

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta pedagogická

Bakalářská práce

**ROZDÍLY V KOMUNIKACI NA ZÁKLADĚ
GENDERU**

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Plzeň 2014

University of West Bohemia

Faculty of Education

Undergraduate Thesis

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNICATION

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Plzeň 2014

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V Plzni dne 8. dubna 2014

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Martin Chýlek

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the supervisor of my undergraduate thesis, Bc. et Mgr. Andrew Tollet, M.Litt., for his help and valuable advice. I would also like to thank my family and parents for their everlasting support.

ABSTRACT

Chýlek, Martin. University of West Bohemia. April, 2014. Gender differences in communication. Supervisor: Bc. et Mgr. Andrew Tollet, M.Litt.

The aim of this thesis is to describe differences in communication between men and women. The first part of this thesis is concerned with the complicated process of communication; it introduces its vital parts such as verbal and non-verbal communication and direct and indirect communication. The second part of this thesis is focused on specific differences in men's and women's communicational styles, their description, research of their origin and their effect on the other gender. These differences are mostly connected with the variant focus of men and women and also with different encoding and decoding of the content. There are also implicated social and biological factors which influence the development of communication. An important part of the thesis is original research. The goal of this section was to verify or disprove hypothesis which were created on the background of the theoretical part. Mostly they are clichés connected with different communicational styles of men and women.

Keywords: communication, gender, difference, men, women

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1. Introduction

Gender differences in communication are part of our everyday lives; men's and women's different communicational styles interact with each other and sometimes create misunderstandings or misinterpretation. This undergraduate thesis is focused on these differences: it seeks to explain them and furthermore attempts to examine their origin.

Everyday communication is created not only by spoken words; apart from these, there are two other vital parts, namely the non-verbal system and paralinguistic signs. All three elements are an integral part of every face-to-face communication, which can provide very important information: together they create a comprehensive impression, which allows the listener not only understand the words themselves, but also to judge the speaker's mood, emphasis on certain words or unconsciously reveal his or her opinion on some problems. In modern times, some of the three main parts can be suppressed, for example in communication over the internet or telephone. In this thesis there are the most marked differences, but also some minor variations, connected with the topic.

The thesis is divided into three main parts: the first part introduces the process of communication and defines terms, which are connected with this topic, such as *description of distances*, *non-verbal signs*, introduction of *communicational scheme* and *direct and indirect communication*. The main part of the thesis provides descriptions of specific situations, in which the behavior, vocabulary, or comprehension of men and women differs. In order to create a more extensive list of differences, sources from both academic and popular literature are used. The last part of thesis belongs to research, which is focused on stereotypes and clichés that are connected with gender communication. The aim of the research was to obtain feedback from two different groups of people, one of them in their twenties and the second one in their fifties. The results clearly show differences in perception of some stereotypes and the results are followed by explanations of the problems and, in some cases, a reference to their origin.

2. Gender and communication: theoretical background

The term *gender* is used very frequently nowadays, but many people understand the term as the basic distinction between male and female sex. Apart from legal documents, this definition is quite incorrect. Oakley (2000) states that the term *gender* and the importance of distinction between gender and sex comes from 17th century: “Studies from 17th century *Hic Mulier* and *Haec Vir* and titles *The Feminised Male* and *The Female Eunuch* from 20th century emphasize the importance of distinction between sex and gender” (p. 20). Sex can be mostly determined by biological aspects, such as general appearance, but most frequently by the presence of male or female genitalia. Gender is connected with social differences between men and women, which are developed, they change over time and can be different within various cultures. (Gender mainstreaming, 2002). Šiklová (1999) states:

In English the term gender includes especially social and socially determined cultural differences, expectations, prejudice and specifics in status of men and women. Gender is at the same time a constructive element of modern and post-modern organization of society. (p. 10 – author’s translation)

To illustrate the difference there is an interesting example: it is biologically determined that only women can give birth to children, but from the biological point of view it is not decided who will raise the child. That is considered to be gender behavior. In some cultures it is possible for men to take care of children (Gender mainstreaming, 2002). As mentioned above, *Gender* and *Sex* are two different terms. Sex is the same in every nation, but gender classification is determined by culture and it can change during some time period (Oakley, 2000).

Anthony Robbins (2008) states: “To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others” (p. 237).

The term *communication* comes from the Latin word *communicare* (to share, consult). Vymětal (2008) states that there is no generally true definition of this term and many authors describe communication with respect to their research. Holeček (2007) tried to offer a general explanation: “Communication can be defined as an interaction among

individuals of the same species, where information is being sent and received” (p.254 – author’s translation). To better illustrate the communicational process, Holeček presented a communicational scheme, which can help explain the basic way of encoding and decoding every message. Within Figure 1 there can be identified a *Communicator* (the one, who is sending certain information), a *Recipient* (the one, who is receiving the information), a *Communiqué* (content of the message) and a *communicational channel* (track on which the communication proceeds).

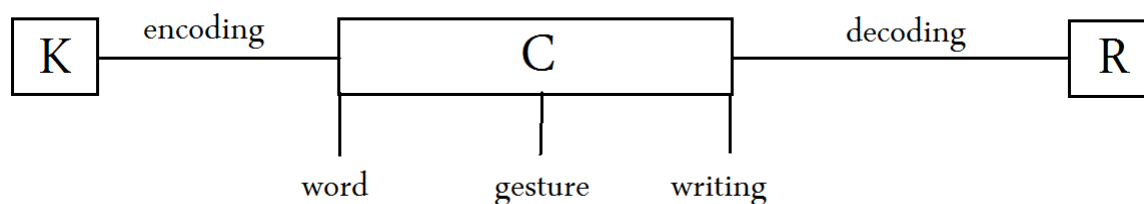


Figure 1

K – Communicator

C – Communiqué

R- Recipient

(Holeček, 2007, p. 255 – author’s translation)

Holeček (2007) adds that even in this simple communicational scheme it can be observed that the communicator has to encode the message and recipient has to decode it, understand its meaning and make sense of it. There is space for a phenomenon called communicational channel malfunction, which causes incorrect understanding of the message. Incorrect understanding of message can be caused either by bad encoding, or wrong decoding. Each person encodes and decodes the information based on their gender, but it also depends on their state of mind, level of stress or fatigability.

Communication can be divided into several fields, the most important of which are direct and indirect communication and verbal and non-verbal communication.

A general definition of the verbal system is given by DeVito (2001), who states that a verbal system is mainly represented by verbal signals transferred through an air and received by hearing. This definition is partially right, but there are also other components of a verbal system, which is a type of communication based on words, including written texts and also sign language of the deaf, a Braille writing system and other word-based means of communication (Musil, 2010). The *Verbal system* can be furthermore divided into spoken or written words, it is the spoken form which is more valuable for the purpose of this thesis because within the spoken form there can be observed non-verbal parts of

communication and furthermore *paralinguistic communication*.

Paralinguistic communication is a part of *Verbal system* and focuses mainly on speech power, quality, neatness, pitch of the voice, intonation and prosody. One interesting fact is that this discipline is also focused on silence, in the concrete pauses between words and their length and frequency (Vymětal, 2008). The authors of communication focused literature (Křivohlavý, 1988; DeVito, 2001; Gruber, 2005; Vymětal, 2008) are not unanimous in the classification of paralinguistic. Sometimes it is considered to be part of the non-verbal system, but it is very strongly connected to the spoken words, therefore the classification differs.

The non-verbal system is sometimes neglected, but according to Lihartová (2007) this is a mistake. Lihartová (2007) states that non-verbal system creates up to 55 percent of communication and it can reveal valuable or even vital information. Therefore it is very important to be aware of this part of communication. It is represented by all the means of communication which are connected with body language (DeVito, 2001). These are mimicry, haptics, gesticulation, proxemics and kinesics (Křivohlavý, 1988).

Mimicry consists of the content of face muscle and facial expressions. It is said that facial muscles allow a person to use more than 1000 different facial expressions (Křivohlavý, 1988), which are so important that in modern communication over the internet, or via text messages, people started to use graphic representations of emotions. They are called emoticons, which is a compound of *emotion* and *icon*. These symbols represent basic emotions and they allow the reader to understand the tone of the message. (DeVito, 2001).

Proxemics is a study of the distance between interlocutors (Gruber, 2005). There are four groups of distance between people, which allows a person to estimate the relationship between them.

