) "negation of the will to live" – is the decadence instinct itself" (Nietzsche, 1997, p. 28). Here, F. Nietzsche emphasises life as a crucial factor in determining the structure and hierarchy of values, positioning decadence – or the negation of life – as a detrimental influence on the formation of values. He further asserts, "My argument is that all the val-

ues on which mankind now fixes its highest aspirations are decadence-values" (Nietzsche, 1931, p. 46). According to J. Jeong (2022, p. 328), "...decadence implies the disvalue of the way people are physiologically. Different physiological types should develop different dominant or fundamental drives... otherwise, they cannot be active... which leads to physiological decline as the will to power falls off". In other words, when negative values dominate, they engender negative self-perception, directing attention towards destructive aspects of existence and resulting in decadence and moral decay. Conversely, the "reference point" of values, which defines the essence of their worth, is rooted in the phenomenon of life, through which the structuring of values occurs. Simultaneously, F. Nietzsche critiques worldviews and religions that reject "the will to life" and life itself as a value.

From this perspective, the "reference point" of values and the primary value in F. Nietzsche's philosophy is "life", specifically "human life". Based on this, he critiques "decadence-values" (Nietzsche, 1931, p. 46), which he argues negate "life". At the same time, F. Nietzsche's critique of "decadence-values" reflects his recognition of the importance of "human life" as a phenomenon that should not be undermined by religion, particularly Christianity. However, the question arises: to whom does "life" as a "reference point" for the creation and revaluation of values belong? Who has the authority and courage to evaluate or revalue the meaning of life and the values formed based on it? Here, F. Nietzsche highlights the role of the human being – a subject who possesses the right and the courage, through the prism of "one's life", to undertake the revaluation of values, given that no other alternative axiological authority exists for such a process.

From this standpoint, the essence of F. Nietzsche's paradigm of the "revaluation (transvaluation) of all values" lies in *axiocentric subjectivism*. This means that the "source of values" and the "reference point" for values is not solely the "phenomenon of life" itself (as "life" possesses

only ontological significance) but rather the subject – the “bearer of life” – who can comprehend life as a value, in contrast to existing concepts of values, and perform the revaluation of values based on the specifics of their own existence. In this context, the phenomena of “life” and “subject” are synthesised in F. Nietzsche’s theory of values, as the “life of a subject” itself becomes the reference point for values, rather than other dimensions of life, including transcendent ones. In this regard, it may be argued that F. Nietzsche, by emphasising the importance of the subject (as a “bearer of life”) in the process of creating and revaluating values, establishes: the axiocentric subjective paradigm for interpreting values; the concept of the secularisation of values, and, consequently; the foundations for the emergence of axiology as a scientific discipline. Thus, F. Nietzsche develops a subjective approach to interpreting values, positioning the human “self” as the central authority in the creation and classification of values. However, it is essential to note that F. Nietzsche’s framework for the revaluation of values introduces the risk of value relativism, which can be problematic. If values are subject to revaluation, the extremes of such processes may lead to the depreciation and eventual destruction of values.

In support of the opinion regarding the subjective paradigm of values, founded by F. Nietzsche, one can refer to his thinking that “values were only assigned unto things by man... Therefore, he calleth himself ‘man’, i.e., the valuing one. Valuing is creating... Only by valuing is there value...” (Nietzsche, 1899, p. 79). In this context, values are human-centred, and a human is a creature who evaluates, creating values through their thinking, which, in its primal dimensions, was nothing but evaluation, comparison, and the measurement of things as values. In this sense, the phylogenesis of human thinking has axiological origins because, through evaluations and measurements, a human adapted to being and simultaneously developed their thinking. F. Nietzsche (1929) argues that “whichever groups of sensations within a soul awaken most

