

UDC 81.115 + 81'276.11

DOI https://doi.org/10.24919/2663-6042.15.2021.33

## DYNAMICS OF COMMUNICATIVE LEADERSHIP STYLES: EXPERIENCE OF THE UKRAINIAN ORGANIZATION

Sushkevych O. V.

*Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University*

*The paper focuses on the results of the study of the shifts in communicative leadership styles practised at the Ukrainian organization as the reflection of overall behavioural and communicative changes in the Ukrainian society, namely, in higher education in the post-Soviet period. The study was conducted at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University focusing on the communicative leadership styles realized between 2014 and 2021.*

*Communicative leadership is regarded in terms of the interplay between positional leaders and co-workers in the organization. At the same time, communicative leadership is addressed as a complex psycholinguistic phenomenon. Its potential is viewed as a means for teambuilding, satisfaction of institutional, personal and professional goals and demands in a given situation or context. Correspondently, it is evaluated according to communicative and pragmatic effectiveness, fulfilment of organizational and team tasks connecting co-workers with common goals. We also take into consideration people's emotional satisfaction after the communication with the leader.*

*We regard a communicative leader as a person who has moral authority in the team, takes responsibility for the staff and unit in a broad sense. We address a communicative leader as a person who suggests concrete things to deal with a situation, speaks the language people speak, shares the same values and problems with people, thus, uniting and integrating the co-workers.*

*The objective of the research is to analyze and contrast the effectiveness of the communicative leadership styles in the Ukrainian organization, namely, the HEI.*

*The research embraces the following stages: preparatory (analysis of the existing research in the area); research (observing the situational context, discourse analysis of the participants' responses in the interview, conducting an associative experiment); findings and conclusions (making parallels and diversifying communicative leadership styles and their pragmatic effects for the team and the organization).*

**Key words:** *communicative leadership styles, the Ukrainian organization, discourse practices, communicative interplay, leaders, non-leaders.*

**Сушкевич О. В. Динаміка стилів комунікативного лідерства: досвід української організації.** *Стаття відображає результати дослідження змін у стилях комунікативного лідерства, які практикуються в українській організації, як відображення загальних поведінкових та комунікативних змін в українському суспільстві, а саме у вищій освіті в пострадянський період. Дослідження здійснювалось на факультеті іноземних мов Уманського державного педагогічного університету імені Павла Тичини. Воно було націлене на аналіз стилів комунікативного лідерства, які реалізувались на теренах підрозділу в період 2014–2021 років.*

*Комунікативне лідерство розглянуто як взаємодію між позиційними лідерами та підлеглими. Водночас комунікативне лідерство постає як складне психолінгвістичне явище. Його потенціал відіграє роль у створенні дієвої команди, задоволенні інституційних, особистих та професійних цілей і потреб у певній ситуації чи контексті. Відповідно комунікативна та прагматична значимість, виконання організаційних та командних завдань, досягнення спільних цілей є показниками ефективності комунікативного лідерства. Враховано також й емоційне задоволення людей після спілкування з лідером.*

*Комунікативного лідера визначено як людину, яка має моральний авторитет у колективі, несе відповідальність за персонал та підрозділ у широкому розумінні, яка пропонує конкретні кроки для розв'язання тієї чи тієї ситуації, розмовляє однією мовою з людьми, а також поділяє з ними цінності та проблеми, таким чином об'єднуючи колег.*

*Метою дослідження є аналіз та протиставлення ефективності комунікативних стилів лідерства в українській організації, а саме закладі вищої освіти.*

*Дослідження охоплює кілька етапів: підготовчий (аналіз актуальних досліджень із вказаної проблематики); проведення дослідження (спостереження в ситуативному контексті, дискурс-аналіз відповідей учасників інтерв'ю, проведення асоціативного експерименту); підбиття підсумків (проведення паралелей і диференціація комунікативних стилів лідерства та їх прагматичних наслідків для команди та організації).*

**Ключові слова:** *комунікативні стилі лідерства, українська організація, дискурсивні практики, комунікативна взаємодія, лідери, не лідери.*

**Defining the problem and argumentation of the topicality of the consideration.** With the fall of the Soviet regime in Ukraine in 1991, new styles and patterns of communication have been developing in

all sorts of organizations representing the national economy. The Soviet regime was mostly of an authoritative totalitarian type with a command system of workers' subordination to an organizational leader. Where com-

municative leadership was ideologically and contextually coloured with suppression of workers, namely, their personal opinions apart from what was predetermined by the regime's ideology, needs, demands, and values [2, 25–30]. Primitively, the communicative leadership was reduced to such basic language formulas: “Do it because I say!” or “Do it because the country demands!”

