

# **Gender and its Impact on Communication and Persuasion**

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Bachelor Thesis  
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**Tomas Bata University in Zlín**  
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## ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

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Téma práce: **Gender a jeho vliv na komunikaci a přesvědčování**

Zásady pro vypracování:

**Úvod:** Objasněte pojem gender.  
**Zjistěte,** jaký vliv má gender na komunikaci.  
**Prozkoumejte** vliv vzhledu na úspěšnost v přesvědčování.  
**Zaměřte se** na přesvědčovací taktiky u genderů.  
**Závěr:** Kdo je v přesvědčování úspěšnější, ženy nebo muži?

Rozsah bakalářské práce:

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## **ABSTRAKT**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá významem slova gender jeho vznikem a vlivem na komunikaci a přesvědčování. Mezi lidmi je spousta předsudků o rozdílnosti komunikace mezi oběma pohlavími, které nejsou vždy pravdivé. Právě objasnění těchto předsudků je hlavním cílem této práce. Snaží se tyto rozdíly definovat a určit jejich příčinu, která je často dána geneticky, ale je z velké míry ovlivněna i společností a prostředím, ve kterém vyrůstáme a které formuje naše chování. Zkoumá rozdíly jak ve verbální komunikaci, tak v neverbální komunikaci, která je nedílnou součástí a často je důležitější než slova samotná, jelikož může ukrývat poznatky, které jsou v mluveném projevu skryty. Dále se práce zabývá také přesvědčováním, tím jaký vliv má v tomto procesu krása a zda jsou ženy opravdu snadněji ovlivnitelné než muži, či zda je to jen jeden z mnoha předsudků, které s pravdou nemají nic společného.

Klíčová slova: Gender, Historie genderu, Feminismus, Verbální komunikace, Rozdíly myšlení, Komunikační schéma, Neverbální komunikace, Gesta, Zprávy, Přesvědčování, Vzhled, Genderové rozdíly v přesvědčování

## **ABSTRACT**

This bachelor thesis engages in the meaning of word 'gender', its origin and the impact on the communication and persuasion. There are many prejudices about the differences in communication of genders, which are not always true. Clarification of these prejudices is the main goal of this thesis. It tries to define the differences and determine the reasons, which are often given biologically. Communication is largely influenced by society, which predominantly forms our behaviour. This thesis explores differences in both verbal and non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is often more important, because it can reveal things, which should have been hidden. The thesis further discusses persuasion and the fact that women are more persuasive than men, or if it is only another prejudice.

Keywords: Gender, Gender history, Feminism, Verbal Communication, Male/Female thinking, Communication Pattern, Non-verbal Communication, Gestures, Messages, Persuasion, Attractiveness, Gender Persuasion

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**DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own and certify that any secondary material used has been acknowledged in the text and listed in the bibliography.

May 6, 2011

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## INTRODUCTION

There are many prejudices about the communication of genders among people. Unfortunately, most of them are about women, and their way of talking. It is even hard to remember any byword about man and sentence like this, you have hardly ever heard: Although women are more talkative, they usually remain quiet because everywhere where the men are, there is not a space for women's speaking because men are chatting all the time. If we imagine a situation of conversation in a pub, where men and a woman are sitting together, this assertion is not far from reality.

It is more often said, "She is gossipy, like the old women in the market." Or the prejudices, such as "this had to be created by women" but is it really true? Does the fact that you are man or woman really determine if you are more or less talkative and do men and women think otherwise? Can we just read or look at something and say with certainty that this is made by a man or a woman? This thesis illuminates some of these assumptions and explains the basic differences between men and women, not only in the way of communication but also from the biological point of view, because there certainly is some dissimilarity. It has already been proved and it somehow influences the way we speak or behave.

First of all, the crucial word 'gender' is explained because it is the main feature of this thesis and the whole thesis is based on this word; furthermore the history of the concept is discussed, as these problems did not appear overnight.

In the next part, the work deals with the differences in verbal communication as it is outlined at the beginning, and non-verbal communication, because who has never heard about so-called women's weapons, but how many people heard about men's weapons and are there really any or is it all fake?

At the end, this thesis also addresses the question if gender has impact on persuasive strategies and if one gender (male or female) prevails over the second in this quality. It could be said that the effective persuading is a result of good communication ability.

## GENDER

The Encyclopededia of Sociology defines gender as: “Division of people into two categories, men and women. Through interaction with caretakers, socialization in childhood, peer pressure in adolescence, and gendered work and family roles women and men are socially constructed to be different in behaviour, attitudes, and emotions. The gendered social order is based on and maintains these differences”<sup>1</sup>

Despite this definition, gender is often misunderstood as being the promotion of women only. However, as we see from the definition, gender issues focus on women, but also on the relationship between men and women and their gender roles, which are defined as a social definition of men and women. These roles have varied within history and even within different societies, ages, family backgrounds, etc.<sup>2</sup>

It is supposed that not all women are born with the maternal instinct and not all men are born fighters. All these characteristics are formed by what people see around them during their lives.<sup>3</sup>

As it has been said, to notice the existence of gender order is easy, to understand it not. Conflicting theories of gender still exist, and a number of problems about gender are genuinely difficult to resolve. Yet, we now have a rich resource of knowledge concerning gender, derived from decades of research, and a fund of practical experience from gender reform. We now have better basis for understanding gender issues than any previous generation ever had.<sup>4</sup>

But even such expertise could not prevent all discrepancies in this expression.

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<sup>1</sup> Borgatta, E.F. & Montgomery, R.J.V. “*Encyclopedia of Sociology*” (2nd ed., Vol. 2). (New York:Macmillan Reference, USA, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Richard Pallardy, “The Study Of Gender”, Encyclopaedia Britannica (02/2011)  
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/27505/anthropology/236865/The-study-of-gender> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>4</sup> Connell, Raewyn. "Noticing gender." In *Short introductions GENDER*. (Malden: Polity Press, 2009), 6.

## 1.1 Meanings of the word 'gender'

Fundamental meaning of the word gender, taken from Latin, is sex and it is still fully used in this sense.

The second meaning of the term referred to the sexual act itself, but in relation to the development of sexuality in society this meaning of the word 'gender' was lost.

Finally, the concept has become a sociological term or social category reflecting the socially suspended cultural differences, expectations, prejudices, and specifics of women and men. This category was created as a clear opposition to the category 'sex' which is seen as purely biological.

The aspects of the historical development of gender are pre-eminently seen on the mutual relationship of the two sexes. Feminine ability to create and care interferes with the masculine desire to conquer and break down in constant cyclical developments. While gender refers to cultural and social differences in the aspirations of men and women, it also proves that they are the closest in nature.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.2 Gender History

"Physical body could be ambiguous that was why the scientists started stress the importance of other indicators of sex difference. During the 1970's, chromosomes were the main marker, which means that looks like a woman was not enough and you had to undergo the tests to prove your femaleness. Disadvantage of these tests was that everybody who had one of the certain types of abnormalities was automatically considered to be a man even if that person had breasts and vagina."<sup>6</sup>

"But during the 70's the critical reconsidering of gender assumption started. This was caused mainly by women's movement and in part by a large number of women who entering into the academic career. At that time many of the researches were focused

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<sup>5</sup>"Gender History," Historie, [www.historie.upol.cz/old/download/eseje/es34.doc](http://www.historie.upol.cz/old/download/eseje/es34.doc). (accessed April, 26 2011)

<sup>6</sup> Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Gender in History: Global Perspectives*, 2 ed. (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 25.

primarily on women since they had been neglected by most of the anthropological records. As a result of this situation, word “gender” started to refer to women only.”<sup>7</sup>

“Till this time gender was taken as an inborn characteristic which was denied by further studies. These studies proved that societies influence not only the variety of behaviour, religions, etc. They also vary the gender systems.”<sup>8</sup>

Gender history is one of the youngest branches of history. Although its creation was not a sudden flash in the historiographical sky and its development was a process like any other science, ‘gender history’ was not definitively established until the early eighties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>9</sup>

History in Focus claims that this gender formation during the 80’s was predominantly given by the enlargement of women’s movement, which shifted its attentions to the discrimination of women and to female reactions to oppression.<sup>10</sup>

Gender is necessarily associated with feminism. This connection is logical as gender study is inevitable consequence of the feminist movement; in other words, it is some sort of compromise between radical feminism and enduring conservative values.