readily... – these decide ... the general order of rank of its values” (p. 214). In this respect, a human and their psyche are the source of value formation. If the subject “as a bearer of life” creates values through self-realisation and self-cognition (i.e., through one’s thinking), then values “lose” their objective status and transcendent origin, ceasing to be absolute and becoming relative. F. Nietzsche believes that the true measurement of values is the human spirit. He states that “...the transvaluation of all values, this is my formula for mankind’s greatest step towards coming to its senses...” (Nietzsche, 1911, p. 49). F. Nietzsche’s subjective position in this approach to values is confirmed, as is the idea that axiological consciousness is the foundation of human self-consciousness, and ultimately, the essence of a human being itself. In this light, F. Nietzsche’s human is an axiological creature, that is, the “reference point of values”, because he is the “bearer of life” and, consequently, “the criterion of values” through the prism of his life. To F. Nietzsche’s mind, “Life itself appears to me as an instinct for growth, for survival, for the accumulation of forces, for power: whenever the will to power fails there is a disaster. My contention is that all the highest values of humanity have been emptied of this will – that the values of decadence, of nihilism, now prevail under the holiest names” (Nietzsche, 1931, p. 46). The will to power is a subjective phenomenon with a phenomenological dimension. Therefore, there is an inner logic between F. Nietzsche’s nihilism and his critique of objective or transcendent “higher values” and, consequently, between axiological nihilism and his voluntary subjectivism, which forms the basis for the “revaluation of values” (Nietzsche, 1911, p. 49). Thus, through his *axiological nihilism*, F. Nietzsche, paradoxically, *performs an “axiological turn” in philosophy with a focus on the subject*, since, with the help of nihilism, he secularises “higher transcendent values”, but nonetheless proposes the subjective source of the “possibility of value being”, which is the will to power, thus signalling elements of the phenomenological understanding of the nature of values.

In F. Nietzsche's interpretation, the will is simultaneously an *ontological* and *metaphysical* source of the being of humans and a phenomenological source of his axiology.

In the context of the creation of values by the subject "as a bearer of life", F. Nietzsche poses several questions based on the "philosophy of life", which relate to the problem of the origin of values, primarily moral: "...under what conditions did Man invent for himself those judgments of values, "Good" and "Evil"? And what intrinsic value do they possess in themselves?" (Nietzsche, 1887, p. iv). That is to say, he believes that a human "invents the judgments about values" (Nietzsche, 1887, p. iv), and therefore, "we need a critique of moral values, the value of these values is... to be called into question..." (Nietzsche, 1887, p. viii). From this perspective, F. Nietzsche's critique of traditional values is based on granting life the "reference point" of values and giving the subject the ability to reevaluate values based on one's own life. In this sense, the possibility of the revaluation of values has a subjective ground because a human essentially "invents the judgments about values" (Nietzsche, 1887, p. iv), and hence is their only creator.

However, subjectivity as the source of F. Nietzsche's revaluation of values should not be interpreted only in the context of nihilism and relativism. The subject does not merely perform an act of axiological nihilism, chaotically denying any values, or, for example, "decadence-values" (Nietzsche, 1931, p. 46); he does not simply create a pluralism of relative values based on one's narrow, limited viewpoint (a great number of subjects as "value creators" tend to *absolute relativism* of values). F. Nietzsche's subject is understood as the species-level being of a human, where the subject's ground is thought itself. It is in the context of the understanding of F. Nietzsche's "subject as thinking" that the revaluation of values takes place because a subject, on its species level, based on thinking as their species feature, has the capacity to "invent values", just as a human in I. Kant has the a priori capability to create knowledge. From this perspective, such an "a priori"

capability, based on which the subject can "create values" and "invent values", is the a priori possession of a phenomenon of life by the subject, which becomes an a priori origin for the creation of new values.

Certainly, one could argue here that if, in F. Nietzsche's view, one can trace "axiocentric subjectivism" in his value theory, then his value theory tends towards absolute relativism. This is because if the subject creates values, systems of any values can be created, including absurd values, fictional values, and at the same time, equality of values and their multiculturalism can allegedly be ensured, as there is a need to respect the ideas and feelings of everyone and admit the right to existence of various identifications, even absurd ones. However, in the opinion of the authors of this article, it is F. Nietzsche's idea about the subject's revaluation of values that can serve, paradoxically, as a reliable criterion for the critique of those values that contradict life and its needs. F. Nietzsche, in developing his theory of values, criticises "decadence-values" (Nietzsche, 1931, p. 46) and Christian values, as they deny life impulses, instincts, and the will to life. If it is assumed that the subject creates absurd values (as the subject is considered an "inventor of values") and that the rules of a good liberal tone force the acceptance of the right to existence of various values in the context of liberalism and multiculturalism (in order not to offend the feelings of various subcultures' representatives), then the final criterion of the truthfulness of values, as stated by F. Nietzsche, can be the "phenomenon of life", which is ontological and, through its ontological nature and will to life, will spontaneously deny absurd systems of values that are theoretical and promoted through some religion or subculture.

