

# The gender component in communication education in Ukraine: conflict communication problems

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**Abstract.** Communication is a universal phenomenon that is explored by many social sciences and humanities. In the structure of communication science has long been distinguished conflict communication. However, the gender aspect of the language conflict in Ukrainian studies is not solved, but highly relevant and in-demand today by scholars. In our work, we emphasize the need for a detailed study of the linguistic gender conflict within the framework of forming a communicative culture in Ukraine. The article analyzes the state standards of higher education in speciality 035 “Philology” for the first and second levels of higher education, where we pay attention to the formation of communicative competence. We argue that the gender identity of the speaker is not taken into account in the structure of communicative competence. This can be the result of conflicts between a man and a woman. Therefore, the author talks about the importance of gender competence within the communicative. The article also analyzes the program in the course of teaching conflict communication for postgraduate students, which allows characterizing gender conflict from different positions (national linguistic representation, space-time parameters, social characteristics, age, etc.).

## Introduction

In today’s world, conflict is an everyday reality. They are deployed in all spheres of life of individuals; actively go to the pages of newspapers, TV screens, the Internet. Because of this, people are often in a stressful state, feeling stress, which makes it impossible for a comfortable life. Therefore, world science is increasingly involved in finding ways to resolve conflicts.

One of the reasons for the disharmony of the social order can be considered hierarchical relations between a man (recognized in the society leading, the main, the first) and a woman (recognized in the society subordinate, the second). In the history of culture, there is a distribution of roles in society. The spheres of external activity, the sphere of formation of culture and society were assigned to the men. According to the woman – the sphere of reproduction of life, as if the sphere of nature. And this distribution has been maintained for many centuries.

However, gender issues become relevant when civilization encounters fundamental difficulties not resolved within norms and cultural norms. The complexities in the foundations of industrial civilization, which are manifested in different cultures, are forcing society to address a gender problem that has become socially aware recently, although the conflict between man and woman is perhaps the most ancient of the many contradictions that define the diversity of social space.

Despite the fact that in Europe the problems of gender identity of a person, gender communication have long been explored, in Ukraine the same issues are still

relevant. The status and roles of men and women are constantly changing, accompanied by a clash of interests. Today in the Ukraine there is still a certain dissonance between men and women’s perceptions of sex-role behaviour, unwillingness to identify and take into account gender stereotypes in behaviour, actions or speech. However, it is becoming increasingly apparent that gender norms are being transformed with the penetration of both women and men into opposite spheres of activity. Because of this, a new type of conflict is emerging – gender [1].

In Ukraine, there is an active fight for equality between people of different sexes. From the history of culture, we know that women submitted to men. But in the twentieth century, women began to fight for their rights, and this process continues today. Therefore, it is commonplace nowadays those women are increasingly not only paying attention to family affairs but also working hard to provide for their families. Men, for their part, do not always like it, especially when a woman is more affluent than a man. These circumstances often lead to domestic family conflicts. The reason for confrontation can be psychological, physiological features of a man and a woman, because they have a different emotional background, different interests, values, preferences, habits.

Unfortunately, Ukrainian society remains a hostage to gender stereotypes: women, unlike men, receive less pay; Ukraine is still in the group of countries with the lowest representation of women in power; almost 90% of Ukrainian victims of violence are women. The issue of

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recognizing people with alternative gender identities, who are often subject to psychological abuse, remains very painful.

All of this can be the cause of gender conflicts, which has been little explored in Ukrainian studies. Therefore, we focus our research on the issue of recognition of gender conflict communication. After all, conflicts are mainly represented by means of language. Therefore, linguistic thought does not stand alone, but, on the contrary, studies them, looks for the most successful models for neutralization or harmonious communication.

The anthropocentricity of the scientific paradigm has led to an appeal to gender aspects of language, to the identification of discordance and differences in the linguistic representation of men and women in culture. The spread of gender studies, the development of new directions and methods of study in the field of linguistics made it possible to form *gender linguistics*. The interest of Ukrainian scholars in the study of gender aspects of language and speech is due, on the one hand, to the continuation of the feminist movement, and, on the other, to the general tendency of the linguistic sciences to study the social conditions under which communication, in particular, the human factor in language, takes place. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to share our views and our experiences in analyzing the features of gender-conflict communication in the context of shaping communicative culture in Ukraine. We would also appreciate any feedback from anyone interested in this matter.