Geopolitical changes in modern Ukraine along with people's urgent need for humane communication predetermined the necessity to reopen team-oriented styles of communication in contrast to authoritative leader-centred means [1; 3; 4]. Developing new communicative models of the interplay among academic staff has become especially topical in HEIs preparing future generations for the country [6].

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Generally speaking, in psycholinguistics, communicative leadership is frequently interpreted as taking communicative initiative, dominating in conversation due to some personal traits and characteristics. A. Romanov regards a communicative leader as an initiator and addresser in the dialogue [8, 57]. M. Kochkyn suggests defining communicative leadership according to the communicative input of each interlocutor [7, 33]. “A communicative leader” is a person who engages people “<...> in dialogue, actively shares and seeks feedback, practices participative decision making, and is perceived as open and involved” [4, 147]. Correspondently, communicative leadership belongs to soft skills [5, 91].

Accordingly, communicative leadership falls into two large categories – ideological and contextual. The first one represents the highest level of communicative leadership (revealed in the studies of Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003; Carsten, Uhl-Bien, West, Patera & McGregor, 2010; Collinson & Collinson, 2009). Such an approach means following the directories and orders of an ideological leader who is respected, trusted and fully supported by the majority of people in the given period, i.e. Stalin, Margaret Thatcher, Hitler, etc. The latter is rather unstable and demanding as it should adapt to the circumstances and different levels of social organization for its efficient functioning (especially addressed by Fairhurst G. T., 2005; Hamrefors S.,

2010; Hamrin S., 2016; Johansson C. Miller V. D., 2014). For example, contextual communicative leadership can be developed at different levels of a political party making people coming from different walks of society work together systematically and achieve goals. The most effective model of communicative leadership is a combination of ideological and contextual. Overall, the communicative interplay of leaders and non-leaders ideally should result in a team where common goals are achieved and people's needs and demands satisfied.

In our study, we focus on the non-leaders' reaction to the interaction with a leader and its effectiveness that is the reason why we follow D. Goleman's classification for leadership styles (Scheme 1).

**Setting the goals and tasks of the article.** In our paper, we attempt to analyze and contrast the effectiveness of the communicative leadership styles in the Ukrainian organization, namely, HEI.

We developed the following *hypothesis*: communicative leadership in Ukrainian HEIs has been developing its style and patterns based on Soviet and post-Soviet experiences and orientations of internal and external affairs in independent Ukraine.

**The outline of the main research material.** This paper reveals the results of action research done among 38 respondents, representing the academic staff of the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University. (All participants of this research were fully informed about the research procedure and had confidence that their personal information would remain confidential and their answers would not be misused). The research participants did not officially occupy any higher rank position during the period of this study. So, they belonged to the group of so-called non-leaders (positional but not psychological). They were aged 28–58. We used the methods of associative experiment and discourse analysis of the interview.

It should be mentioned that after the fall of the USSR, foreign languages training was firstly done at the Faculty of Philology with several stages of later transformations into the Faculty of Foreign Languages. Overall, it was run by four deans with different leadership styles



Scheme 1. Styles of Emotional Leadership according to Daniel Goleman (2000)

and principles of work organization. Each manager was a unique personality and his/her manner of communication had dominant features as well as including the elements of other leadership styles. Switching from one pattern to another was contextually predetermined and served to achieve definite pragmatic goals. Still, two dominant patterns of interplay were practised and experienced at the Faculty – commanding and visionary. In this paper, we regard both their pros and cons for the organization and staff. We focus on the period of 2014–2021 as it is associated with significant enforcement of pro-European vector of internal and external politics in Ukraine. At the national level, this period brought the concept of New Ukrainian School, the new law on “Higher Education” (2014), the introduction of the European Framework for teaching Foreign Languages. At the level of the University, it was reflected in management changes and enlargement of cooperation with international organizations (British Council in Ukraine, American Council, DAAD and signing bilateral agreements on cooperation with foreign HEIs). These shifts in politics and education brought new challenges and inevitable changes for the communicative leadership in a relatively small team – Faculty of Foreign Languages.

