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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF UKRAINE

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ЗАПОРІЗЬКИЙ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ /  
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# ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКІ ЦІННОСТІ В УКРАЇНСЬКІЙ ОСВІТІ: ВИКЛИКИ ТА ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ

## EUROPEAN VALUES IN UKRAINIAN EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND FRONTIERS

*Колективна монографія*

*Collective Volume*



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With Ukraine's European future at stake, educational institutions step forth as powerful agents of change in terms of European Values promotion. By focusing on European Values' role as an all-encompassing groundbreaking framework for national education reform, we treat this concept first and foremost as values in action – be it teaching, studying, policy making, quality assurance procedures, academic process management, student government or intellectual product design.

Колективна монографія, видана за підсумками Міжнародної на-уково-практичної конференції «Європейські цінності в українській освіті» (м. Запоріжжя, 2021), презентує історію успіху й кращі практики впровадження ціннісно-орієнтованих підходів у середній і вищій школі, а також міждисциплінарні і крос-секторальні теоретичні розвідки, виконані у тому числі в рамках проєктів програми Еразмус+.

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# Gender-Oriented Strategy of Philological Higher Education: Experience and Challenges

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## **Abstract**

The subject of this research is the strategy of gender mainstreaming in philological education. Gender mainstreaming is the UN and UE approach to making progress in realizing gender equality for women and girls compared to men and boys. The key problem is that, despite the equality of women in the opportunity to receive education, there is an inequality in the very content of education, which reproduces the androcentric world.

The purpose of the study is: 1) to justify the need to adjust the educational program, in particular for philological specialties, for a) integration into the European educational space; b) empowerment of female students; c) achieving gender equality; 2) to offer a variant of such correction. The research method is gender analysis.

The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement guarantees equal opportunities for women and men in employment, education, training and more. One of the areas that require correction is education, in particular philology, since it traditionally has a high percentage of girls.

The article shows the work results of the Department of Ukrainian Literature, Comparative Studies and Grinchenko Studies of the Institute of Philology of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University in area of overcoming sexist stereotypes in the practical training of higher education students on the material of Ukrainian literature. Also the article proposes the correction of curricula, focused on the development of the model for constructing women's identity in modern conditions in the light of European gender studies and national tradition.

**Keywords:** gender mainstreaming, philological education, gender analysis, sexist stereotypes, women's identity.

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## **Gender-Oriented Strategy of Philological Higher Education: Experience and Challenges**

The urgency of the topic is due to the need to discuss and comprehend European integration as the main course of public policy; acquaintance with the history of the orientation of Ukrainian culture (and literature) to the European one, acceptance of its values. The formation of a common anti-discrimination culture and the popularization of the principle of equal rights and opportunities of men and women as European values remain relevant. The Council of Europe's actions are aimed, in particular, at "promoting the implementation of documents and recommendations the purpose of which is to eradicate prejudices, customs and traditions based on stereotypical gender roles; to develop instruments for supporting Member States in the implementation of relevant documents, in particular the Istanbul Convention; to promote the implementation of the recommendations of the Helsinki Conference (2014) "Combating gender stereotypes in education and through education"; to promote the implementation of the recommendations of the Amsterdam conference (2013) "Media and the image of woman"; to identify, compile and disseminate good practices of gender stereotypes eradicating" (*Стратегія гендерної рівності Ради Європи на 2018-2023 роки*). The Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy for 2018-2023 states that regular monitoring and research show that progress in women's political participation, access to justice and the eradication of harmful gender stereotypes and sexism is too slow.

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, said: "Gender equality is a core principle of the European Union, but it is not yet a reality. In business, politics and society as a whole, we can only reach our full potential if we use all of our talent and diversity. Using only half of the population, half of the ideas or half of the energy is not good enough. With the Gender Equality Strategy, we are pushing for more and faster progress to promote equality between men and women" (*Gender Equality Strategy*). "No EU Member State has so far achieved equality between women and men. The progress is slow while gender gaps persist in employment, pay, care and pensions. To bridge those gaps and allow Europe to reach its full potential in business, politics and society, the strategy outlines a set of key actions including: ending gender-based violence and stereotypes;

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ensuring equal participation and opportunities in the labour market, including equal pay; and achieving gender-balance in decision-making and politics”(Ibid.).

