

**METHODOLOGY OF INTERDISCIPLINARITY  
AND TRANSDISCIPLINARITY IN A MODERN LEGAL SCIENCE:  
PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS  
OF THE MUNICIPAL LAW DEVELOPMENT**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Today's interdisciplinarity (or interdisciplinary studies involves the combination of two or more academic disciplines into one activity) is a necessary condition for any progressive, innovative research. Simultaneously with differentiation and specification of knowledge there is a process of formation of the various hybrids integrating achievements of the adjacent directions for the purpose of study object in its integrity, to cover research in all internal interrelations. In addition to the concept of "interdisciplinary research" in a scientific discourse gradually includes the concept of "transdisciplinary<sup>1</sup> research". This is defined as research efforts conducted by researchers from different disciplines working jointly to create new conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and translational innovations that integrate and move beyond discipline-specific approaches to address a common problem.

"Trans" has several meanings. It refers to that which is across the disciplines, between the disciplines, and beyond and outside all disciplines. It traverses all possible disciplines which means "to crisscross, zigzag, and move laterally from side to side".<sup>2</sup> Actually, new science can only arise as a result of such transdisciplinary efforts.

Transdisciplinary Research (TDR) is now a well-established and expanding field of science. It is an approach in which researchers from a wide range disciplines work together with stakeholders. TDR aims to overcome the gap between knowledge production on the one hand and the demand for knowledge to contribute to the solution of social problems, on the other.

The Enlightenment saw the separation of the natural sciences from philosophy, followed in the 19th century by the establishment of the humanities and the social sciences as separate disciplines in universities.

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<sup>1</sup> Transdisciplinarity connotes a research strategy that crosses many disciplinary boundaries to create a holistic approach.

<sup>2</sup> Nègre A. (1999). A transdisciplinary approach to science and astrology. Accessed May 19, 2021 at <http://cura.free.fr/quinq/02negre2.html>; Nicolescu B. (1997). The transdisciplinary evolution of the university condition for sustainable development. Accessed May 19, 2021 at <http://perso.club-internet.fr/nicol/ciret/bulletin/b12/b12c8.htm>

Science in the modern period was concerned with empirical laws and carried out by intervening in nature through technically equipped experiments. There was a separation between the branches of knowledge production and the creation of scientific knowledge in the technical world, and its consequences in the “life world”.

In the industrial age, science-based technological innovation supported the expansion of industry and the production of commercial goods and led to the view that progress in society depended on progress in science. The large-scale application of scientific knowledge has had both beneficial and harmful consequences. Increasingly, there is an expectation that the drivers and impacts of modern science and technology are understood in a wider social and environmental context. This has led to a demand for new forms of research and science to understand and mitigate the effects of some earlier innovations and to stimulate the development of “sustainable” science and technology too.

The objective of transdisciplinary is to understand the present world, in all of its complexities, instead of focusing on one part of it.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, transdisciplinary research is being conceptualized as both:

a) a specific kind of interdisciplinary research involving scientific and non-scientific sources or practice; and more excitingly,

b) a new form of learning and problem-solving involving cooperation among different parts of society, including academia, in order to meet the complex challenges of society.

Through mutual learning, the knowledge of all participants is enhanced, and this new learning is used to collectively devise solutions to intricate societal problems that are interwoven.<sup>4</sup>

Out of the dialogue between academia and other parts of society, new results and new interactions are produced, offering a new vision of nature and reality.<sup>5</sup>

Methodologically important concept of a paradigm in municipal law can be associated with the traditional imagination about the main types of legal understanding: the classic type of scientific rationality can be attributed to both traditional positivism and traditional jusnaturalism. And the

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<sup>3</sup> Nicolescu B. (1997). The transdisciplinary evolution of the university condition for sustainable development. Accessed May 19, 2021 at <http://perso.club-internet.fr/nicol/ciret/bulletin/b12/b12c8.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Regeer B. (2002). Transdisciplinarity. Accessed May 19, 2021 at <http://www.bio.vu.nl/vakgroepen/bens/HTML/transdisciplinI.html>

<sup>5</sup> Nègre A. (1999). A transdisciplinary approach to science and astrology. Accessed May 19, 2021 at <http://cura.free.fr/quinq/02negre2.html>

nonclassical approach presented by sociology of law <sup>6</sup> and the post-school corresponds to the psychological type of misunderstanding.<sup>7</sup>

The most optimal phenomenological model of their ratio within the legal reality is the ring system of objecting with the following location: The most optimal in the centre is the psychological type of understanding, when the sequence is a jus naturalism, sociology and positivism.

This whole system is vector-scattered with the changes that come from the psychological centre, symbolizing the dominance of the post-class approach. It also corresponds to the anthropocentric research program.

The law as a component of society is considered as a post-class object of cognition, which has signs of “self” as self-exclusion, self-structuring, self-regulation, self-development, self-reproduction. It enters the system of primitive social self-regulators, one of the forms of which is a self-government (in French “self-government municipal, d’association mutuelle <...> elle est en rapport avec le gouvernement établi”).<sup>8</sup> According to Pierre-Joseph Proudhon this term better conveys the socio-organizational meaning of an anarchy. This self-regulator acts alongside power, economy and morality in accordance with the basic motivations of the typological model personality. It is a part of the core of the anthropocentric scientific program. It competes with the ability of social entities to manage themselves autonomously and refers to the capacity of social entities to govern themselves autonomously and, as such, is an important mode of societal governance in modern society.<sup>9</sup>

According to J. Panejko, “self-government is <...> a decentralized state administration that is underpinned by law and exercised by local bodies which are not subordinate hierarchically to other authorities, being autonomous within the limits of statute and general legal system”.<sup>10</sup> In establishing self-government, the state narrows down the scope of its responsibilities and limits its authority in terms of exerting influence on how the duties delegated to the local self-government are performed. Local self-government is first and foremost a union of local community that is distinguished within the structure of the state and endowed with legal

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<sup>6</sup> Эрлих О. Основоположение социологии права / пер. с нем. М.В. Антонова ; Под ред. В.Г. Графского, Ю.И. Гревцова. Санкт-Петербург : Университетский издательский консорциум, 2011. 704 С.