Intimate distance represents a distance up to 45 centimeters. This distance is kept during a fight, sex or for protection. This distance is so small that many people consider it to be inappropriate in public. Personal distance represents a distance from 45 to 120 centimeters; this is a personal “bubble”, which people are very protective of. People do not let many other people in and when someone breaks their personal space, they feel insecure and upset. Social distance represents a distance from 1.2 to 3.7 meters and is used for business and social communication. For example high-ranking officials have their desk placed in order to keep this distance between them and the clients. Public distance represents distance bigger than 3.7 meters. This distance is a base for personal protection.

One example – in public transportation people will keep this distance between themselves and a drunk person (DeVito, 2001). This distance gives a person a chance adequately to react on various situations. This division of distances is valid for most part of Europe, but it can differ in variant cultures and countries, such as India or Japan.

Haptics studies the content of interpersonal contact, mostly touch with other people, which can be direct, contact of the skins, or indirect, for example a clap on the back. It can express for example positive emotions or it can control one's behavior. Touch has several meanings, which differs in various cultures and therefore it is important for person visiting a foreign country with different culture to be careful in contact with other people (DeVito, 2001).

Gesticulation is focused on arm movements and their position. Gestures are signs, which interpret words or phrases. For example upright thumb means "Good" (DeVito, 2001). This part of non-verbal communication, as well as haptics and proxemics is dependent on the culture.

In the study of verbal and non-verbal part of communication, it is important to be aware of the fact that both verbal and non-verbal signals are included and that they function together in every face-to-face communication. Each of the two systems has its advantages and disadvantages. The non-verbal system is for example understandable in most countries with a similar culture: even if a person does not understand the language of other people, he or she can estimate someone's mood or state of mind by non-verbal signs. These signs are mostly consistent in Western and Central Europe, but they can differ in Asia or South-Eastern Europe.

| Feature | Verbal communication | Non-verbal communication |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Exactness | High | Low |
| International clarity | Very low | High |
| Emotional appeal | Low | High |
| Potential subliminal effect | Low | High |

Figure 2

(Musil, 2010, p. 21 – author's translation)

In the figure (Figure 2) there is a table of features of verbal and non-verbal communication and their level of exactness, international clarity, emotional appeal and potential subliminal effect. The level of exactness is very high in verbal communication, but the predisposition is to master the language. Non-verbal communication is not as exact as a verbal system, but its international clarity is very high and it can be easily used even by children, for example the symbols of thumb up or thumb down. Emotional appeal is

high within non-verbal communication, it is provided mostly by facial expressions and haptics.

Another division of communication is into direct and indirect communication.

Direct communication is created by a communicational chain with only two members: a communicator (speaker) and communicant (listener). It is irrelevant whether there are individuals or groups of people: nothing else than human individuals is required (Musil, 2010). This type of communication allows examination of non-verbal system and also paralinguistic signs.

Within indirect communication there is a technical device required, which is generally called *communicational medium*. This *medium* can be for example a paper with words on it, telephone, television, painting or statue (Musil, 2010). In indirect communication, non-verbal and paralinguistic part of communication can also be found, but in a reduced form. For example in a telephone conversation, the paralinguistic part of communication can be described, but it is usually impossible to say whether the person was standing or sitting, or state their facial expressions or body movement, in other words non-verbal part of communication.

Communication has several rules and three of them were described by Knötigová (2010):

It is impossible not to communicate; it is possible just not to talk. Each person during each contact with another person communicates.

Style of communication can be digital (accurate) or analog (indicative). Digital communication is mostly verbal. It can be written down without changing its delivered content. Analog communication is mostly non-verbal. It is expressed by posture or act. It is very individual and cannot be unambiguously interpreted.

Each communication underlies interpretation. Each person adjusts the reality according to their character, temperament and other factors, such as experience, expectation, relationship with the communicational partner or momentary temper. (p. 10)

The first rule of communication implicates that even if a person is not talking, he or she is still sending a message to their surroundings. For example, when a man is sitting at his desk and is tapping with his fingers, he does not communicate verbally, but he communicates, therefore it can be presumed he is angry or nervous. Each of a person's

movements, actions and reactions can be considered as communication. The second rule of communication says that verbal communication can be recorded for example in written form and it does not change the content of the sentence. It can be said that it omits the paralinguistic part of utterance, but the information inscribed in words is persistent. The second rule also says that non-verbal communication can be interpreted with slight differences by different people. DeVito (2001) attributes these differences in interpretation to uneven temperaments or states of mind, which is also the third rule of communication given by Knötigová (2010), who adds also experiences and expectations.

3. Gender differences in communication

At the beginning it is important to declare that a following gender differences in communication cannot be considered as something that is the same with every member of a group of men or women. These are the most marked differences that appear with the majority of men or women.

In this chapter there are sources from academic and popular literature. The main difference between academic research and popular books is that popular books are rather more oriented on communicational situations; academic research on the other hand is more oriented on separate descriptions of men's and women's capabilities and habits. Both approaches offer important facts about gender differences in communication; thus in creating a more extensive description of them, it is important to include both types of sources.

A person's life is influenced by many factors during his or hers whole life and communication also underlies this influence. In the study of differences in communication between men and women it is important to emphasize some variance in heredity and social influence. Psychologists say that each person is determined both by biological and social incidence (Holeček, 2007). This incidence changes during one's lifetime. These differences in biological incidence are a result of sex, not gender, but they influence the person's whole life and are vital for further investigation of gender differences in communication.

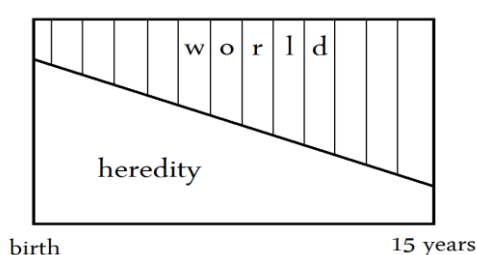


Figure 3

World – social influence

Heredity – biological incidence

(Holeček, 2007, p. 40 – author's translation)

In the figure (Figure 3) there is the rate of influence of world and heredity during a first fifteen years of life. At birth the influence of heredity is significant, but not total. During time the influence of the world (social environment) increases.

In communication the rate is similar. Girls start to talk sooner than boys because their brain is evolved in a different way, which is determined hereditarily. During childhood it is very important for the social environment to have an impact on the child, so it can adopt behavioral and communicational patterns. The importance of social

stimulation can be demonstrated on the so-called ‘wolf children’, Amala and Kamala. These human children were found at the age of 18 months and 8 years: previously they had lived with wolves and adopted their behavior. People then tried to nurture them without significant success; the most problematic areas were intellect and speaking (Holeček, 2007). This example illustrates how important social interaction with children is. With insufficient stimulation it is very unlikely our communicational skills will develop.

In the study of gender differences in communication there is another very important aspect, which can be investigated both from a biological and social point of view. From the social influence point of view, the differences in communication can be considered a result of education or imitating the style of an adult of one’s own gender. This theory is partially correct, but there is another point of view, namely biologically determined qualities. In the past, men were considered to be smarter than women, because they have a bigger brain. This theory was proven wrong: research of American doctor David Wechsler revealed that women’s intelligence quotient is three percent higher than men’s (Pease, 2002). The important thing is how effectively the brain can work and how many tasks it is able to process. In the brain there are two hemispheres and in each hemisphere there are certain areas, responsible for certain tasks. The main difference is that during communication, women use both of their hemispheres, but men use just one. Because the centers of a brain responsible for speaking are distributed in both hemispheres, women are able to do more things at once. When they need to use another center of brain, it is possible for them to still communicate and continuously use both hemispheres. On the other hand, when men are focused on speaking, no other task can be done in the same hemisphere, or it can be done in a very reduced way (Vyskočil, 2006).

Another factor are hormones in the human body, predominantly the female hormone – estrogen. This helps the brain to create more synapses, which reflects in more effective use of the brain (Vymětal, 2008). Women also have more developed *corpus callosum*, which connects both hemispheres, therefore both of the hemispheres communicate more effectively (Karsten, 2006). This difference in brain structure causes vital distinction in communicational styles, which will be dealt with later.

These biological qualities developed in time; in the past men were hunters, focused on one task. When they were waiting for some prey, they had to be quiet and focused. According to Vyskočil (2006), women were ‘protectress of the settlement’, they had plenty of tasks and their brain evolved accordingly to the amount of their tasks.