## 1 Interest in gender manifestations in communication abroad and in Ukraine

Communication is a universal phenomenon that comes into view of many social sciences and humanities. The concept itself is quite broad and not fully defined, because communication is caused by: 1) a variety of ways of fixing information; 2) specifics of the purpose of information transfer; 3) the discretion / indiscretion of the generation and perception of information; 4) the way the information is addressed [2].

It can be argued that communication is an important factor in the existence of the individual and society in general. Compliance with the harmonious process of information transfer is the key to a successful state. Therefore, researchers from different countries are interested in the dynamic development of their own "information infrastructure" and the improvement of communication tools.

Traditionally, communication is seen as an interdisciplinary subject that is closely linked to language, social cognition and psychology. Since the 1960s, scholars have actively studied communication as one of the central aspects of human existence.

In the scientific literature differentiate communication. In particular, American sociologist C. H. Cooley said that communication is a certain mechanism by which human relations exist and develop, including all symbols of the mind with the means of transmitting them in space and preserving them in time [3]. Modern studies highlight communication as a

mechanism that affects all spheres of society. In particular, B. D. Ruben and R. A. Gigliotti study communication as a strategic tool through which leadership qualities of the individual are manifested. They reveal this concept through the prisms of leadership, defining communication as the process by which people create and use information that expresses their attitude to the world and to others. The conceptualization of human communication leads to a view of leadership as a process of social influence, which is ascertained through both verbal and non-verbal communication [4].

H. Giles and T. Ogay outline the basic principles of communication theory, which include: 1) communication is influenced not only by the particularities of the situation and the orientation of the participants in the communication, but also by the socio-historical context; 2) communication is not only an exchange of information about facts, ideas and emotions, but also a clear identification of the social category of participants; 3) communicators expect optimal communication based on social stereotypes; 4) communication participants use specific communication strategies to express their relationship to one another or to a social group [5]. As we can see from the above, the researchers talk about communication as social relations between people.

In domestic science, they rely on the views of foreign colleagues, but they have their own view of the problem. H. Pocheptsov understands the processes of transcoding verbal into non-verbal and non-verbal into verbal spheres [6]. A. Pokhresnyk analyzes the modern information society within higher education and says that communication is a message that is interpreted through the political, cultural, economic, semiotic, hermeneutic and social aspects of their contexts. With the expansion of information devices and "communication" there is a growing need for the emergence of new science, which is not limited to social-humanitarian knowledge, but also takes into account the exact sciences [7].

O. Bohuslavska emphasizes on effective communication, noting that it is a complex multidimensional process of interaction between people, which is implemented by a specific model and consists in the exchange of information, as well as in the perception and understanding of each other's partners [8].

In the higher education system, communication is considered, on the one hand, as a type of social process, and on the other, as a type of communicative social influence and interaction of participants in the educational process [9].

In Ukrainian linguistics, communication is defined as social interaction by means of linguistic and paralingual (facial expressions, gestures, etc.) means to convey information [10].

Therefore, we argue that communication is a broad interdisciplinary concept that includes linguistic and non-linguistic means of information exchange, perception and understanding.

Within communication science, conflict communication is singled out as one form of communication. In general, there are several names in linguistics: verbalized conflict (I. Frolova), verbal conflict (V. Borysevych), language conflict (L. Bilokonenko, V. Tretiakova), conflict discourse (S. Formanova), and others. In particular, V. Borysevych defines: verbal conflict is the result of a violation of the process of human communication, the most important means of which, as we know, is language [11]. I. Frolova, based on the English language environment, it concludes that a verbalized conflict is a form of communication that has historical and cultural roots and is linked to natural features of a national character, but is recognized in the modern day as not conforming to the norms of communication [12]. V. Tretiakova notes that language conflict is a state of opposition between two parties (parties to the conflict), each of whom knowingly and actively acts to the detriment of the other party, explaining their actions by verbal and pragmatic means [13]. Although these definitions have differences, it can be said that language conflict is a violation of norms of communication between people.

