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Researching Ethnic Tolerance, Social Identity and Social Communicative Competence among Teachers in Russian, Latvian and Estonian Schools

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Abstract

This research concerns the measurement of social communicative competence and the ethnic and social identity of teachers in Russian schools in Estonia, and in Estonian schools in Estonia, and Latvian schools in Latvia. Statistically significant differences were revealed in the structure and levels of the variables investigated. The type of the relationships between variables differs between groups of teachers. Teachers of Russian schools in Estonia, of Estonian schools in Estonia and of Latvian schools in Latvia have positive views of the development of ethnic tolerance.

Introduction

The offered research is the continuation of research into inter-ethnic relations' psychology in the countries of the Baltic States. It includes the problems of ethnic identity, social identity and socially communicative competence, and also their relationships.

There is close interconnection between ethnic tolerance and positive orientation of auto-types and hetero-types (Vidnere, Plotka, Sokol, 2006). Research by Vidnere and Plotka (2005); and Vidnere, Igoņins and Plotka (2006), is devoted to the ethnic communicative competence and its role in creation and development of international relationship in Latvia. The problems of ethnic identity of young people of Latvia are explored in (Russita, 2006; Russita, 2007). The experimental study of relation between explicit and implicit ethnic attitudes measures using the emotional priming is begun by Plotka I., Igonin D., Blumenau N., Vorobjova J., Galickaja S.

The investigations of interconnections of the ethnic identity, the social identity and the social communicative competence are the important problems of Baltic States. Research into these problems can extend knowledge in ethnic psychology, social psychology, cross-cultural psychology and in other spheres, which are related with the relations between different ethnic-groups. The obtained research results will allow us to extend the knowledge of the ethnic psychology sphere in Baltic States. Using this knowledge will allow us to foresee any arising of new ethnic intolerance between different ethnic groups and thus help prevent possible ethnic conflicts.

Hypothesis:

The ethnic identity, the social identity and the social communicative competence in the different groups of teachers are interrelated.

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Research Questions:

- 1) Are there differences between indexes of Ethnic Tolerance among the teachers in Russians schools, Latvian schools and Estonian schools?
- 2) Are there differences among indices of Social Communicative Competence among the teachers in Russians schools, Latvian schools and Estonian schools?
- 3) Are there differences among indices of social identity among the teachers in Russians schools, Latvian schools and Estonian schools?

Methods:

Ninety-four teachers participated in the investigation. All of them are women:

- 34 teachers of Russian schools living in Estonia,
- 31 teachers of Estonian schools living in Estonia,
- 30 teachers of Latvian schools living in Latvia.
- The age:
 - 25 teachers are of the age of 22-30;
 - 43 teachers are of the age of 31-40;
 - 26 teachers are of the 41-50.

Testing was conducted in spring of 2007.

The following abbreviations were used for the groups of teachers in the given research (Table 1):

Table 1. The reductions and denotations for the groups of teachers

Teachers	Reductions and denotations	
Teachers of Russian schools in Estonia	Russians in Estonia	RE
Teachers of Estonian schools in Estonia	Estonians in Estonia	EE
Teachers of Latvian schools in Latvia	Latvians in Latvia	LL

Methodology I. “Types of Ethnic Tolerance” by Soldatova, G.

The Questionnaire “Ethnic Tolerance” (Soldatova, 1998).

Allows diagnosis of ethnic consciousness and transformations in the conditions of inter-ethnic tension. Contains six scales (Table 2).

Table 2. The scales of ethnic identity and reductions

Scales of Ethnic Identity	Reductions
Ethnic nihilism	Nihilism
Ethnic indifference	Indifference
Positive ethnic identity (the norm)	Positive identity
Ethnic egoism	Egoism
Ethnic isolation	Isolation
Ethnic fanaticism	Fanaticism

Methodology II. “Social Communicative Competence (SCC)” by Kalininsky L.

The questionnaire for the evaluation of the social-communicative competence contains six scales (Table 3).

Table 3. The scales of Social Communicative Competence (SCC) and reductions

Scales of Social Communicative Competence (SCC)	Reductions
Socially communicative clumsiness	CC
Intolerance to vagueness	IV
The Excessive drive to conformity	EDC
The heightened drive to the height of the status	HDHS
The orientation to the avoidance of failures	OAF
Frustration intolerance	FI

Methodology III. “The direction of a personality to Self” by Kuhn M., McPartland T. The Test of 20 Questions. “Who Am I ?” determines and measures the aim of personality to the SELF (Бодалева, 2006), (Кун М., Макпартлэнд Т.).

The test supposes four groups of answers:

- ❑ A - physical Self(as an object of in space and time),
- ❑ B – social Self (a place in a group, a social role),
- ❑ C – reflexive Self (the individual style of behaviour, the peculiarities of a character),
- ❑ D – transcendental Self (the abstract reflection out of the dependence on a concrete social situation).