It is important to declare that communicational patterns and styles are affected by

these biological limitations and also by social incidence like imitating the style of an adult of one's own gender. Based on these differences, it can be said that the basis for variations in communication is laid in a pre-natal stadium of a person's life. According to Holeček (2007), after the birth of a child, biological factors are superior to social factors. Curran (2003) adds that as soon as the child starts to realize its own a gender and gender of others, social factors starts to take an increasingly important place;

Children as young as eighteen months old show preferences for gender-stereotyped toys. By the age of two, they are aware of their own and others gender, and between two and three years of age, they begin to identify specific traits and behaviors in gender stereotyped ways. (Curran, 2003, p. 73)

When children are able to do this, they start to play together within a group of the same sex. In this group it is possible to examine some behavioral patterns, which are vital for understanding the gender differences in communication.

Within the group of man-child it is possible to observe that the group is relatively big and it is hierarchically organized. In this group boys are trying to reach higher positions by giving orders or outbidding each other (Tannen, 1991). In their games there are very often clear winners and losers, which help to build the hierarchy. This group is relatively open for any newcomers, but they are most likely to be at the bottom of the hierarchy (Pease, 2002). Female groups are different, they are small, and sometimes there are even only two members. The relationship between them is equivalent; they are on the same level. While in the male group the core is the most admired person, in female group it is mostly the best friend. There is also the importance of a high level of intimacy and seek for emotional attachment in their relationship. This group is easily penetrable by a new person, but with the first indication of a problem the person can be excluded (DeVito, 2001). Cameron (1992) directly connected this variance of children's games with latter differences in communication: "Boys tend to play in large groups organized hierarchically; thus they learn direct, confrontational speech. Girls play in small groups of 'best friends', where they learn to maximize intimacy and minimize conflict" (p. 73). Deborah Tannen (1991), American academic and professor, author of the popular book *You just don't understand*, sees the difference as even bigger: "Because boys and girls grow up in what are essentially different cultures (...) talk between women and men is cross-cultural communication" (p. 18).

These behavioral patterns are raised in a person's whole childhood and are vital for further development. The time when one starts to notice some differences is around puberty, when the two groups of male and female gender start to interact with each other more. The differences are also present in adult life, where people can study them to understand better the opposite gender's behavior in communication.

Deborah Tannen uses different names for these biological and social factors, which are *nature* and *nurture*. These names are commonly used in psychology and gender based literature, but they possess the same meaning as biological (nature) and social (nurture) factor.

The differences in communication are a result of combination of biological and social factors. The one unchangeable factor is biological: there are predispositions with which people are born and cannot change. These factors are division of brain centers, amount of brain synapses and development of corpus callosum. The reason for these differences can be found in the history of mankind and evolution: the distribution of tasks with variant level of focus urged brain to evolve accordingly. Social stimulation is very important for a development of children's speech and adoption of basic human habits. The social factor is mainly incidence of one's surroundings, the influence of child's parents and family and later on the influence of classmates and friends. During children's games there are some habits in cooperation and communication evolved, which influence a person's whole life.

The social and biological factors, or the influence of nature and nurture, are a basis for the communicational style people use in an adult age. One of the proponents of the opinion that women and men have different styles of speech is again Deborah Tannen. She named these two styles as 'rapport talk' and 'report talk'. According to her, women seek intimacy in conversation and men information. Tannen (1991) states:

For most women, the language of conversation is primarily a language of rapport: a way of establishing connections and negotiating relationships. Emphasis is placed on displaying similarities and matching experiences. (...) For most men, talk is primarily a means to preserve independence, and negotiate and maintain status in a hierarchical social order. This is done by exhibiting knowledge and skill, and by holding center stage through verbal performance such as storytelling, joking, or imparting information. (p. 77)

These citations from one of the best known authors of gender-topic books clearly state that women indeed seek or relationships and connections; men, on the other hand, still have the need for hierarchy and status.

The authors of popular and academic literature agree on the fact that our conversational habits do have their basis in children's games. A conversation between genders, or even a conversation between the same gender, has certain rules that can be traced back to the children's games. In an example within the group of men there is still the need of hierarchy; a man in communication with a partner of the same gender tries to achieve a higher position in an imaginary hierarchy; therefore he tries to reply with a high level of knowledge, or at least with a more aggressive style, which can help him build dominion over the second participant in conversation (Kalnická, 2009). Deborah Tannen also tried to explain these habits of men using examples from everyday life. The problem between men starts when one of them is clearly in a lower position, whether it is in employment or has significantly lower social status. This state is pleasant for the person in the higher position, because he is aware of his rank and therefore he has some power over his notional or literal subordinate. This role is usually unpleasant for the person who is lower in the hierarchy, but usually he has to accept the situation or risk some consequences (Tannen, 1991). Another situation where this hierarchy is well displayed is decision making. Vymětal (2008) states that men make decisions based on their experience and will, even when the decision should be a group opinion, the strongest member (highest on the hierarchy) often decides on his own without even asking others. On the other side of this decision making, women like to cooperate and agree on the best possible decision. Even if there is one female boss and her female colleagues or subordinates, it is likely that she will ask them for their opinions and they will make a group decision, which can of course be changed by the boss. This approach helps to build better workplace environment and there is also evident effort for better personal relationships (Curran, 2003; Vymětal, 2008). The group decision making can be labeled by men as lack of self-confidence or some uncertainty by the boss, but the reason can also be found simply in a different approach. Tannen (1991) concurs:

Women expect decisions to be discussed first, and made by consensus. They appreciate the discussion itself as evidence of involvement and communication. But many men feel oppressed by lengthy discussions about what they see as minor decisions, and they feel hemmed in if they can't just act without talking first. (p. 27)

Of course, in some situations both these reasons can be true and also men certainly need to ask their colleagues or subordinates from time to time. But these approaches can be found in the majority of one gender and therefore it is important to mark them as differences in decision making.

The differences in decision making are a remainder of children's games, both genders approach this task differently, but both with respect to their learned schemes of behavior. Men tend to make decisions of their own, which can be labeled as a demonstration of power, self-confidence and rank. Women, on the other hand, like to cooperate and make the decision together, without apparent struggle for power.

In the study of gender differences of communication, involvement with some more or less factual stereotypes is inevitable. It is a common belief that women like to talk and they talk much more than men. Vymětal (2008) focused on this statement:

Woman can, in conversation in one day, express 6,000 to 8,000 words; moreover they use up to 2,000 sounds, 8,000 to 10,000 gestures, mimic expressions, head movements and other body signals – altogether around 20,000 'words'. By contrast men, though they have bigger vocabulary, use only 2,000 to 4,000 words, 1,000 to 2,000 sounds and just 2,000 to 3,000 signals. Altogether that is seven thousand 'words', which is only one third compared to women. (p. 42 – author's translation)

This research clearly shows that women do talk more and men talk less. DeVito (2001) agrees in this matter and also states that this difference is not caused by a bigger vocabulary of women, in fact men's lexicon is more extensive. In contrast to this widespread opinion stands Deborah Tannen (2007), who inclines to the opinion that both men and women talk equally:

Can we learn who talks more by counting words. No, according to a forthcoming article surveying 70 studies of gender differences in talkativeness. (...) In their survey, Campbell Leaper and Melanie Ayres found that counting words yielded no consistent differences, though number of words per speaking turn did (Men, on average, used more).

This doesn't surprise me. In my own research on gender and language, I quickly surmised that to understand who talks more, you have to ask: What's the situation? What are the speakers using words for? (para. 3)

Tannen does not consider counting words a valuable method for deciding who speaks more, men or women. The important question is about the situation in which the utterance is made. On this topic there is an uncommon agreement among the authors of a gender based books. These differences can be described by a situation from married life. When the married couple meets in the evening, a woman like to ask her husband how was his day. He usually replies with “OK”, “Fine” or “Nothing much”. But a woman considers this question as a start of conversation, while a man simply replies without much or any detail. If the same couple has friends over for dinner, the man suddenly starts to entertain the whole group and usually he also recalls some funny situation or story from earlier that day and tells it to the people. A woman then can conceive a suspicion that he has nothing to tell her. That does not have to be true: men usually like to speak in front of an audience, whether it is at work or for example at dinner with other people. Women, on the other hand, like to talk in smaller groups, where they can maintain eye-contact and read the non-verbal signs of other people; it is harder to read them in a group of twenty people than it is with five people sitting close to each other. (Pease, 2002; Tannen, 2007; Vymětal, 2008)

On the other hand, men’s preference for public speaking is because it provides a place for men to apply their strengths of physical presence and direct communicational style, which is formidable for the audience and it hides the weaknesses such as insensitiveness to audience reactions, because they usually feel in power and it is easier for them to suppress individual objections (Pease, 2002; Goman, 2009). Carol Kinsey Goman, an American professor and expert on body language, focused on the problem of gender differences in communication at the workplace and created a list of three communication strengths and weaknesses at a workplace for each gender.