However, the issue of gender in the language conflict has not been resolved, although such an analysis is in demand in Ukrainian studies, especially regarding the specific language behaviour of men and women.

In general, issues of gender specificity in conflict have long been explored abroad. In particular, the French researcher C. Dijkema stresses the importance of studying gender and conflict together, since ignoring the gender aspect of social reality complicates the resolution of key elements of the conflict. In general, conflict can be seen as an opportunity to change the gender roles of men and women [14].

Conflict scientist J. Birkhoff notes that gender influences and really permeate the dynamics of conflict at the social and individual levels. It has an impact on how individuals identify, perceive, and understand a conflict [15]. L. Handrahan draws attention to the impact of ethnicity in gender conflicts and says that gender analysis of ethnicity has problematized the complexities of social realities, community concepts and understanding of conflict and post-conflict dynamics [16].

H. Giles and T. Ogay also speak about the peculiarities of communication between men and women, emphasizing that both sexes use different communication strategies and tactics in communicating with each other. However, both men and women do not have the same communicative behaviour in same-sex and heterogamous groups. This means that they adjust their communicative style to the gender of the interlocutor [5].

As we can see, gender issues and conflict have been explored abroad for a long time. Therefore, in our opinion, there is a need to speak about the unification of these two scientific directions and the identification of a new direction in Ukrainian studies – *gender conflict communication* science, which opens the prospect of gaining new knowledge on specifying the functions of

the Ukrainian language in gender conflict communication.

Our thoughts are based on domestic research. Researchers point out that the gender factor influences the use of different language means by men and women, and communicative failures occur in different societies. Gender-related verbal conflicts arise primarily from differences in cognitive information models contained in the psyche of participants in a communicative act and of a sociocultural nature [17]. When interacting in heterogamous groups, women and men use multi-vector communication strategies, resulting in many misunderstandings, sometimes leading to communicative deviations or communicative conflicts that illustrate a particular relationship between men and women in communication.

We treat *gender communicative conflict* as a representation of the language of the process of creating a communicative space, which is conditioned by the opposition of gender values, social roles, interests of persons of different sexes, which covers all spheres of life and aims at rethinking gender stereotypes in the minds of people.

## 2 Communicative educations in the state standards of Ukraine (with gender competence)

The development of a person and becoming him / her as a future specialist is through the prism of mastering and correct ability to use the set of competencies (general and special / professional). These competencies are enshrined in the updated provisions of the Law of Ukraine “On Higher Education” of 2014. It is this Law that is central to the formation and differentiation of state standards and competencies for particular specialities.

The Law treats competence as a dynamic combination of knowledge, skills and practical skills, ways of thinking, professional, ideological and civic qualities, moral and ethical values, which determines a person’s ability to successfully pursue professional and further educational activity and is the result of teaching at a certain level of higher education [18].

According to this Law, Section III defines standards of educational activity and higher education. In particular, the values of the category “higher education standards” are defined, which are defined as the set of requirements for the content and results of educational activity of higher education institutions and scientific institutions for each higher education level within each speciality [18]. Each standard should have a number of components, including a list of competencies.

Having analyzed the state standards of higher education of Ukraine in speciality 035 “Philology” for the first (bachelor) and second (master) levels of higher education, we noticed that one of the key competencies is communicative [19–20].

In general, communicative competence is a complex multicomponent concept, a set of personal qualities of an individual (values and personal orientations, abilities, motives, knowledge, skills, experience), which ensure her ability to establish the necessary contacts with other

people, to build social communication taking into account and with social norms and systems of cultural representations and values of language. However, in the structure of communicative competence, we did not notice gender identification through communication norms.

The issue of gender competence as one of the central components of personality development remains relevant in Ukrainian education. The importance of the gender competence of the future teacher is determined by the fact that it is the educator who is one of the important subjects of gender socialization of the growing generation and has a great influence on the formation of ideas about the quality of men and women and their role in society.