The methodologies were translated into the Latvian and Estonian languages.

The Methods of Data Processing:

Data were processed with the help of the computer program SPSS 11.5. The processing of data included:

- Descriptive statistics;
- The accordance of the distribution of data to the normal distribution was tested with following methods:
 - The comparison of indexes of Skewness and Kurtosis with their standard errors,
 - Kolmogorov-Smirnov’s Test in modifications of Lillifora,
 - Shapiro-Wilk’s Test,
 - The visual study of histograms with a normal curve and Boxplots.

It was revealed that the distribution of most variables, significantly differs from the normal distribution. Therefore, all further research were conducted with the help of nonparametric methods of statistics:

- The Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient for research of relationships;
- Mann-Whitney U-test for the comparison of levels of the variables,
- Kruskal-Wallis H-test for the comparison of levels,
- Fisher's ϕ^* -Test for the comparison of percents,
- Pearson’s Chi-square test for comparison of distinctions in distributions.
- Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient for the evaluation of the internal consistence of tests.

Results

I. Ethnic Identity

The statistic significance of differences in the structure of ethnic identity (Fig. 1 and Table 4) was investigated with the help of Fisher's ϕ^* -Test.

The differences in the structure of groups of teachers were not found.

The distinction was found into each of the groups between the stakes of Positive Identity and Egoism and Nihilism ($p \leq 0,05$). In the group of teachers of Russian schools from Estonia meaningful distinctions also were found out in the indices of Positive Identity and fanaticism and isolationism ($p \leq 0,05$). In the group of teachers of Estonian schools from Estonia meaningful distinctions also were found out among the indices Positive Identity and isolationism ($p \leq 0,05$).

The levels of ethnical identity in scales are shown with the help of means and medians (Figure 2).

Kruskal-Wallis H-test exposed influencing of type of school for the scales of Nihilism ($p \leq 0,05$), Indifference ($p \leq 0,05$), Positive Identity ($p \leq 0,01$) and Isolationism ($p \leq 0,01$).

Mann-Whitney U-test revealed statistically significant differences in the levels of scales of ethnical identity (Table 5).

Table 4. The Structure of Ethnic Identity in different schools

Place	Russians in Estonia	Estonians in Estonia	Latvians in Latvia
1	Positive Identity (29.7%)	Positive Identity (29.8%)	Positive Identity (28.6%)
2	Indifference (21.6%)	Indifference (19.5%)	Indifference (20.8%)
3	Fanaticism (13.5%)	Fanaticism (14.4%)	Fanaticism (14.7%)
4	Nihilism (12.8%)	Isolation (12.7%)	Isolation (13.6%)
5	Egoism (12.4%)	Egoism (12.4%)	Egoism (11.4%)
6	Isolation (10.0%)	Nihilism (11.2%)	Nihilism (11.0%)

Table 5. The Statistical Significances of Differences of Levels in Scales of Ethnical Identity

Ethnical:	RE - EE	RE-LL	LL-EE
Nihilism	RE>EE ($p \leq 0,05$)	RE >LL ($p \leq 0,01$)	Ns
Indifference	RE>EE ($p \leq 0,05$)	ns	Ns
Positive identity	RE>EE ($p \leq 0,05$)	RE >LL ($p \leq 0,01$)	ns
Egoism	Ns	ns	ns
Isolation	RE>EE ($p \leq 0,05$)	LL>RE ($p \leq 0,01$)	ns
Fanaticism	Ns	ns	ns

Reductions and denotations in the Table 5:

"ns" - "Differences are not statistically significant:

"EE" - „The level of teachers of Russian schools in Estonia exceeds the level of teachers of Estonian schools in Estonia (Table 1)"

II. Social Communicative Competence (SCC)

The statistic significance of differences in the structure of SCC (Fig. 3 and Table 6) was investigated with the help of Fisher's ϕ^* -Test.

Distinctions among the groups of teachers and into the groups were not found.

The levels of SCC on scales are shown with the help of medians and means (Fig. 4).

Kruskal-Wallis H-test exposed influencing of a type of school for scales of SCC ($p \leq 0,001$), IV ($p \leq 0,001$), EDC ($p \leq 0,05$), OAF ($p \leq 0,05$).

Mann-Whitney U-test revealed statistically significant differences on the levels of SCC (Table 7).

