

The Power of Communication and Dialogue in the Negotiation Process of the Modern Polish Police

Justyna Przybył¹

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Abstract. The aim of the study is to theoretically generalize and practically substantiate the role of communication and dialogue in the negotiation process of the modern Polish police as a determining factor in de-escalating conflicts, saving lives, increasing the effectiveness of police response and strengthening public trust. The object of the study is the negotiation process in the activities of the modern Polish police as a component of professional law enforcement practice, within which communication and dialogue are the main means of influence, resolving crisis situations and ensuring public safety. The article examines the importance of communication and dialogue in the negotiation process of the modern Polish police as one of the leading components of effective law enforcement activities in the context of growing social tension, the complexity of the security environment and the increasing requirements for the humanity of police response. It is substantiated that the negotiation process in modern police practice goes far beyond the limits of narrowly operational communication in crisis situations and appears as a systemic form of professional interaction aimed at de-escalating the conflict, reducing psychological tension, building trust, preventing the use of force and achieving a safe resolution of the incident. Particular attention is focused on the fact that communication in the activities of the Polish police performs not only an informational, but also a psychological, preventive, coordination and legitimizing function, since it ensures contact with a person in a crisis situation, assesses his intentions, corrects his behavior and creates conditions for a peaceful conclusion of the event. It is proven that dialogue in the negotiation process is an indicator of the professional maturity of the modern police, as it allows achieving results without excessive escalation, maintaining a balance between the protection of public order and respect for human rights, and strengthening public trust in state authorities. At the same time, it is established that modern Polish police practice is increasingly focused on the development of specialized negotiation training, interdepartmental coordination, anti-conflict approaches and international professional interaction, which makes it possible to consider communication as a strategic resource for the modernization of the police service. Therefore, it is concluded that the strength of communication and dialogue in the negotiation process of the modern Polish police determines not only the effectiveness of individual operations, but also the overall level of humanity, legitimacy and social effectiveness of law enforcement activities.

Keywords: communication, dialogue, negotiation process, Polish police, conflict de-escalation, public safety, police activity, crisis negotiations, public trust, law enforcement practice.

¹ ORCID ID 0009-0002-6344-3039

mgr, WSHIU Academy of Applied Sciences,
Poznan, Poland

Introduction

In the modern security environment, the topic of the power of communication and dialogue in the negotiation process of the modern Polish police becomes particularly relevant, since it is the quality of speech interaction that often determines whether the conflict will be localized without the use of force, or, conversely, the situation will enter a phase of escalation with high social, legal and reputational losses. The Polish police operate in conditions of increasing complexity of social processes, increased mobility of the population, expansion of the information space, increased sensitivity of citizens to the actions of government officials and the rapid spread of any messages in the external digital environment. Under such circumstances, professional communication is no longer just an additional skill of a police officer, but becomes one of the key components of the effective performance of official tasks. The negotiation process in police activities covers not only crisis cases related to hostage-taking, suicide threats or aggressive behavior, but also a much wider range of situations in which it is necessary to convince, reassure, establish trust, obtain reliable information, reduce emotional tension and form the basis for voluntary cooperation. Therefore, communication in this direction is not just a tool for transmitting content, but a mechanism for influencing a person's behavior, emotional state and decisions. Dialogue is of particular importance as a form of interaction that involves not one-sided command influence, but attentive listening, understanding the motives of the other party, assessing the psychological state of the interlocutor and flexible response to changing circumstances. It is through dialogue that the police are able to ensure a balance between the need to protect public order and respect for human dignity, rights and freedoms.

The aim of the study is to theoretically generalize and practically substantiate the role of communication and dialogue in the negotiation process of the modern Polish police as a determining factor in de-escalating conflicts, saving lives, increasing the effectiveness of police response and strengthening public trust. The object of the study is the negotiation process in the activities of the modern Polish police as a component of professional law enforcement practice, within which communication and dialogue are the main means of influence, resolving crisis situations and ensuring public safety.