History as a science was previously the domain of men primarily and the whole history is understood as a process created by men only. Female historians were exceptional and women as objects of historical research or as objects of historical narrative were located on the periphery of historical works. After the previous attempts, a comprehensive examination was finally started by the gender history whose infiltration into the renowned range of historical approaches as particularly worthy of Joan Scott and Lynn Hunt.<sup>11</sup>

First of the obstacles the innovators of women’s history had to overcome were traditional relations on the campus which favoured men to obtain the title of professor. The empowerment of women in this regard was contributed substantially by politicising

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<sup>7</sup> Richard Pallardy, “The Study Of Gender”, Encyclopaedia Britannica (02/2011) <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/27505/anthropology/236865/The-study-of-gender> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Gender History,” Historie, [www.historie.upol.cz/old/download/eseje/es34.doc](http://www.historie.upol.cz/old/download/eseje/es34.doc). (accessed April, 26 2011)

<sup>10</sup> Joanne Bailey and John Arnold, “Is the Rise of Gender History 'hiding' Women from History Once Again?” History in focus (2005) <http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/Gender/articles.html> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Gender History,” Historie, [www.historie.upol.cz/old/download/eseje/es34.doc](http://www.historie.upol.cz/old/download/eseje/es34.doc). (accessed April, 26 2011)

women's issues in the sixties of the 20th century in the U.S. and its connection to the human rights movement that resulted in the Civil Rights Act.

The development of 'woman's history' then went through a gradual de-politicisation in the mid seventies to the change in gender history and complete de-politicisation. Otherwise, we could characterize this development as a process in which women's history first gained the status of an addition to history as such in order to become equal branch examining in the historical context woman as a political identity by the progressive efforts to incorporate women to history as an integral part.<sup>12</sup>

What are the basic attributes of gender history? Gender history emphasizes that the relationship of sex in a given period reflects the social relations in the state. In this regard, according to Joan Kelly-Gagol, gender history sees mainly four qualification criteria. The first is the regulation of female sexuality due to the traditional education and social conventions, then the economic and political role of women in society, the cultural role of women perceiving primarily the approach to education and the possibility of its use, as well as the ideology on the women documented by symbolic creations of the company. Important is that gender history is looking for the real status of women in that era. In Renaissance, for example, the status is declared otherwise in belles-lettres than in the writings on marriage. It appears the focus on the gender relations, in this case, the love between man and woman, is a measure of the status of women in the society. The history, in this case, is emotional, which is a typical aspect of women's perception and it is proved in life stories, which create some kind of paradigm for the state of society.<sup>13</sup>

But there also arises the question: where should the gender history be included? The first scholars to point out conflict and exploitation in gender relations were Marxist historians, namely E.P. Thompson in his book *The Formation of the English Working Class*, however, the definition of gender as social category, which does not fall into the categories of Marxism, excluded the inclusion of gender in the history of Marxist historiography. A significant space was devoted to gender relations by representatives of the 'Historical Social Sciences' (Wehler, Nipperdey) and the further development of the intellectual world of women's studies took place within a group of social-science historians

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<sup>12</sup> Gender History," Historie, [www.historie.upol.cz/old/download/eseje/es34.doc](http://www.historie.upol.cz/old/download/eseje/es34.doc). (accessed April, 26 2011)

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

around the magazine *History Workshop*. However, the independence of gender history was due to later poststructuralist linguistics and ‘new cultural history’. Exploitation comes from the variety of interpersonal relationship not institutionalised structures.

Stories, individual characters and language play Central role in this version of history. The radical position on the issue of language was taken by already mentioned Joan Scott arguing that the traditional language created the hierarchical order which resulted in the oppression of women. This argument was supported by Lynn Hunt stressing that gender is not in the social and political sense naturally given but is constituted by language.

It seems clear that gender history is a separate branch of historiography, which deals with the history of women that is located on the border of social, micro and post structural history. The gender history owes mainly to the interest of American historians and their creation of independent study courses primarily on the soil of American universities for its development in the last decade.<sup>14</sup>

### 1.3 Feminism

According to Britannica encyclopaedia the word feminisms means “the belief in the social, economic, and political equality of sexes. Although largely originating in the West, feminism is manifested worldwide and is represented by various institution committed to activity on behalf of women’s rights and interests.”<sup>15</sup>

In my opinion, feminisms have been perceived as controversial and when the term is used nowadays people tend to have negative associations, especially men. During the development of the feminism the expression began to be perceived in a different sense than this word should be understood. It is said that this misunderstanding is mainly caused by the radical part of this movement, which is very often seen as an effort of women to be equal at all costs. However, this is not entirely true as the history and the current forms of this movement show.

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<sup>14</sup> Gender History,” Historie, [www.historie.upol.cz/old/download/eseje/es34.doc](http://www.historie.upol.cz/old/download/eseje/es34.doc). (accessed April, 26 2011)

<sup>15</sup> John M. Cunningham, “The Second Wave of Feminism”, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11/2010) <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/724633/feminism/216004/History-of-feminism> (accessed April 26, 2011).

### 1.3.1 Forming of Feminism

#### 1.3.1.1 First Wave of Feminism

Although most of people went through certain learning process only a small part of them know something closer about the history of women as such. If we look closely at the content of current American history textbooks, we get the impression that the only thing feminists endeavoured and managed was the electoral right. No wonder that when talking about feminism in 19<sup>th</sup> century; the word ‘feminist’ coincides with the word ‘suffragette’ (from the French word suffrage: electoral right). Feminist historiography dedicated to women’s movement emphasizes that the exclusive focus on electoral law pushed through the decades long campaign which categorized also many other forms of gender inequality. In some cases feminists even steadfastly refused to put the electoral right in the first place of the aspirations of the women’s movement and drew attention to the other aspects of unequal status of women.<sup>16</sup>

Gerda Lerner, feminist historian, showed that the ideas of feminism could be found already in the time preceding the first wave of feminism, exactly in the years 1830 – 1920. She reconstructed tradition of protest against patriarchal oppression of women in her analysis of medieval historical documents (1971). Regrettably, these reconstructions were incomplete because actions of women or their written speeches had never been systematically documented in the Middle Ages. On the contrary, women were rather systematically pushed out of the formation of history. The power to determine how to understand history and what is or is not a relevant part of it was exclusively male. Therefore, women struggling with gender inequality could never learn anything about the efforts of their predecessors. This fact long prevented the birth of feminist consciousness – an understanding that social inequality applies to women as teams, not individuals and that their inferiority is maintained by a system that can be changed through collective efforts only. Even though feminism as such appeared only at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, examples of female resistance can be found in every historical period.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Women, Men, and Society (4th Edition)*, 4 ed. (London: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 36-39.

<sup>17</sup> John M. Cunningham, “The Second Wave of Feminism”, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11/2010) <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/724633/feminism/216004/History-of-feminism> (accessed April 26, 2011).