Top three communication strengths for females according to Goman (2009):

- 1) Ability to read body language and pick up nonverbal cues
- 2) Good listening skills
- 3) Effective display of empathy

Top three weaknesses for females:

- 1) Overly emotional
- 2) Meandering – won’t get to the point

- 3) Not authoritative

Top three communication strengths for males:

- 1) Physical presence
- 2) Direct and to-the-point interactions
- 3) Body language signals of power

Top three communication weaknesses for males:

- 1) Overly blunt and direct
- 2) Insensitive to audience reactions
- 3) Too confident in own opinion

This list of communicational strengths and weaknesses can be a guide for improving one's weaknesses and focus on their strengths and apply them more often. Pelt (2001) states that women understand better the body language and non-verbal signals, which help them to sense the state of mind of other people. Baron-Cohen (2003) agrees and adds:

Women's perceptual skills are oriented to quick people reading. Females are gifted at detecting the feelings and thoughts of others, inferring intentions, absorbing contextual clues and responding in emotionally appropriate ways. They empathize. Tuned to others, they more readily see alternate sides of an argument. Such empathy fosters communications and primes females for attachment. Men focus first on minute detail, and operate most easily with certain detachment. They construct rule-based analyses of the natural world, inanimate objects and events. They systemize. (p. 40)

To reassume with Vymětal's and DeVito's opinion on lexicon differences, it would be appropriate to examine one of the first well known books on gender topic. Robin Lakoff, American linguist and professor, dealt in her book *Language and Woman's Place* with gender differences in communication. This book was released in 1975, shortly after the first strike of feminism. Lakoff (1975) states that women's communicational style differs in lexicon. Women and men use different words based on their interest or focus, for

example women know more expressions for colors, men for technical terms. Lakoff (1973) states: “Women, then, make far more precise discriminations in naming colors than do men; words like *beige*, *ecru*, *aquamarine*, *lavender*, and so on, are unremarkable in a women’s active vocabulary, but absent from that of most men” (p. 49) and in one breath she adds a reason why this is true:

I have seen a man helpless with suppressed laughter at a discussion between two other people as to whether a book-jacket was to be described as ‘lavender’ or ‘mauve’. Men find such discussion amusing because they consider such a question trivial, irrelevant to the real world. (p. 49)

Lakoff (1973) also describes a situation, when a woman uses a word ‘mauve’ and assumes what would happen if a man then used the same word: “but if a man should say ‘The wall is mauve’, one might well conclude he was either imitating a woman sarcastically, or a homosexual, or an interior decorator” (p. 49). From this last example it is possible to conclude that both men and women are aware of the fact that their lexicon is different. By using some words from the lexicon of the other gender, one can be perceived as sarcastic or in a case of males – feminine, and in case of females – masculine. In modern times the differences are smaller: for example, there are many female engineers, biologists, chemists, university teachers and doctors, who can use technical and special terms as well as their male colleagues. At the same time, however, men using special terms for colors, flowers etc. is still considered feminine.

In Lakoff’s research can be also found differences in speech: women speak with less volume than men; they also tend to speak more politely, swear less and use more tag questions and intensifiers. This difference can be probably bound with social stimulation of little girls. Their role model is usually a mother, who speaks with them in a soft tone and uses tag questions to gain children’s attention or intensifiers to make stories more interesting. Girls usually adopt these speech properties. Lakoff (1975) connects this behavior also with social influence and nurture: "Rough talk is discouraged in little girls more strongly than in little boys, in whom parents may often find it more amusing than shocking" (p. 6).

The communicational style of women differs also in its consistency, Lakoff (1975) labeled women’s opinions as uncertain, they more often try to recede when they are not completely sure of their opinion. This matter could be presumably bind with age, when

Lakoff did her research and wrote her book, after almost forty years of feminist movement can be said that this situations, probably caused by women's oppression by men, can still be found, but in a reduced amount. On this topic it is also important to consider a person's temperament. There is another interesting phenomenon of women, namely indirect orders. It is very common to hear from women "Isn't it cold in here?" which is in fact an indirect order to close a window or turn up the heat. Men on the other hand are more likely to give direct orders. Tannen (1991) disagree that – especially American – women use more indirect orders. She states that both genders use indirect orders in approximately the same amount, but in different situations. In a situation where one person is in a superior position and the second person is his or her subordinate, it depends on the superior to choose whether he or she wants to use direct or indirect commands. Tannen (1994) states that giving indirect orders to one's subordinate is often perceived as a lack of self-confidence or sign of insecurity. She rejects this assumption:

I challenge the assumption that talking in an indirect way necessarily reveals powerlessness, lack of self-confidence, or anything else about the character of the speaker. Indirectness is a fundamental element in human communication. (Tannen, 1994, p. 313)

The topic of indirect orders is precarious: this is probably caused by numerous differences on this matter in a different countries; therefore, it is hard to provide a coherent conclusion.

The opinions on question "Who talks more" differ. On one hand we can agree with Vymětal and DeVito and their word-count, which clearly shows that women do talk more than men. On the other hand there is the research of Deborah Tannen and her suggestion that to decide who talks more it is important to ask the question: "In which situation?" There is an agreement in authors opinions (including Vymětal) that men and women like to speak in different situations, men in front of an audience and women within smaller groups of a few members. The work of Carol Kingsley Goman (2009) introduced the most marked communicational strengths and weaknesses for both genders, which can be useful in focusing on them and improving them. On the background of Robin Lakoff's (1975) book there are explained differences in speech and their probable causes, which can be both social and biological. The last part covers the topic of indirect orders, where the opinions are not very consistent.

It is important to emphasize that each conversation is produced by at least two members, who interact with each other – speaker and listener. Women are considered to be both better speakers and listeners, but only by other women. It is natural that they can communicate with each other better. Men mostly consider women as better listeners, because they do not try to affect their status. On the other hand, women are considered by men as ‘bad’ speakers, because their style of speaking differs too much. Men consider women’s utterances long and boring, with too many unimportant details (Karsten, 2006). The differences in speaking and receiving can be best shown by taking each gender and each role separately.

Women as speakers are considered very enthusiastic, women tend to accompany their stories with large amount of gestures, facial expressions and also sounds. They also tend to dramatize their stories, which is reflected in changing voices and expressive gesticulation. Women are also considered to be more emotional when speaking; Musil (2010) explains it with the tone of voice – women use approximately five tones when speaking, but men just three. It is important to add that men usually do not perceive these slight differences, because their sense of hearing is not as evolved as women’s (Lakoff, 1975; DeVito, 2001). Pelt (2001) states: “Woman’s brain is programmed more intuitively and emotionally” (p. 23). This might be the reason why women share many details, which would be considered by men as unimportant.

It is an important issue for the speaker to be assured by the listener that he or she is involved in the conversation and actually listens. Women are considered to be good listeners, because they actively react to important changes in the story, they are very good at facial expressions and they tend to maintain eye-contact. In their facial expressions they are very emphatic (Lakoff, 1975; Gilligan, 1982; DeVito, 2001). Women are also better listeners in indirect communication, for example in a conversation over a telephone. It is quite disturbing when someone talks over a phone and all he or she hears on the other side is silence. This inevitably leads to question: “Do we hear each other?” Women use more frequently some words or sounds that assures the speaker of their presence. Deborah Tannen (1991) agrees:

As anthropologists Maltz and Borker explain, women are more inclined to ask questions. They also give more listening responses – little words like *mhm*, *uh-uh*, and *yeah* – sprinkled throughout someone else’s talk, providing a running feedback

loop. And they respond more positively and enthusiastically, for example by agreeing and laughing. (p. 142)

This behavior can be probably again connected with women's greater need of empathy and connection with the conversational partner. There is one more typical issue of women and these are emphatic notes. Phrases like "I understand...", "That must be hard for you...", "I've been there too..." or "I feel the same" are common in women's conversation and they help to assure the speaker that he or she is being listened to. These emphatic notes are also very important in indirect communication, where no non-verbal signs can be observed (Kalnická, 2009). A man's brain is programmed analytically, in extension that means it is focused on solving problems. When a man is speaking, his utterance is based on facts without any unimportant details. A man's utterance is shorter and more factual, but it mostly lacks emotions (Pelt, 2001). The lack of emotions is mostly signaled by *paralinguistic* signs: that means men usually do not change the tone of their voice or the speech power.