Literature Review

The issue of communication and dialogue in police negotiations has been examined in the academic literature from several complementary perspectives, including behavioral communication models, active listening, tactical crisis response, institutional organization of negotiation units, and public order policing in situations of social tension. At the same time, the existing body of research shows that the negotiation process in modern policing cannot be reduced only to a narrow operational technique, because it combines psychological influence, interpersonal communication, situational assessment, organizational preparedness, and the broader legitimacy of police actions in society. In this regard, the selected studies create a substantial theoretical and applied foundation for understanding the role of communication in the negotiation process of the modern Polish Police, although they differ in their analytical focus and in the level at which the problem is considered [1-10]. P. J. Taylor [1] offers one of the most important theoretical contributions to the study of communication in crisis negotiations. In his work, the author develops a cylindrical model of communication behavior, which explains how interaction in crisis negotiations may be interpreted through structured patterns of verbal exchange. A more practice-oriented communicative dimension is developed by M. Chmielecki [3], who emphasizes the decisive role of active listening skills in crisis negotiations. The author argues that successful negotiation depends not only on the negotiator's ability to speak persuasively, but also on the capacity to listen attentively, identify emotional cues, interpret hidden meanings, and respond in a way that reduces tension and encourages cooperation. The institutional and organizational side of the issue is reflected in

the studies by K. Jałoszyński [5] and D. Maciejewski [4], both of whom focus directly on the police negotiation system in Poland. K. Jałoszyński [5] examines the organization of police negotiations in the Polish Police Service and shows that negotiations should be understood as a formally embedded and professionally coordinated element of police activity. The author highlights the importance of structural arrangements, procedural clarity, and the place of negotiators within the wider police response system. This work is especially valuable because it demonstrates that communication in negotiations is not merely an individual skill, but an institutionalized capacity supported by organizational solutions. Continuing this line of inquiry, The tactical and crisis-management dimension is developed in the article by D. Semków [6], who considers tactical and criminalistic aspects of police negotiations in crisis situations. D. Semków [6] points out that negotiations in crisis settings are inseparable from the broader operational context, including risk assessment, incident control, offender behavior, and the need to coordinate negotiation efforts with tactical police measures. This perspective is highly important because it prevents the simplification of dialogue as an isolated communicative event. Instead, negotiation is presented as part of a complex security mechanism where verbal interaction must remain effective under stress, uncertainty, and time pressure.

Research Results

In the modern Polish police, the negotiation process has long been perceived not as a highly specialized practice only for extraordinary incidents, but as one of the central professional components of all law enforcement activities. This approach is directly related to the very understanding of the role of the police, since at the official level the Polish police is defined as a formation that serves society, protects the safety of people and maintains public order. At the same time, the Polish Ministry of the Interior and Administration directly indicates that the police play a leading role in responding to terrorist events, including conducting negotiations. Therefore, negotiations are not an auxiliary option, but are part of the very professional architecture of the modern police service. The historical development of this direction also reflects its importance. Official Polish police records show that the first training of negotiators in Poland took place in the early 1990s, the first negotiation section was established on 1 September 1991, and systematic training began in 1996. As of 2022, the police reported 371 negotiators, 17 provincial negotiation groups, and a separate negotiation section in the central counterterrorism unit BOA. Such institutional evolution means that communication in the Polish police has ceased to be just an individual trait of an individual employee and has emerged as an organized system of professional competencies, personnel selection, coordination, and training. That is why the power of communication in the negotiation process lies not only in the ability to convince a specific person at a specific moment, but also in the fact that through dialogue the police realize their social mandate without excessive escalation, without hasty coercion, and with a higher level of legal and moral legitimacy (Table 1).

A full disclosure of the topic is impossible without understanding that in the modern Polish police, the negotiation process is based not just on speech, but on complex psychological work with emotions, fear, aggression, confusion and a person's crisis state. Official police materials emphasize the principle of "Po pierwsze człowiek", that is, a primary focus on the person, and not only on the formal side of the incident. Such a vision changes the very trajectory of police interaction. A negotiator within the framework of modern practice does not simply convey a demand or warning, but forms contact, reduces emotional tension, reveals the motivation of the interlocutor, assesses his psychological state and looks for that form of dialogue that is capable of transferring a dangerous situation from the plane of impulsive behavior to the plane of controlled communication.