Already in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century women fought for equality: equal access to education especially. Despite the fact that most of the middle-class women during the 19<sup>th</sup> century gradually managed to acquire higher education than ever before it was proved that the entry into most of professions still remained denied. The only thing left to them, if they did not want to spend all their time at home, was charity.<sup>18</sup>

The demand for equality for women had to appear at the best as irrelevant to the recipients of that social activities. These recipients were mainly Afro-Americans, immigrants from Europe and poor labourers. Black women were the only ones that were, as far as slavery and disfranchisement is concerned, equal to their men. While women from higher and middle classes required access to prestigious jobs and equality of men, women from working-class and poor families, on the contrary, called for protection in comparison with men. Poor women were forced to work in the overcrowded and often-unsafe factories with pay from one to three U.S. dollars a week to help feed their family. It is not therefore difficult to understand why the first feminists failed to obtain wider support from the female population.

The irony is that it was the experience of working in organizations fighting for the abolition of slavery, which led white women from upper and middle classes to feminism. Abolitionism helped scattered groups of women to establish contact with each other and unite in the fight for their common goal. Gradually, the movement became politicised and began to organize congresses. However, the first conference for abolition of slavery in London 1840 rather outraged feminists, because women were not authorized to speak publicly and, they had to sit behind a curtain in a separate part of the boardroom during the time of the conference. After this experience, early feminists began to organize their own conferences where they discussed not only the abolition of slavery, but also women's rights.

The most famous of these conferences was held in Seneca Falls in New York State, 19 and 20 July 1848. About three hundred women along with a handful of sympathetic men

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<sup>18</sup> John M. Cunningham, "The Second Wave of Feminism", *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11/2010) <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/724633/feminism/216004/History-of-feminism> (accessed April 26, 2011).

formulated the Declaration of Attitudes, which was based on the principles of the American Declaration of Independence.<sup>19</sup>

The franchise for women became a fundamental requirement of the feminist movement after the Civil war. When the war broke out, most women eased their feminist activities and began to fully focus on the war effort, believing that after the war their good deeds will be rewarded by being granted the right to vote. When the war ended, the U.S. Congress not only refused to grant women equal rights with men, but even added a new constitution of discriminatory barrier. During the nineties of the 19<sup>th</sup> century women's suffrage law was introduced in several western states of the U.S.A., however, other states did not join until 1910.

Bitter irony was that another war was necessary – The First World War – to return political developments in the favour of women. House of Representatives and Senate in a special legislative session, held in the spring of 1919, approved The Nineteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and submitted it to the states of Union to the necessary ratification by two-thirds majority. Ratification took a little over a year and, on 26 August 1920; 26 millions of American women received the suffrage.

The following period can be best described as anti-climatic. Universal suffrage did not bring any dramatic effect. Even though women gained the right to vote, they participated in the elections to a lesser extent than men did and if they voted, they voted the same candidates as their husbands. The successful campaign for suffrage feminism ended much of the active support, as most of the women gained equality they were fighting for together with their voting right. Particularly young women were indifferent or dismissive to the women's movement and perceived feminists as lonely unmarried women, who unnecessarily provoked hostility towards men.<sup>20</sup>

In my opinion, this was a naive view of women of the period because not even 90 years later, when we take the right to vote for granted and lives of women (in the western culture) are much easier and relaxed, and women do not have to stand by the stove only and can work freely, they are still not equal to men. Although, as will be discussed in the next section, the 'Equal Pay Act' (an Act to prevent discrimination, as regards terms and

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<sup>19</sup> John M. Cunningham, "The Second Wave of Feminism", *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11/2010) <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/724633/feminism/216004/History-of-feminism> (accessed April 26, 2011).

conditions of employment, between men and women, 1970) was adopted, the salaries for women are still lower, even though most of the companies deny it, it is generally that women still have in some cases up to one-third less pay just because they are women. When we look for example at the political scene, which is a prime example of permanent inequality, we see that even today men are still able to obtain power much more easily than women. Women are viewed as weaker creatures that are not able to compete adequately in top positions; moreover, they are sometimes deliberately harassed, for not being competent. It is generally known that this attitude usually appears in jobs which are viewed as purely male.

The anti-climatic period after the year 1920 did not mean that feminism has disappeared entirely. The period following the ratification of the Nineteenth Constitutional Amendment until the 1960's, was not a period of mass women's activism, however, the movement never descended into complete inactivity. The beginning of the sixties is marked by renewed political mobilization of women in the U.S. and outside; feminism has found a new momentum. <sup>21</sup>

### ***1.3.1.2 Second wave of feminism***

“If the first-wave feminists were inspired by abolition movement, their great grand-daughters were swept into feminism by civil rights movement, attendant discussion of principles such as equality and justice, and the revolutionary ferment caused by protests against the Vietnam War.”<sup>22</sup>

Several factors contributed to the revival of feminism in the early sixties. In 1961 the government itself pointed out the problem of sex discrimination when President John F. Kennedy established the Presidential Committee on the Status of Women. <sup>23</sup>

As Britannica Encyclopaedia mentions, “Its report firmly supported the nuclear family (typical family consisting of father mother and their children) and preparing women for

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid

<sup>21</sup> Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Women, Men, and Society (4th Edition)*, 4 ed. (London: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 43.

<sup>22</sup> John M. Cunningham, “The Second Wave of Feminism”, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11/2010) <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/724633/feminism/216004/History-of-feminism> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>23</sup> Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Women, Men, and Society (4th Edition)*, 4 ed. (London: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 44-45.

motherhood. But it also documented a national pattern of employment discrimination, unequal pay, legal inequality, and meagre support services for working women that needed to be corrected through legislative guarantees of equal pay for equal work, equal job opportunities, and expanded child-care services.”<sup>24</sup> The Equal Pay Act accepted the requirements for equal pay in the 1963.<sup>25</sup>

Another important thing, which happened in the same year, was the publication of *Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan. Friedan expressed the feelings of frustration and boredom plaguing educated white women in the household. The book became a springboard for reflection on the politics of relation between the sexes (sexual politics), namely for the exploration of the roots of gender inequality in the privacy of our kitchens and bedrooms.

In the 1963 two permanent Federal Committees for Women’s Affairs were established and according to this model a number of similar committees at the level of the states of Union were created. These committees have helped to create the National Organization for Women, NOW, which became a model for newly emerging feminist organization, such as National Women’s Political Causes or Women’s Equity Action League and others.<sup>26</sup>

Consequently, first crisis centres dealing with sexual assaults against women were established and employers who accused of sexual discrimination against women had to pay their losses back. Situation on the labour market improves and “women begin finding jobs as pilots, construction workers, bankers or bus drivers.”<sup>27</sup>

“Unlike the first wave, the second-wave feminism provoked extensive theoretical discussion about the origins of women’s oppression, the nature of gender, and the role of the family.”<sup>28</sup> It also addressed new issues and adopted new approaches. In getting the problem of socialization of language and status of women in various areas of social life got into the foreground attention. An important benefit is the theme ‘Personal is Political’

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<sup>24</sup> John M. Cunningham, “The Second Wave of Feminism”, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11/2010) <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/724633/feminism/216004/History-of-feminism> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>25</sup> Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Women, Men, and Society (4th Edition)*, 4 ed. (London: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 44-45.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

<sup>27</sup> John M. Cunningham, “The Second Wave of Feminism”, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11/2010) <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/724633/feminism/216004/History-of-feminism> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

which suggests a new way of looking at domestic work and household status of women in the broader sense.<sup>29</sup>

### 1.3.1.3 *Third wave of feminism*

The development of feminism does not stop with the second wave. Some authors talk about the third wave of feminism, which is not confined only to business or political area, but seeks to explore the very foundations of the sexist society and reveal female personality. Others, however, protest about the fact arguing that the third wave of feminism cannot be defined, as the requirements of the second wave have not been met yet.<sup>30</sup>

Three basic types of feminist theory are distinguished in the so-called third wave: the theory of gender reform, the theory of gender-motivated resistance, and the theory of gender-motivated riot.