To define the patterns of communicative leadership we developed the following lists of words and short sentences for the participants to associate themselves with the state or quality which was the closest to them.

The interview was organized around the following key statements to find out non-leaders’ attitudes to the styles and results of communicative leadership practised at the HEI:

- *communicating common values and goals with the leader and co-workers;*
- *the level of personal energy after communication with boss and colleagues;*
- *the degree of trust and support in the organization;*
- *the level of employees’ commitment to work and duties;*
- *personal significance, job and interpersonal communication satisfaction;*

– *effectiveness of the organization goals achievement.*

Having analyzed these factors of institutional communication, we conclude whether speakers follow general principles of successful communicative interaction. In our study, we evaluate the effectiveness of communicative leadership according to the following criteria: leaders involve people in cooperative discussion and actions by sharing and reflecting **common values, needs, goals, communication style and language, topics for discussion**. People respond with **respect, trust, understanding, performing required actions**.

Firstly, we regard *dominant commanding with the elements of the visionary style of communicative leadership (leader-centred character)*. The results of the research show that authoritative leaders and subordinated non-leaders did not fully discuss and reveal their value orientations in the given context or situation. The majority of personal non-leaders’ suggestions, desires and professional goals remained unspoken or hardly heard (78%). At the same time, institutional goals and activities were reflected in all possible means of communication including online resources, staff meetings in vertical and horizontal dimensions, and interpersonal discussions. Thus, it is obvious that achieving organisational goals was a priority at the HEI but at the same time, a low level of trust and personal significance stopped non-leaders from revealing their personal and professional needs, and demands. The staff did not feel being significant and able to make a change in the organization. Answering the question “Did you try to discuss with your leader those institutional issues that worried you?”, 72% respond, “No. It was useless”, 15% say, “Yes, but nothing really changed.” And only “13%” conclude, “Yes, and it was successful!”. As a result, the level of personal commitment to work was quite low although staff accomplished the pre-set tasks out of fear. That is the reason why authoritative leadership was quite effective in terms of achieving institutional goals (97%).

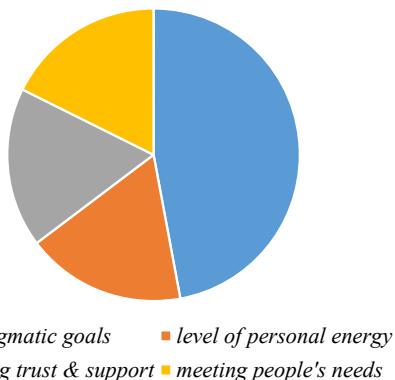
Another factor that reflects interpersonal communication with the leaders is the level of personal energy.

Table 1

Experiment associative lists

<i>At work I am...</i>	<i>Our leader ...</i>	<i>My workplace is ...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responsible</li> <li>• initiative</li> <li>• respected</li> <li>• joyful</li> <li>• future-oriented</li> <li>• feeling I need a change</li> <li>• committed</li> <li>• diligent</li> <li>• painstaking</li> <li>• motivated</li> <li>• kind and tolerant</li> <li>• cultured</li> <li>• adequate</li> <li>• respecting deadlines</li> <li>• regretting being here</li> <li>• growing</li> <li>• suffering</li> <li>• exhausted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• motivates</li> <li>• does everything himself</li> <li>• benefits from the organization</li> <li>• inspires</li> <li>• depresses</li> <li>• disappoints</li> <li>• suppresses</li> <li>• assists me</li> <li>• delegates</li> <li>• shifts responsibilities</li> <li>• appreciates</li> <li>• trusts</li> <li>• trying to do his best for us and our organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• modernized</li> <li>• my home</li> <li>• my property</li> <li>• not worthy me</li> <li>• inspiring me to work</li> <li>• well-equipped</li> <li>• atmospheric</li> <li>• suck with positive energy</li> <li>• suck with negativity</li> <li>• crowded</li> <li>• full of people I like</li> <li>• devastated</li> <li>• looks like from the previous epoch</li> </ul>

The majority of respondents state that they felt troublesome and anxious when they had to communicate with their leader. At the same time, “small talk” with co-workers brought much satisfaction and joy. People felt more relaxed and did not experience tension. Still, they tried not to be very sincere concerning their professional and private intentions. Overall, the level of personal energy was subjectively described as low by 73% of respondents.