<sup>7</sup> Петражицкий Л.И. Теория права и государства в связи с теорией нравственности. Санкт-Петербург : Лань, 2000. 606 с.

<sup>8</sup> Proudhon P.-J. De la Capacité politique des classes ouvrières. Paris : E. Dentu, Libraire-éditeur 1865. P. 309.

<sup>9</sup> Morgan D.L. Living within blurry boundaries: The value of distinguishing between qualitative and quantitative research. *Journal of mixed methods research*. London, 2016. Vol. 10, N 1. P. 1–12.

<sup>10</sup> Panejko J. Geneza i podstawy samorządu europejskiego. Paryż : Imprimerie de Navarre, 1926. P. 9–10; Buczkowski P. Samorząd lokalny i budowa społeczeństwa obywatelskiego w Polsce do 1990 r. In : Odrodzenie samorządu terytorialnego, Krajowy Instytut Badań Samorządowych. Poznań, 1994. P. 9.

personality.<sup>11</sup> “Self-government, as a qualified way of exercising state administration, is, on the one hand, bound by the legal system in force and the relationships established within this system with regard to the state central authorities, while on the other hand, it is granted the most stable guarantees of autonomy in exercising its functions”.<sup>12</sup>

Governmentality, an expression originally formulated by the 20th-century French philosopher Michel Foucault, combines the terms “government” and “rationality”. Government in this sense refers to conduct, or an activity meant to shape, guide, or affect the conduct of people. Conduct takes on meaning beyond the form of leading and directing. It also refers to the “conduct of oneself” where a sense of self-governance is a guiding force.

Rationality, as a form of thinking that strives to be systematic and clear about how things are or ought to be, suggests that before people or things can be controlled or managed, they must first be defined. Therefore, the state designs systems for defining populations, which make them known and visible. They include mechanisms of management and administration (work processes, procedures, rules) and ways of classifying individuals or groups (by income, race, professional and personnel categories), which allow for their identification, classification, ordering and control.<sup>13</sup>

### **1. Philosophy of science and technology of *ius municipale* research**

P. Shennon-Baker (University of Cincinnati, the USA) considers paradigmatic foundations as a key component of mixed methods research. This article is a sort of a response to the “paradigm war” that has recently broken out within the methodology of social sciences. This war touches on such fields of philosophical inquiry (paradigms) as pragmatism, critical realism, dialectics and transformative emancipation.

Dialectics is rather an approach than a separate paradigm since a scientist can use this approach at different levels of research including paradigmatic, methodological, analytical etc. Such dialectic categories as, for example, dialogue, similarities and differences, divergence and others can be used at the paradigmatic level as well i.e., they can influence a scientist’s decision throughout the inquiry. The dialectical approach allows bringing together ideas, theories, and data that, at first, seem to be in conflict, as well as converging different paradigms. Dialogue helps representatives of different research groups to cooperate.

When it comes to pragmatism, it is worth saying that pragmatists put a special emphasis on the presentation of a problem, ways of communication

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<sup>11</sup> Ochendowski E. Prawo administracyjne, część ogólna. Toruń : “Dom Organizatora”, 1997. P. 22.

<sup>12</sup> Kamiński R. Decentralizacja i samorządność w administracji publicznej. Postacie i formy. *Przegląd Humanistyczny. Pedagogika, Politologia, Filologia*. 2011. N 4. P. 212.

<sup>13</sup> Huff R. (2007). Publications’ Encyclopaedia of Governance. Accessed May 19, 2021 at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/governmentality>

and common meanings of terms, interconnection between theory and factual background. It is pragmatism that keeps balance between the subjective and the objective during scientific researches. The pragmatic approach allows detecting the interconnection between an old paradigm and a new one.

Transformative emancipationists pay special attention to positive social changes in power, suppression, and privileges. Round out the picture, critical realists strive to synthesize qualitative and quantitative research methods, emphasizing that any theory reflects only a part of reality, and it should be supplemented with other opinions. This approach allows drawing conclusions about causal connections which, on the one hand, are conditioned by the context and, on the other hand, are available for representatives of a different paradigm.

Discussions were predominantly focused on “paradigm” as a category. Some scientists insisted on the traditional Kuhnian interpretation of this notion as “a way to summarize researchers’ beliefs about their efforts to create knowledge”.<sup>14</sup> Others argued that paradigms should be considered as “tools” useful to any research process but not intending to be exclusionary. There were also researchers who viewed paradigms not as static perspectives, but as dynamic constructed entities needed for any scientific research. Some scientists thought that the concept of a paradigm is unhelpful and may be successfully replaced with “mental models”.

P. Shannon-Baker sees paradigms as a guide that a researcher can use to ground his research. Paradigms are continuously changing. They help scientists to align their choices with existing value systems distinguished by other scientists. Showing beliefs helps a scientist to find a common language with the opponents. The problem is not that whether paradigms are necessary or not, but how to make the best use of them within scientific research.

Another issue for the paradigmatic foundations of mixed methods addresses whether one paradigm might be best suited to the field over other competing ones. Some researchers argued that such presentation of a problem makes no sense. According to the others, one paradigm cannot be better than the other one since the use of mixed methods combining qualitative and quantitative approaches constitutes strong and weak points of any paradigm. There are also researchers who argue that although paradigms can play an important methodological role, they cannot be used for revealing the essence of the cognitive process.