The theory of gender reform focuses more on similarities between men and women rather than on their differences.

The theory of gender motivated resistance points out that formal legal right cannot solve the problem of gender inequality, because male dominance permeates everyday all social relationships, heterosexual relations including.

The last theory, the theory of gender-motivated riot, is sometimes called third-wave feminism, because it represents a significant digression from how the concepts of sex and gender are considered within the framework of theoretical perspectives of the first and second wave. This theory focuses attention on the relationship of inequalities based on gender, race, ethnicity, social class or sexual orientation and examines the gender inequality only as a one component of a comprehensive system of social stratification.<sup>31</sup>

This division is naturally not the only division and feminism has many various subsections. Unfortunately, the diversity of opinion is so varied that it has resulted in a competition between approaches as the subdivisions are trying to silence each other.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Gender Studies o.p.s., "Stručná Historie Feminismu," feminismus.cz (2003), <http://www.feminismus.cz/historie.shtml> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>30</sup> Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Women, Men, and Society (4th Edition)*, 4 ed. (London: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 44-45.

<sup>31</sup> Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Women, Men, and Society (4th Edition)*, 4 ed. (London: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 48-50.

<sup>32</sup> Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Women, Men, and Society (4th Edition)*, 4 ed. (London: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 48-50.

## GENDER COMMUNICATION

This chapter will be dealing with the communication between both the same and opposite sexes and its problems or advantages. Are there really such differences as it has been said for centuries or is it just something artificially created so that we have another thing to argue about? Since the two sexes have been created, women and men seem to be engaged in some sort of war, whether it is the right to vote, equal opportunity, wearing pants or simply the opportunity to speak publicly, all of these have long been solely male privileges.

Throughout the history people claimed that the manner of communication of most of men and women is different; for example, women speak faster, use more words to express what they want to say and they also use more connotative words. On the other hand men are more able to get straight to the point without unnecessary speech and emotional colouring. But is this really a general truth? In my opinion, there are as many different ways of expressing as many different people are.

Communication consists not only in words but also in gestures (non/verbal communication), which are an indispensable part of every speech. As far as so-called women's weapons are concerned, is usually seen as female advantage. However, is such a weapon genuinely effective? Following chapters will discuss and will try to answer and clarify the question.

### 1.4 The biological point of view

The idea that men and women have different brains is very old. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, for example, it was believed that women are less intelligent because they have smaller brains. When it became clear that elephants, according to this argument should be, smarter than men due to the size of their brain, the argument was quickly emended. Afterwards it was argued that the best way to estimate an individuals' intelligence is to divide the body weight by brain size. This theory, however, was also abandoned when it was discovered that women would be smarter than men.<sup>33</sup>

The attention of current research primarily focuses on how our brain is organized. This hypothesis suggests that the different organization of brain is not only a cause of

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<sup>33</sup> Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Women, Men, and Society (4th Edition)*, 4 ed. (London: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 75.

behavioural differences between men and women, but is also responsible for the development of sexual orientation.

Unfortunately, research is rather problematic, as the brains used in the research are animal brains, rats especially; therefore, the evidence suggesting the difference in male and female brain is doubtful.

According to me this is a significant problem, because the laboratory rats do not have as developed brains as human do and none of the animals are able to communicate on such high level as people are.

The second problem is that human brain changes and develops constantly, as people age, acquire experience and change the environment they live in.

Finally, the last problem, related to the previous ones, is that scientists are still unable to precisely determine how the specific arrangement of specific parts of brain is affecting brain function as a whole.<sup>34</sup>

#### **1.4.1 Anatomical differences**

Routine neuropathological examination of female and male brains does not show significant differences, except for the difference in weight and size, which was found statistically more than a hundred years ago. Larger brain size can be explained by the ratio of the men body to women body. The density of neurons was significantly higher in males and the average ration of neuronal density differs between hemispheres. On the contrary, the thickness of the cerebral cortex was similar in both sexes to balance the right and left hemispheres but the evaluation of nerve cells gives advantage to men over women. Women have more intertwined connections in the cerebral cortex.<sup>35</sup>

#### **1.4.2 Differences in cognitive function**

It was also proved that despite the difference in brain size, normal men and women do not differ in their IQ. The research of John Halpern (1992) pointed out interesting facts about

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<sup>34</sup> Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Women, Men, and Society (4th Edition)*, 4 ed. (London: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 75.

<sup>35</sup> Portal s.r.o., "Kapitola 6 - 'Gender-mozek' versus 'Sex-mozek'," portal.cz, (2011), <http://www.portal.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=2734> (accessed April 26, 2011).

the distribution of the results of IQ tests: women concentrated symmetrically around the average, while men tended to move along the IQ scale.<sup>1336</sup>

Another thing that scientists found out was that male brain is more asymmetrically organized. Such an observation was later supported by Willerman et al. who demonstrated (1991) that the greater left cerebral hemisphere predicted better verbal than nonverbal ability in men, but the same ratio means better non-verbal skill than verbal in women.

Motoo Kimura (theoretical population geneticist) deals with mostly specified difference of gender – male superiority in spatial orientation, which derives from the evolutionary pressure acting over a half million years of human evolution. Women mostly stayed at home looked after children, cooked, and produced clothes, while men hunted, fought and traded, so the ability of orientation in space was more developed.<sup>37</sup>

An average woman can say 6-8 thousand words a day during communication; besides, she can use additional two thousand sounds, 6-8 thousand gestures, facial expressions, head movements and other body language signals, which makes altogether about 20 thousand “words”. This resulted in women having problems with jaws four times more often than men. An average man uses 2-4 thousand words a day, 1-2 thousand of sounds and just 2-3 thousand body language signals. His daily average is about seven thousand words, which is only one third in comparison with an average woman.<sup>38</sup>

When speaking man produces more structurally complex terms, but is were inconsistent in the task of description of some activity; woman, on the other hand, creates more sentences on the basic levels and has significantly more patches than men in semantic evaluation.<sup>39</sup>

## 1.5 Is there a “male” and “female” thinking?

We speak the same language but the speech is different. We use the same brain but we use different parts of it and we use it in different ways. We can only speculate whether the

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<sup>36</sup> Portal s.r.o., “Kapitola 6 - 'Gender-mozek' versus 'Sex-mozek,’” portal.cz, (2011), <http://www.portal.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=2734> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> Mirka Vopavová “Proč Si Muži a Ženy Nerozumějí” *MAGAZÍN DNES* no. 37 (14.9.2006)

<sup>39</sup> Portal s.r.o., “Kapitola 6 - 'Gender-mozek' versus 'Sex-mozek,’” portal.cz, (2011), <http://www.portal.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=2734> (accessed April 26, 2011).



various works of thousands of years have meant that now we think and feel differently, or if it was just the opposite.<sup>40</sup>

One of the reasons of the differences between men and women is enshrined in the control part of our body, namely the brain. As the Dr. Eva Labusová claimed, many scientists were and still are puzzling over the answer to this question. The results of their efforts remain full of question marks and the definite conclusions impressed the dogmatic and the unconvinced. On the other hand, general differences between thinking and doing of most of women and men are quite striking.<sup>41</sup>

### 1.5.1 Childhood as a beginning

“Parental and societal expectations from boys and girls, their selection of gender-specific toys, and/or giving gender based assignments seem to define a differentiating socialization process that can be termed as ‘gender socialization’. Gender socialization is the process by which people learn to behave in a certain way, as dictated by societal beliefs, values, attitudes and examples. It begins as early as when a woman becomes pregnant and people start making judgments about the value of males over females.”

