

## The explication of emotions in the communicative situation of psychological imbalance (a case study of the English cinematic discourse)

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**Abstract.** The article investigates the communicative aspect of psychologically imbalanced situation through the perspective of emotions. The paper explains the essence of the communicative situation of psychological imbalance, its emotional determination remaining our chief concern. The research is focused on the regulative function of emotions as well as their impact on the person's communicative behavior. Special attention is paid to lexical markers of the classified emotions as means of their explication in the communicative situation.

**Keywords:** *communicative situation, psychological imbalance, emotions, regulation, lexical markers.*

**Introduction.** The peculiarities of human functioning in the communicative surrounding constitute an object of intense scientific interest. The activity approach highlights the fact, that it is a sort of human self-manifestation, the personality's genesis in social and outer world, his\her way of formation, expression and actualization [4]. Communication is a special type of activity directed to regulate the communicative surrounding of a person. Within the communicative situation a person explicates the activity aspect through communicative interaction, with verbal and nonverbal communicative components performing the role of a mediator between the communicant and the pursued pragmatic aim.

**Brief review of scientific sources and publications.** The communicative situation of psychological imbalance has not been thoroughly analyzed yet. Whereas the notion of communicative situation and its aspects was studied by many linguists (T. van Dijk, L. Wittengstein, H. D. Lasswell, I. Yakovliev, J. J. Leach, F. Batsevykh, H. Pocheptsov, A. Zahnitko, E. Selivanova, V. Krasnykh, M. Bakhtin, etc.), the aspect of the psychologically imbalanced communicant influencing the whole communicative interaction process remains chief concern of our paper.

The psychological imbalance was previously studied mainly by psychologists (Z. Freud, F. Heider, T. M. Newcomb, C. E. Osgood, L. Festinger), which left the communicative constituent outside the scope of linguistic interest. Nowadays, with scientific attention focused on the anthropocentric aspect of communication, different psychological and psychic processes become widely engaged into linguistic studies.

With the communicative situation of psychological imbalance still being the open question, **the goal of the presented paper** is to investigate the emotional basis. In order to achieve this aim, we have to solve a number of tasks:

- to explicate the essence of the notion of "communicative situation";
- to define the meaning of the term "psychological imbalance";
- to investigate the emotional constituent of the communicative situation of psychological imbalance;
- to illustrate the theoretical material with the segments of the English movies;

**Materials and methods.** The cinematic discourse fragments reflecting the communicative situation of psychological imbalance in the form of movie segments are used as the presented article's materials. The general methodologi-

cal basis is the anthropocentric principle. The main scientific methods include analysis, synthesis, abstraction, deduction and induction.

**Results and discussion.** The communicative situation as an abstract or a scheme plays purely methodological role and doesn't denote a peculiar discourse fragment, as it performs the function of communicative episodes abstraction and common relevant properties generalization. The components of the abstracted communicative situation include the objectively existing contextual restrictors of each discourse fragment that influence the process of implicature formation. The contextual restrictors comprise Time, Place, Consequences, Participants (their social and communicative roles, relationship, common knowledge, needs, objectives and aims), verbal and nonverbal actions [3].

To understand what behavior may be referred to as that of imbalance, we have to analyze the words used to denote this notion. The metalinguistic label "imbalance", which will be used in this paper, was originally recorded in 1895-1900 [1]. The English thesaurus suggests the following equivalents to the word "imbalance": *inequality, shortcoming, asymmetry, disproportion, lopsidedness, disparity, difference, discrepancy, divergence, imparity, variation, variance, unevenness* [1; 2; 4]. According to the definition dictionaries, this words is explained as: the state or condition of lacking balance, as in proportion or distribution; lack of proportion or relation between corresponding things; a situation in which two things that should be equal or that are normally equal are not; when one of two supposedly equal things is bigger, stronger or more important etc. For example: 1) *The demographic imbalance could then affect the financing of social welfare and pension systems;* 2) *I agree with your criticism of the imbalance between road transport infrastructure and more environmentally friendly forms of transport.* In the first example the word "imbalance" describes different intensity of birth and death rates, so they are not equal and one of them is prevailing. In the second example it denotes lack of relation between two things that must be equal. The other dictionaries suppose that the state of imbalance exists when it can be characterized as instable, asymmetric, disproportional, unequal and so on. For example: *There are still a lot of unknowns about the causes of gynecomastia, but scientists mostly cite hormonal imbalances.* This time the word labels the state of disproportion and even dysfunction. So, we can summarize that the state of imbalance exists in cases of instability, inequality, disproportion, disparity, asymmetry etc.