To address this, the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 sets out key actions for the next 5 years and commits to ensure that the Commission will include an equality perspective in all EU policy areas (Ibid.).

The subject of this research is the strategy of gender mainstreaming in philological education. Gender mainstreaming is the UN and international community’s approach to making progress in realizing gender equality for women and girls compared to men and boys (Marcus 2018). The key problem is that, despite the equality of women in the opportunity to receive education, there is an inequality in the very content of education, which reproduces the androcentric world.

The purpose of the study is:

- 1 ) to justify the need to adjust the educational program, in particular for philological specialties, for a) integration into the European educational space; b) empowerment of female students; c) achieving gender equality;
- 2) to offer a variant of such correction.

## **Method**

The research method is gender analysis – a critical analysis of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities, norms affect men and women in certain (in our case, educational) situations and contexts. In particular, gender analysis examines the opportunities and limitations that women and men have to prevent inequalities. Also, the methodological basis of the article is feminist studies, revealing the causes and consequences of the gender gap.

The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement guarantees equal opportunities for women and men in employment, education, training and more. Accordingly “Ensuring gender equality, empowering all women and girls”, are defined as the goals of sustainable development for the period until 2030.

One of the areas that require correction is education, in particular philology, since it traditionally has a high percentage of girls. For example, over 89% of girls study at the Institute of Philology, so there is a need to provide them with examples of successful women’s self-realization: pro-

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fessional, creative, and personal. It is worth mentioning the famous experiment of Philip Goldberg (Goldberg 1968), who invited graduate girls to read an article signed by either John Mackay or Joan Mackay. The text was the same, but the girls attributed the depth of thinking to John, and they criticized Joan, that is, the assessment of the text depended on the gender of the author. Goldberg concludes that women accept society's disdainful attitude and translate it onto themselves and each other. This situation arises because during their studies girls have almost no examples of successful self-realization. Courses in history and theory of literature reproduce the androcentric story, in which women are given a secondary and passive role.

In 2016, UNESCO published a document (*Text books pave the way to sustainable development*), which warns that the prevalence of sexism in textbooks negatively affects girls' education and limits their career growth and life expectancy. Scientists also have a lot of works for the selection of fiction used in the educational process. In particular, it is recommended to include books depicting girls / women with an active role in a positive light, as well as to give preference to texts where both gender roles are not stereotyped. Rudman (1984) recommends books with characters that have gender neutral roles, that is, personal traits are portrayed as being gender independent; achievements are assessed without regard to gender; professions are presented as gender neutral; women are not necessarily portrayed as weaker and more vulnerable than men, individuals show logic or emotion depending on the situation, and so on. When studying the history of literature, the choice of texts is based on cultural, historical and stylistic principles, so the above recommendations cannot always be followed. In such cases, it is important to identify gender stereotypes and develop gender-equitable perceptions. It is suggested to pay attention to the presence of gender stereotypes and offer a critical analysis, in particular, asking the question: what would happen if the protagonist was of the opposite sex? (Temple, 1993), to suggest that a view of events be reproduced from the opposite gender perspective (Lawrence, 1995). Literary texts can and should be an occasion to discuss gender roles so that students are aware of the construction of these roles.

The national tradition limits the woman's possibility to the role of "Berehynia". At the same time, advertising products and glossy magazines



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impose certain standards of beauty on women, often incompatible with the natural state of the woman's body, which causes frustration and lowered self-esteem (N. Wolfe, K.-P. Estes, O. Mukha). Taken together, these problems cause limited perceptions of girls about their abilities, reduced social and professional activity.