It is common that people wish their first-born baby were a boy and even though any mother-to-be claims that it does not matter what sex of her baby is, her environment often hopes for “a little prince”. The evidence can be found in historical documents, folksongs and even fairytales.<sup>42</sup>

“Gender communication differences then begin during the childhood. From a very early age, males and females are taught different linguistic styles. Communication behaviours that are acceptable for girls may not be acceptable for boys and vice versa. Girls are told to use their manners, play quietly, and be ladylike. However, it is okay for boys to use rough language, play loudly, and be rambunctious. Girls are allowed to show feelings. For example, if a small girl scrapes her knee and starts to cry, she is nurtured. If a boy has the same minor injury, he is told not to cry and be tough. Girls play with dolls and make

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<sup>40</sup> Mirka Vopavová “Proč Si Muži a Ženy Nerozumějí” *MAGAZÍN DNES* no. 37 (14.9.2006)

<sup>41</sup> Eva Labusová “Existuje 'Mužské' a 'Ženské' Myšlení?” *evalabusova.cz* (4/2005), [http://www.evalabusova.cz/clanky/existuje\\_muzske\\_a\\_zenske.php](http://www.evalabusova.cz/clanky/existuje_muzske_a_zenske.php) (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>42</sup> UNICEF, “Early Gender Socialization,” *unicef.org* (08/2009), [http://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/index\\_40749.html](http://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/index_40749.html) (accessed April 26, 2011).

believe. They cooperate as a group when playing together like double dutch jump rope. Boys play sports and cops and robbers, they are competitive and play team games like dodge ball. Girls developed a relational style of interaction whereas boys develop a competitive style of interaction.<sup>43</sup>

### 1.5.2 Differences in thinking = differences in communication

As it was stated above the differences in thinking are largely given by the environment and society, which have the biggest influence on the behaviour of both sexes and shape it from an early age.<sup>44</sup>

This causes that boys are not only more assertive but they are also more resistant against violence both on the screen and in the real life. This is proved for example by film industry. If we compare films for women and for men, categories both focus on something different. Action movies, aimed primarily at male audience, are full of action, explosions and often brutality; on the contrary, films for female audience are usually based on emotions, love or friendships. This is not a coincidence it is predominantly determined by the different ways of behaviour of the genders to satisfy their desires.

In real life man is supposed to be strong enough to protect his wife, children and property. This fact is also reflected in their way of communicating. They are more assertive, competitive, they do not submit and they are not really fixed on friendships. A woman, instead, is supposed to take care of children and household and thanks to these activities she is empathetic, friendly and speaks more about the emotions and personal things.<sup>45</sup>

Empathy is the ability to recognize feelings and thoughts of another person and to respond appropriately to their own emotions. It is not about the monitoring and calculation but the perception of emotional reaction in our inner world of emotions caused by another

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<sup>43</sup> Amanda-Makenzie Braedyn Svecz, "Gender Communication: The Impact Gender Has On Effective Communication," suite101.com (02/2010), <http://www.suite101.com/content/gender-communication-a196747> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>44</sup> UNICEF, "Early Gender Socialization," unicef.org (08/2009), [http://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/index\\_40749.html](http://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/index_40749.html) (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>45</sup> Ivo Plaňava, *Průvodce Mezilidskou Komunikací: Při Stupy, Dovednosti, Poruchy* (Praha: Grada Publishing, 2005), 29.

person. Who can empathize with the other and understands it, can predict his behaviour and to establish emotional contact with him. <sup>46</sup>

## 1.6 Communication patterns

From the brief characteristic above, it can be deduced the communications patterns outlining the styles of communication of genders. <sup>47</sup>

### 1.6.1 Male Communication Pattern and Traits

“The male communication pattern and traits tend to be honest, direct, and factual. It is considered to be the “report” type of talk and it has the following features:

- Reason
- Logic
- Power
- Rank
- Status
- Compete
- Winning
- Team
- Think

Men view conversation as a means of exchange information and problem solution. They stay away from personal topics and discuss events, sports, news, and facts. They tell more stories and jokes than women as a way to show their status and power. Men are direct, blunt, and their speech often includes slang or swears. Men get straight to work on a task and build relationships while working on the project, and they reflect and process information for decision making internally.” <sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Eva Labusová “Existuje 'Mužské' a 'Ženské' Myšlení?” evalabusova.cz (4/2005), [http://www.evalabusova.cz/clanky/existuje\\_muzske\\_a\\_zenske.php](http://www.evalabusova.cz/clanky/existuje_muzske_a_zenske.php) (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>47</sup> Amanda-Makenzie Braedyn Svecz, “Gender Communication: The Impact Gender Has On Effective Communication,” suite101.com (02/2010), <http://www.suite101.com/content/gender-communication-a196747> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid

In the contact with each other, man interrupt women twice more often than women jump into the speech of men and change the topics to suit their interests.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, if is a man speaking, his audience of both genders pays more attention to what he is saying than when a woman is speaking.

For example, in interviews in a mixed gender society, researchers found out that most of the interviews men procure, which is a direct consequence of the fact that in many instances man has more opportunities to express their views.<sup>49</sup>

### 1.6.2 Female Communication Pattern and Traits

“The female communication pattern and traits tend to be nurturing, indirect, and respectful. It is considered to be the “rapport” type of talk that has the following features:

- Feeling
- Empathy
- Harmony
- Closeness
- Relationships
- Sharing
- Cooperation
- Group
- Intuitive

Women talk to build rapport and make connections. They discuss personal topics such as relationships, feelings, past experiences and take turns to communicate. They tend to be indirect, tactful, and use more courtesy words. They accomplish tasks by building relationships first and talking out loud to others, and they process information externally for decision-making.”<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Women, Men, and Society (4th Edition)*, 4 ed. (London: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 180-181.

<sup>50</sup> Amanda-Makenzie Braedyn Svecz, “Gender Communication: The Impact Gender Has On Effective Communication,” suite101.com (02/2010), <http://www.suite101.com/content/gender-communication-a196747> (accessed April 26, 2011).

American sociologist Pamela Fishman examined dialog between couples and suggested that women work harder at communicating than men and they increasingly try to keep the conversation by bringing new ideas into it. If man comes with a new idea, woman accepts it, however, this pattern is not reciprocal and man accepts ideas of woman rarely.<sup>51</sup>

The research of speaking in in same-sex groups shows that women in exclusively women's groups speak more than men in the male one. The study also showed that conversations of women are less individualistic and more dynamic than the men's are. Female participants give each other space and consistently respond to each other; they respond positively to the attempts to establish their own themes when they talk moreover, they show active listening by being a yes-men and consenting sounds.

### 1.6.3 Feminine and Masculine

According to linguist Deborah Tannen who claims that women and men belong to different linguistic communities, the two sexes have different styles of communication and even different communication objectives. As people from different areas speak various dialects, women and men speak two different 'genderlects'. Women speak and listen to the language of confidentiality and relationships, while men speak and listen to the language of status and independence.<sup>52</sup>

When speaking about communication differences between sexes, it is apparent that women are more adept at speaking and adaptable; furthermore, in marriage and family life they have a greater need to communicate.

The differences in intonation, so-called vocal characteristics, are striking. Women often use interrogative sentences; what is more, many reporting sentences may end with a question mark. If there were two men on Charles Bridge their sentence would be: "So, this is Charles Bridge." But female communication of the same content would be: "Isn't this by accident that bridge, what's the name, yeah, Charles Bridge?"

