

UDC 37.016:305-055 / 316.774

DOI <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2025.1.11>

**G. YU. TSAPRO**

*PhD in Linguistics, Associate Professor,  
Head of English Language and Communication Department,  
Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Kyiv, Ukraine  
E-mail: [g.tsapro@kubg.edu.ua](mailto:g.tsapro@kubg.edu.ua)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0748-7531>*

**V. V. YAKUBA**

*PhD in Linguistics, Professor,  
Dean of Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology,  
Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Kyiv, Ukraine  
E-mail: [v.yakuba@kubg.edu.ua](mailto:v.yakuba@kubg.edu.ua)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5433-0334>*

**N. F. GLADUSH**

*PhD in Linguistics, Professor,  
Professor at the Linguistics and Translation Department,  
Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Kyiv, Ukraine  
E-mail: [n.gladush@kubg.edu.ua](mailto:n.gladush@kubg.edu.ua)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0458-1554>*

**TEACHING GENDER STUDIES THROUGH AN INTERDISCIPLINARY LENS:  
SOCIOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION THEORY**

This paper presents a qualitative case study of an interdisciplinary approach in teaching gender studies to master's students of philology that synthesizes communication theory with sociology. Emphasizing the use of critical thought, interdisciplinary analysis, and analysis of gendered discourse knowledge to raise awareness about the social construction of gender. Using Judith Butler's performativity theory, feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA), and other leading theories, the methodology demonstrates how interdisciplinary methods can be used to interrogate traditional gender roles and stereotypes. Foundations of theories relating directly to language (the deficit, dominance, and difference models) and social and linguistic concepts (hegemonic masculinity) are explored to equip undergraduates with a holistic framework for examining gendered identities.

As media analysis, one of the core teaching methods introduced in the article lends itself to a group project format, each related activity is designed to offer students a bigger-picture understanding of the role of gender in the media. Through advertisements, news, and other forms of digital content, students use theories from multiple disciplines to disassemble the subtle ways discourse features gender norms that are either upheld or challenged. The discussions afterward about these projects create space for further consideration and analysis, where students can offer their interpretations and reflect on long and complex conversations around those interpretations with different communities and their relation to larger social structures.

The paper concludes that interdisciplinary teaching strategies will provide students with the necessary analytical approaches and forty-nine transdisciplinary communication skills needed to navigate through gendered discourses critically and create more inclusive, equitable social narratives. This method provides these analytical tools and encourages critical awareness, using insights from linguistics, sociology, and communication theory, to empower students to improve gender relations outside the classroom.

**Key words:** interdisciplinary teaching, gender studies, communication theory, sociology, gendered discourse, critical discourse analysis.

**Introduction.** The study provides an overview of teaching gender studies to philology master students, focusing primarily on interdisciplinary approaches where the focal point involves critical

thinking and learning in multiple areas, including communication theory and sociology.

Gender studies, as an interdisciplinary field of study, the social, cultural, and political aspects

of the construction of gender in society, language, and communication [Connell: 2005; Gill: 2007; Holmes & Meyerhoff: 2003]. Drawing from communication theory, researchers remain interested in how gender identities are constructed, expressed, and negotiated through social interactions, media discourse, and interpersonal communication [Butler: 1990; Cameron: 1992; Wodak: 2001], while sociological perspectives help to understand the power dynamics, social norms, and institutional arrangements in the reinforcement or disruption of traditional gender roles.

Using communication theory and sociological perspectives in teaching gender studies enables students to analyze how language and communication help construct lived gendered experiences [Holmstrom et al.: 2018; Hovey: 2016]. Integrating the methodologies of linguistics, sociology, and communication, this transdisciplinary approach to studying gender invites students to observe the processes of genderization in multiple social worlds, from media through education and daily interactions. Once more, the interdisciplinary framework offers students analytic tools to deconstruct gendered power relations and resist stereotypes, exploring the role of discourse and communicative practices in reproducing or disrupting existing gender norms so that they can become critical thinkers on gender in the academic world and the real world.

The article **aims** to examine the interdisciplinary teaching of gender studies to master's students in philology, focusing on integrating insights from communication theory and sociology.

The paper seeks to explore the interdisciplinary deconstruction of gender studies to master students in philology through the accusing lens of communication theory and sociology. The article argues for the significance of critical thinking, methodological pluralism, and an analysis of gendered discourse for advancing a more nuanced comprehension of gender-social construction. It also seeks to show how such an approach can improve students' ability to engage critically with issues related to gender within diverse linguistic and communicative contexts.