However, all parties, one way or another, address an issue whether paradigms should be applied within empirical researches. P. Shannon-Baker empathizes that the use of mixed methods research combining qualitative and quantitative approaches “is more about our approaches to data and methods rather than signalling a singular worldview”.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Shannon-Baker P. Making paradigms meaningful in mixed methods research. *Journal of mixed methods research*. London. 2015. Vol. 10. N 4. P. 319.

<sup>15</sup> Shannon-Baker P. Making paradigms meaningful in mixed methods research. P. 320.

Hence, the question arises as to what the use of paradigmatic foundations within mixed methods research may result in. Therefore, this article seeks to review practical implications of such an use, to observe the specifics of paradigm application in researches. Mixed methods research is deemed as “philosophically grounded mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches”.<sup>16</sup> The purpose of a mixed methods research is to provide a more profound understanding of surrounding phenomena that could otherwise not have been ensured by using one approach alone. Postpositivism as a field of modern methodology of science within which the concept of paradigm was formed, still prevails in such areas of expertise as medicine and business.

P. Shannon-Baker gathers that a mixed methods research allows detecting tools to choose the best perspectives of scientific inquiry. Therefore, a question is raised about a potential replacement of the “paradigm” category with a new notion – “perspective”. Future should not witness the only best paradigm (perspective): researchers themselves should choose the paradigm suitable for each case. The problem is not that which paradigm should be chosen; it is that how to use it.

L. M. Howes (School of Social Sciences, University of Tasmania, Australia) emphasizes that methodologists “urge” mixed methods researchers to justify their methodological choices and provide greater clarity about philosophical underpinnings of the method used. Detecting scientific values and background helps improving logic and methods in researches.

Methodology is a complex discipline. “It is not just about the technique to consolidate data; it interlaces with philosophical ontology (beliefs about the nature of reality) and epistemology (beliefs about the nature of cognition)”.<sup>17</sup> Ontological reality includes such elements as people, understanding, interpretations, social processes, social groups and institutions. Epistemology poses before researchers such questions as whether a phenomenon is cognizable or not, and if it is, then how and by which means this cognition may be expressed. According to L. M. Howes, both objective reality and subjective methods of communication between researchers are cognizable.

Mixed methods research shows how efficient interdisciplinary synthesis is. It presupposes knowledge of philosophy, methodology, psychology, linguistics, law, social science etc. Any method contains the review of research principles. Many methodologists agree that the synthesis of ontology, epistemology and methodology forms a scientific paradigm. While being formed, the paradigm absorbs knowledge of other branches of

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<sup>16</sup> Shannon-Baker P. Making paradigms meaningful in mixed methods research. P. 321.

<sup>17</sup> Howes L. M. Developing the methodology for an applied, interdisciplinary research project: documenting the journey toward philosophical clarity. *Journal of mixed methods research*. London. 2015. Vol. 11. N 4. P. 450.

philosophy including ethics and esthetics. Axiology (the study of values) has a significant influence on the research process. Since methodology and philosophy are closely interrelated, it is difficult to explain methodology without using philosophical foundations. A researcher's self-reflection contributes to detecting such foundations.

There are factors influencing a research, namely:

- a) philosophical underpinnings (including ontology and epistemology),
- b) logic of research (or methodology),
- c) practical principles (certain methods and procedures),
- d) social and political factors (the place of science in the society, axiological values etc.).

While some methodologists suggest proceeding with the cognition process from more specific methods to more abstract, others insist on the practical principles being the beginning and end of a research and consider areas *a*, *b* and *d* to be insignificant. Critics often call the latter approach as "the cart before the horse". L. M. Howes thinks that a research is a recursive process the meaning of which for this argument is revealed through meanings for preceding arguments and which requires referring to various areas of expertise while often returning to the initial position. Researches based on value factors are mostly conditioned by social and political environment.

Mixed methods can integrate at the following levels:

- a) technical (it may be possible if an analysis is carried out step-by-step),
- b) ontological (it may be possible if they are based on similar preconditions in terms of the nature of social reality),
- c) epistemological (it may be possible if available factors are comparable with each other),
- d) explanatory (it may be possible if the data speak in favour of a certain argument).

L. M. Howes has concluded that the use of qualitative mixed methods allows establishing a connection between researchers representing different areas of expertise. "This article is sort of a response to methodologists urging researchers to explain the methodology used with philosophical clarity".<sup>18</sup> This material may help other researchers raising similar questions within mixed methods research.

J. Schoonenboom (University of Vienna, Austria) argues that those advocating for a performative paradigm of mixed methods research assume the existence of multiple realities that can be known in various ways. These realities are changing all the time.

A performative paradigm is based on ontology and epistemology of dialectic pluralism. In a research inquiry, researchers create new, unknown worlds, which they subsequently investigate. During this process, a certain

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<sup>18</sup> Howes L.M. Developing the methodology for an applied, interdisciplinary research project: documenting the journey toward philosophical clarity. P. 465.

level of objectivity is achieved through the feedback system. While pragmatists assume that the world around us is a result of the subject's experience, those advocating for a performative paradigm believe that there are many outside worlds.

They are temporary because they have been created by a human based on key concepts. A performative paradigm assumes that an answer to the question how many objects exist in a certain world depends on how an object is defined.

J. Schoonenboom offers the following four principles underlying a performative paradigm.

Number one, some researchers use mixed methods only and stick to the pragmatic position and ignore ontological and epistemological problems.

Number two, such factors as researchers' beliefs and values play an important role in the research process.

Number three, people do not so much hold different views on the same reality in a sense as exist in different worlds. Number four, there is a continuous two-way feedback between a researcher and reality in the research process.

Mixed methods researchers can stick to the following philosophical paradigms:

- a) dialectic stance,
- b) critical realism,
- c) pragmatism.