Therefore, whatever theoretical value systems (even the most absurd) are created by the subject as a "value creator" or "value inventor", on the practical level, the possibility of the realisation of the values created by the subject will be "tested" by life itself, which, as an ontological phenomenon, cannot be negated by the subject as a creator

of values by any means. The subject, as a “creator of values” (as a theorist of values, who, let to assume, is driven by liberal principles and is focused on multiculturalism), will be forced to listen to the requirements of life and its needs, regardless.

Thus, the absurd value systems, even if they are recognised by the majority by voluntary conviction or under coercion, even if the majority comes to an agreement and accepts the recognition of these absurd values, such artificial and absurd values will still not be able to function for long, because they will contradict the very laws of “life” and the “will to live”. Life itself is capable of destroying the systems of absurd values and systems of agreed values that contradict life. In this perspective, the construction of values and social constructs, no matter how specific they are in their assertion, must be consistent with life as the last reliable criterion of any values.

2. Postmodern social constructs in the context of revaluation of values.

F. Nietzsche speaks about several ideas that he proposes to be reevaluated, such as “... (the) ideas of certainty, cause and effect, will to the preservation, and subjectivity so that we more highly value uncertainty, continual creativity, will to power, and subjectivity (over and above objectivity)” (Kranak, 2014, p. 50). Some of these ideas (or derivatives from those mentioned above), such as the idea of certainty (absolute truth) and will to preservation, and their reevaluation, have a profound effect on the processes that are happening in today’s society. Specifically, they shape how humans operate and function. In this regard, the idea of social constructs in postmodernism and how F. Nietzsche’s views influenced and shaped the ideas generally accepted today at the level of social constructs will be explored.

“Social construct” is the idea that various social phenomena are maintained by social norms and standards, rather than being universal or natural phenomena. However, this idea has some flaws; for example, it can lead to absurd statements, such as everything being a product of social

construction, rather than biological or objective truth and objective life conditions. The extreme relativism adjacent to this theory (which grants the possibility to discard some notions, concepts, or facts if they do not fit an ideological agenda) can make it difficult to establish any generally meaningful form of basic standards or agreement. If the idea of truth is rejected and everything is claimed to be relative, an infinite number of possible truths emerge, even if they concern the same thing. However, if there is no universal truth, there is no possibility of finding common ground or agreeing on universal human values.

2.1. The critique of the idea of absolute truth.

In this aspect, F. Nietzsche’s views are a foundational source of the development of postmodernism, with its idea of the negation of absolute truth. F. Nietzsche was critical of the idea of absolute truth, specifically with regard to “...our limitations to achieve truth”, and he feared that “...the finding of absolute truth may hurt healthy human activity” (Kranak, 2014, p. 25). Thus, healthy human activity is “...whatever contributes to the health of a culture, and what defines a healthy culture is one that attains great cultural achievements and is admired by later generations” (Kranak, 2014, p. 25). Healthy cultures tend to produce healthy philosophies, which strengthen them. And it works the other way around too: unhealthy cultures produce unhealthy philosophies, only making things worse: “...if philosophy ever manifested itself as helpful, redeeming or prophylactic, it was in a healthy culture. The sick it made even sicker” (Nietzsche, 1962, p. 33). F. Nietzsche’s ideas about perspectivism, falsification, and the metaphorical value of language – “...all these topics can be related to the idea that to know is to interpret... the knowing subject... creates something, instead of merely replicate a state of affairs” (Gori, 2013, p. 72). From this perspective, one rejects the traditional characteristics of truth – absoluteness and indisputability. According to F. Nietzsche, “...there is no “Truth”, but only an indefinite amount of world-interpretations, of