**Literature overview.** Over the past few decades, interdisciplinary methods to study gender have proliferated, bringing with it a broad bank of foundational research spanning disciplines as

varied as linguistics to sociology to communication theory [Gal & Irvine: 1995; Jewitt & Kress: 2003]. One of the pioneering works in this field was Robin Lakoff's *Language and Woman's Place* [Lakoff:1975], which sparked discussions around the relationship between language and gender by introducing the «deficit model», which claims that language is less certain and more tentative compared to that of men. Although the study reported here is much earlier than many of the models that followed, the early work set the stage for subsequent models, for instance, Spender's [Spender: 1980] dominance model and Tannen's [Tannen: 1990] difference model – the social power relations and interaction parameters which serve to differentiate men and women in terms of their speech).

In parallel, sociological perspectives have explored how broader social structures shape and sustain gender roles. This concept emerged in R.W. Connell's *Masculinities* [Connell: 2005] and has proven useful for analyzing how ideals of hegemonic masculinity disempower non-patriarchal modes of being a gender and reproduce patriarchal global orders. This sociological perspective intersects with communication theory, which places importance on the ways in which gender identities are negotiated and constructed through discourse. Judith Butler's [Butler: 1990] theorization of performativity has been particularly important in communication studies, wherein she contends that gender is not a static characteristic of individuals but an assemblage of repeated acts taking place within the social and discursive contexts in which we live.

Feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA) has also developed as a relevant methodology for theorizing the intersection of language and discourse with the reproduction of gendered power structures. Media and political discourses have been shown to reproduce these and other gender stereotypes and hierarchies [Lazar: 2005; Wodak: 2001], representing women in ways that reaffirm notions of them as emotional, nurturing, or inferior and men as rational, powerful, and superior. Theoretically, such discursive framed patterns are reflective and evaluative of prevailing social norms, where gender studies education sees a pivotal importance of scrutiny.

Corpus linguistics provides more quantitative means of evaluating language use in regards

to gender at a macro-scale. In this context, Baker [Baker: 2014] and others have studied how gender may be encoded in different text corpora and found subtle bias embedded in the use of vocabulary, pronouns, and grammar, all of which lead not only to the more explicit reinforcement of their interpretation with different patterns of moderation and speech but also to a permanent and systematic maintenance of the asymmetries between genders. In parallel, sociolinguistic studies, including Eckert [Eckert: 2000] and Coates [Coates: 2015], have researched how gendered speech varies according to different social contexts and networks, stressing the significance of taking intersectional conditions into account (e.g., the role of class, ethnicity, age, etc.) for an adequate analysis of gendered linguistic behavior.

In digital spaces, scholars increasingly work to understand how online communities mold and mirror modern gender norms. Studies of toxic masculinity, anti-feminist ideologies, and related phenomena, such as Vallerga and Zurbriggen [Vallerga & Zurbriggen: 2022], show how online discourses can just as easily be spaces through which traditional gender roles are contested and drawn into question or reaffirmed and reinforced. This collection of works highlights the need for critical media literacy to comprehend and resist the discursive perpetuation of gender norms online and offline.

In general, gender studies emphasize interdisciplinary perspectives drawing on sociology, linguistics, and communication theory. Together, these perspectives deepen our understanding of the relationship between language, discourse, and social structures and their role in the production and maintenance of gendered identities and inequalities across a range of social contexts, providing important frameworks for critically analyzing and reshaping gendered discourses.

**Methodology.** This study is undertaken based on a comprehensive interdisciplinary notion of teaching gender studies in terms of integrating several overarching disciplines such as linguistics, sociology, and communication theory. In addition, the course focuses on critical discourse analysis, which frames discussions of what it means to be a woman or gendered using socio-historical, political, and social constructions that illustrate how women are often positioned in gendered discourse. Using both qualitative and quantitative research

methods – including feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA) and corpus linguistics – the study provides an exploration of how language and communication practices reproduce or challenge traditional gender roles. Students explore many fundamental theories of gender differences in language, such as the deficit, dominance, and difference models, and even more recent theories, such as Judith Butler's theory of performativity.

**Discussion and Results.** Teaching in gender studies involves different methodologies by integrating linguistics, sociology, psychology, history, and communication studies. As Deborah Cameron [Cameron: 1992] points out, «gender is not merely reflected in language; it is constituted and reproduced through communicative practices». By integrating the critical examination of how language and communicative practices reproduce, resist, or rework gendered identities, students become practitioners of the relational nature of identity itself. The course is designed to cultivate students' critical thinking about the intersections of language, communication, and societal power structures.