**Diagram 1. Commanding Leader – co-workers' communication satisfaction**

Diagram 1 visually illustrates the priorities of commanding communicative leadership. Each component does not look balanced in terms of organizational and people's priorities.

The second communicative pattern can be characterized as a *dominant visionary style with the elements of affiliative, democratic, pace taking and coaching (shared and mixed communicative leadership)*.

This kind of communicative leadership became constructive in comparison with the previously described.

The major value orientations coincided with the staff's professional and personal needs and demands as well as institutional ones:

co-workers oriented: *valuing time, personality, efforts, professional growth and experience, supporting the young generation of academic staff;*

professional: *novelties in education, technological apps, language learning methodology, common activities and projects, multiplying pro-European and national achievement in teaching and learning, gradually becoming better;*

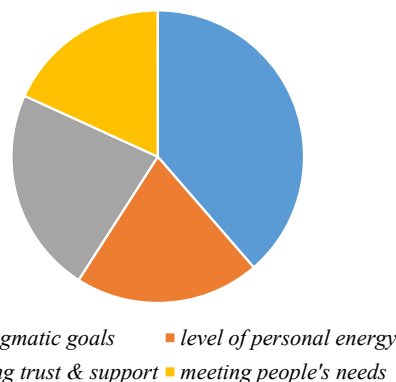
– institutional: *achieving best academic and management results as well as financial stability.*

Correspondently, 81% of respondents stated that they felt the administration's support and reflected it with their trust. The level of personal energy was dramatically higher than in the previous case for 75% of respondents. Still, the democratic change in communicative leadership lessened the level of personal commitment to job, duties and responsibilities (only 37%). It can be explained by the lack of developed

personal responsibility of each member of the academic staff as people were used to another commanding style. Unofficial group leaders or initiative colleagues started compensating this gap with their input in common goal setting and achieving.

The level of job satisfaction was also higher (62%). Answering the question “What can raise your job satisfaction?”, the answers ranged from improving financial conditions to breakout from work and trying different activity. In this regard, motivational tools should be applied to stimulate the staff's interest in the job such as rotating courses for teaching and specific administrative duties, involving people in a new experience to unfold a new professional and personal success story as well as providing material bonuses.

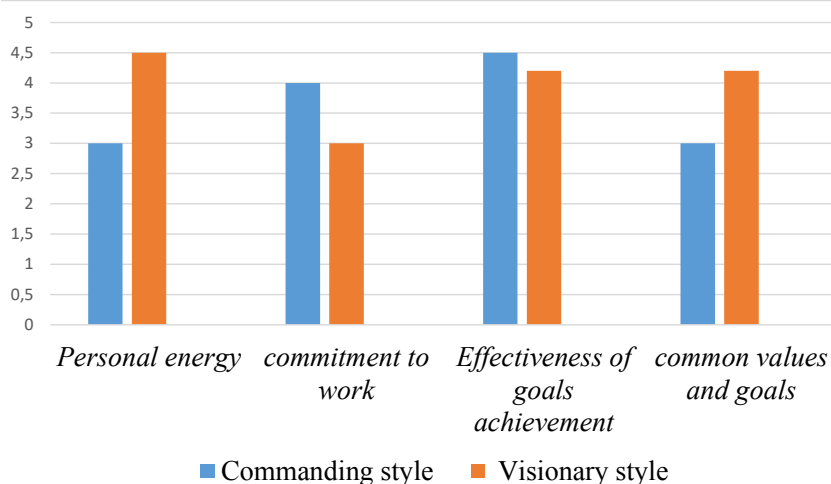
According to the results of the study, the effectiveness of organizational goals achievement was also high (91%) due to the leader's communicative flexibility and ability to find common grounds with the higher rank administration and other stakeholders.



**Diagram 2. Visionary Leader – co-workers' communication satisfaction**

Diagram 2 depicts a more balanced approach to both reaching pragmatic institutional needs and people's demands with the help of a dominant visionary communicative leadership practised at the Faculty.