world-descriptions, of viewpoints that cannot be a priori rejected as absolutely false" (Gori, 2013, p. 72). Consequently, such Nietzschean critiques of truth have developed in today's postmodern worldview, which rejects the concept of absolute truth altogether. However, the postmodern depreciation of the idea of truth leads to absurdity and the loss of common sense. It leads to unhealthy human practices, where, if one departs from the current mainstream line of thinking, that person is ostracised, neglected, and shamed. Ironically, this works only if the person argues against the common line of thinking of postmodernists and seeks to substantiate or prove the contrary to the current mainstream idea. If the situation is reversed, however, that person is praised for bravery and supported in any way. This, in turn, leads to a dangerous situation, where, even if people know that some idea is factually untrue, they must pretend it is true, or they will face social consequences and sanctions. Such an approach of playing along with fictional social constructs may work in a social bubble (let's say a campus or a country that doesn't face any real external threats and is in a state of stability and prosperity). This does not work, however, in the real world, where, for example, wars are waged. It cannot be assumed that architectural buildings, or, for example, a bridge over a river, are built based on the assumption that $2 + 2 = 5$. Such an assumption just won't work in practical life, even if the feelings of people who think so will be greatly hurt. Real buildings cannot be constructed based on such false assumptions.

Moreover, "...if we are to assume that the overcoming of nihilism is more important than discovering truth, then it is acceptable to adopt untrue ideas if they are useful in overcoming nihilism...it does mean that whether an idea is true, untrue, or partially true is irrelevant if it serves the more important project of revaluation" (Kranak, 2014, p. 10). This irrelevance is especially harmful if one tries to adopt or implement factually incorrect ideas into life, ignoring the signs and warnings that suggest otherwise. This is only

possible when everything is relative and there is no truth. Usually, a person using common sense assumes that there is truth that can be comprehended and, therefore, acts based on this, although postmodernism emphasises subjectivity and relativism and negates the possibility of the existence of absolute truth.

F. Nietzsche also discusses value feelings, criticising the elevation of these value feelings to absolute value principles (Nietzsche, 1967). These value feelings are described as "aversion and partiality" (Nietzsche, 1996, p. 32), and feelings of "respect and antipathy" (Nietzsche, 1996, p. 107). Thus, "...the creation of new values is the creation of new feelings" (Kranak, 2014, p. 46). This idea is heavily reflected in today's postmodernist belief that feelings are the most important criterion for whether something is true, has value, or is beneficial to society.

2.2. Deconstructive aspects of the nihilistic void of values.

The danger of offending someone's feelings or beliefs should not be an obstacle in the pursuit of sincere truth. Value feelings have become so important in today's world specifically because nihilism promotes the idea that life lacks purpose, meaning, or value. But, if there is no purpose in life, any of peoples' actions are pointless; if there is no meaning, then there is a profound existential void; if there is no value, then life itself is not valuable. The combination and aggregation of all these postmodernist ideas lead to the deconstruction of worldview and sociality, particularly to suicidal thinking and the rejection of procreation (if life has no meaning, why bring children into this world, only to suffer?). If nothing matters, then such a void of values leads to apathy, depression, tragedy, unhappiness, and social deconstruction. Such nihilistic rejection of being can happen on an individual level; however, if many people in society adopt this nihilistic type of thinking, then society is committing cultural and literal suicide.

Such negative thinking about the possibility of the existence of truth and universal values also

leads to the social rejection of maturing, since adult life brings challenges and hardships. If life is hard enough already, why mature and deal with all those consequences if it is possible to pretend that those problems don't exist in the social bubble created? There will simply be no need to deal with reality, and only the need to live in the created and fictional world, especially since it is the adopted way of thinking, which others should respect and accept, even if it is wrong, harmful, or absurd.

In this context, it is also important to discuss the “revaluator of values”, or rather the subject who will be conducting the process of reevaluation of values. Adherence to Christian traditional moral values is often straightforward, as belief in such values is reinforced by the reassurance that they originate from a higher, perfect, and ideal being. But when it comes to the newly crafted postmodernist ideas, they, as social constructs, are created by humans, and people are often mistaken because they are imperfect. In this sense, it is impossible to find a reliable criterion for the verification of the truthfulness of postmodernist ideas other than one's feelings, which should not be offended, even if they are the criteria for accepting absurd social constructs. Furthermore, to assure everyone to adhere to these new postmodernist values and social constructs, one must either coerce them into doing so or convince them that these new alternative constructs matter, since there is no absolute truth. Hence, what is the reason to question these new values and social constructs if everything is subjective anyway? Even when new values and constructs appear ridiculous, harmful, or absurd, there is always the possibility of disregarding dissenting opinions altogether. As F. Nietzsche (2001, p. 335) states, “It is selfish to consider one's own judgement a universal law ... that is, in relation to the idea that I proposed ... everyone must judge as I do”.