Table 6. The structure of SCC in different schools

Place	Russians in Estonia	Estonians in Estonia	Latvians in Latvia
1	IV (20.6%)	HDHS (22.8%)	HDHS (23.9%)
2	CC (20.2%)	IV (19.5%)	IV (18.5%)
3	HDHS (17.4%)	CC (16.2%)	CC (17.4%)
4	OAF (16.3%)	FI (15.3%)	FI (15.7%)
5	FI (14.3%)	OAF (15.2%)	OAF (14.5%)
6	EDC (11.1%)	EDC (11.0%)	EDC (10.0%)

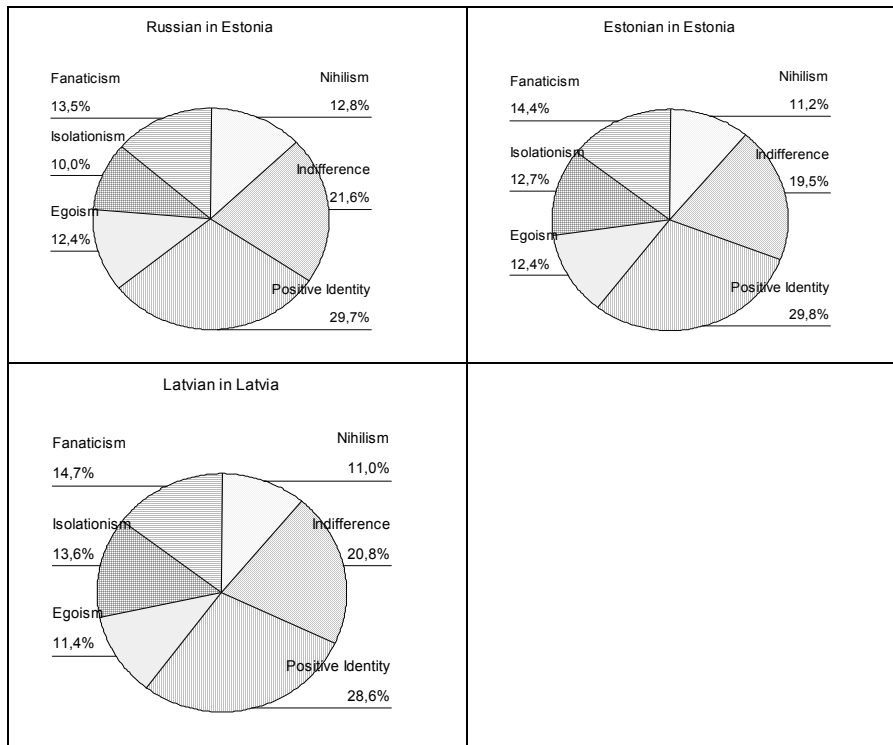


Fig. 1. The structures of Ethnic Identity for schools: Russians in Estonia; Estonians in Estonia; Latvians in Latvia

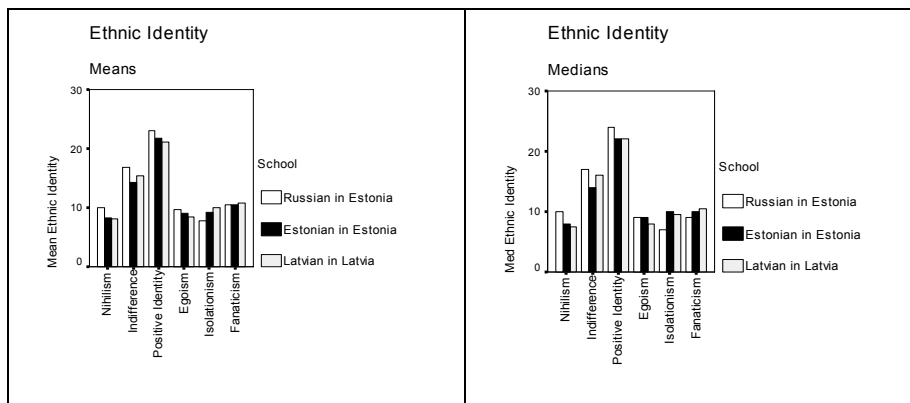


Fig. 2. The levels of the Ethnic Identity's scales

Table 7. The statistical significance of differences of levels of scale of Social Communicative Competence (SCC)

SCC	RE - EE	RE-LL	LL-EE
CC	RE>EE (p≤0,01)	RE >LL (p≤0,001)	ns
IV	RE>EE (p≤0,01)	RE >LL (p≤0,001)	ns
EDC	ns	RE >LL (p≤0,01)	ns
HDHS	ns	Ns	ns
OAF	ns	RE >LL (p≤0,01)	ns
FI	ns	Ns	ns

Reductions and denotations in the Table 7:

"ns" - "Differences are statistically not significant „RE>EE" –

"The level of teachers of Russian schools in Estonia exceeds the level of teachers of Estonian schools in Estonia" (Table 1)"