Critical realism assumes the existence of the only objective reality that can be known in one way or another. The aim of science is to get knowledge of the world that would exist independently of a knower. This knowledge includes both experience and emotions of a researcher. The main argument against critical realism is that there are cases when the idea of different realities makes sense. Representatives of different scientific paradigms often exist in different worlds, use different notions, have different habits, values, and interests. It would be wrong to say that they have simply different views towards the same reality.

Pragmatism assumes that the research of the nature and consequences of people's deeds comes to replace epistemological and ontological beliefs. The research does not so much seek to get knowledge which is true in any historical epoch as to solve up-to-the-minute outstanding problems. "If results are inconsistent with current beliefs of a researcher, such beliefs should be updated".<sup>19</sup> Such updated beliefs are gradually become "current", forming the basis for further researches. Such transformations are made until an outstanding problem is solved.

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<sup>19</sup> Schoonenboom J. A performative paradigm for mixed methods research. *Journal of mixed methods research*. P. 5. Accessed May 19, 2021 at <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1558689817722889>

Researchers advocating for dialectic position see a research as a dialogue between representatives of different paradigms. Constructivists emphasize the existence of multiple realities which may be cognized in many ways. Positivism assumes that there is the only reality which may be known objectively. Any mixed methods researcher should be informed on both positions to establish a dialogue between them.

Critical realism says that objectivity can be achieved through experiencing the reality, constructivism – through intersubjective understanding, and pragmatism – through revising researchers' beliefs. Researchers advocating for a performative paradigm believe that objectivity can be achieved when a researcher interacts (or dances) with the world created by them. During such an interaction (or dance) a leading position is always passing from a researcher to the reality and vice versa. When a researcher takes the lead, they are active and impose something to the reality. At those stages, when a researcher is passive, they step back and watch the world responding to the introduced changes.

Finally, J. Schoonenboom distinguishes the following features of the performative paradigm of mixed methods research. (1) Mixed methods researchers do not use different types of ontology and epistemology. (2) Researchers usually do not change an available paradigm during a research. (3) In some way, people are more likely to live in different worlds than have different views towards the same reality. (4) When a researcher applies one or another method to research a reality, the reality responds to them.

In the modern legal literature, there is a noticeable expansion of the range of philosophical principles and methodological approaches to legal research. Interpretation of these changes as trends in the dynamics of our scientific legal consciousness can be considered as the main process that determines the philosophical and methodological situation of modern domestic jurisprudence, its transition from monistic methodology to philosophical and methodological pluralism.

There are several groups of factors that underlie the research of local self-government.

First, these are factors related to local self-government being as the object of study. The system of legal regulation of local self-government is changing, all types of relations with enterprises, institutions and organizations located on the territory of the municipality are becoming more complicated, bases and principles of financial and economic resource provision are being formed, the price of decisions and, consequently, the price of managerial mistakes is growing.

Secondly, these are the factors of development of the science of municipal law, due to the objective need for its integration with other branches of scientific knowledge. Integration processes in science require new, non-standard solutions to problems, which can significantly advance the improvement of municipal social relations and local interconnections.

Third, these are factors related to changes in the political and legal spheres, with the formation of the entire state policy, system of views and approaches in the legal regulation of municipal and legal relations, which could not be realized without allow for local interests of self-government.

Against the background of legal studies, historians of law show much more modest interest in the topic of *ius municipale* or a municipal law now.

The science of municipal law, which has developed largely on the basis of the development of pre-revolutionary legal thought (before 1917) and the study of foreign constitutionalism, is at the initial stage of its formation. Disputes continue not only about the basic scientific concepts and categories, but also about the place of this science in jurisprudence.

This state of science of municipal law, as well as many other scientific disciplines, is largely due to the existing methodology of law in general. It seems logical that in recent years the issue of theoretical and methodological foundations of branch legal sciences, the methodology of law in general has become sharply relevant. Fairly huge scientific material has been accumulated to be generalized and reconsidered.

The latter has a special relationship to municipal law, because here scientific and research activities are complicated by additional factors. However, it should be noted that the formation of a systematic view of the theory and practice of legal regulation of local self-government is not favoured by the attention to such issues as its territorial organization, local government decisions on certain issues of local importance, the economic basis of local government. Most often, only the local budget is studied.

Thus, the model of local self-government in the very contradictory conditions of the formation of constitutionalism in Europe retained its political and practical significance as a form of democracy and became the object of considerable research interest, remaining one of the most controversial issues of jurisprudence.

The algorithm of cognition is determined by the abstract concepts and categories formulated on the basis this knowledge, the content of which is accumulated by the corresponding ideas, theories, methodological principles. The concept of autonomy of local self-government should be included in the basic concepts, the development of which is a priority. It is used in international law and foreign legal practice, in municipal legal acts.

The theory of local self-government is of the greatest scientific and methodological importance, of course, the identification of its legal nature. It has already been noted above that local self-government is considered in the context of the political as an element of the political system of society, in which another form of public power functions simultaneously with this system.

The main attention of researchers is focused on the interaction of local governments and public authorities.

This approach has certain historical and legal preconditions. Any phenomenon with well-established theoretical ideas goes through periods of its origin, formation and development.

This alphabet of epistemology, unfortunately, is sometimes ignored when we are considering for example the legal nature of modern local government or classifying the current municipal systems and try to use ideas about social or state theories of Anglo-Saxon or continental or French municipality. Of course, this is not to say that in this part knowledge is no longer of a scientific nature, and the approaches formed on their basis have lost their methodological significance.

However, local government is not just the municipal government. For these concepts, often used as synonyms, different content is seen. We can assume that the concept of local self-government is much broader than the concept of municipal government.

Accepting the dual nature of the legal nature of local self-government, it should be understood as the unity not of the state and the public, but of the political (authoritative) and public.

As a powerful phenomenon, local self-government is a part of the political system of society within which power relations are exercised.