The consistency theory by Fritz Heider considered the cognitive approach of attitude toward people and objects formation in relation to one another. Further investigation of this approach led to postulation the unbalanced state producing tension and generating forces to gain balance again. The balanced state concept designated the situation of coexistent perceived units and experienced emotions. Heider's paradigm focused on two individuals, a person (P), the object of the analysis, some other person (O), and a physical object, idea, or event (X). Heider's concern was with how relationships among these three entities are organized in the mind of one individual (P). Heider distinguished two types of relationships among these three entities, liking (L) and unit (U) relations (cause, possession, similarity, etc.). The opposition of balanced and imbalanced states was explained with psychological tension experienced by the individual. The balanced state was argued to be stable and resisting outer influence; in other words, every individual seeks balance and tries to avoid influence endangering this state of harmony and stability. The unbalanced state is unstable and generates psychological tension or disharmony. The mentioned tension can be relieved only by achieving balanced state again when some changes take place. Unbalanced states, being unstable states, are susceptible to change toward balance. Balanced states, being stable states, resist change [9].

The consistency theory has been studied and developed by a number of psychologists (Theodore M. Newcomb, Osgood, Leon Festinger), who changed the theory slightly each time. For our work Newcomb's theory is of peculiar interest, because he was the first, who applied Fritz Heider's theory to communication. He argued, that people influence each other to generate and sustain symmetry (equilibrium or balance), because the function of attraction that one person has for another while communicating makes them change attitudes towards discussed objects in order to maintain the state of symmetry [9].

Taking cue from Fritz Heider, Max Wertheimer, Koller and Newcomb who equaled the state of balance with the state of harmony, we equal the state of imbalance with the state of disharmony [9]. Every person feels the necessity of harmonious elements that belong to the same system and to one another: he/she needs the expected and desired thing happen at the defined moment. If it doesn't happen, the person feels the discrepancy between the expected and the existing, that produces cognitive and emotional activity to ruin his or her psychological balance. In other words, the psychologically balanced state is explicated as that of relative tranquility, harmony, stability of the psychic and cognitive dynamic indexes of a human. The significant change of these indexes brings about the state of agitation, disharmony and imbalance.

The psychological imbalance is actualized as a communicant's psychosomatic state. This approach lets us view the body as a peculiar screen which reflects the psychic and emotional states of a person by means of symbolic unconscious messages; at the same time it explicates existing psychological problems generating the mentioned state. The connection of the person's body and psychic promotes bilateral interaction, that shows the interdependence of psychological and somatic aspects of human activity: the disabled body impacts healthy psychic's functioning, and psychologically determined problems influence the behav-

ior of the body and become reflected by means of expression.

The psychological imbalance investigation through psychosomatic activity brings our attention to emotions as a source of person's behavior: both verbal and nonverbal. The significance of emotions is explained by a great number of studies dedicated to the problem. V. I. Shakhovskii says, that emotions are basic to our cognition, thinking and consciousness [7] and A. N. Leontiev assures, that emotions are a product of person's positive development and perform the function of his/her activity regulation; in other words each time a person encounters something, he/she acquires feelings of liking or disliking it. In I. Kant's studies emotions, feelings and affects are viewed as interrelated stages of subject and object existence [5]. The communicant's knowledge of the objective reality exists not in a purely informational form, but in a form, obtained by means of this knowledge projection through certain feelings, that are in turn explicated in the language through implication of conceptualization, categorization, and verbalization processes [5]. So, we can summarize, that subjective conceptualized and categorized knowledge of the objectively existing reality when seen through the perspective of emotions is explicated by means of verbal or/and nonverbal communication. This can be dramatically illustrated with the segment of the movie "Deadpool" (00:28:50):

VANESSA: *So, am I supposed to just smile and wave you out the door?*

WADE: *Think of it like spring cleaning. Only, if spring was death. [...]*

VANESSA: *Sounds like you do. Bernadette is not going anywhere, because you're not going anywhere! (she is on the verge of crying)*

In this segment we can see, that Wade is going to leave Vanessa, because he doesn't want her watch him painfully die of cancer. Despite all his true love, he made the decision to leave her behind, because his conceptualized and categorized knowledge of cancer mechanism (what will actually happen to him in several months) was seen through the perspective of his feelings (sympathy with Vanessa, who will suffer together with him). This state of psychological imbalance is explicated with the help of such verbal communicative components as comparison (death is compared with spring cleaning). Vanessa explicates her feeling with the help of verbal and nonverbal components combination: she raises her voice and her eyes moisten.