A gender-linguistic perspective, as part of this interdisciplinary approach, explores linguistic phenomena with a focus on gender as a social construct. It uses methods from linguistic, sociological, and communication theories to understand linguistic behavior with respect to gender identities [Talbot: 2019]. To take just one issue – gender – sociologies of gender help vitalize inquiry on gender as a phenomenon that is simultaneously structural and interactional, while communication theories dialectically assess how gender is performed in discourses, media representations (however defined), along with quotidian interactions [Eckert & McConnell-Ginet: 2013; Lazar: 2005]. Translated, sample questions engage students to simultaneously view language as both a tool of reflection and a tool of construction of gendered realities. For example, Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet [Eckert & McConnell-Ginet: 2013] point out that «gender is a social category that emerges through interaction», emphasizing the need to study language and communication as always intertwined aspects of the performance of gender.

Learn classical theories of language gender differences like the deficit model [Lakoff: 1975], the dominance model [Spender: 1980], and the dif-

ference model [Tannen, 1990]. Some theories, such as Judith Butler's [Butler: 1990] concept of gender performativity, also contribute to the understanding of identity as fluid and performed through discourse. Butler argues that «gender is a repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame», which matches communication theory's focus on performative acts and symbolic interaction.

Students also did research about power dynamics in communication. Pamela Fishman [Fishman: 1978], for instance, studied conversational dominance in mixed conversations and found that men and women adopt different strategies to attain it. This resonates with sociological understandings of how gender hierarchies are played out in social and communicative settings. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) [Wodak: 2001] shows how linguistic and discursive strategies work to marginalize women through political, media, and educational discourses and how these discourses are used to reproduce gendered power relations.

Corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, and sociolinguistics can enable students to examine words, forms, and discourse for gender asymmetries. For example, gender patterns in large text corpora [Baker: 2014] shows how numerical means identify quantitative mechanisms naturalizing subtle forms of gender biases, while the intersection of functional grammar and gendered meaning [Conrad: 2000] exemplifies ways the careerer deliver narrower counts of gendered meaning-making.

Available theories in communication theory and media studies add another dimension of analysis, looking at how gender norms are built, challenged, or consolidated in the dynamic between digital and traditional media. Through a feminist lens, both Michelle Lazar [Lazar: 2005] and Ruth Wodak [Wodak: 2009] argue that feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA) can be used to interrogate the media portrayal of women and men. This analysis primarily falls on the media that usually paints men as strong and logical characters, while it describes women as emotional and tender. As Wodak [Wodak: 2001; Wodak & Meyer: 2001] notes, this binary is rooted in interdiscursive ideologies related to masculinity and femininity sustained through communicative behaviors.

Students also investigate gender representation in society through sociological and communicative

lenses, considering how these perspectives contribute to the culture, institutional practice, and media narratives that construct definitions of masculinity and femininity. Digital environments, for example, have become critical sites for the reproduction and contestation of gender norms. Studies of online communities like «red pill» forums and incel groups reveal the ways in which toxic masculinity and anti-feminist beliefs are shared and reinforced in online dialogue [Kitzinger: 2000; Vallerga & Zurbriggen: 2022]. This emphasizes how our digital communication spaces should all be critically examined as these spaces highlight the gender processes of today.

Through this interdisciplinary prism, students learn to dissect the complexities of the relationship between language, communication, and gender. Students learn about the roles of linguistic and communicative practices in articulating and reproducing gender norms within various sociocultural contexts by reconceptualizing the aforementioned linguistic, sociological, and communication theory paradigms. Judith Sunderland [Sunderland: 2004] states: «Gendered discourses are dynamic: they are historical, produced in specific time-space contexts, and thus fluid, political process, work through which men and women come to make sense of themselves, each other, the world, and their anticipations of the future».

Gender studies, due to teaching processes to combine different theories into one frame, includes some interdisciplinary courses that integrate knowledge of both natural and social sciences. One approach, media analysis done as a group project, is particularly effective for the classroom. Students explore the processes by which gender norms and stereotypes manifest and persist via communication production through analytical frameworks ranging from communication theory, sociology, and linguistics in analyzing advertising, news coverage, narrative content, and digital content. This Old School approach empowers students to experiment with gender representation and critically analyze how the language, images, and narratives presented in these traditional academic curricula either reinforce or trouble heteronormative gender norms and expectations.