The speech power was observed by DeVito (2001) with interesting conclusion that a man's voice has a lower register which is well received by the audience, it creates an impression of importance and truthfulness of the information. Also when men are angry or trying to defend themselves, the vocal register lowers even more. Women on the other hand have commonly higher vocal register and when they are nervous or trying to assert themselves, it becomes even higher (DeVito, 2001). The interesting conclusion is that women should try to lower their voices, which would be well received by an audience and it would draw attention to the speaker. A man's approach to listening is completely different from a woman's, most of the time a man is silent and looks disinterested. He does not maintain eye-contact; he rather looks out of a window. In fact DeVito (2001) states that men tend to eliminate eye-contact: furthermore, their facial expressions hardly display any emotions (Pelt, 2001). Pease (2002) connects these feeble facial-expressions again with evolution; men had to hide their emotions for example in a fight or negotiation, not to give the enemy essential information about their weaknesses.

Another research (Lakoff, 1975; Gilligan, 1982) connected this behavior to the biologically determined qualities; evolution of the senses. Men do not maintain eye-contact, because their vision is directed on orientation at a distance. It is harder for men during conversation to focus on the near target (communicational partner). Women's sight is evolved to work on shorter distance and with better evolved peripheral vision, which

gives them an advantage in conversation.

The conversational roles are different in both genders. A woman as a speaker is very enthusiastic uses a large amount of gestures, facial expressions and sounds. A man, on the other hand, does not show any emotions, does not change the tone of voice and his utterance is usually shorter and more factual than woman's. A woman as listener is more emphatic; she actively reacts to changes in a story and is very good at facial expressions. A woman is also good at listening responses, which gives the speaker a certainty that he or she is being listened to. A man as a listener can be labeled as disinterested; he does not maintain eye-contact and his facial expressions hardly display any emotions.

Misinterpretation of signals is a very common problem, connected with different understanding of the same situation by men and women. One example: a woman is talking and a man is reading a newspaper. After a while, the woman accuses the man of not listening to her. There are two possible explanations for this problem. From the biological point of view, a man's brain is focused on reading newspapers and he actually does not listen, or cannot process the signals (Vyskočil, 2006). Another theory is given by Vymětal (2008): "The woman expects the man to listen to her, nod and express interest in her problems" (p. 43 – author's translation). But the brain of men is set differently; he tries to come up with a solution to her problem. Therefore he remains silent until the correct answer is found. Tannen (1991) also adds that once the solution is found, a man says it straightaway and interrupts woman, which can naturally cause more problems. Curran (2003) adds that it is very common that men try to change the topic of conversation to something that is interesting for them.

Both these different conversational styles are hard for the other gender to understand: a woman was only looking for someone to talk to; she did not need help with finding a solution. The man on the other hand is not used to talking without the prospect of finding some solution (Vymětal, 2008). According to these examples Naumann (2008) states that a target of conversation for women is to create opinions and develop relationships, for men the target is to gain information and find solutions. Tannen (1991) shows this problem on a different example, which is a phone call. A typical phone call made by a man is short and factual. Women like more just to talk and listen to their conversational partners. Tannen (2007) also thinks that this is one of the reasons why men think that women talk more:

Women's rapport-talk probably explains why many people think women talk more. A man wants to read the paper, his wife wants to talk; his girlfriend or sister spends hours on the phone with her friend or her mother. He concludes: Women talk more. (para. 11)

From Naumann's (2008) research it can also be determined that women are more oriented on feelings, emotions and personal likeability. Naumann (2008) took into consideration a situation when men and women were criticized and wanted them to describe what feelings they had towards the person who criticized them. Women were more oriented on their personal feelings and answered that the person did not like them. Men on the other hand connected this behavior to their skills: they thought that the person was questioning their competency. It was also reflected in a situation when they had to react to problems of other people. Women demonstrated high level of empathy and shared their own experiences with similar problems. The reaction of men was completely different, they started to give advice. The misinterpretation and men's seek for a higher position in a hierarchy can be shown by a situation that almost everyone has experienced, which is driving a car in an unfamiliar city and asking for directions. Men are trying to find the right way on their own and they do not listen to anyone else. When a wife decides to ask someone for directions, he does not want to and continues driving.

This situation shows that accepting the possibility that he does not know the right way is frustrating for a man, because in this case he would lose some of his social status. Naumann (2008) labels this behavior as 'Mentality of lonely warrior'. A woman in the same case is willing to ask for help because she is not afraid that this situation would cause any harm to her.

Returning to the theme of men interrupting woman during conversation, Doctor Lydie Meunier (1996) from University of Tulsa mentions an interesting research of: "mixed-gender conversations and linguistic inequality in gender-specific styles" (Social status, Language, and Interruptions, para. 2). The research was performed by audio-taping thirty-one conversations from ordinary places such as coffee shops or libraries. The aim of the research was to find "the use of overlaps and interruptions" (Social status, Language, and Interruptions section, para. 2). Meunier (1996) then explains the terms:

Overlaps were defined as an act of anticipating the end of a sentence spoken by an interlocutor while articulating it with a topic-related response. An interruption, on

the other hand, was considered as a violation of turn-taking rules whereby topical disarticulation is flagrant.

(Social status, Language, and Interruptions section, para. 2)

The results of the research were extremely interesting: “Results showed that all the overlaps were caused by male speakers and that 96% of the interruptions resulted from men interrupting women.” (Social status, Language, and Interruptions section, para. 2) Meunier (1996) also adds that: “men rarely interrupted each other, primarily using interruptions when speaking to women. Women used fewer overlaps with men than with women due to the fact that men tended to perceive overlaps as interruptions.” (Social status, Language, and Interruptions section, para. 2) This research should be taken with respect to the relatively small number of pairs that were audio-taped, but it clearly shows the tendency of men to interrupt women more. Tannen (1991) sees this difference again with different communicational styles. The interruption: “does have to do with issues of dominance, control and showing interest and caring” (p. 215).

In communication between genders there are differences that are strongly connected with communicational styles. Men usually do not respond to women’s problems and they are trying to find a solution to them. On the other hand, women seek moral support or empathy. Men are very likely to interrupt women during their utterance, but this does not apply vice versa; in other words women rarely interrupt men.

It is important to say that the communicational styles of men and women interact with each other during communication, which is very often a cause of misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Pelt (2001) states that neither men nor women change their styles when they communicate with the other gender and therefore “the real key is mutual understanding” (p. 22).

Vyskočil (2006) also focuses on the behavioral problem of communication and paralinguistic signs. What is normal for men is sometimes not normal for women. As an example he names silence: while men are usually silent when a woman is talking to them, the silence in woman’s behavior should be carefully evaluated, because it can suggest social conflict. Tannen (1991) concurs and adds an exact time of silence which is usually uncommon for women, namely ten minutes. Of course it is important to review the situation accordingly, for example with an insight of previous behavior. Vymětal (2008) adds one situation where men are more like to open up to other people and that is with

metabolic oxidation of ethylalcohol in organism. DeVito (2001) focused on the matter of silence and named five functions of silence: “[it] provides the speaker time to think (...), [it] can be used as a weapon (...), [it] can be a sign of personal anxiety (...), [it] can stop a delivery of opinion (...), [it] can communicate emotional reactions” (p. 171 – author’s translation).

The first function of silence is used in almost every conversation and in this sense the distribution is practically equal with both genders. Silence as a weapon is usually used after a fight and is more often used by women, according to DeVito (2001): “as a certain kind of punishment” (p. 171 – author’s translation). An anxious silence is a sign of fear or shyness and it can be interrupted when the feeling of insecurity or stress lowers to a tolerable amount. The fourth function is usually used in a conflict situation and “it helps one or all the participants to avoid saying something they might regret later on” (DeVito, 2001, p. 171 – author’s translation). This approach is used by both genders equally and it is more sign of a temperament, rather than gender. The last function accompanies other signs of disapproval, such as hands crossed on chest or resentful expression of face. This non-verbal sign can be more often observed in women, because men usually try to enforce their opinion verbally – if their rank allows a verbal response (DeVito, 2001; Karsten, 2006; Naumann, 2008).