The reevaluation of some values, particularly the value of truth, has already happened. Currently, modern liberal societies are dominated by those values and postmodern social constructs

that mainly promote nihilism, a value system that exalts to the status of highest values relativity, subjectivity, rejection of absolute truth, fatalism, rejection of objective morality, scepticism, absurdity, disillusionment, and the rejection of religion. Such an approach to values, where only the negative, life-harming values are given the status of highest values, is destructive, depressive, hurtful, counterproductive, and dangerous. Such an approach may even lead to moral paralysis, where there is no distinction between moral or immoral, just or unjust actions since harmful ideologies cannot be condemned. *Postmodernist axiological nihilism* and the destruction of the notion of absolute truth, or the rejection by postmodernism of at least the attainability of truth, is a harmful and destructive idea that may lead to dangerous consequences in society. The postmodern idea that feelings are more important than truth is also harmful to the formation of constructive social and individual identifications.

3. The new revaluation of values.

In the authors' view, there is a need for a new revaluation of values in modern society, because the world is ever-changing, and those social constructs, such as postmodernism, which are currently widespread in modern liberal societies, are no longer progressive. On the contrary – they are the cause of moral decadence and the loss of the sense of human existence, contributing to suicidal tendencies in human behaviour. One of the prominent human traits is adaptability; humans “...mimic not just the forms and behaviors of other human beings but also their values. Such mimicry permits the individual to pursue his own advantage insofar as assimilation makes his interests and society's interests appear identical” (Meredith, 2024, p. 294). Hence, if certain value systems are inherited as a cultural legacy, formed at a specific point in the history of humanity, the idea that these should remain unchanged – regardless of the current scientific, technological, social, political, or legal changes taking place in the world – is incorrect.

Such a revaluation of values, which were shaped by the postmodernist tradition, should take place and is necessary. However, this revaluation of values should be based on different grounds from those postmodernism proposes today. Striving towards more universal values that focus on basic human decency, social responsibility, honesty, fairness, and enlightenment is essential. This universal revaluation of postmodern values can be rooted in F. Nietzsche's ideas regarding the criterion of the revaluation of values, which is the phenomenon of life. Even if one assumes that reality appears different for different groups of people because they use different social constructs and allegedly live in different realities, real social problems, such as famine, war, and natural catastrophes, can still serve as indicators that multiculturalism and pluralism – the negation of truth as “theoretic mind games” – are possible only in stable and protected societies.

The objective processes of social being (surprisingly, they also exist) alongside social postmodernist constructs, and these objective processes, make significant adjustments to the theoretical comprehension of being. Therefore, in the situation of war, for example, which has been occurring in Eastern Europe since 2022, postmodern ideas about the impossibility of the existence of objective truth are destructive. In reality, there is an aggressor, who cannot be interpreted otherwise; that is, he cannot be equated with a victim because he is committing the genocide of Ukrainians and destroying civil infrastructure in Ukraine. If, in evaluating this war, the truthfulness of some other alternative opinion is admitted – because the feelings of the aggressor should not be hurt and his opinion that he is not the aggressor should be respected – then such an approach is not only untrue but also inhumane, because it is Ukrainians who are dying on their land, and the criterion for the truth of judgments about the aggressor is human lives, which are being lost by the thousands every day in this war.

The postmodern idea about the impossibility of the attainability of truth can be applied

unless concerning the cognition of ontological reasons but by no means to ethical, legal, or personal identifications. If one allows pluralism and multiculturalism in ethics, law, self-esteem, and selfunderstanding, then such alternative social constructs in the fields of ethics, law, and personal identification are destructive because human destiny and human life are at stake. In this aspect, F. Nietzsche's idea of life as a criterion for the revaluation of values is relevant and promising in the context of the analysis of social constructs for their genuineness.