From the communicative point of view, the psychological markers of explicated emotions indicating the psychic and emotional state of the individual at the communicative interaction moment are at the same time indicators of the psychological imbalance communicative situation. Let us examine the segment of the movie "Devil Wears Prada" (00:04:43):

*Emily answers the phone.*

EMILY: *Oh my God, no, no, no!!!*

EMILY (on the phone again): *SHE's on her way. Tell everyone!!!*

Emily is an employee of a strict and commanding boss Miranda Priestly. Being her first assistant she is responsible for Miranda's office perfect readiness before she comes in. Although Emily is very punctual, Miranda often comes ahead of time. So, at the moment when Emily is said that Miranda is on her way to her office, the assistant realizes

that nothing's ready, she panics and explicates her psychological imbalance in this way. Her emotions actualized by means of verbal (exclamations, repetition, imperatives) and nonverbal (rounded eyes, blushed cheeks, raised voice, emphasized words) communicative components serve as indicators of psychological imbalance communicative situation.

Emotions influence person's behavior and activity directly, because every emotional state motivates, stimulates and guides his\her perception, cognition and thinking. It can be explained by human desire to repeat or avoid certain communicative situations, which are likely to cause certain emotion. It lets us go into the question large and emphasize the regulative aspect of emotions, which makes the communicant choose necessary communicative means of confrontational or cooperative character. It can be brightly illustrated with the movie "Deadpool" (00:13:30):

*MERCHANT: Look, what if I slow it down for you? I didn't order the pizza.*

*JEREMY: Is this 7348 Red Ledge Drive? Are you Mr. Merchant?*

*MERCHANT: Yeah, the Mr. Merchant, who didn't order the fucking pie!*

*JEREMY: Then who placed the call?*

*WADE: I did. Pineapple and olive? Sweet and salty.*

*MERCHANT: Fuck are you? The fuck you doing in my crib?*

*Wade pulls out a gun. Merchant backs off.*

*MERCHANT: Woah, man, look. If this is about that poker game, I told him, I told Howie that uh... Just uh, just take whatever you want.*

Conventionally, this segment can be divided into two parts according to Mr. Merchant's responses, who changes his communicative strategy instantaneously when driven by emotions. In the first part we can see him confronting the pizza boy, who brings the order to the right address, but the supposed client denies the very fact of ordering pizza. Being a person of hot temper, Merchant starts with confrontational communicative strategy hoping to get rid of the boy. His verbal behavior comprises taboo words and his nonverbal behavior is marked with raised voice, peculiar mimic and gesturing. At the moment, when Wade appears unexpectedly from the bathroom and pulls out the gun, Merchant backs off and engages the cooperative strategy (agrees to give everything away) to save his own life. The essence of his actions lies in the sphere of his emotions: from agitation to fear, that regulate the communicant's behavior.

The state of emotional drive is characterized with temporality: it begins, lasts for some time while reaching its peak and afterwards it is over. The whole process makes a person feel uncomfortable or, in other words, tensed. After the emotional drive is over, the person feels relaxed. It is shown in with the segment of the movie "Deadpool" (0:05:10):

*FRANCIS: They won't disappoint.*

*MAN: They better not. What about next month's shipment?*

*FRANCIS: There won't be one. You're not the only one with a war to win.*

*MAN: That won't do.*

*FRANCIS: See, we've had this small disruption to our supply chain. (Francis grabs the man by the throat and lifts him into the air): We'd appreciate your patience.*

*MAN (suffocating): Okay!*

*FRANCIS: We'll deliver in full the following month. (Francis drops the man, who chokes a little) Pleasure doing business with you. (He walks away; he and his men leave.)*

*MAN: Fucking mutant.*

The action takes place at the delivery place, where two groups of criminals exchange their goods. Francis is a leader of his group and a mutant (he is extremely strong and doesn't feel anything). In this situation he uses his strength to force the man into a deal. The man's emotional tension starts at the moment, when he is told that there will be no shipment next month. The climax of his emotional discomfort happens when Francis grabs him by the throat. The tension drops when Francis and his bandits leave.

The diversity of emotions gave effect to creation of numerous classifications capturing this or that characteristic of emotions. The necessity to investigate emotions and accept one classification is crucial for our paper, because this classification will form the basis for communicative situation of psychological imbalance identification. Among the most popular and influential theories we must mention the deterministic theory (by James-Lange), that investigates the physiological aspect of expressing emotions by means of a complex biochemical reaction of an organism to the outer factors; the cognitive theory (S. Schechter, P. V. Simonov, M. Arnold), which places emotions in the centre of human's cognitive activity and integrates physiological and cognitive aspects of emotions formation; functional theory (R. F. Krueger) that focuses on universal emotions and their ability of intensification at certain age, the activation theory (Daffi), which equals emotions and behavior, motivation theory, etc. Among all the variety of emotion's classification, that suggest astonishingly different number of emotions (from three to eleven), we accept the model of Paul Ekman, that comprises five positions: anger, fear, disgust, sadness and enjoyment. The well-known Atlas of emotions by Paul Ekman comprehensively reveals the essence of each emotion and dramatically illustrates stages of its formation [8]. This model appears to be relevant for our research: the exact identification of every emotion helps identification of the communicative situation of psychological imbalance.