The media analysis project generally consists of splitting students into groups of three or four students and assigning each group a differ-



ent type of media genre or theme to analyze. One group might focus on how media representation of masculinity was suspended in relation to sports, another on the gender dynamics of political coverage, and another on femininity in beauty advertising. Using feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA) and sociological concepts like hegemonic masculinity, students learn to write headlines, labeling events in ways that deconstruct the quotidian, invisible ways that social power relations and gender ideologies get stamped into media – as media is the other content area. This cross-disciplinary approach develops students' critical analysis skills and encourages collaboration and active learning as they engage in peer-to-peer exchanges, presenting alternative perspectives and arguing interpretations.

After working on the group project, students share their discoveries in class, which creates a shared space for reflection and debate. Group discussions like these play a crucial role in the learning process, as they allow students to verbalize their interpretations, answer questions posed by their classmates and instructor, and relate their literary analysis to broader social dynamics. As students draw on a range of ideas across disciplines, they demonstrate the ability to think critically about the ways messages in media help construct society's perceptions of gender and perpetuate systems of social inequality. Discussions about gender provide opportunities for students to (1) demonstrate their nuanced understanding of how it works in specific circumstances and (2) show their developing ability to identify and question gendered assumptions embedded in conversational exchanges in daily communication.

This measure was used to gauge students' critical thinking skills and depth of understanding of the issue of gender through group discussions. Instructors consider not just the concrete content of students' media analysis; they engage students in constructing new and diverse truths through

rigorous dialogue, evidenced claims, and critical self-reflection of personal biases and assumptions. For mission statements, if students are partnered up, it helps to have students be able to support their mission with a bigger picture rather than a description of what they saw as observations, as well as allowing them to pinpoint a root cause and understanding the complexity of communication issues and gender. By involving them in media analysis, group projects, and interdisciplinary conversation, this pedagogy allows students to critically engage with gendered discourses, bookending the academic and pandemic landscapes and granting them the analytical and evaluative skills necessary to successfully these urban ethnography checkpoints.

**Conclusions.** It is the interdisciplinary nature of gender studies that equips students with critical perspectives on language, communication, and sociocultural structures. Utilizing knowledge across linguistics, communication theory, and sociology, students appreciate how gendered identities are constructed, enacted, and perpetuated in different environments. It is based on academic/de-colonial education, allowing people to question stereotypes, interrogate power structures, and engage in critical conversations about gender that they will carry into their real worlds and the academic realms.

In addition, teaching through hands-on practice learning, including media analysis projects, further prepares students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-life scenarios. Students analyze and discuss media representations together, learn to work through their own biases, and discuss the broader implications of gendered discourse through group-based analysis. It makes for meaningful engagement with interdisciplinary perspectives while also preparing students to critically evaluate and navigate the evolving landscape of gendered communication in society today.

Future research may explore whether interdisciplinary practices impact long-term critical awareness of gender issues in the classroom and beyond.

## REFERENCES

1. Baker, P. (2014). *Using corpora to analyze gender*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
2. Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.
3. Cameron, D. (1992). *Feminism and linguistic theory*. Macmillan International Higher Education.
4. Coates, J. (2015). *Women, men and language: A sociolinguistic account of gender differences in language*. Routledge.
5. Connell, R. (2005). *Masculinities*. Polity Press.
6. Conrad, S. (2000). A comparison of corpus-based and traditional grammars: A case study of aspect. *Language Learning & Technology*, 4(2), 43–55.