## **Results**

Overcoming sexist stereotypes in the practical training of higher education students on the material of Ukrainian literature is one of the areas of work of the Department of Ukrainian Literature, Comparative Studies and Grinchenko Studies of the Institute of Philology of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University within the scientific theme "Typology of identities in art and critical discourse" (2017-2022). In 2019, a survey was conducted among students of the educational program "Ukrainian Language and Literature" of the first (bachelor's) level regarding the understanding of the system of European values and the formation of an adequate literary canon in Ukrainian literature. As a result, the question "What do you mean by the concept of "European values"?" was asked to 78 respondents and only one participant named gender equality, one - same-sex marriages (2.56%, respectively).

The results of the survey convinced us of the urgency of reviewing the content of training programs for philologists and the implementation of these changes in the educational process. The implementation of the experience of research construction of the gender-sensitive space of modern humanities has acquired the following practical manifestations:

1) Special course "Gender artistic models of modern Ukrainian literature" (Bashkyrova 2018) – 4 credits (educational program "Literary Creativity" (second (master's) level)). Disciplines "Scientific basis for the examination of educational literature" (Topic: Anti-discriminatory Examination of Educational Literature. Legal Bases of Anti-discrimination Policy in Ukraine. Gender Discrimination and the System of Measures to Combat It. Gender Examination of Educational Literature. Forms of Textual Expression of Discrimination on Various Grounds, Ways to Avoid Them. – 1 credit) (educational program "Ukrainian Language and Literature" (second (master's) level)).

Themes of final qualifying works, defended by applicants in 2020-2021

- Children's works by Borys Hrinchenko: gender aspect;
- *By the Black Sea* by I. Nechuy-Levytsky and *Comrades* by Olena Pchilka: gender issues and the patriarchal system in Ukraine in the middle of the XIX century;
- Women's destiny in the prose by Olena Pchilka and Lesya Ukrainka;
- Problems of gender identity in the prose by Irina Wilde;
- Emigrant woman's search for identity in short prose by Maria Tsukanova;
- Women's lyrics of the second half of the twentieth century: the originality of themes, images, genres;
- Feminine creativity in media: features of functioning.

In January-February 2021, a second survey of applicants (158 people) was carried out on the basis of the Institute of Philology of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University. 21 people out of 115 respondents (18.26%), answering the question "What meaning do you put into the concept of "European values"?" indicated gender equality as a European value. The survey confirmed the need for further correction of the content of educational components of higher education training:

The proposed correction of curricula is focused on the development of the model for constructing women's identity in modern conditions in the light of European gender studies and national tradition. We are also talking about the dissemination of European achievements in the field of gender policy when discussing the topics and problems of training courses. Discussion of women's experiences, represented by the artistic and journalistic work of women writers, will create conditions for female students to become self-aware and promote their ideas about their own life opportunities and rights. An important aspect of the project is the development of methods for the text analysis for gender discrimination. The interdisciplinary approach involved in teaching the course will contribute to the formation of synthetic knowledge, and the problematic direction will be to change the format: from mentor lectures to heuristic conversations that will actualize the knowledge acquired by students and personal acquaintance with European standards.

Thus, the correction tasks are:

- By means of literary texts to correct the idea of the modern image of the Ukrainian woman, which would correspond to European ideas

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- about gender equality and would be based on the national tradition;
  - To provide examples of successful self-realization of women in various spheres of life, by introducing more writers, critics and artists to the program;
  - Encouraging young scholars, critics and journalists to study and to disseminate women's experience in literature.

Correction of the program is expected to have the following results:

- Students' awareness of the formation of contemporary women's self-identity under the influence of European gender policy and national tradition.
- Modernizing the content of literary education, equalizing the gender composition of the authors who are studied at education institutions, providing examples of successful women's self-realization, introduction of women's experiences.
- The accumulation and deepening of knowledge about women writers, the conditions of their work and achievements; reassessment of their contribution to Ukrainian and European culture.
- Promotion of European gender policy.
- Creating preconditions for successful self-realization of female students and schoolgirls in the professional, civil and personal sphere.