The central point to our work is the verbal explication of emotions. In the majority of cases, the employed verbal code denotes the actual psychological state of a communicant. For example, the lexical markers of the emotion of anger are as follows: *annoyance, frustration, exasperation, argumentativeness, bitterness, vengefulness, fury, viciousness, cruelty, violence*, etc. For the emotion of fear: *trepidation, nervousness, anxiety, dread, desperation, panic, horror, terror*, etc. The emotion of disgust is vividly explicated with such words as: *dislike, aversion, distaste, revulsion, abhorrence, loathing*, etc. The lexical markers to denote the emotion of sadness are such: *disappointment, discouragement, distraughtness, resignation, helplessness, misery, despair, grief, sorrow, anguish*, etc. Enjoyment can be identified as: *pleasure, rejoicing, compassion, joy, amusement, relief, peace, pride, wonder, excitement, ecstasy*,

*euphoria* and so on. It can be demonstrated in the segment of the movie "Devil Wears Prada" (0:32:00):

ANDY: She *hates* me, Nigel.

NIGEL: And that's my problem because – Oh, wait. No, it's not my problem.

ANDY: I don't know what else I can do because if I do something right, it's unacknowledged. She doesn't even say thank you. But if I do something wrong, she is *vicious*.

Andy, or Andrea Sachs is the second assistant of Miranda Priestly. The girl does everything she can think of, but her despotic boss doesn't give her any credit. When confessing to Nigel, one of the favorite Miranda's colleges, she uses the lexical markers of sadness and anger appropriately to describe Miranda's attitude towards her: *hates* and *vicious*. These words are expressed in a specific manner: the former is uttered almost in a whisper, with a bent down head and wet eyes (in this way Andy shows her sadness upon her inability to satisfy her boss) and the latter is said sharply, with clearly articulated sounds and peculiar gesturing, that in sum identifies her boss' angry disposition of mood.

**Conclusion.** The investigated ontological characteristics of emotions as a trigger for human activity (communicative activity as well) explained the very essence of the communicative situation of psychological imbalance. Taking into consideration the fact that the communicative situation is a methodological construct or scheme denoting a peculiar

discourse fragment we engaged the English cinematic discourse case study to comprehensively illustrate the article's theoretical aspect. The introduced movie segments performed the role of communicative episodes to be abstracted according to certain relevant properties. The basis for the common relevant properties identification was formed regarding the communicative situation restrictors: Time (the subsequent responses), Place (the same location of the communicants), Settings (conflicting parties to any dispute), Participants (pursuing conflicting or contradictory pragmatic objectives), and specific verbal and/or nonverbal means of communication. We explicated the essence of the notion of communicative situation of psychological imbalance by the emotional constituent analysis, which enables to emphasize the regulative aspect of the communicative situation mentioned above: the emotional drive governs person's activity of all kinds. With the psychological imbalance viewed as an "extraordinary" communicant's psychosomatic act exploiting body as a mediator between pragmatic surge and action of expression, we can say that explicated emotions represent the actual psychological state of the communicant. The mentioned verbally and/or non-verbally actualized emotions of the communicative interaction participants perform the function of the communicative situation of psychological imbalance identification. Broader analysis of this linguistic issue is promising for **further research**.

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**Экспликация эмоций в коммуникативной ситуации психологического дисбаланса (на материале английского кинематографического дискурса)**

**И. Б. Кондратюк**

**Аннотация.** Статья посвящена исследованию коммуникативного аспекта психологически дисбалансированной ситуации сквозь призму эмоций. В статье представлено краткое изложение сущности коммуникативной ситуации психологического дисбаланса и особенности его эмоционального генезиса. Изучение проблемы ставит в центр регулятивный аспект эмоций и его влияния на коммуникативное поведение субъекта дискурса. Также внимание уделено лексическим маркерам, обозначающим классифицированные эмоции как средство их экспликации в коммуникативной ситуации.

**Ключевые слова:** коммуникативная ситуация, психологический дисбаланс, эмоция, регуляция, лексические маркеры.