Diagram 3 presents a comparative look at different parameters in terms of communicative leadership effectiveness.



**Diagram 3. Communicative leadership effectiveness**

**Conclusions and directions for further research in this area.** In the course of this study, we proved our *hypothesis* that communicative leadership in Ukrainian HEIs has been developing its style and patterns based on Soviet and post-Soviet experiences and orientations of internal and external affairs in independent Ukraine. New realities of modern Ukraine, people's communicative needs and institutional priorities demand a new

type of communicative leader and leadership practices at the University. Communicative leadership should involve non-leaders in reaching common goals, fulfilling the tasks based on a mutual commitment to common values and job duties. The communicative interaction should bring joy and satisfaction to its participants. The leader radiates trust and support as an effective manager due to his or her communicative flexibility.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Fairhurst G. T. Reframing. The Art of Framing: Problems and Prospects for Leadership. *Leadership*. 2005. Vol. 1 (2). P. 165–185.
2. Hamrefors S. Leadership. *Hamrefors S. Modern Leadership in value-creating networks*. 2010. P. 18–20.
3. Hamrin S. Communicative leadership and context: Exploring constructions of the context in discourses of leadership practices. *Corporate Communications*. 2016. Vol. 21. Issue 3. P. 371–387.
4. Johansson C. Miller V. D., Hamrin S. Conceptualizing communicative leadership: A framework for analysing and developing leaders' communication competence. *Corporate Communications*. 2014. Vol. 19. Issue 2. P. 147–165.
5. Кабрин В. И., Выскочков В. С., Прудников И. О. Структура когнитивно-креативного потенциала лидерства как базовой компетенции будущего трансфессионала. *Сибирский психологический журнал*. 2020. № 76. С. 91–104.
6. Kalashnikova S., Orzhel O. University leadership development: lessons from Ukraine. *International Scientific Journal of Universities and Leadership*. 2019. Issue 2 (8). P. 133–141.
7. Кошкин М. Ю. Манипуляция в политическом дискурсе. *Языковая личность : проблемы лингвокультурологии и функциональной семантики* : сб. науч. трудов. Волгоград: Перемена, 1999. P. 29–34.
8. Романов А. А. Коммуникативная инициатива говорящего в диалоге. *Текст как структура* : сб. науч. трудов. Москва : ИЯ АН СССР, 1992. P. 55–76.

#### REFERENCES

1. Fairhurst, G. T. (2005). Reframing. The Art of Framing: Problems and Prospects for Leadership. *Leadership*, 1 (2), 165–185.
2. Hamrefors, S. (2010). Leadership. *Modern Leadership in value-creating networks*, 18–20.
3. Hamrin, S. (2016). Communicative leadership and context: Exploring constructions of the context in discourses of leadership practices. *Corporate Communications*, 21/3, 371–387.
4. Johansson, C. Miller, V. D., Hamrin, S. (2014). Conceptualizing communicative leadership: A framework for analysing and developing leaders' communication competence. *Corporate Communications*, 19 (2), 147–165.
5. Kabrin, V. I., Vyskochkov, V. S., Prudnikov, I. O. (2020). Struktura kognitivno-kreativnogo potentsiala liderstva kak bazovoy kompetentsii budushchego transprofessionalnogo [Structure of the Cognitive-creative Leadership Potential as a Basic Competence of a Future Trans-professional]. *Sibirskiy psikhologicheskiy zhurnal*, 76, 91–104. Retrieved from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17223/17267080/76/6> [in Russian].
6. Kalashnikova, S., Orzhel, O. (2019). University leadership development: lessons from Ukraine. *International Scientific Journal of Universities and Leadership*, 2 (8), 133–141.
7. Kochkin, M. Yu. (1999). Manipulyatsiya v politicheskom diskurse [Manipulation in the political discourse]. *Yazykovaia lichnost: problemy lingvokulturologii i funktsionalnoi semantiki*. Volgograd: Peremena, 29–34 [in Russian].
8. Romanov, A. A. (1992). Kommunikativnaia initsiativa govoriashchego v dialoge [The speaker's communicative initiative in the dialogue]. *Tekst kak struktura*. Moskva: AN RAN USSR, 55–76 [in Russian].