Another notable thing is the difference between so-called inner monologue and external vocal performance, according to Ivo Plaňava. Females vocalize, that means they talk at the same time. When they think, they merge and associate words and ideas in the

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<sup>51</sup> Ivo Plaňava, *Průvodce Mezilidskou Komunikací: Pří Stupy, Dovednosti, Poruchy* (Praha: Grada Publishing, 2005), 30.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid

mind, which means that talking and thinking merge into one. Men tend to have certain delay: they first think about something, they may even think it up, and only then they say it out loud.<sup>53</sup>

There are words and sayings that can be identified as male or female. From a female mouth and also from the mouth of sensitive man adjectives such as: beautiful, divine, gorgeous, etc. are often heard. Women are also more likely to indicate their communication subjectively by using: “I think that.. Maybe that.. It seems to me that..”<sup>54</sup>

In one of the of the Ivo Plaňava’s researches (2003) the examined persons were presented subjective series of selected words and were asked to indicate so-called ancestral characteristics of verbal subject, in other words, to point out if the words are more masculine or feminine. The research suggested that these words and statements are more often considered as male:

- Statements connected to pedantry: “It is 11 o’clock, 52 minutes, 23 seconds.”
- Assessing statements: “That’s stunner!” “That’s logical!”
- Swearwords and vulgarisms: “Jeez!” “You are such an asshole!” “Shit!”
- Unique generalized assertions that something must be somehow and it cannot be different.

As feminine were labelled the words and statements expressing or implying a relation to the communication partner, particular account and interest, for example: “What do you thing about it?” “It’s great, isn’t it?” or “I agree with you.” And also statements, which express clearly that the communication partner knows everything better or suggeste this idea: “You certainly know where we are right now, don’t you?” Women’s words are also considered to be words with emotional connotations: “I really like it!” or “I don’t like it.”

These words and statements were considered gender neutral:

- Intimate salutation such as: “Baby.”
- Instructions and invitations: “Come on” or “Can you hurry up?!”

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<sup>53</sup> Ivo Plaňava, *Průvodce Mezilidskou Komunikací: Pří Stupy, Dovednosti, Poruchy* (Praha: Grada Publishing, 2005), 31.

<sup>54</sup> Ivo Plaňava, *Průvodce Mezilidskou Komunikací: Pří Stupy, Dovednosti, Poruchy* (Praha: Grada Publishing, 2005), 31.

- Replies expressing personal views and hesitation: “I’m not sure about it” “But then I don’t think I like this.”<sup>55</sup>

The discussion of communication patterns proves that the differences in the communication style between genders really exist and they are not only made up. These diverse forms of communication are created and formed since childhood and they not only influence the way of speaking but the whole process of thinking, which varies, due to the impact of the society on male and female character development. However, these differences are not given only by the society but also by the biological dispositions.

Can it be stated that there is female and male type of body language? Speaking about body language, most of people imagine the so-called women’s weapons, as a typical feature of this kind of communication. Are there also typically male communication strategies, which are used in case of certain manipulation and desire to achieve something? In fact there is probably not such thing as typical men weapon. Women have a number of non/verbal strategies typical in certain situations, such as playing with hair or parts of their clothing. Next chapter will discuss common kinds of body language and gendered non-verbal language, and it will also describe some of their characteristic features.

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<sup>55</sup> Ivo Plaňava, *Průvodce Mezilidskou Komunikací: Pří Stupy, Dovednosti, Poruchy* (Praha: Grada Publishing, 2005), 31.

## NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

In everyday life there is not only one way of expressing or defining the meaning of non-verbal communication. There are countless numbers of non-verbal communications, but generally a genuine non-verbal communication is any kind of communication; which does not contain words. Despite this definition, there are as many different kinds of non-verbal communication as many people and cultures there are. Such plurality and diversity often lead to misunderstandings.<sup>56</sup>

The Business Dictionary defines non-verbal communication as “behaviour and elements of speech aside from the words themselves that transmit meaning. Non-verbal communication includes pitch, speed, tone and volume of voice, gestures and facial expressions, body posture, stance, and proximity to the listener, eye movements and contact, and dress and appearance.

Research suggests that only 5 percent effect is produced by the spoken word, 45 percent by the tone, inflexion, and other elements of voice, and 50 percent by body language, movements, eye contact, etc.”<sup>57</sup>

Non-verbal communication is in other words also called body language and it is a list of nonverbal information which people knowingly or unknowingly send out to the their surroundings. During the researches it was found out that there are over million types of these signals.

The means of non-verbal communication can be divided more detailed into:

- Surrounding – impacts the interpersonal relationships, but they are not part of them, such as: furniture, lighting, etc.
- Proxemics – perceiving of personal and social space
- Kinezics – movements of body in space
- Touches – physical contacts from greetings to leading somebody else
- Physical characteristics – breath and body odour, tallness, weight, colour of skin or physical appearance and attractiveness
- Protolanguage – height and strength of voice, the pace and intensity of speech, pauses

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<sup>56</sup> Juliane Krueger, *Nonverbal Communication* (GRIN Verlag, 2008), 1.



- Artefacts – decorating components on the body and make-up

Non-verbal communication is historically older than the verbal one. It hides inside the archetype of communication – because people are able to communicate on the basic level without using words and we are able to decode the speech of gestures on a very high level despite the language barrier. The only problem can arise in multicultural decoding, because every culture can have different meaning of certain gestures, which can result in misunderstandings and even disagreements.

The signals, interpreted in this kind of communication, can be inborn, trained, or both and can reveal the real emotions and approaches, which are often intended to be hidden in the verbal communication.

Generally the more educated people are the more verbal communication prevails over the non-verbal one. However, as every rule requires an exception, politicians, for example, frequently use their body language to support their claims and assertions.

Surprisingly, it is often the case that the non-verbal signals:

- slightly removes imperfections of the verbal communication in some situations
- is stronger than the verbal one
- can be harder controlled than the verbal signal
- is socially unacceptable in some case<sup>58</sup>

According to Vybíral non-verbal communication also fulfils these functions:

- The support of speech – regulation of what we say and its speed
- The substitution of speech – by using the gestures people illustrate or symbolize what they say
- Expressing and controlling emotions – attending to return to the emotion stability
- Expressing of interpersonal attitude – for example, expression of sympathy, dominance, doubts or urgency during persuading
- Self-expression – the function of self-presentation<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> BusinessDictionary, “*Non-verbal Communication*”, BusinessDictionary.cz (03/2011), <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/non-verbal-communication.html> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>58</sup> Ladislav Leško, *Náhled do Sociální Komunikace* (Librix.eu), 22-25.

<sup>59</sup> Tereza Jančová “*Projevy Zájmu Mužů a Žen o Člověka Opačné Rodové Příslušnosti: Původ a základy neverbální komunikace*” (diss., Masarykova Univerzita, 2006), 6.

## 1.7 The Understanding of non-verbal gestures

The understanding of gestures is largely given by the cultural backgrounds; this means that certain gestures mean something in one culture and something different or totally opposite in another culture. But the main feature for the understanding gestures is not only the cultural background but also the context of the communication and situation factors. It is generally said that if you evaluate the gestures without knowing the context, your conjectures are usually wrong because, according to context, one non-verbal signal can have more than one meaning.

This statement can be demonstrated for example by the fact that people often try to hide their emotions instead of expressing them. So they intentionally behave in the opposite way than their real feelings are, for example they laugh to hide their sadness or discomfiture or they show their power in order to hide their fear. From this it is seen that, however, the symbols have already been describing quite elaborately not always we can follow that because the real explanation of the gestures depends on many facts and misunderstandings still constantly appear.<sup>60</sup> The examples suggest that even though the meaning of a gesture has an elaborate description, the decoding of the actual meaning depends on a number of facts; therefore, frequent misreadings and misunderstandings are inevitable.