Unfortunately, in Ukraine, the gender issue in education remains relevant today. In general, gender competence is represented by a three-layer structure that reflects the logic of the scientific interpretation of the concept: knowledge – experience – skills. Knowledge is teachers' awareness of gender issues (its relevance to Ukrainian society, the essence of gender theory, understanding of the gender category). Experience is the degree of development of a teacher's gender culture (in particular, gender sensitivity) that influences their readiness to perceive these issues through their genetic connection to feminism. Skills are the level of mastery of a teacher by the method of gender education and training [21].

We believe that gender competence should also be included in the structure of communicative competence. The perception and understanding of the opposite articles by means of language is equally important. In linguistics, there are concepts of both masculine and feminine communication styles that differ. We believe that future philological teacher needs to acquire the skills and abilities of gender communication.

In the modern world, in the study of speech and in general communicative behaviour, gender is considered as one of the parameters by which the social identity of the speaker is constructed in communication. Today, a great deal of scholarly work is devoted to the interrelation of language and gender, which reveal the specifics of male and female discourses. Identifying the differences inherent in all aspects of communicative behaviour of persons of different sex is not only theoretical but also of practical importance. Knowledge of gender peculiarities of communication allows to avoid communicative failures, promotes mutual understanding of men and women, gives an opportunity to detect gender stereotypes and overcome negative or, conversely, to promote their reproduction if they are embedded in the system of social values.

The emergence of conflict between men and women is the result of "gender illiteracy". In order for both sexes to provide effective communication, it is necessary for men to know and take into account the peculiarities of female communicative behaviour, and for women – male.

Therefore, our study is aimed at regulating optimal communication between men and women. We try to take

into account the different communicative behaviour of both sexes.

### **3 Theoretical parameters of the description of conflict communication: my conclusions**

Within the framework of postgraduate studies in the speciality 035 Philology, we study the discipline "Ukrainian-language communicative conflictology", in the structure of which we try to resolve the issue of gender conflict and identify ways of its neutralization [22].

The curriculum of the discipline stipulates that as a result of studying the discipline, the graduate students should learn the basic concepts and provisions of communicative conflictology, presented by methodologically and theoretically diverse linguistic trends; have an understanding of the structure and mechanisms of functioning of the Ukrainian-language interpersonal conflict, as well as the principles and technologies of its management; learn to analyze the communicative laws of conflict and cooperative communication taking into account social, cultural, cognitive, psychological, ethnic, gender factors; be able to apply the acquired knowledge in practical professional activity.

As a result of studying the discipline, the graduate student should know the laws, mechanisms, linguistic means of interpersonal interaction of speakers in different spheres of interpersonal communication; understand the laws of the conflict process; to analyze the Ukrainian-language representation system of harmonious and conflict communication; be aware of the public inquiry to raise the level of knowledge of the society about effective communication.

Upon completion of the course, the graduate student should be able to: creatively use knowledge of the laws of language communication development in teaching, research and teaching activities; be aware of the nature and mechanisms of functioning of this phenomenon; to disclose its deep causal relationships, functional features of harmonious and conflicting statements; constructively analyze barriers to communication; to know the basic ways of language neutralization of the conflict risk situation and the end of the conflict itself; independently think, analyze and synthesize, evaluate the information obtained.

The program provides a general awareness of conflict communication as a phenomenon caused by various factors. We pay particular attention to the following topics: *Lexical conflict markers, Phraseological markers of conflict, Morphological and syntactic markers of conflict, Linguopragmatic aspects* of discrepancy between communicative actions of persons that enable us to characterize gender conflict from the point of view of national linguistic representation of gender behaviour of men and women. The gender factor influences the use of different language means by men and women. This is important because we can describe the most distinctive features of the use of linguistic means of opposing articles in a conflict, which allows for a greater

understanding of each other and promotes harmonious communication between individuals.

The issues of space-time parameters of conflict gender communication cannot be overlooked. Here we have to take into account the scope (political, economic, administrative, public, family, friendly) of the origin and manifestation of the conflict, the conditions and factors of its occurrence, the means and actions to which the parties involved in the conflict, the duration, the frequency and recurrence of the conflict, the temporal characteristics of each stage of the conflict.