The complexity of developing legal problems of the local government nature has not only objective, but also subjective reasons. If we turn to the analysis of works on the theory of the state and law, they are obviously dominated by research in law. Without theoretical elaborations of the essence of public power in modern conditions, it is difficult to count on the formation of an adequate theory of local government for the municipal authorities as the variety of the state ones.

In the formation of such a theory, as well as in the development of municipal law in general, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of another component methodology or study methods. There are only two reasons for this: the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to consideration legal regulation of local self-government and comparative studies.

Research, as stated earlier, is a systematic inquiry into a “legal fact” or casus (*Lat.* Chance; accident; an event; a case; a case contemplated). It involves the collection of legal facts, analysis of the collected legal facts, and logical inferences drawn from examined closely legal facts. A method of inquiry becomes systematic only when the researcher resorts to a systematic approach to, and follows a scientific method of inquiry into, the legal fact under investigation. Research, simply put, is an endeavour to arrive at certain conclusions through the application of scientific methods.

Scientific method is loaded with logical considerations. It is the pursuit of truth as determined by logical considerations. The ideal of science is to achieve a systematic inter-relation of legal facts. Scientific method attempts to achieve this ideal by experimentation, observation, logical arguments from accepted postulates and a combination of these three in varying proportions.

The subject-matter of the science of municipal law relates to its methodology. Methodology science is a set of techniques and ways to study its subject.

Among them there are both general scientific and private scientific methods.

General scientific methods of municipal law include dialectic method, historical, genetic, axiological, logical, systemic, functional methods of a research.

Using the dialectic method allows us to consider municipal and legal phenomena in their development and the relationship with other legal and illegal phenomena. This dialectical method is built on the Principles of Expression and Differentiation. The first breaks with both logical and causal analysis, emphasizing relationships within a whole. The second stresses that development is often multilinear and discontinuous.

The method is sensitive to linguistic, social, and cultural issues and is much more sociological than its critics have grasped. When applied to functionalism, the dialectical method demonstrates the inadequacy of ends-means logic. It also shows that functionalism has rested on a limited, social control viewpoint based on an identification of equilibrium with negative feedback models. A dialectical approach can subsume functionalism through a balanced perspective which stresses latent potentials as much as latent functions and treats equilibrium as homeorhesis<sup>20</sup> rather than homeostasis.<sup>21</sup>

The historical method involves the study of the facts of the past, for example, local self-government in organizational and legal forms.

This type of research is aimed at describing municipal legal enactments, statutes or institutions in their unique historical perspectives. Historical research is desirable especially when it becomes necessary to find out the previous law in order to understand the reason behind the existing law and the course of its evolution. It often shows that a particular existing provision of the law that was justifiable at the time when it was introduced is no longer justifiable because the reason that justified the original inclusion of that provision are no longer valid. In this circumstance, the researcher must consult earlier commentaries on the particular municipal statute. The major problem attendant upon this type of research concerns the difficulty of obtaining the accurate and detailed records one wishes to examine.<sup>22</sup>

The genetic method focuses on the identification of the root causes of a municipal legal phenomenon and reasons for the formation of the principle of organizational territorial isolation of local self-government.

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<sup>20</sup> It derived from the Greek for “similar flow”, is a concept encompassing dynamical systems which return to a trajectory, as opposed to systems which return to a particular state.

<sup>21</sup> Homeostasis, any self-regulating process by which biological systems tend to maintain stability.

<sup>22</sup> Afolayan M.S., Oniyinde O.A. Interviews and Questionnaires as Legal Research Instruments. *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization*. 2019. Vol. 83. P. 52. Accessed May 19, 2021 at [www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org) DOI : 10.7176/JLPG

The value method allows you to analyze the practice of local self-government from a position the role of its results for the subjects of municipal legal relations, in the first municipal unit.

The logical method makes it possible to divide a municipal legal phenomenon into parts, for example, the basis of the local self-government as organizational, legal, territorial and financial economic level of governance.

Using a systemic method, municipal legal phenomena are investigated from the point of view of the interconnectedness of elements. The system of local self-government is studied through consideration of its organizational and legal forms. Finally, the functional method helps to analyze the functions of various phenomena, such as local self-government functions, local self-government functions, etc.

Private scientific methods include sociological, statistical, comparative legal methods, method of legal experimentation. The specific sociological method is based on questionnaires, interviews, observations, surveys. With their help you can get some information about municipal legal processes and phenomena.

The statistical method reveals quantitative indications in the statics or the dynamics of certain municipal legal phenomena.

This involves the gathering of statistics which will give an idea of the actual working of the law. It provides quantitative illustrations of the dynamics of certain social and legal process or serves to arrange the sets of available data in numerical terms. It involved collection of data in a methodological manner However, because it involves quantitative analysis, it is not a popular way of conducting legal research. It involves going to the field to collect data through surveys, opinion polls, participant observation, focused group discussion, and relies on instrument such as interviews and questionnaires. A way of overcoming the above identified challenges is by employing interdisciplinary approach or embracing academic collaborations so that persons who are knowledgeable in quantitative or numerical aspects of the research are brought in to carry out the analysis, while the legal researcher is left to draw the inferences and write his conclusions based on results of the analysis.<sup>23</sup>

All scholarly research implies comparisons. Scholarly legal research often requires comparing one's own legal system to another one. Here, we will focus on comparing national legal systems, as this is the most common geographical level of comparison.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Afolayan M.S., Oniyinde O. . Interviews and Questionnaires as Legal Research Instruments. *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization*. 2019. Vol. 83. P. 53. Accessed May 19, 2021 at [www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org) DOI : 10.7176/JLPG

<sup>24</sup> Hoecke M. van. Methodology of Comparative Legal Research. *Law and Method*. 2015. P. 3. Accessed May 19, 2021 at <https://biblio.ugent.be/publication/7145504/file/7145530.pdf> DOI : 10.5553/ REM/000010

Comparative research is still mainly about comparing national legal systems, even if different forms of globalization, such as Europeanization, and an increasing recognition of non-state law, such as customary law, religious law or unofficial law-making by international companies are challenging the very concept of “legal system”. Here, we are not entering into that discussion.