As the theme of Ukrainian women's literature is insufficiently studied, research-based teaching will be an effective method, as it will promote an active and creative approach to the problems of the courses. The focus on research-based learning will promote active and creative approaches to course issues, and the research component of the project is designed to disseminate knowledge of national women's experiences and demonstrate the nature and dynamics of the complex interaction between domestic and world sociocultural trends, which will provide it with a constructive and creative approach to gender policy contradictions.

Correction of the curriculum can be implemented through changes in the History of Ukrainian and Foreign Literature courses, as well as through introduction of special courses, for example "Women's Experience and Self-Identity in Ukrainian and Foreign Literature: Traditions and Deconstruction" or "Modern Ukrainian Woman: Berehynia or Feminist?". Correction of topics and problems of the course in the History of Ukrainian Literature and Criticism will further the formation of knowledge about feminism as a liter-

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ary methodology, the expansion of knowledge about Ukrainian women's literature, its problems and achievements, the reassessment of the status of women in literature, the provision of examples of successful women's literary projects. Tentatively, the course on the History of Ukrainian Literature is proposed to be supplemented with the following topics:

- Women's literary creativity of almanac *First wreath*.
- Olena Pchilka and her influence on Ukrainian literature.
- Subjects and problems of works by M. Kybalchych, G. Hryhorenko, Dni-prova Chaika, M. Zagirnia.
- Genre and style specifics of women's art work at the turn of the century.
- Women's literature of the 1920s: the fate of the authors and texts.
- Works of Maria Galych and Alexandra Svekla.
- Lyrics by N. Zabyla and R. Troyanker.
- Genre diversity of women's works in the 1920s.
- Women's works of the 40s-50s.
- Authoress of Diaspora literature: D.Gumenna. L. Kovalenko, P. Kylyna
- Children's and biographic works by O. Ivanenko, N. Zabyla, V. Chered-nichenko.
- The hypostases of femininity at the turn of the millennium (neo-narod-nist, feminist, deconstructive tendencies in modern Ukrainian litera-ture).
- Cultural aspects of "wome's issues" in Ukrainian literature at the turn of the 20th – 21st centuries.
- Woman and man: socio-cultural roles (based on works by modern Ukrainian authors).
- Problems of Ukrainian women's criticism (G. Ulyura, Ya. Tsymbal, T. Trofymenko).

Special course "Women's Experience and Self-Identity in Ukrainian and Foreign Literature: Traditions and Deconstruction" will further the forma-tion of knowledge about European women's studies, anti-discrimination standards; knowledge of the main achievements of the French school of feminism; demonstration of successful women's literary projects; the formation of ideas about the modern image of women in Europe and Ukraine, the understanding of the problems of perceiving it, a deeper un-derstanding of the women's world of fiction. The approximate themes of the course will cover the following topics:

- 
- The European Movement for Women's Rights: main stages and achievements;
  - Modern European woman in literature and media;
  - Modern Ukrainian woman in literature, media and facts;
  - Women's canon of Ukrainian literature and criticism.

Another special course master-class "Modern Ukrainian Woman: Berehynia or Feminist?" will also form knowledge about European gender policy and discuss the idea of the modern image of women, identifying the causes and consequences of maintaining/destroying gender stereotypes.

Its topics may be as follows:

- European experience of the women's rights movement: historiography of the issue
- French school of feminist criticism: representatives, issues.
- The concept of Berehynia and the ideology of nationalism.
- The "new woman" of the 1920s.
- What did it mean to be a Soviet woman?
- Women's images in literary texts of the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

Domestic and foreign gender specialists will be invited during the sessions.

The project plan includes 4 stages of implementation:

- 1) Developing European experience in the field of gender studies; Accumulation of resources; Formation of research theory and methodology.
- 2) Development of methodology and methods for the interpretation of fiction in the light of gender studies.
- 3) Implementation of the project results into the education process.
- 4) Processing of results.