Other paralinguistic signs differ as well. Previously in this thesis it was stated that a man’s voice has a lower register, which is better received by listeners (DeVito, 2001). Doctor Audrey Nelson describes the other side, woman’s voice register: “Their voices are pitched to the upper range, the decibel level is reduced, and vowel resonances are thinned” (Girl talk: The Female Perspective, 2010, para. 4). She further explains the origin: “These paralinguistic elements are not the effect of biology but of socialization and learning-the imperative to be soft-spoken“ (Girl talk: The Female Perspective, 2010, para. 4). This opinion that pitch of an adult’s voice is a result of nurture was also proved by Dale Spender, who in 1980 presented her findings of this research, drawing attention to congenitally deaf people and emphasizing that the voices of some of them did not change through puberty (Githens, 1991). Therefore she presumes that “females could possibly learn or choose to use a higher pitch, while boys in adolescence make an audible effort to enter ‘manhood’ by lowering their voices, which results in the break” (para. 6). These findings are very interesting and based on them it is possible to incline to a fact that pitch of voice is really a result of nurture – social influence. But also in light of these facts one still have to take into consideration biological factors, such as development of a vocal

chords. This would explain why some males have a very low pitch of voice and some women on the other hand very high. The conclusion could be that around puberty people lower or increase their pitch of voices based on the social influence, but according to their biological predispositions. The speed of speech, as another paralinguistic part of communication, is important for attention of the listener and for his or her understanding of the content. DeVito (2001) states that in lectures or presentations, faster talking people (approximately fifty percent faster than usual) are perceived as more trustworthy and intelligent. He also states that by increasing a speed of speech by fifty percent, the level of comprehension decreases only by five percent. Altogether it can be stated that faster talking speakers can transfer more information and they will also be better perceived by the audience. Vybiral (2005) states that men usually talk faster but in contrast to women, they articulate worse. The speed of speech is something that has to be practiced; if an inexperienced speaker tries to speak faster than he or she is used to, it would have completely an opposite effect with a lot of pauses and parasitic words, such as “mm” and “ehm”.

The paralinguistic signs are an important part of communication, which helps a person in his or her verbal speech. The most unique and characteristic sign for a person is the pitch of voice, which originates partially in adopting the level of voice of one's gender and partially in biological aspects, such as development of vocal chords. Silence is very dependent on a situation and it can function in various situations as various instruments, such as a weapon or a sign of fear. An adequate speed of speech is a basis for a high quality performance, speaking too slowly or extremely fast will end in misunderstandings of the content. On one side people can stop listening to slow and loose speech, on the other side with increased speed the listeners have to sharpen their focus, which can be done only for a limited amount of time. Some of the other paralinguistic signs, such as intonation and amount of speech were described previously in the thesis.

Communication is always present in our behavior, it is impossible not to communicate. There are differences based on the place and situation and most importantly in the main part of our everyday life where communication is necessary, which is the workplace. The differences can be observed in office layout, during team work, conferences or negotiations. Men like to work in their social and public distance. The reasons for this selection of space were introduced previously in this thesis; briefly to repeat them, it is mostly demonstration of their skill, their strength of physical presence

and once again the origin in childhood plays, which is hierarchy and building a dominion over the other participants. Another interesting difference is described by Deborah Tannen (1991): “At every age, the boys and men sit at angles to each other-in one case, almost parallel-and never look directly into each other’s faces” (p. 246). Tannen (1991) further explains: “But if boys and men avoid looking directly at each other to avoid combativeness, then for them it is a way of achieving friendly connection rather than compromising it” (p. 269). Women, on the other hand, like to work in their social distance but it is also common that they let someone in their personal distance on a condition they know each other well (Pease, 2002). It is also common in groups of women that they like to have physical contact with their conversational partner; haptics is more present in the communication of women than of men. Tannen (1991) states: “At every age, the girls and women sit closer to each other and look at each other directly” (p. 246). Pease (2002) connects this behavior with biological predispositions: women have thinner skin and more sensitive nerve endings, so they perceive touch in a different way than men. It is also connected with their more emotional behavior: a touch can assure them of someone’s support or the same state of mind. The posture of men and women during negotiations also differs; Dr. Jenna P. Carpenter from Louisiana Tech University created a list of men’s and women’s positions:

Women often make themselves “small”

- ... Sit with legs crossed, hands in lap
- ... Materials stacked neatly on desk/table
- ... Sit tucked under the table

Men tend to take up lots of space.

- ... Sit with figure four legs or feet on floor, arms on side of chair or spread out on table
- ... Materials spread out
- ... Sit pushed back from table

(Carpenter, n.d., p. 5)

Of course, these differences do not apply for each member of one’s gender, there certainly are exceptions. When observing someone it is important to take into consideration

his or her state of mind, temperament and also ethnicity. But the above items are the differences that can be attached to the genders.

Communication at the workplace to a certain extent depends on a gender structure of company. Novák (2002) implies that it is easier for men to communicate from a position of power, because men are more commonly in higher positions within the company. He attributes this to the masculine company structure, subconscious preference of men for leading positions and unwillingness of companies to conform to potential family obligations. At this point it would be appropriate to briefly explore the background of women and men on the labor market. In Europe and also in other states all around the world it can be seen that in the past women were oppressed at the expense of men. This fact reflected in a labor market, where most of the leading positions were occupied by men.

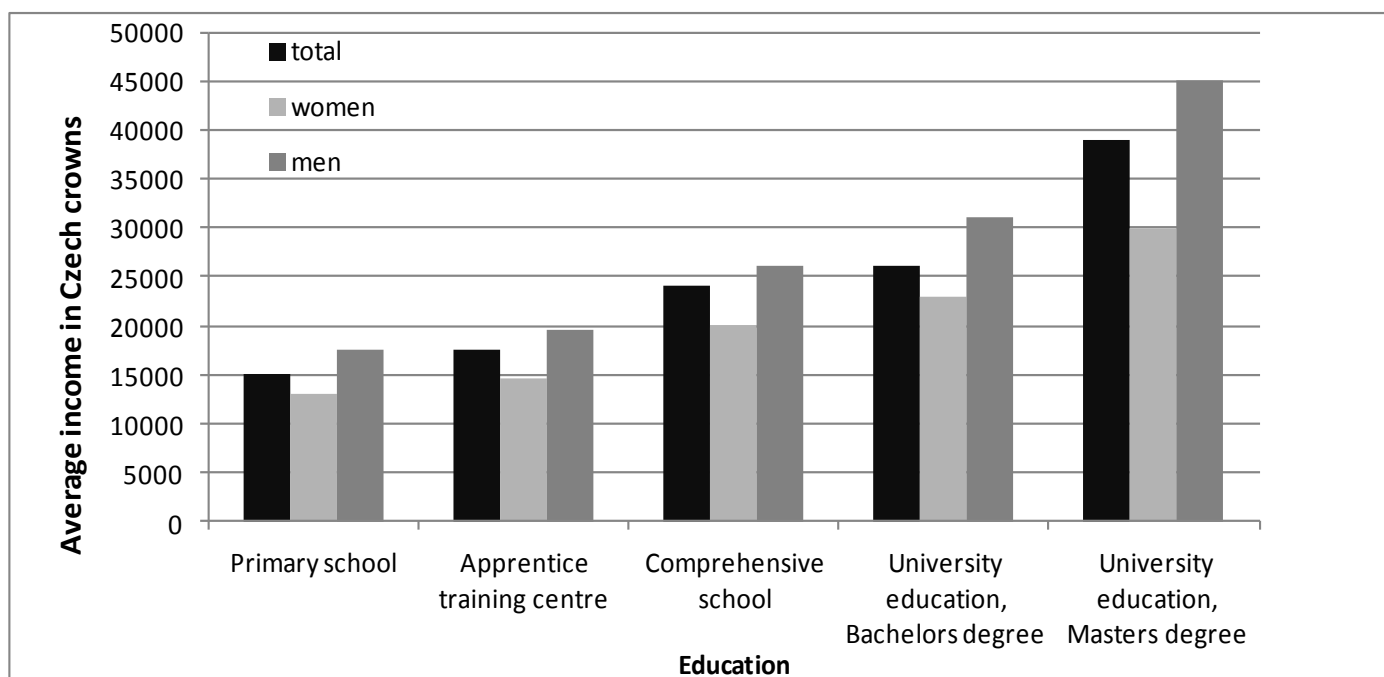


Figure 4: Average income dependent on education in 2006 in the Czech Republic

(Jarkovská, 2010, p. 21 – author's translation)

As Křížková (2011) says, in the Czech Republic there was another factor in that leading positions were conditioned by membership of a Communist Party, from which women were mostly unbind (Křížková, 2011). Nevertheless, in 1970, 45.5% of working people were women (Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1986). Further research revealed that women were also oppressed in a terms of salary.