The method of comparative law study is a technique consisting of a comparison of two or more municipal legal categories, which is designed to identify similarities and differences. Thus, it is possible to compare the models of local self-government existing in different municipalities and charters of these municipalities. This method is important both theoretically and in practical terms, it allows us to gather useful information in order to borrow positive experience, both to improve regulations and to improve local governance.

The method of legal experimentation reveals the positive and negative aspects of the introduction of certain innovations at the local municipal level.

## **2. Modern methodology of the municipal law**

In modern philosophy of law and general theory of law the methodology is associated primarily with the understanding of law and the type of scientific rationality. There are classical, non-classical and post-non-classical types of rationality. The classical type of scientific rationality offers as a condition of objectivity the elimination of the subject, the non-classical is the account of the means of research, and the post-non-classical is also the relativity of knowledge to the extrascientific value orientations of the subject.

In our opinion, the use of the category “local self-government” should begin with the study of all intellectual wealth *ius municipale*, considering the uniqueness of its terminology, basic references, methodology, and so on. In addition, the study of the components of the legal tradition *ius municipale* avoids superficial assessments of legal concepts, doctrines as secondary to the ancient Roman or those that “do not reach” the level of legal thought of today.

From the first days of institutionalization in the late eighteenth century municipal law appears as a dualistic branched complex legal system, when the theses of M. Thouret from 1789 were formulated, who singled out two components of the competence of local governments as “système d’administration municipale et provinciale” (in French).<sup>25</sup>

We emphasize that in the XXI century, there is an obvious tendency to involve the resources of life sciences in rebuilding new theoretical perspectives and schemes for organizing public life on the ground. In general, the specificity of the integration of knowledge about local self-government is determined by

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<sup>25</sup> Rapport de M. Thouret sur les bases de la représentation proportionnelle, lors de la séance du 29 septembre 1789. In : Archives Parlementaires de 1787 à 1860 – Première série (1787–1799), Tome IX – Du 16 septembre au 11 novembre 1789. Paris : Librairie Administrative P. Dupont, 1877. P. 202.

specific predications, in our case it is socialization. They are responsible for establishing the appropriate relationships, hierarchies and procedures for combining knowledge, such as conceptual schemes or empirical data, that is, everything that ultimately determines the form of architecture of interdisciplinary research of local government.

Modern local self-government provides equal position of all members of the local community in relation to issues of local importance. This is impossible under the conditions of dominance of class-state relations or their analogues.

Any theory of local self-government is an element of scientific and theoretical justification of self-government of a group of subjects (totality of property owners, first of all real estate, land) in the implementation of public administration and economic activity in the local territory.

The main achievement of all theories of local self-government is the development of scientific categories, creation of structures for local self-government systems, general theoretical justification of local self-government. Indeed, under the current conditions for the construction (reform) of local self-government, it is necessary to take into accounts the theoretical material developed for many centuries.

Voluntary amalgamation, in particular of communes and communities, will be the second important feature of the local territorial community. Such characteristics of the local territorial community in the greatest expression are currently inherent in communities, which are formed spontaneously. At the heart of the functionality of municipal society are objective general local interests. This may not always be understood as a simple amount of private interests.

Some might feel that the usefulness of the term “community of interest” with respect to local government has similarly diminished. It has been bandied about vaguely, with varying degrees of expediency, seriousness and passion.

However, none of the concepts offered to replace it seem to do so adequately. Such expressions as common identity, affinity, collective perspective, sharing common concerns, sense of common purpose, core of commonality, sense of belonging, a coherent social and economic whole, acting in the interests of community, and speaking with a united voice, have been put forward, yet each tends to cover only some aspect of the broad dimensions in which the concept of “community of interest” can be applied for local government.

Furthermore, as part of the vocabulary of local government, it is unlikely this term can be abolished. It must be therefore more specifically defined if it is to have any real meaning or be applied as a useful criterion in the determination of local government boundaries.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> The concept of community of interest (1989). A Discussion Paper which explores the concept of Community of Interest as it applies to Local Government boundaries. Prepared by Helen Fulcher for the S.A. Department of Local Government / Edited by Rose Bowey. Accessed May 19, 2021 at [The Concept of Community of Interest – A Discussion Paper – 1989](http://lgc.govt.nz). Accessed May 19, 2021 at <http://lgc.govt.nz>

In addition, an important component of the general discipline interests is not only the interests of the current functioning and spatial reproduction of the municipal society as spatial and geographical factor. These are the interests of its long-term perspective development as temporal factor, at least for the life of one generation as “hromada residents”.

From cyber positions, the local territorial community can also be imagined as a system. Namely a system of probability, complex, which does not lend itself to a full description.

An attempt to bring these lines of thought together was made by Hermann Haken in his 1988 book *Information and Self-Organization*, where he identified complex systems of two types: designed or built by man, and those occurred as the result of self-organization.<sup>27</sup> The self-organized system is the local community.

The modern construction of the municipal legal categories as a disciplinary apparatus, if necessary, requires the selection and detailed linguistic processing of the content of the relevant fundamental definitions, which together form the appropriate conceptual integrated system. In the conditions of a steady stream of empirical material this system provides mediation in the municipal and legal theory of that main, natural element which is present in the imagined realities at the level of its general and special understanding.

In the analytical-theoretical sense, the following aspects of municipal legal definitions should be distinguished:

- a) semantic (they have a certain meaning and carry clear information),
- b) axiological (the information contained in them is of value to municipal law as an epistemological system),
- c) communicative (they are a means of communication),
- d) semiotic (they denote information in a clearly defined sign system),
- e) theoretically reflected (they perform a reflected function in the process of cognition of municipal legal activity),
- f) epistemological (they are a means of scientific knowledge),
- g) physical (they are material reproductions of information).