When we concentrate on our body language, we can utilise it in order to influence people. Gestures can not only, express or hide emotions as it was already said, but using the right movements we can reach that people like you or vice versa. As it was said at the beginning of chapter, non-verbal signal frames 60-75% of information, so if people know what they should do in the right time, they can make their life easier and more successful.

On the other hand, people can get very quickly into the trouble by simple habits, they have. If somebody has the habit: for example, he must play with something around him, like pen or telephone. The others would say, that he is nervous and then logically deduce, that he must hide something, although, he actually has only the bad habit or neurosis.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Tereza Jančová "Projevy Zájmu Mužů a Žen o Člověka Opačné Rodové Příslušnosti: Původ a základy neverbální komunikace" (diss., Masarykova Univerzita, 2006), 6.

<sup>61</sup> Kevin Hogan, "Secrets of Reading Body Language," kevinhogan.com (04/2011), <http://www.kevinhogan.com/bodylanguage.htm> (accessed May 3, 2011).

## 1.8 Gender and non-verbal communication

“Did you know? Men and women behave and respond to body movements in different ways. So it's crucial for you to suit your body language depending on the gender of the person you meet, or you could damage a relationship or business without even knowing it.”<sup>62</sup>

During the history of the researches and investigations of gender was proved that there really are differences in usage of body language. These differences are not only in the behaviour, but also in the purpose of using the specific signal at a certain time or situation. Some of these differences are based on natural characteristic, as the differences are somehow “pre-programmed” in person, while differences in learn gestures are created predominantly by various explaining of these gestures in various cultures, which was adumbrated in the chapter 1.7.<sup>63</sup>

### 1.8.1 Gender Differences in Non-verbal Communication

#### 1.8.1.1 *Emotions and feelings*

If the general features of the non-verbal communication of sexes are compared, the juxtaposition suggests similarity between behaviour and verbal communication. The fact that women are more sensitive and emotional and men are more focused on the expression of their power and position is reflected in their non-verbal communication. According to Moore women presented themselves in more sensitive and delicate way. Their gestures are often unnoticeable although they are fully functional. On the other hand, the expressions of men are more awkward and concentrated on praising their qualities and assets of to amaze the audience, confirm their position in the society and prove their ability to support the family.

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<sup>62</sup> Kevin Hogan, “Secrets of Reading Body Language,” kevinhogan.com (04/2011), <http://www.kevinhogan.com/bodylanguage.htm> (accessed May 3, 2011).

<sup>63</sup> Julie-Anne Amos, “Body Language Differences between Men and Women,” [bodylanguageexpert.co.uk](http://www.bodylanguageexpert.co.uk) (11/2010), <http://www.bodylanguageexpert.co.uk/BodyLanguageAndMenAndWomen.html> (accessed May 3, 2011).

Another difference is that female gestures are more indirect because they leave space for the possibility of choice and persuasion that the qualities of men really meet their expectations.<sup>64</sup>

### ***1.8.1.2 Sending Messages***

According to the Moore, women are also more successful when it comes to sending signals to the unknown men than it is vice versa.<sup>65</sup> However, I would not say that this fact is based on verbal or non-verbal communication, but more on the male self-conceit and appearance of the person. Firstly, men are more pleased when somebody shows an interest and secondly, women are more reserved due to their apprehension about speaking and about communication with somebody they do not know.

On the other hand when women really receive signals from somebody unknown, they are much more attentive to these signals and if any of the non-verbal signals does not correspond with the things the person is telling, vigilance immediately arrives on the scene.

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### ***1.8.1.3 Eye Contact***

As far as eye contact is concerned, it could be said that women have generally less trouble with it. It has been mentioned several times, that women are more sensitive and also that long and direct eye contact is connected with the expression of emotions. People, who are in love, stare into each other's eyes twice longer than people, who are not in love. Looking into someone's eye sustains the intimacy; that is why we have difficulties looking into the eyes of somebody who is not agreeable to us and also why this signal is more complicated for men who are generally less able to describe or express their feelings.<sup>67</sup>

### ***1.8.1.4 Proximity***

The attitude to proximity is also different in both genders. Women's attitude is in this case connected to their emotions again. Women let close people come nearer into their personal

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<sup>64</sup> Tereza Jančová "Projevy Zájmu Mužů a Žen o Člověka Opačné Rodové Příslušnosti: Původ a základy neverbální komunikace" (diss., Masarykova Univerzita, 2006), 7-10.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid

<sup>66</sup> Kevin Hogan, "Secrets of Reading Body Language," kevinhogan.com (04/2011), <http://www.kevinhogan.com/bodylanguage.htm> (accessed May 3, 2011).

<sup>67</sup> Shai Coggins, "Nonverbal Communication between the Genders," shaicoggins.com (04/2006), <http://www.shaicoggins.com/nonverbal-communication-between-the-genders/> (accessed May 3, 2011).

space than men; however when it comes to the communication with the person in their personal zone, women tend to choose different position than men do. Men prefer an eye-to-eye contact while women would rather choose side-to-side communication, due to the fact that they have less difficulty with this type of communication than men.<sup>68</sup>

#### *1.8.1.5 Resolving of the Differences*

It cannot be said that there are any certain instructions how to deal with the differences in body language between both genders. As always the most significant thing allowing dealing with it is tolerance. People should not judge the opposite gender only on the basis of body language, especially the gestures which can be perceived as strange or annoying. Even though they can mean something different than the other person thinks. The main factor to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation of gestures is to be acquainted with the person who you are speaking with and his/her specific gestures. Generally, this rule holds true: The more you know the person you are talking to, the less possibility of misunderstanding exists. If we put this rule into the real life, we can imagine the situation in which we are speaking with the strange person and with your friend. The possibility of misunderstanding with the stranger person is much bigger than that of misunderstanding the person we know.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid

<sup>69</sup> Kevin Hogan, "Secrets of Reading Body Language," kevinhogan.com (04/2011), <http://www.kevinhogan.com/bodylanguage.htm> (accessed May 3, 2011).

## PERSUADING

As it was mentioned in the introduction, persuading could be viewed as a kind of paying interest to the knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication and their usage.

The definition of the persuasion according to the BrainyQuote encyclopaedia is: “The act of persuading is the act of influencing the mind by arguments or reasons offered, or anything that moves the passions, or inclines the will to a determination.”

Not only the kinds of persuasion included in the verbal communication, as was mentioned in the definition of BrainyQuote encyclopaedia, but also ways of non-verbal communication can noticeably influence the successful ability to change people’s minds. It is a process of coordinating, verbal and non-verbal part of expression at the same time; not only the speech as such, but also all gestures must be used in the right way. Aristotle, Greek philosopher, describes the idea of coordination as: “Character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion.” Because it is generally true that the character of person is not based only on the ability to speak, but on his/her appearance and presentation as such.<sup>70</sup>

### 1.9 Ways of Persuasion

To be persuasive is very useful characteristic in business for example: The more persuasive we are the more profit we make. Hundreds of article and books have been written on the topic: “How to be successful in persuading?” or “The most effective ways of persuading!” etc.