7. Eckert, P., & McConnell-Ginet, S. (2013). *Language and gender*. Cambridge University Press.
8. Eckert, P. (2000). *Linguistic variation as social practice: The linguistic construction of identity in Belten High*. Blackwell Publishing.
9. Fishman, P. (1978). Interaction: The work women do. *Social Problems*, 25(4), 397–406.
10. Gill, R. (2007). *Gender and the media*. Polity Press.
11. Holmes, J., & Meyerhoff, M. (Eds.). (2003). *The handbook of language and gender*. Blackwell Publishing.
12. Kitzinger, C. (2000). Doing feminist conversation analysis. *Feminism & Psychology*, 10(2), 163–193. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353500010002001>
13. Lakoff, R. (1975). *Language and woman's place*. Harper & Row.
14. Lazar, M. (2005). *Feminist critical discourse analysis: Gender, power and ideology in discourse*. Palgrave Macmillan.
15. Spender, D. (1980). *Man made language*. Pandora Press.
16. Sunderland, J. (2004). *Gendered discourses*. Palgrave Macmillan.
17. Talbot, M. (2019). *Language and gender*. Polity Press.
18. Tannen, D. (1990). *You just don't understand: Women and men in conversation*. William Morrow & Company.
19. Vallerga, F., & Zurbriggen, E. (2022). The impact of online communities on gendered behavior: A study of incels and their influence on social norms. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 34(2), 145–160. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jgs.2022.03402>
20. Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2001). *Methods of critical discourse analysis*. Sage Publications.
21. Wodak, R. (2001). *Discourse and power*. Sage Publications.
22. Wodak, R. (2009). *The discourse of politics in action: Politics as usual*. Palgrave Macmillan.

---

### **Г. Ю. ЦАПРО**

*кандидат філологічних наук, доцент,*

*завідувач кафедри англійської мови та комунікації*

*Київський столичний університет імені Бориса Грінченка, м. Київ, Україна*

*Електронна пошта: g.tsapro@kubg.edu.ua*

*<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0748-7531>*

### **В. В. ЯКУБА**

*кандидат філологічних наук, доцент,*

*декан факультету романо-германської філології,*

*Київський столичний університет імені Бориса Грінченка, м. Київ, Україна*

*Електронна пошта: v.yakuba@kubg.edu.ua*

*<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5433-0334>*

### **Н. Ф. ГЛАДУШ**

*кандидат філологічних наук, професор,*

*професор кафедри лінгвістики та перекладу,*

*Київський столичний університет імені Бориса Грінченка, м. Київ, Україна*

*Електронна пошта: n.gladush@kubg.edu.ua*

*<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0458-1554>*

## **ВИКЛАДАННЯ ГЕНДЕРНИХ СТУДІЙ ЧЕРЕЗ МІЖДИСЦИПЛІНАРНУ ПРИЗМУ: СОЦІОЛОГІЯ ТА ТЕОРІЯ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ**

У цій статті представлено якісне дослідження випадку, що висвітлює міждисциплінарний підхід до викладання гендерних студій магістрам-філологам, який поєднує теорію комунікації із соціологією. Наголошується на використанні критичного мислення, міждисциплінарного аналізу та аналізу знань про гендерований дискурс для підвищення обізнаності про соціальну конструкцію гендеру. Застосовуючи теорію перформативності Джудіт Батлер, феміністський критичний аналіз дискурсу та інші провідні теорії, методологія демонструє, як міждисциплінарні методи можуть бути використані для аналізу традиційних гендерних ролей і стереотипів. Також розглядаються основи теорій, які безпосередньо стосуються мови (моделі дефіциту, домінування та відмінностей), а також соціальні й лінгвістичні концепти (гегемонна маскуліність), що забезпечує студентів цілісною базою для дослідження гендерної ідентичності.

Аналіз медіа, який є одним із ключових методів викладання, представлених у статті, організовується у форматі групових проєктів, де кожна пов'язана діяльність спрямована на надання студентам ширшого розуміння ролі

гендеру в медіа. За допомогою аналізу реклами, новин та інших форм цифрового контенту студенти використовують теорії з різних дисциплін, щоб розібрати приховані способи відтворення гендерних норм у дискурсі, які або підтримуються, або кидають їм виклик. Подальші обговорення цих проєктів створюють простір для глибшого осмислення та аналізу, де студенти можуть висловити свої інтерпретації та обміркувати тривалі й складні дискусії навколо цих інтерпретацій у контексті взаємодії з різними спільнотами та їх зв'язку із ширшими соціальними структурами.

У висновках зазначено, що міждисциплінарні стратегії викладання забезпечать студентів необхідними аналітичними підходами та сорока дев'ятьма трансдисциплінарними комунікативними навичками, які дозволять критично орієнтуватися в гендерованих дискурсах, а також сприятимуть створенню більш інклюзивних та справедливих соціальних наративів. Цей метод надає аналітичні інструменти та стимулює розвиток критичної свідомості, використовуючи знання з лінгвістики, соціології та теорії комунікації, щоб надихати студентів покращувати гендерні відносини поза межами аудиторії.

**Ключові слова:** міждисциплінарне викладання, гендерні студії, теорія комунікації, соціологія, гендерований дискурс, критичний аналіз дискурсу.