The development problem of the theory of municipal governance at the present stage is that the authors of most studies in the field of local self-government and the current law provide local authorities with public-legal quality characteristics,

For a correct understanding of the subject of municipal law one cannot deal without the use of political concept as an interdisciplinary approach to the study, understanding and modelling of political reality in its relationship with all spheres of socially integrated reality. This going beyond the subject discipline of legal science allows, with the help of methodological and theoretical potential, to work out in interdisciplinary research the production

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<sup>27</sup> Хакен Г. Информация и самоорганизация: Макроскопический подход к сложным системам / пер. с англ. Москва : Мир, 1991. С. 18.

of scientific knowledge about local self-government, which has great comparative potential.

Territorial toponymic or local identity is the perception of an individual as a representative of a certain “imagined community”, which is based on the unity of the territory of residence, history and traditions, socio-cultural experience, values and way of life. Territorial identity can refer to objects of different scale and content, such as place of residence, local community, settlement, etc.<sup>28</sup>

Political and institutional identity is the identification of individuals with self-determination, a social group, a community that has or aspires to political sovereignty. Therefore, the subject of local self-government should be based on territorial and in some way correlate it with the political and institutional identity, as local self-government is characterized by the initiative of the population and its separation from other forms of public authority.

The notion of “local community” mostly used nowadays is the one which defines local community in terms of geography (valley, mountain range) or administration (town, district, region, state). Local community often refers to either small towns or some other parts of urban or rural centres. The word community derives from the word *communitas*, which means the spirit of collective belonging or unstructured community where all people are equal. Turner uses anthropological approach in describing a community as a link in liminal time and spatial process; a group of people who go together through life stages, who help individuals cope with the overwhelming moments in their lives, such as birth, puberty, marriage, parenthood, social advancement, professional specialization and finally, death.<sup>29</sup>

R. Esposito uses etymological analysis of the word. He sees community neither as a property nor as a territory separated and defended against those who do not belong to it, but as our debt, or a gift which reminds us to appreciate ourselves.<sup>30</sup> Family groups are also community types, especially in societies based on strong family relations, responsibility, reciprocity and respect.

Many indigenous communities are based on a complex hierarchy which is mostly lost in Western cultures. Community also means belonging to a group and sharing common values and visions through formal or informal channels. In that sense, D. W. McMillan and D. M. Chavis<sup>31</sup> identify four crucial factors for community development: membership, influence, a common emotional connection and integration and satisfaction of needs.

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<sup>28</sup> Коржов Г. Територіальні ідентичності: концептуальні інтерпретації в сучасній зарубіжній соціологічній думці. *Соціологія: теорія, методи, маркетинг*. 2010. № 1. С. 108–109.

<sup>29</sup> Uerner V. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Antistructure*. Ithaca, New York : Cornell University Press, 1969.

<sup>30</sup> Esposito R. *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*. Stanford : Stanford University Press, 1998.

<sup>31</sup> McMillan D.W., Chavis D.M. Sense of community: A definition and theory. *Journal of Community Psychology*. 1986. Volume14, Issue 1. P. 6–23.

Further emphasis has to be put on the term sense of community, a life environment in which people mutually cooperate as a group but always clearly state the differences among its individual members.<sup>32</sup>

Moreover, a local community is an amalgam of life values and space sharing. When looking at the core premises of community, the following elements have to be taken into consideration: members' individuality, common perception, trust, connection, common goals and values, common expectations, belonging and a sense of space. It can be concluded that a local community is a place where material, human and social resources are accumulated.

Production and service processes are related not only to individuals but also to a local surrounding. Within a local community various of protagonists (individuals and organizations, economic and others, private and public) build up mutual relationships, make decisions and develop strategies in the context which is both cooperative and competitive. The definition of sustainable community development applicable to this research is: "Local community's sustainable development is the improvement of the quality of life, that is economic prosperity and a subjectively good feeling which is evoked by reduced usage of non-renewable natural resources and decreased harm to the environment with the purpose of ensuring unlimited development options of future generations".<sup>33</sup>

The political-institutional sustainability of a local community refers to its ability to preserve and develop its cultural identity, life and work conditions of its inhabitants.

Municipal law combines two internally opposite components of the subject (as public and private) and the method (as subordination and coordination), which creates a special regime of municipal regulation. The method of municipal law is a set of imperative, dispositive, recommendatory ways or means of influencing public relations, which are formed in the process of organization and functioning of local self-government, as well as the implementation of forms of direct democracy to address local issues.<sup>34</sup>

At the same time, the method of municipal law includes three main traditional methods of legal regulation (prescription, prohibition, permission). Along with traditional methods, relatively independent techniques (methods) are being developed, namely value orientations and the principle of proportionality (in German "Verhältnismäßigkeitsgrundsatz") or the doctrine of balance the USA, which determine the uniqueness of modern municipal influence and help protect the law in local self-government.

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<sup>32</sup> Graves L.N. Cooperative learning communities: context for a new vision of education and society. *Journal of Education*. 1992. N 174 (2). P. 57–79.

<sup>33</sup> Dončić S.H., Đurek N. Social – cultural sustainability of a local community through visual identification on the example of the town of Zabok. *Acta Economica Et Turistica*. 2016. Vol 2, N 2. P. 129.

<sup>34</sup> Любченко П.М. Муніципальне право України : навчальний посібник. Київ : ФІНН, 2012. С. 24.

The modern specificity of the method of municipal legal regulation is characterized by the universality and integrativeness of legal methods in the process of municipal legal regulation. New characteristics of the subject and method of municipal law require adequate research of modern problems and trends in its development as a branch of law. Interest should be shown in the methodology of the science of municipal law, as well as in a set of different methods of studying local self-government as a key category of this law.