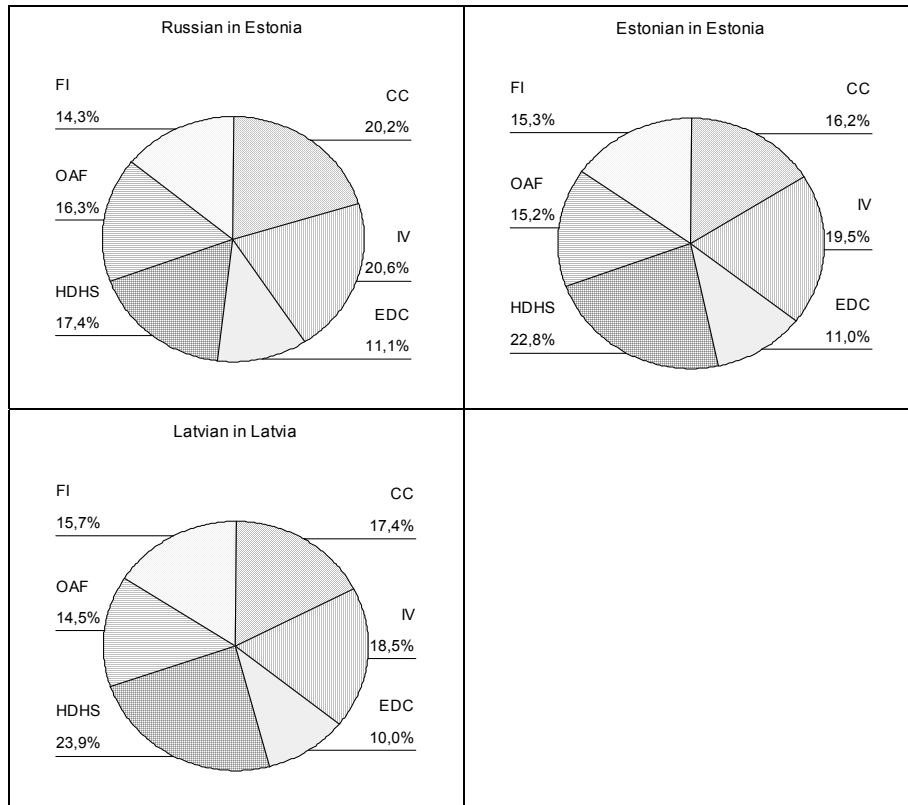


Fig. 3. The structures of SCC for schools: Russians in Estonia; Estonians in Estonia; Latvians in Latvia

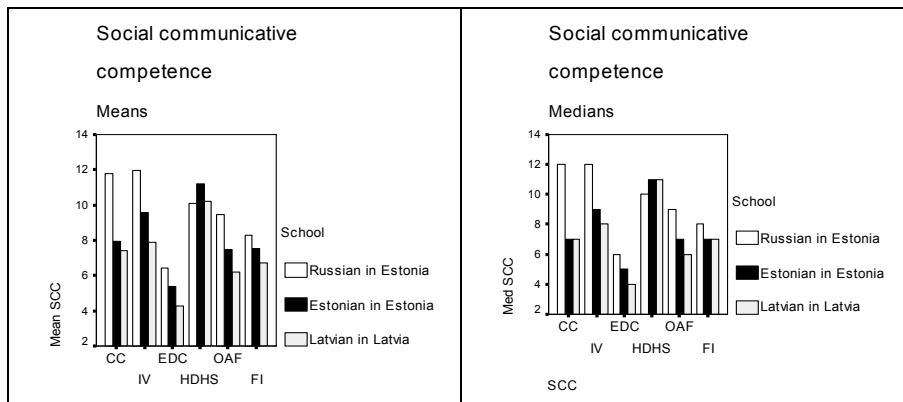


Fig. 4. The levels of the Social Communicative Competence's (SCC) scales

III. Social Identity

The statistic significance of differences in the structure of Social Identity (Fig. 5 and Table 8) was investigated with the help of Fisher's ϕ^* -Test.

All the differences within the groups are statistically significant ($p \leq 0,01$).

Significant differences between groups are the following:

- B- social in the structure of Latvians is higher than in the structure of Russians and Estonians ($p \leq 0,01$);
- C- reflective in the structure of Russians and Estonians is higher than in the structure of Latvians ($p \leq 0,01$).

Kruskal-Wallis H-test exposed influencing of a type of school for the schools of the scales B ($p \leq 0,001$) and C ($p \leq 0,001$).

Mann-Whitney U-test revealed statistically significant differences on the scales of social identity (Table 9).

The levels of social identity on the scales are shown with the help of means and medians (Fig. 6)

Table 8. The structure of Social Identity in different schools

Place	Russians in Estonia	Estonians in Estonia	Latvians in Latvia
1	C (61.7%)	C (60.5%)	C (46.2%)
2	B (23.5%)	B (25.0%)	B (36.1%)
3	A (13.3%)	A (13.7%)	A (16.2%)
4	D (1.5%)	D (0.8%)	D (1.5%)

Table 9. The statistical significance of differences of levels of scales of Social Identity

Social Identity	RE - EE	RE-LL	LL-EE
A	ns	Ns	ns
B	ns	LL >RE ($p \leq 0,001$)	LL >EE ($p \leq 0,01$)
C	ns	RE >LL ($p \leq 0,001$)	EE >LL ($p \leq 0,001$)
D	ns	ns	ns

Reductions and denotations in the Table 9:

"ns" - "Differences are not statistically significant"