Stage I: Accumulation of resources and development of project methodology:

- understanding the main stages in the formation of the European gender policy and approaches in the study of women's texts;
- definition of content and basic approaches to the description, generalization, systematization of literary evidence of women's experience and self-identity in the works of Ukrainian writers of a modern, post-modern, post-postmodern era;
- development of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of problems of women's experience in literary criticism on the

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principles of gender studies, literary anthropology, post-colonialism, etc.;

- determination of the basic parameters of the Ukrainian literature interpretation model in the aspect of gender studies.

Stage II: Development of methodology and methods for the interpretation of fiction and critical literature in the light of gender studies:

- determination of the main parameters of the interpretation of feminism and traditional image of Berehynia in fiction, models of influence of the EU member states politics and culture on the Ukrainian women's identity, the formation of stereotypes;
- analysis of the identity text projections in contemporary art and critical discourse;
- study of the literary vectors of the problem of person identity transformations and comparison with the EU countries literature.

Stage III: Implementation of the project results. Adaptation of the identified and agreed theoretical and methodological approaches to the needs of the education process:

- development of programmes, methodological recommendations;
- introduction of educational courses.
- development and implementation of content of educational courses for students;

Stage IV: Processing of the project results

- monitoring the results of implementation of the project topics in the training courses for bachelors and masters;
- preparation of practical recommendations for various groups of interested persons.

## **Discussion**

The survey results indirectly indicate that more than a third of the respondents consider gender correction to be an irrelevant task. So, the risk of introducing such a correction is the possibility of public resistance, which, however, is exposed to any changes in national education.

A controversial aspect is the stage of introducing such a correction, on the one hand, gender-acceptable models are formed in preschool and school age, so students already have largely formed views, on the other hand, they have developed skills of analysis and critical thinking to independently identify and evaluate gender stereotypes. Agreeing with both

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theses and noting the work that has now begun in Ukrainian schools to eliminate the imbalance (*Henderny pedagogichny almanah 2017*), we insist on the need to support it at the level of higher education for the successful professional implementation of female students.

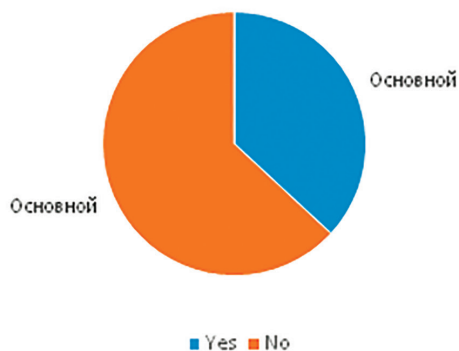
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**Figure 1**

Do you agree, that in the course of the history of Ukrainian literature women's experience is sufficiently covered?

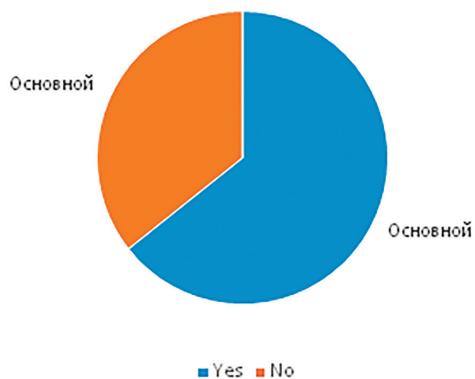
157 respondents



**Figure 2**

Have you felt a lack of successful examples of female self-realization during your study?

157 respondents

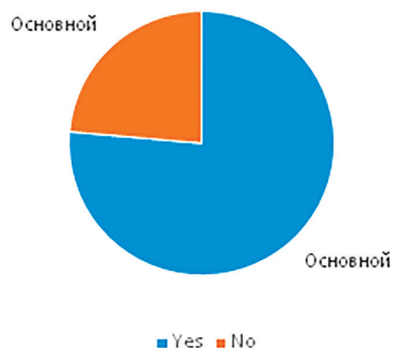




**Figure 3**

Do you agree, that female self-realization is different from male self-realization (for example, it has other obstacles, achieves other goals)?

157 respondents



**Figure 4**

Which of these writers have you read?