Another significant aspect is the influence of social characteristics, age, profession, education on the communicative behaviour of the initiator of the conflict, whether a man or a woman. This is due to the fact that in society there is a certain differentiation of the social statuses of the opposite sexes, which are influenced by gender stereotypes. Human social status is one of the basic parameters of communication, which manifests itself in the postulates of communication and speech acts, ways of influencing the opponent. The age of the communicators is another important factor in the social organization of communication in general and speech interaction in particular. For example, the age of the older generation determines the level of accumulated knowledge and experience and is a factor in the expansion of the individual cognitive space and cognitive base of the individual.

If we are talking about the course of gender conflict in the light of national specificity, it is obligatory to consider the topic of Ethical and cultural principles of cooperative communication. After all, Ukrainian ethical and cultural norms imply changes in worldview values. Although Ukrainian culture remains a hostage to gender stereotypes, for the most part, gender norms are increasingly being transformed today.

Summarizing the previous results of our work, we can say that the Ukrainian mental opinion is that the male style of communication is more active and substantive, competitive and conflicted, as well as emotionally restrained. Instead, women are more emotional in communication, able to empathize in conversation.

That is why the Ukrainian culture shows the peculiar types of male and female verbal behaviour. Among the most characteristic features are the following: for women the fact of communication is important, for men – the result of communication; women prefer private communication, men prefer public communication; the story of men is usually short, without detail; women express more exclamation and interrogative sentences; men are prone to irony at their opponent; in conflict situations, women are more likely to abandon their views, are prone to emotional resolution, men insist on their positions, use a rational way to end the conflict; women are characterized by a cooperation strategy, and men by competition.

In our work, we analyze interpersonal gender conflict, where language material indicates that most gender-specific communication is expressed at the lexical-semantic level. At this level, women are more likely to use vocabulary with hyperbolized connotation,

and they are the initiators of conflicts, especially household ones, as opposed to men who, on the contrary, seek to resolve the situation and conflict peacefully. Male representatives, in turn, are more likely to resort to obscene, vulgar, and stylistically reduced vocabulary.

We note that men and women in conflicting communication are equally inclined towards the image toward their opponent. However, these images differ in their evaluation characteristics: men often indicate excessive talkativeness of women; mental disability; deceitfulness; appearance based on age; anger and meanness. Very often, men resort to the names of women with zoonomenes, as well as words that indicate immorality.

Although vulgar vocabulary is not characteristic of women, in conflict, in our observations, they are more active in the use of abusive words against men: most often, the offences refer to the tendency to act inappropriately; ignorance; social level; deceitfulness; audacity.

We believe that gender competency is one of the priorities of higher education. After all, this knowledge can help in communicating with the opposite sex.

Therefore, we believe that the above facts give us the right to speak about a new approach to gender in a language that integrates theories of gender linguistics and conflict communication. We call this approach *gender-conflict*. Its essence is that it makes it possible to distinguish:

- 1) the influence of gender on the verbal interaction between men and women in interpersonal conflicts of different types;
- 2) the circumstances in which certain communication strategies and tactics are chosen;
- 3) resources of the national language that determine the communicative actions of men and women in the area of conflict and / or conflict risk;
- 4) pragmatic markers that can cause interpersonal conflict between men and women;
- 5) models of linguistic behaviour of men and women at the pre-conflict, conflict stage and completion stage;
- 6) methods of effective communication between men and women [5].

## Conclusion

Therefore, the study of language gender conflict is relevant to Ukrainian culture. Following on the research of foreign colleagues, Ukrainian scientific thought should distinguish its own system of linguistic signs used by men and women. This will promote harmonious communication in society.

That is why in our work, we emphasize the need for a detailed study of the gender conflict, which opens up perspectives for new knowledge of the functioning of the Ukrainian language.

We believe that the gender-conflict aspect should be introduced in the structure of communicative competence and gender-communicative competence should be formed. After all, knowledge of the gender features of communication will allow the future philological teacher to avoid communicative failures and to foster “gender literacy” in the young generation,

which will ensure effective communication between a man and a woman. The new gender-conflict approach allows different perspectives to characterize the conflict between the persons of both sexes and to find new ways of avoiding (mitigating) gender conflicts.

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