Trans- and interdisciplinary theory of civilized determination of law allows us to study current trends in the current system of local self-government in Ukraine. Systems analysis, even if it is sociological as structural functionalism, political science as input-output or cybernetic as self-regulation of information and management systems, leaves open the empirical definition of goal-attaining, conversion or means of “regulatory structures” of local self-government, which is an integral part of the traditional state collectivity. These traditional approaches to cognition are based on the concepts of power.

Thus, transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to the knowledge of the subject of municipal law allow at the appropriate scientific and theoretical level to understand the construct of defining it as social relations, which are related to the organization and functioning of local self-government as an independent and relatively separate type of public local government. certain administrative and territorial units.

Identifying and studying the internal hierarchical structure of municipal law, the subordination of its elements provides the creation of certain dynamic models of local government law, which are holistic and transformed as a result of restructuring their elements in the process of changing local and legal reality. The multiplicity of conceptual models of municipal law is due to the systemic nature of legal reality and a systematic approach to its study.

The most significant model of municipal law is a value, axiological system that combines the phenomena of material and spiritual order at the local level of self-organization of the population, which is the basis and purpose of communalization, its development and improvement based on the ideals of freedom, justice, law and democracy. These universal values, which determine the meaning of the existence of the individual and society, are protected by the current system of law, become legal values, principles of law.

The normative system expressing the law in the form of normative-legal regulations protecting the values of society is divided into institutions and branches of law, and the semantic system of philosophical and legal, moral, legal knowledge and meanings are evolving legal models between which logically consistent connections are formed and interdependence.

The methodology of a systematic approach in the study of municipal and legal phenomena can provide significant effectiveness of knowledge and transformation of legal reality, especially in interaction with other components of the general methodology of law, considering a new field of

research, not excluding such an interdisciplinary field of research complex, self-organizing, open nonlinear systems. Endogenous innovation of municipal law is a legal innovation developed in the current legal system without the application of foreign law and the law of past historical epochs, law based on traditions and national characteristics in order to an improve its existing structural elements.

Legal construction, along with innovations in legislation, continuity in law, transformation and implementation of international law, consists, inter alia, of the reception of law.

Methodologically, the reception of local self-government law, as well as endogenous innovation of municipal law can be practically used in the presence of the formed municipal law order, developed local legislative process and legal awareness of the inhabitants of territorial communities. The main condition for the effective use of innovative elements of other countries is the observance in law-making style, in which the development, improvement of the municipal and legal mechanism is based on the comparative legal research.

## CONCLUSIONS

Interdisciplinarity is a natural result of the development of science and a necessary form of organization of modern knowledge. However, the path of interdisciplinary fields requires careful reflection on the congruence of methods, translatability of languages and coordination of ultimate goals, especially when it comes to the interaction of the humanities and natural sciences.

Thus, the study of municipal law from the standpoint of modern achievements of the methodology of system cognition allows to identify the complex, multifaceted nature of modern legal reality, provides a wide range of law in its integrity, interdependence of structural elements, allows to find ways and means to solve major social problems, improving the legal life of the territorial community.

Based on modern ideas, municipal law science is a field of research aimed at producing new knowledge about the legal component of local government and includes all the conditions and aspects of this production: scientists with their knowledge and abilities, qualifications and experience, with division and cooperation scientific work; scientific institutions, experimental and laboratory equipment; research methods, conceptual and categorical apparatus, the system of scientific information, as well as the entire amount of available knowledge about local government, acting as either a prerequisite or a means, or the result of scientific production.<sup>35</sup>

The science of municipal law is a field of research and a system of knowledge, organized in a certain way, aimed at studying the legal component of local self-government as a municipal legal reality. As a conclusion, we can note the need to expand the methodological tools of the

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<sup>35</sup> Философский словарь / под ред. И.Т. Фролова. Москва, 2001. С. 329–330.

science of municipal law. Soon this will be made possible due to the reception of methods and approaches of other social sciences and humanities as political science, sociology, linguistics, etc. (For example, structuralist theories, various versions of constructivism and deconstructivism).

It is thought that at the present stage it is already necessary to direct a certain part of the attention of scholars-specialists in local self-government to reflection on the very science of municipal law.

### **SUMMARY**

The author studies the issue of scientific and analytical support for the development of local self-government, with a focus on theoretical and methodological issues of municipal law. It explains the debatable methodology of the municipal law, policy, and the interdisciplinary nature of the theory of local self-government, its “catching-up” attitude to the municipal practices. The materials of the study can be useful in both research and practical work in the sphere of governance and legal support of the local self-government.

The aim of the article is an analysis of the theoretical and legal problems associated with the formation of methodology of modern municipal law in the context of globalization, its connection with general issues of methodology and legal methodology. The subject of the article is the study of principles and methods of modern methodology of interdisciplinarity and their comparison with the methodology and practice of municipal law and European Union law.

The article is written using general scientific, philosophical and special legal methods of cognition, and is built on a new object for legal methodology of interdisciplinarity as a comparative municipal law. As a result of the characteristic of general framework of modern methodology of municipal law and prospects of its development is given through a prism of the analysis of integration relations forming it.

The analysis of the formation of a new area of methodology (the methodology of municipal law and its relation to legal theory and practice) is carried out for the first time in legal science of European Union and Ukraine. Its provisions can be used in further studies on issues of municipal and comparative law. On pages of the article formulates practical proposals, which are recommended to be take account into scholars-specialists in local self-government of the European Union and Ukraine while using the methods studied in it.

The methodology of the science of municipal law includes general, special and private methods, each method has its own content or a certain set of principles of knowledge, rules that are based on known objective laws and guide the researcher to obtain new objective and true knowledge.

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