„RE>EE” - „The level of teachers of Russian schools in Estonia exceeds the level of teachers of Estonian schools (Table 1)”

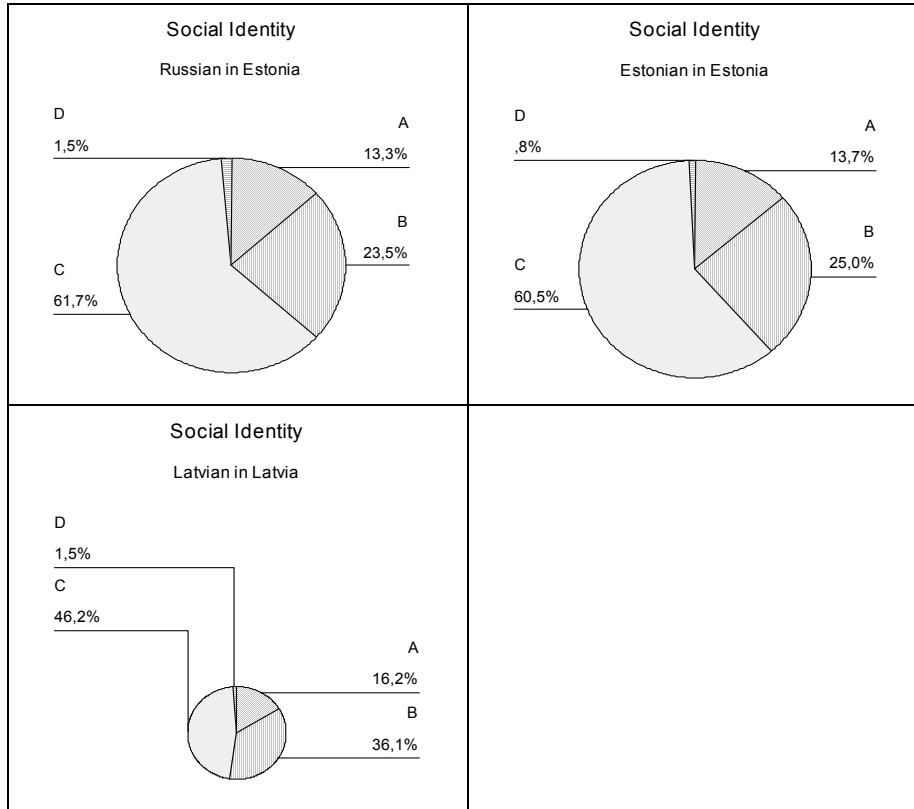


Fig. 5. The structures of Social Identity for schools: Russians in Estonia; Estonians in Estonia; Latvians in Latvia

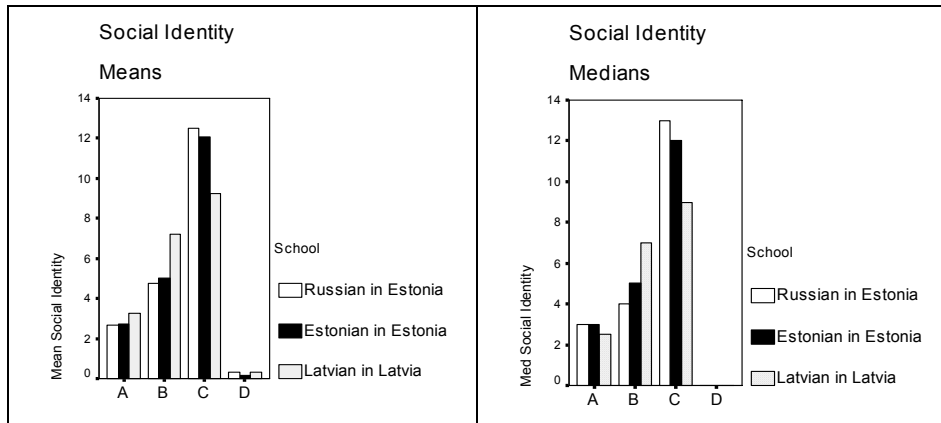


Fig. 6. The levels of the Social Identity's scales

IV. The Analysis of Correlations

Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used for the analysis of relationships (Table 10). It was revealed statistically significant relationships among Ethnic Identity, Social Communicative Competence and Social Identity for the groups of teachers of Russian

schools in Estonia (N=34), the groups of teachers of Estonian schools of Estonia (N=31) and the groups of teachers of Latvian schools in Latvia (N=30) (Fig. 7-9). The continuous lines show the positive monotonous connections, and the dotted lines – the negative monotonous connections. Statistically significant Spearman’s correlations coefficients are shown in Table 10.