Table 1

Institutional foundations of communication in the negotiation process of the modern
Polish Police

Dimension	Detailed explanation	Practical significance
Service mission	The Polish Police is officially described as a force serving society and protecting human safety and public order. Within this mission, communication is not a soft supplement to police work but a core method for carrying out public service in a lawful and socially acceptable way	This makes negotiation a legitimate operational tool rather than an exceptional add-on. It connects public safety, legal order, and humane intervention
Formal negotiation mandate	Official government information presents negotiation as one of the leading police responses in serious incidents, including terrorist situations. This means that dialogue has a recognized place inside the operational doctrine of modern policing in Poland	Negotiation becomes institutionally protected and operationally expected, especially when the main goal is to save life and stabilize a dangerous situation
Historical development	Police materials show that the first Polish negotiation structures emerged in the early 1990s, the first section was created in 1991, and a structured training system started in 1996. This confirms that negotiation capacity was built gradually and professionally over time	The long development path indicates continuity, specialization, and the transfer of experience across generations of officers
Organizational capacity	Police information published in 2022 reported 371 negotiators, 17 regional negotiation groups, and a dedicated negotiation section within the central counterterrorist unit. Such numbers show that communication in crisis situations is supported by real structures, not only by individual talent	A distributed negotiation network improves readiness, coordination, and the ability to respond quickly across different regions and types of incidents

Formed by the author

The training of Polish negotiators included not only the actual conduct of negotiations, but also interpersonal communication, as well as specialized forms of interaction in complicated circumstances, in particular during negotiations at height (Table 2).

Table 2

Communication as a de-escalation mechanism in police negotiation

Component	Detailed explanation	Operational value
Human-centered orientation	The principle "Po pierwsze człowiek" places the person at the center of police negotiation. This approach directs officers to understand the emotional and psychological condition of the subject before forcing rapid compliance	It helps transform a potentially violent encounter into a managed interaction where the priority is life preservation and stabilization
Interpersonal communication	Police training materials refer not only to negotiation itself but also to interpersonal communication. This shows that successful	Officers gain tools for reducing panic, slowing impulsive reactions, and

	negotiation depends on listening, emotional control, tone selection, and the ability to adapt language to the subject's condition	building the minimum trust needed for cooperation
Multi-channel contact	Anti-conflict police teams operate through situation recognition, behavior monitoring, technical communication tools, and direct conversation. This demonstrates that modern negotiation is broader than talking alone and includes environmental reading and tactical communication design	A multi-channel approach improves situational awareness and allows the police to react more precisely to changing emotional and collective dynamics
Controlled de-escalation	Police practice shows that dialogue is used in difficult, unstable, and emotionally charged situations, including those requiring patience and long engagement. Negotiation works by replacing immediate confrontation with controlled verbal influence	This reduces the likelihood of force, buys time for assessment, and creates safer conditions for officers, bystanders, and the person in crisis

Formed by the author

In the modern Polish police environment, the power of communication is manifested not only in the narrow crisis negotiation process, but also in the broader public dialogue with citizens, protest groups, participants in mass events, sports environments and local communities. It is here that it is especially clear that dialogue performs several functions at the same time. It reduces the risk of immediate escalation, creates a sense of predictability of police actions, demonstrates respect for human rights and helps transform the police presence from a factor of pressure to a factor of manageability and stabilization. Materials on the anti-conflict teams of the Polish police show that they operate not only during demonstrations or protests, but also in situations of local social tension and during sporting events. It has been officially declared that one of the key elements in the work of the Polish preventive service is building public trust, and communication with society must be clear and accessible to all social groups. The police also emphasize that they engage in dialogue with citizens, listen to their opinions, and respond to their needs through informational and educational projects.

Conclusions

The importance of the topic of the power of communication and dialogue in the negotiation process of the modern Polish police lies in the fact that it reflects one of the most humane and at the same time the most effective directions of law enforcement development, in which the result is achieved not through the dominance of force, but through the professionally constructed influence of the word, trust and psychological interaction. For the modern police, successful negotiations are often the factor that allows avoiding losses among the civilian population, police officers and the offenders themselves, which is especially important in cases of crisis situations, mass gatherings, family and domestic conflicts, incidents involving individuals in an unstable emotional state, as well as in interaction with vulnerable groups of the population. The importance of the topic is enhanced by the fact that communication in the negotiation process performs several functions at once. It allows you to collect information, assess the intentions of the other party, identify hidden motives, translate aggression into a rational direction, reduce the feeling of threat and form at least a minimum level of cooperation. At the same time, dialogue becomes an important means of legitimizing police actions, since through explanations, arguments, and respectful treatment of the interlocutor, law enforcement officers demonstrate that their actions are not subject to an arbitrary decision, but to the requirements of the law, professional ethics, and public interest.

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