Here is the selection of the most popular and effective advices about how to be a persuasive person according to ratracetrapp Web side:

1. Social Proof – Generally, people like the most those people who are similar to them. So, a good strategy for persuading people is to choose those who are alike and emphasize that they are sustainable.
2. Mirroring – is another way of social proof strategy. To persuade someone we do not choose people similar to us, but we become similar one to term. We use the same words and even the postures. As indicates the ratracetrapp Web page,

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<sup>70</sup> “Definition of Persuasion,” BrainyQuote.com,  
<http://www.brainyquote.com/words/pe/persuasion201632.html> (accessed May 3, 2011).

somebody uses vocabulary similar to yours, there is bigger probability that you start to like that person.<sup>71</sup>

3. If you want, then give – this is the rule that when we require something from people around us, we should offer them something to them: satisfy their requests or help them in the difficult situations. Then they do not answer “No!” to our questions and requests.<sup>72</sup>
4. Timing – there are also strategies based on the timing of request. Generally, it is said that people are more compliant when they are tired or when they have just managed an important task for them.<sup>73</sup>
5. Even two options can be enough – because the more options there are, the less people are able to choose.<sup>74</sup>
6. Smile – Smiling is the best and the most effective strategy ever. When we smile we are on the half way to success. But pay attention to the sincerity of your smile, because people usually recognize or feel when your smile is insincere.<sup>75</sup>

### 1.10 Attractiveness and its impact on the persuasion

Although many people do not like this idea; good-looking people are usually more successful in persuasion strategies the less good-looking ones. There is not any particular reason for it neither it is given by their ability of creating persuasive strategies. The only reason is that attractive people are generally more pleasant and to their environment.

Face also carries great significance. “Attractive people tend to have wide eyes or baby faces.” A baby face usually seems more trustworthy other people and a good foundation for the ability to persuade.

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<sup>71</sup> Stephen Mills, “10 Ways to Be More Persuasive,” [ratracetrapp.com](http://www.ratracetrapp.com/the-rat-race-trap/10-ways-to-be-more-persuasive.html) (05/2010), <http://www.ratracetrapp.com/the-rat-race-trap/10-ways-to-be-more-persuasive.html> (accessed May 3, 2011).

<sup>72</sup> Gabriella Sannino, “6 Ways to Increase Your Influence and Persuasion,” [searchenginejournal.com](http://www.searchenginejournal.com/6-ways-to-increase-your-influence-and-persuasion/23052/) (08/2010), <http://www.searchenginejournal.com/6-ways-to-increase-your-influence-and-persuasion/23052/> (accessed May 3, 2011).

<sup>73</sup> M. Stuart, “9 Secret Ways to Persuade and Influence People,” [dumblittleman.com](http://www.dumblittleman.com/2008/08/9-secret-ways-to-persuade-and-influence.html) (08/2008), <http://www.dumblittleman.com/2008/08/9-secret-ways-to-persuade-and-influence.html> (accessed May 3, 2011).

<sup>74</sup> Noah Goldstein, Steve Martin and Robert Cialdini, “Yes! 50 Scientifically Proven Ways to Be Persuasive,” [moskalyuk.com](http://www.moskalyuk.com/blog/yes-50-scientifically-proven-ways-to-be-persuasive/1624) (05/2009), <http://www.moskalyuk.com/blog/yes-50-scientifically-proven-ways-to-be-persuasive/1624> (accessed May 3, 2011).

<sup>75</sup> Stephen Mills, “10 Ways to Be More Persuasive,” [ratracetrapp.com](http://www.ratracetrapp.com/the-rat-race-trap/10-ways-to-be-more-persuasive.html) (05/2010), <http://www.ratracetrapp.com/the-rat-race-trap/10-ways-to-be-more-persuasive.html> (accessed May 3, 2011).

We can see that the attractiveness in persuasion really works in the world of advertisements. Beautiful models are type casted into advertisements in particular; they usually appear in the advertisements for cars, jewellery luxuries. It has been also suggested that even if a salesperson offers two similar things, the one advertised by a beautiful model or famous person seems to people more expensive and luxurious.

Finally, attractive people are more often regarded as intelligent, kind and reliable, which gives them better opportunities in their lives, for example when they apply for a job.

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## 1.11 Gender Persuasion

Although attractiveness has great influence on the persuasion strategies, this is not so clear when we speak about gender.

“Historically, persuasion scholars have paid considerable attention to four characteristics of persuasive targets: gender, message discrepancy, involvement, and function matching.” The characteristic of gender will be discussed in this chapter.

If you ask a person who is more persuasive in their opinion, almost everyone will respond that women are. Scientists themselves are not in agreement about the answer to the question: male scientists answer that women are more persuasive and women scientists claim the opposite.

Although, a number of researches have been carried out, there is not any tangible proof; the statement claiming that women are more persuasive than men is true. Some differences were discovered, however, these were not inherent or gender based, but were caused by the human impact on the investigation.

The famous research was lead by Eagle in 1978. The Examined sample of people was divided into two groups: traditional persuasion studies, where the members were exposed to the persuasive task individually and conformity studies in which all the members had to come to some conclusions. Results of both groups were very similar; most of them claimed that there are not any differences in the persuasion (about 65%), bigger group claimed that women are more persuasive (about 30%) and the rest claimed the opposite (about 3%).

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<sup>76</sup> “Communication Skills: How to Persuade with Looks,” eruptingmind.com, <http://www.eruptingmind.com/physical-attractiveness-similarity-persuasion/> (accessed May 3, 2011).



But they all agreed that people were easily persuaded because of their lack of knowledge of the topic rather than on the basis of gender. This proves that gender is not really an important characteristic for the ability of persuading the others.

Of course, there are some topics in which we can expect that they will interest men more than women of vice versa. Think, for example, of articles about cars, which are supposed to be more interesting for men; on the other hand, clothes and jewellery are said to be more intriguing for women. However, this is not a rule and it does not prove that one of the genders is more or less persuasive or easy to persuade. Persuasibility is given by many characteristics; yet gender is certainly not the main one.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> James B. Stiff and Paul. A. Mongeau, *Persuasive Communication*, 2nd ed. (New York: The Guilford Press, 2003), 166-70.

## CONCLUSION

The goal of this bachelor thesis was the clarification of the impact of gender on communication and persuading. Firstly, the word 'gender' and its origin and history were explained. Furthermore, the influence of gender on communication, both verbal and non-verbal, was discussed.

It was proved that women and men have different types of thinking which significantly influence the style of their communication. Both women and men have their own styles of communication, which have some characteristic features. Female communication is partly influenced by feelings causing women more sensitive in their communication. They are lead by their intuition and they have a developed sense for empathy. Generally, it could be said that women are more influenced by feelings when they speak.

On the other hand, men are natural fighters and protectors. This is the reason why their way of communication is more systematic and logical than sensitive. They consider every word before saying it and they are more assertive during communication. They usually do not show their emotions, so that they do not show their weaknesses. It is in their competitive way of life seen as a disadvantage.

As far as male non-verbal communication is concerned, it could be generally said that it is influenced by their verbal communication. Men are again physically stronger and also their gestures seem more self-confident. As said before, men are very competitive, so they try to communicate in a way to amaze their audience and they use gestures accordingly.

Women are again influenced by their feelings their gestures are more delicate, however, they are fully effective.

The main difference between genders is in the sending and receiving of the signals of non-verbal communication. It was observed that women are more successful in both, receiving and sending. Naturally, women use more signals, they smile more and also their eye contact is better. Speaking about receiving messages, due to their ability of empathy and sensitivity they can better recognize and determine these signals.

The last chapter elaborates on persuasion. Persuasion is the only communicative act in which there were found no differences. We found out that attractiveness is one of the most influential features in persuading. It can be observed in advertising, which often uses good-looking models to persuade people to buy their products. However, gender as such does not have a significant impact on persuasion; moreover, it is hard to say if on gender is more persuasive than the other, as it is mainly affected by the knowledge of person rather

than by gender. Finally, there is no scientific evidence for the claim that women are more persuasive than men.

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