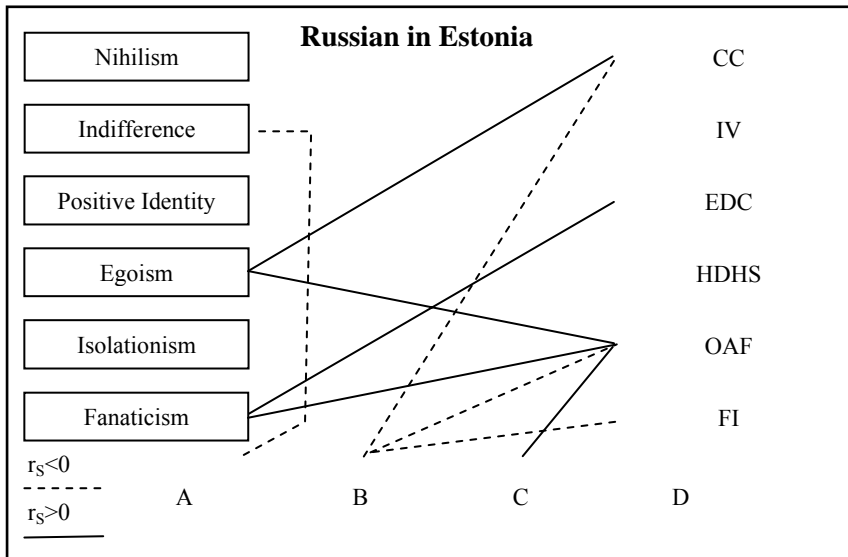


Fig. 7. The relationships for the Russian in Estonia (N=34)

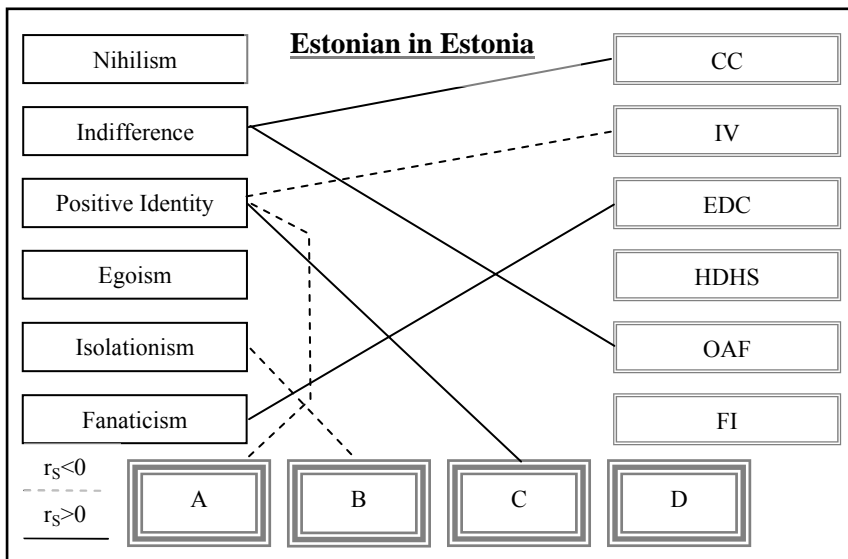


Fig. 8. The relationships for the Estonians in Estonia (N=31)

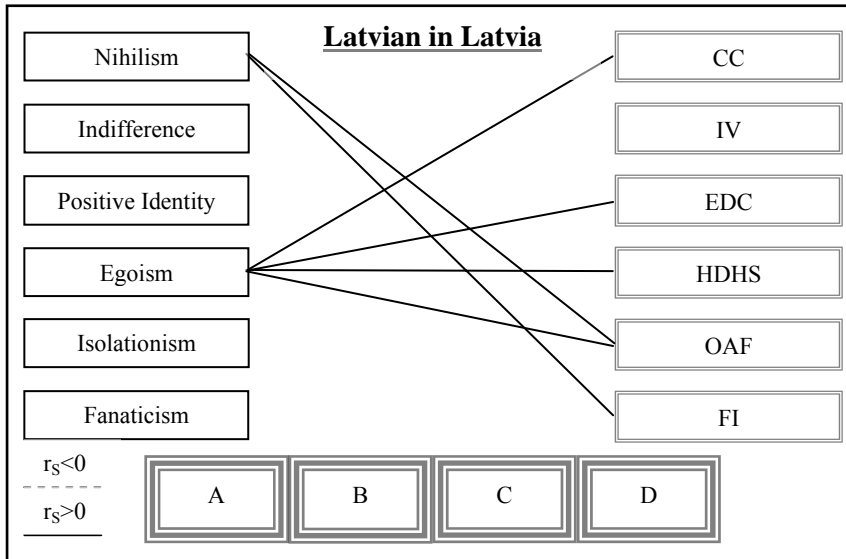


Fig. 9. The relationships for the Latvians in Latvia (N=30)

Table 10. The Spearman's correlation coefficients and significances for all groups. Statistically significant relationships are the following:

Variables		Russians in Estonia		Estonians in Estonia		Latvians in Latvia	
		<i>r</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
CC	B	-0.43	0.013	-0.18	0.331	0.23	0.217
OAF	B	-0.42	0.014	0.05	0.802	0.10	0.583
OAF	C	0.40	0.02	-0.03	0.876	-0.29	0.124
FI	B	-0.36	0.04	-0.03	0.873	-0.14	0.468
A	Indifference	-0.61	0.000	0.10	0.586	-0.14	0.453
A	Positive identity	-0.04	0.847	-0.36	0.05	-0.01	0.942
C	Positive identity	-0.02	0.914	0.39	0.032	-0.02	0.936
B	Isolationism	-0.26	0.149	-0.36	0.046	0.10	0.592
CC	Indifference	-0.34	0.052	0.37	0.043	-0.24	0.192
CC	Egoism	0.37	0.035	0.01	0.944	0.46	0.011
IV	Positive identity	-0.03	0.872	-0.39	0.031	0.15	0.421
EDC	Isolationism	0.07	0.682	0.02	0.918	0.43	0.019
EDC	Fanaticism	0.43	0.012	0.03	0.872	-0.06	0.743
HDHS	Egoism	0.05	0.761	0.13	0.492	0.37	0.043
OAF	Nihilism	0.15	0.419	0.22	0.228	0.40	0.027
OAF	Indifference	-0.11	0.540	0.44	0.013	-0.25	0.178
OAF	Egoism	0.46	0.007	0.27	0.135	0.36	0.047
OAF	Fanaticism	0.45	0.009	0.27	0.135	-0.13	0.487
FI	Nihilism	0.12	0.517	0.23	0.209	0.38	0.040

Discussion

I. Ethnic Identity

Positive Identity dominates within all groups. It determines the ethnic tolerance. It sets the optimum balance of tolerance in relation to native and to other ethnic groups. It is the condition of the independence and stable existence of ethnic group and peaceful inter-culture co-operation in the multi-ethnic world.

The scales “Ethnic egoism”, “Ethnic isolation”, “Ethnic fanaticism” characterize the appearance of the destructiveness of inter-ethnic relationships and transformation of ethnic consciousness to the type of hyper-identity.

Uniting scales of the positive ethnic identity on the both sides we will get practically the same distributions. (Table 11). The differences of all percents’ quotas are statistically not significant.

Table 11. The structure of ethnical identity

Schools	Nihilism, Indifference	Positive Identity	Egoism, Isolationism, Fanaticism
Russians in Estonia	34.40%	29.70%	35.90%
Estonians in Estonia	30.70%	29.80%	39.50%
Latvians in Latvia	31.80%	28.60%	39.70%

The analysis of levels of scales of ethnical identity revealed the following (Table 5).

1. The levels of ethnic nihilism of the teachers of Estonian schools in Estonia and the teachers of Latvian schools in Latvia are the same. It is lower than the ethnic nihilism of the teachers of Russian schools in Estonia. The teachers of Russian schools in Estonia have the trend to deviation from native ethnic group and searching for stable social-psychological niches not according to the ethnical criterion.

2. The levels of ethnic indifference of the teachers of Estonian schools in Estonia and the teachers of Latvian schools in Latvia are the same. It is lower than of teachers of Russian schools in Estonia. The teachers of Russian schools in Estonia have the tendency to ‘washing-out’ the ethnical identity.

3. The levels of ethnic positive identity of teachers of Estonian schools of Estonia and teachers of Latvian schools of Latvia are the same. The level of ethnic positive identity of the teachers of Russian schools of Estonia is higher. They have a higher combination of the positive attitude to the native people with the positive attitude to other people. They have the optimum balance of tolerance.

4. The levels of ethnic egoism of all groups are the same. The levels of tension and irritation are the same in socializing with the representatives of other ethnic groups.

5. The levels of ethnic isolationism of teachers of Estonian schools of Estonia and teachers of Latvian schools of Latvia are the same. The ethnic isolationism of the Russian teachers of Estonian schools is lower. They are less sure of own superiority. They have not the negative attitude to the inter-ethnic marriages and have not xenophobia.

6. The levels of ethnic fanaticism are the same in all investigated groups.

Thus, the teachers of Russian schools of Estonia have more positive trends to tolerance. Negative tendencies are expressed less for them. They have a higher level of ethnic tolerance.

II. Social Communicative Competence (SCC)

The analysis of the structure of social communicative competence did not reveal any statistically significant differences.

The analysis of levels of scales of Social communicative clumsiness exposed the following (Table 7).