At the beginning of the 1960s, women were paid only two thirds of a man's salary for doing a similar job. Křížková (2011) states that this discrimination in salary was mostly influenced by persistent form of division of labor in a household, and ideology of men as breadwinners. A change to this model came after 1989 (the fall of the Communist party), when transformation of the labor market attracted attention to educational attainment, and salary was strongly connected with prestige of employment and education (Křížková, 2011). But as can be compared now, the differences in salary have persisted; in Figure 4 it can be seen that with higher education the difference in salary is larger and also that women with higher university education are paid less than men with lower university education. According to Křížková (2011), this difference can be caused by interrupted work careers of women, who are very likely to go to maternal leave, but men with the same education can work without this interruption and can become more valuable for the company.

4. Research

In the research section of this thesis there are several hypotheses based on matters described in the theoretical part. The objective of the practical part is to find people's opinions on these matters and to some extent to verify them. The hypotheses, for the most part, are very well known clichés, connected with gender communication. The second objective of the research is to find out whether their perception is consistent in two different age groups.

The questionnaire was given to two groups of people. For the first group, the questionnaire was published on a networking site and the address was spread on Facebook among friends with one additional piece of information, which was maximum age of respondents, limited to twenty-six years. The page was available for thirty days and it obtained seventy respondents, forty-two women and twenty-eight men. For the second group the questionnaire was spread in printed form among family, their colleagues and random passers-by aged over fifty years. The gap between the two groups was made on purpose to provide a greater contrast in the results. From the second group the questionnaire was answered by sixty-one people, thirty-four women and twenty-seven men.

I had hoped the number of respondents would be slightly higher, but even this number can be considered sufficient.

The aim of the research was to discover people's opinions on gender-based questions and stereotypes. The survey consists of six compulsory questions. The questions were simple yes/no questions and in question number six there was a series of statements that the respondents could check off if they believed the statement was true. The respondents from the first group were between eighteen and twenty-six years of age, from the second group between fifty and sixty-one years.

Questions number one and two were simple questions to determine the age of the respondent and his or her gender. The aim of question number three was to determine whether the person believes that men and women have different communicational styles. This question was answered "Yes" by 100% of men and 90% of women from the first group and by 88% of men and 97% of women from the second group. Altogether, from the total count of one-hundred and thirty-one respondents only eight think that men and

women have the same communicational styles.

Question number four served to obtain information about sharing problems with the opposite gender. From the first group, 36% of men answered that they prefer to share the problem with a person of the same gender and 64% would rather share the problem with an opposite gender. No male respondent answered that he does not like to share the problem. 57% of women like to share the problem with the same gender, 29% with opposite gender and 14% does not like to share the problems at all. From the research can be determined that both men and women from this group give priority to share problems with a person of female gender. That is probably caused by the fact that women are considered to be better listeners and in contrast to men they actually like to talk about problems of others. An interesting finding is that no men answered that he does not like to talk about his problems and on the contrary, six women did. Maybe this finding can be awarded to the age of the respondents and their current position of students. As was explained in theoretical part, men tend to be more open in specific conditions of metabolic oxidation of ethylalcohol in organism and the group of university students is often attributed with the inclination to alcohol and pub visiting. In the second group, the results were completely different. 77% of men and 82% of women answered “Yes”, which means that they like to share problems with a member of the same gender. On the other hand, only 11% of men and 6% of women like to share problems with opposite gender. The same number of men, 11%, does not like to share their problems at all, for women the count was almost the same – 12%. These completely different results with an obvious inclination to the same gender can be put in the context with an age of the respondents and their different life-style: people from the second group usually have a spouse and family and their effort to attract the other gender is significantly lower than in the first group. On the other hand, people in their twenties are very interested in the other gender with a perspective of finding a partner and this can be one of the instruments of bonding with the opposite gender.

The aim of question number five was to determine whether the person realizes the non-verbal part of communication and if it is important for him or her. From the first group, for 57% of men the non-verbal part was important and for 43% it was not. In contrast all the women agreed that the non-verbal communication is important for them. This difference clearly indicates that women tend to observe their communicational partner more and are better in perceiving the differences in non-verbal system. Men, however, are biologically predetermined to do one task at a time and maybe this is the reason why almost half of them answered that non-verbal communication is not important for them.

The reason can also be that men are more oriented on facts and they probably tend to focus on them and do not consider any body language important. For the second group, for 66% of men and 70% of women the non-verbal part of communication was important and for 33% of men and 30% of women it was not. Women also more often answered the definite answer “Yes”, whereas men were more inclined to the option of “Rather yes”. Only one respondent answered definite “No” and surprisingly it was a woman. It is important to emphasize that even when someone does not consider the non-verbal signs of communication important, he or she still perceives them; in face-to-face communication it is almost impossible not to see them. Question number six consisted of list of statements and the respondent could check as many as he or she considered being true.

Statement 1: Women are more emphatic than men

Group 1: 64% of men and 62% of women agreed with this statement.

Group 2: 44% of men and 58% of women answered this question positively.

For the first group it can be generally said that also men consider women to be more emphatic. For the second group the results are not evident, nearly half of the men and half of the women answered the question positively - and also negatively.

Statement 2: Women talk more than men

Group 1: This statement was answered positively by 86% of men and 67% of women.

Group 2: 85% of men and 38% of women agreed with this statement.

In the first group both genders agreed that women are the ones who talk more. In the second group a majority of men still concurs with the statement, but on the other hand women do not consider it to be true. It was proven by Vymětal’s research that men use only one third of women’s number of words but, as was stated in the theoretical part, for example Deborah Tannen does not consider this method of counting words as valuable. The general opinion from the questionnaires is that women actually do talk more than men.

Statement 3: Women like to talk about their feelings more than men

Group 1: 57% of men and 52% of women agreed with this statement.

Group 2: 81% of men and 67% of women considered this statement to be true.

Within the first group the answers are not conclusive, half of the respondents agreed with the statement. In the second group the results were more evidential; a majority of both genders agree that women like to talk about their feelings more than men. In the

theoretical part it was stated that women are more feelings-oriented, but within the question there is implicated a verbal part of communication. Some emotions and feelings can be also recognized from non-verbal or paralinguistic signs.

Statement 4: Women can mutli-task better than men

Group 1: 43% of men and 78% of women agreed with this statement.

Group 2: 66% of men and 100% of women agreed with this statement.

It is biologically determined that women can do more tasks at once: their brain structure is different and *corpus callosum*, which connects brain hemispheres, is more evolved and can transfer information more effectively. From the low percentage of men in the first group agreeing with this problem, it can be deduced that men do not perceive this to be true about them. In the second group, on the other hand, even men agree that women in fact can multi-task better.

Statement 5: Women are better story-tellers

Group 1: This question was answered by 7% of men and 5% of women positively.

Group 2: 19% of men and 30% of women agreed with this statement.

From the total count of 131 respondents this question was answered positively only by nineteen people; seven men and twelve women. It can be traced back to the environments where people like to talk – men do like to entertain big groups of people, where some interesting stories can be told. Only twelve women agreeing with this statement was an unexpected outcome; it might be interpreted by women that men speaking to a group of people can be perceived as powerful and good speakers, who can impose women. On the other hand, only seven men agreeing with this statement is not surprising at all: as was explained in the theoretical part, men generally do not like women's style, which is rich on details.

Statement 6: Women like to think out loud

Group 1: 43% of men and 38% of women agreed with this statement.

Group 2: 33% of men and 44% of women answered this question positively.

The results of this question are unconvincing: this matter is rather subjective and it probably depends on other aspects than communicational styles. From psychology it can be connected to types of notion: if a person is an auditive type, he or she probably prefers

to think out loud. The results show that neither men nor women are inclined to think that women like to think out loud.