Conclusions

The article investigated the subjectivist approach of F. Nietzsche regarding the creation and revaluation of values. It is stated that F. Nietzsche was one of the first philosophers to attribute thinking as a necessary component for the creation of values. The authors argued that F. Nietzsche criticises decadence values and positions the human (a subject) in a position to evaluate or reevaluate values. From this perspective, axiocentric subjectivism becomes the essence of F. Nietzsche's paradigm of the revaluation of values, as the subject is the “bearer of life”, and the life of a subject becomes the reference point for values. By accentuating the importance of the subject, F. Nietzsche establishes an axiocentric subjective paradigm of interpreting values and the idea of secularisation of values. It is asserted that F. Nietzsche performs an axiological shift in philosophy by emphasising the subject, secularising transcendent values, and proposing the subjective source of the possibility of value being (the will to power).

The article also stated that F. Nietzsche criticised the idea of absolute truth, which, in turn, is reflected in today's postmodern view of the negation of truth. Such postmodern depreciation of truth leads to extreme relativism and absurdity, as there is no criterion to evaluate the truthfulness of an idea. The combination of postmodern ideas concerning the lack of purpose, meaning, or value in life leads to a value and existential

void, which deconstructs the worldview and sociality. The negation of truth and the irrelevance of truth leave no opposition to harmful values or ideologies, as everything is relative and cannot be criticised because feelings play a more important role than truth.

It was argued that the new revaluation of values should differ from what postmodernism presents. New, more universal values should revolve around basic human decency, social responsibility, honesty, fairness, and enlightenment. The authors proposed that such a revaluation of postmodern values can occur on the grounds of the phenomenon of life as a criterion for the revaluation of values. In situations involving the objective processes of social existence (such as famine, war, and natural cataclysms), the ideas of the absence of truth and postmodern constructs that negate objectivity or emphasise relativity are

harmful to humans and their lives.

The research is relevant in the context of addressing the crisis of traditional values, as most values of modern civilisation are interpreted through the lens of postmodernism and tend towards relativity, and in extreme cases, absurdity (for example, the negation of the possibility of the existence of truth). Additionally, the conclusions of the research can be applied to further comprehension of the criteria and principles of the new revaluation of values, which should be directed towards understanding the value of human life and human dignity.

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Ідея переоцінки цінностей Ф. Ніцше та можливість її застосування для переосмислення постмодерністських конструктів

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Анотація. Суб'єктивістський підхід Ф. Ніцше до природи цінностей та їх переоцінки є актуальним у контексті сучасних мейнстримних концептів важливості індивідуального світогляду та особистого відчуття цінностей, які є альтернативою об'єктивному розумінню природи цінностей та природи істини. Мета статті – дослідити практичне застосування ідеї Ф. Ніцше про переоцінку цінностей крізь призму постмодернізму. Системний підхід, історично-порівняльний метод та метод філософської реконструкції були використанні у статті. Аксиологічні особливості філософії Ф. Ніцше проаналізовані у статті. Позиція Ф. Ніцше стосовно декадансу цінностей розглядалася з точки зору суб'єктивістського підходу філософа до природи цінностей. У статті зверталася увага на можливість застосування ідеї Ф. Ніцше про «переоцінку цінностей» для критичного аналізу «абсурдних» ціннісних систем, які пропонуються постмодернізмом, який акцентує увагу на ідеях нігілізму, релятивізму, скептицизму, відсутності абсолютної істини, відсутності мети життя, екзистенційної порожнечі, фаталізму, відмови від об'єктивної моральності, абсурдності, розчарування, відмови від релігії. Постмодерні світоглядні конструкти досліджувались у контексті їхнього деструктивного впливу на процеси самоствердження індивіда та соціальних взаємодій, оскільки відсутність універсальних цінностей та заперечення можливості досягнення істини веде до світоглядних маніпуляцій, які можуть поширюватись під прапором плюралізму та мультикультуралізму. Практична цінність статті полягає в тому, що вона пропонує онтологічний критерій для перевірки справжності абсурдних ціннісних систем та соціальних конструктів

Ключові слова: абсурдні системи цінностей; роль суб'єкта в переоцінці цінностей; аксіоцентричний суб'єктивізм Ніцше; цінності декадансу; конструювання цінностей; нігілізм; релятивізм

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