1. The levels of social communicative competence for the teachers of Estonian schools of Estonia and Latvian schools of Latvia are the same. It is less for Russian schools teachers of Estonia. It means that the teachers in Russian schools have less socially-communicative harmoniousness, they are worse at expressing their opinions, and worse at listen to the opinions of others.
2. The intolerance for vagueness of the teachers of Estonian schools of Estonia and of the teachers of Latvian schools of Latvia does not differ. It is less than of Russian schools teachers of Estonia. It means that the teachers of Russian schools of Estonia are not tolerant enough to vagueness, and they could predict a worsening social-communicative situation.
3. The levels of excessive drive to conformity of the teachers of Estonian schools of Estonia and the teachers of Latvian schools of Latvia are the same. And it is less than that of Russian schools teachers of Estonia. It means that teachers of Russian schools of Estonia are more influenced by the real or imaginative pressure of a group.
4. The heightened drive to the promotion of the position in all schools is the same.
5. The teachers of Russian schools in Estonia, possibly, have a more expressed trend of avoiding failure in interpersonal collaboration compared to the teachers of Latvian schools in Latvia.
6. The frustration intolerance does not differ.

III. Social Identity

The analysis of a structure (Table 8, Fig. 5), showed, that the priorities of aiming to the Self of a person are the same for all teachers. The dominant priority is C – reflexive Self included such properties of a personality as the individual style of behaviour, the peculiarities of a character. B – Social Self – has the second place in a group, it reflects a social role of a personality. A-physical Self - as an object of space and time has the third place. A tiny part is assigned for D – transcendental Self - it shows the abstract reflection of the dependence on a concrete social situation.

The level of B, - social Self - the place in a group, the social role, is significantly higher of Latvian teachers in Latvia than of Russian and Estonian teachers in Estonia (Table 9). A social role for Latvian teachers is more important than for their colleagues from Estonia.

The level of C – reflexive Self represented the individual style of behaviour, the peculiarities of a character, for Latvian teachers of Latvia it is statistically significantly lower than for Russians teachers and Estonians teachers in Estonia (Table 9).

Individual styles of behaviour, peculiarities of own characters (reflective Self) are more important for teachers from Estonia than for their colleagues from Latvia.

III The Analysis Of Correlations

1. Russians In Estonia

The following interrelations were revealed for the teachers of Russian schools of Estonia :

- The higher ethnic indifference is, the lower physical Self is. And *vice versa*;

- The higher socially-communicative clumsiness is,
 - the higher ethnic egoism is, and *vice versa*;
 - the lower aiming to own social Self is, and to a social role, and *vice versa*;
- the more the level of ethnic fanaticism is,
 - the higher level of extremely driving to conformity is. And *vice versa*;
 - the higher level of a direction of choosing the optimum variant of avoiding failures is. And *vice versa*;
- The higher orientation of avoiding failures is,
 - the lower aiming to social Self, to own place in a group is. And *vice versa*;
 - the higher aiming to Self, reflexive Self, individual style of behaviour, peculiarities of a character are. And *vice-versa*;
- The higher frustration intolerance, emotional discomfort in communicative sphere is, the lower the aiming to Self, own social Self, a place in a group, own social role are. And *vice versa*.

2. Estonians in Estonia

The following interrelations were revealed for the teachers of Estonian schools in Estonia:

- The higher ethnical indifference is:
 - the higher social –communicative clumsiness is. And *vice versa*;
 - the higher the orientation to avoiding failures is. And *vice versa*;
- The higher positive ethnical identity is,
 - the lower the tolerance to vagueness is, and *vice versa*;
 - the lower aiming to own physical Self is, and *vice versa*;
 - the higher aiming to reflective Self, individual style, peculiarities of a character are . And *vice versa*;
- The higher ethnical isolationism is, the lower aiming to social SELF, to a place in a group, and a social role are.
- The higher the level of ethnical fanaticism is, the higher level of driving to conformity is. And *vice versa*.

3. Latvians in Latvia

The following interrelations were revealed for the teachers of Latvian schools in Latvia:

- The higher ethnical nihilism is, the higher
 - - the orientation to avoiding failures is. And *vice versa*;
 - -frustration intolerance, emotional discomfort in the communicative sphere are. And *vice versa*;
- The higher ethnical egoism is,
 1. the higher social clumsiness is. And *vice versa*;
 2. the higher extreme driving to conformity is. And *vice versa*; the increasing driving to promotion of own position is. And *vice versa*; the higher orientation to avoiding failures is. And *vice versa*.

Conclusions

The hypothesis of the existence of the relationship among the ethnical tolerance, social-communicative competence and social identity is proved.

It was revealed that positive ethnic identity was connected with ethnic tolerance and it was its basis.

The more communicative skills were developed, the more positive tolerant relations were among ethnic groups.

The common trend is revealed, that if the level of communicative competence is low, the intolerant attitude to representatives of native and others ethnics increases.

The comparison of identities shows that the ethnic reflective and physical characteristics of identity are the most undergone social changes. It is necessary for people to pay their attention on cultural and spiritual values, and traditions.

The obtained results could help in problem-solving connected with the area of communication and tolerant interrelations among the representatives of different ethnic groups living on the territory of the Baltic States. We should develop the positive identity with own ethnic group, the level of ethnic tolerance to Self and the others. The positive ethnic identity with own ethnic group is connected with the rest of nations.

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