Statement 7: Women tend to touch other people more than men

Group 1: 36% of men and 57% of women answered this question positively.

Group 2: 26% of men and 44% of women agreed with this statement.

The more frequent use of haptics by women was not proven in this research; furthermore a very low percentile in men's answers on this matter shows a bias towards the opinion that maybe men use touch more often, for example as a handshake. In the theoretical part there was the inclination of women for haptics connected with biological predisposition; women have thinner skin and more sensitive nerve endings, therefore they feel the touch differently than men. The answers, however, do not prove that women would use haptics more than men.

Statement 8: Men communicate more factually

Group 1: 64% of men and 71% of women answered this question positively.

Group 2: 93% of men and 56% of women agreed with this statement.

Women's speech is rather rich on details on the contrary to men's, which is rich on facts. Both groups agreed with this statement and proved that both men and women do think that men's communication is focused on facts.

Statement 9: Men are more impulsive

Group 1: 43% of men and 24% of women agreed with this statement.

Group 2: 66% of men and 35% of women answered this question positively.

This rather non-communication related question was added to prove or disprove the theory that men like to think about a problem without making rash decisions. On the other hand when the solution is found, men tend to interrupt other person's speech and say the solution. The percentile of positive answers was in three cases below fifty percent; the only exception were men from the second group, who agreed with the statement that men are more impulsive.

Statement 10: Men are better public speakers (e.g. in front of audience)

Group 1: 72% of men and 68% of women agreed with this statement.

Group 2: This question was answered positively by 33% of men and 26% of women.

This question showed the biggest difference between the two groups of age. On one hand, both genders from the first group agreed with the statement, but the respondents from the second group mostly disagreed. In the theoretical part it was stated that men do like to talk in their public distance, for example in front of audience, but opinions on whether in fact they are better public speakers differs.

Statement 11: Men appear disinterested when listening

Group 1: 21% of men and 33% of women agreed with this statement.

Group 2: This question was answered positively by 44% of men and 41% of women.

This statement was proven mostly wrong, but it shows a slight increase in percentile. In group 1 less than one third of the respondents agreed with the statement, but in the second group it was nearly a half of them. It might be again connected with the effort of younger people to attract the opposite gender.

Statement 12: Men are more likely to give advice

Group 1: 57% of men and 67% of women considered this statement to be true.

Group 2: 48% of men and 26% of women answered this question positively.

This statement is one of the most contradictory ones. Almost seventy percent of women from the first group agreed, but only twenty-six percent from the second group. Men were at this matter more neutral, fifty-seven and forty-eight percent are both almost at the middle of the scale.

Statement 13: Men are more introverted

Group 1: 50% of men and 52% of women agreed with this statement.

Group 2: This question was answered positively by 30% of men and 47% of women.

The answers to this question were unconvincing and they did not prove that men would be more introverted.

Statement 14: Men ask fewer questions

Group 1: 93% of men and 90% of women agreed with this statement.

Group 2: This question was answered positively by 66% of men and 50% of women.

This statement was within the first group the most demonstrable one; almost every respondent agreed with it. The results were different in the second group where exactly half of the women agreed, but sixty-six percent of men. It is a common belief that women ask more questions and this was proved in the first group of respondents.

Statement 15: Women can read emotions better

Group 1: 82% of men and 88% of women agreed with this statement.

Group 2: This statement was answered positively by 81% of men and 76% of women.

This statement was the most demonstrative one. Both groups agreed that women are better in reading emotions. In the theoretical part this ability was connected with their better evolved sight on short distances. It is also connected with paralinguistic signs and women with their better evolved hearing can detect more differences than men.

Statement 16: Women include more details in their stories

Group 1: This statement was answered positively by 50% of men and 81% of women.

Group 2: 88% of men and 74% of women agreed with this statement.

The last statement was proved by the second group and also by women from the first group. Only half of the younger men agreed with this statement and it might be because they considered this question as an attack on their self-esteem: it might have been perceived that fewer details would make their story less attractive and worse.

5. Conclusion

This thesis describes and examines various differences in communication. The effort to provide a survey of the origin of these differences was accomplished in a description of social and biological factors that form a person from the beginning of his or her life. The biological factors are mostly hereditary and are very similar in both genders, but the social factors can differ and it is important for the surroundings of a child to have an influence on it. Little children adopt the behavior of the adult of the same gender and, as was declared in the thesis, without this influence it is impossible for the child to socialize. In the social environment there are involved children's games, which have a vital role for further development of communication and from these games originate for example more emphatic relationships of women and hierarchical organization of men's society. The biological factors are in principle unchangeable; they include, for example, brain structure and quality of brain synapses.

Different communicational styles of men and women are a cause of some misinterpretations, which are also connected with variance in a focus of men and women and by different encoding and decoding of the content. Each communication underlies interpretation and with different genders it is possible for the message to slightly change or, more likely, be perceived otherwise.

Furthermore this thesis describes communicational roles of both genders and their advantages and disadvantages. Women are usually perceived as better listeners and men as better speakers, which is not surprising at all and is also connected with children's games and adoption of gender based customs. In the paralanguage the differences persist: there is interesting research showing that in puberty the change of voice can be partially perceived as a result of nurture, social influence. At the end of the first part there was briefly described the difference in salary between men and women, which certainly deserves its place in this thesis.

The gender differences in communication are a wide and in modern times frequently discussed topic. It is possible to describe and study the differences to improve our understanding of the opposite gender and to avoid misinterpretation and needless stress in solving interpersonal conflicts.

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7. Summary in Czech

V této bakalářské práci byly popsány a prozkoumány různé rozdíly v komunikaci. Snaha poskytnout přehled původu těchto rozdílů byla naplněna v popisu sociálních a biologických faktorů, které utváří člověka již od začátku života. Biologické faktory jsou většinou dědičné a jsou skoro totožné pro každý gender, na druhou stranu sociální faktory se mohou lišit a je důležité pro okolí dítěte, aby na něj mělo vliv. Malé děti přejímají chování dospělých stejného pohlaví a bez tohoto vlivu je téměř nemožné, aby se dítě socializovalo. V sociálním prostředí jsou zapojeny také dětské hry, které mají zásadní význam pro následný vývoj komunikace a z těchto her pramení například více empatický vztah žen a hierarchické uspořádání společnosti mužů. Biologické faktory jsou většinou neměnitelné a řadíme mezi ně například strukturu mozku, nebo kvalitu mozkových synapsí.

Rozdílné komunikační styly mužů a žen jsou příčinou některých nedorozumění, které se také pojí s rozdílným zaměřením pozornosti mužů a žen a také rozdílných kódováním a dekódováním obsahu sdělení. Každá komunikace podléhá interpretaci a s rozdílnými gendery je možné, že se sdělení lehce změní, nebo spíše bude vnímáno jinak.

Dále jsou v této práci popsány role v komunikaci pro oba gendery a jejich výhody a nevýhody. Ženy jsou většinou považovány za lepší posluchačky a muži za lepší řečníky, důvod těchto rozdílů je opět možno hledat v dětských hrách a v osvojování genderových zvyků. V paralingvistické rovině rozdíly přetrvávají, v práci je popsán zajímavý výzkum který inklinuje k názoru, že změna hlasu v období puberty není jev určený biologicky, ale působením sociálního prostředí. Na konci první části jsou krátce popsány rozdíly v platových podmínkách mužů a žen v minulosti a přítomnosti.

8. Appendix

Questionnaire

1. What is your age? (number)
2. What is your gender?
 Male Female
3. Do you think that men and women communicate in different styles?
 Yes No
4. When you have a problem, would you rather share it with someone of the same gender?
 Yes No I do not like to share my problems at all
5. Is the non-verbal part of communication (posture, gestures...) important for you?
 Yes Rather yes Rather no No
6. Review the following list of statements and check those that you believe to be true.
 - Women are more emphatic than men
 - Women talk more than men
 - Women like to talk about their feelings more than men
 - Women can multi-task better than men
 - Women are better story-tellers
 - Women like to think out loud
 - Women tend to touch other people more than men
 - Men communicate more factually
 - Men are more impulsive
 - Men are better public speakers (e.g. in front of audience)
 - Men appear disinterested when listening
 - Men are more likely to give advice
 - Men are more introverted
 - Men ask fewer questions
 - Women can read emotions better
 - Women include more details in their stories