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COMMUNICATIVE TACTICS OF POSITIVE EMOTIONAL IMPACT IN ENGLISH FICTIONAL DETECTIVE DISCOURSE

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Abstract. The paper documents several key contributions made by linguists to the strategic aspect of communication, discourse studies, theory of emotions, and speech impact. The paper identifies and analyses the communicative tactics manifesting the strategy of emotional impact in modern English fictional detective discourse. These advanced tactics have been investigated from the perspective of the lexical, morphological and syntactic characteristics that exemplify them in detective discourse.

Key words: discourse, detective discourse, communicative strategy, communicative tactic, emotional impact.

1. Introduction

Modern linguistic pragmatics is focused on speech production and perception (Arjmandi & Behroozmand 2024; Probst et al. 2018, etc.), as well as the conditions under which a person uses certain linguistic means in communication (Panasenکو et al. 2018). These are primarily the conditions for the adequate selection and use of language units enabling the speaker to make the most effective impact on the communication partner.

At present, there is a clear need to systematize and generalize numerous empirical data proving the fact that the choice of models of communicative behavior is determined by certain types of



communicative strategies. In our previous study, we focused on the communicative tactics manifesting manipulation strategy in English fictional detective discourse (Bigunova & Kosovets 2021). The present study is an attempt to identify the communicative strategy of emotional impact in terms of the tactics that manifest it in English fictional detective discourse, as well as the language used for this purpose.

The genre of detective fiction has become the focus of attention for Boltanski (2014), Horsley (2010), Munt (1994), Rowland (2010), Rzepka (2005), Sim (2001), Symons (1992), and others. Rzepka uses the term 'detective fiction' "to refer to any story that contains a major character undertaking the investigation of a mysterious crime or similar transgression" (Rzepka 2005). It has been demonstrated that creating a sense of mystery in a detective story requires a specific mode of narration, one that presents the crime as an enigma and the detective as a problem-solver (Horsley 2010; Sim 2001).

In our view, in English fictional detective discourse the communicative strategy of emotional impact becomes explicit by means of the tactics of request, empathy, mitigation, apology, reproach, and promise. In linguistics these phenomena have been examined as communicative strategies, tactics and speech acts. This seeming discrepancy is a good reason for addressing ourselves to explore the strategic and structural properties of conversation, and consider the relationship between some of the communicative terms which can be advantageous from the perspective of conversational analysis.

2. Conversational paradigm

The conversational analytics Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) proposed a descriptive framework for analysing spoken discourse, using classroom data as a starting point. They advanced the following descriptive units: *act*, *turn*, *move*, *exchange*, *transaction*, and *lesson*. These units are ordered in a hierarchical manner such that acts (discourse acts) combine to form moves, moves combine to form exchanges, and so on.

In the description of reproduced fictional conversation that we will subsequently make, we have borrowed the descriptive units: *act*, *turn*, *move*, *exchange*, and added the broadest term – *speech episode* – that can be applied specifically to fictional discourse.

A *move* is the smallest free unit of discourse and is made up of one or more than one *act* (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975: 23). The concept of *exchange* structure captures the relationship between utterances in which one component sets up the expectation for another. An adjacency pair is made up of two *turns (cues)* made by two different speakers (Schegloff & Sacks 1973). Two turns can constitute an

each other. In this article we will interpret communicative strategy as "a general scheme, a plan for the realization of a communicative idea, which involves the use of specific speech actions (tactics and corresponding language tools)"¹ (2015: 183). While strategy is seen as a general scheme, tactic is a speech technique used to realize a certain strategy. One of the good definitions says: "communicative tactic is a line of behavior at a certain stage of communicative interaction aimed at obtaining the desired effect or preventing an undesirable result; speech techniques that allow achieving the communicative aim" (2009: 119).

From the functional perspective primary (semantic, cognitive) and secondary communicative strategies were put forward. The primary strategy is the one that is more significant in terms of the speaker's motives and goals. In most cases, it is directly aimed at making an impact on the addressee, their system of values, attitudes, and behaviour. Secondary strategies help to efficiently organise dialogue interactions. Another popular division is into co-operative and non-co-operative (or confrontational) strategies. The former, unlike the latter, are based on Grice's Cooperative principle. Within discourse, there has been talk about cultural, social, interactional, pragmatic, semantic, schematic, stylistic and rhetorical strategies (Dijk & Kintsch 1983: 89-95).

It is the communicative strategy of emotional impact to which we are going to give our close and detailed attention. It is seen as primary, cooperative, pragmatic, stylistic and rhetorical, realized by certain communicative tactics, that, in terms of this article, have been followed up in the fictional detective's speech.

4. The communicative strategy of emotional impact and the tactics that implement it

The close interaction is observed between emotions and the mind, between the processes of thinking and the work of senses (Goleman 1997). Researchers have examined emotional impact in a variety of discourses (Panasenکو et al. 2018; Zabuzhanska & Greguš 2023) and have found that emotional impact is aimed at creating common categories for the addressee and the addresser, which arise as a result of their perception and evaluation of information on a certain emotional basis.

The importance of emotional impact is reinforced by the fact that no matter how logical or rational the communicator's arguments are, if they are unable to evoke emotions, their ability to influence the listener will be seriously compromised (Kondratenko et al. 2020).

It is widely accepted that the expression of emotions in language is associated with the representation of the linguistic categories of emotionality and expressiveness (Goleman 1997; Zabuzhanska &

Greguš 2023). Emotionality is a part of an utterance corresponding to the speaker's self-expression and reflecting their impressions, feelings, and evaluations. Expressiveness is aimed at increasing the persuasive power of an utterance in accordance with the planned intentional impact on the addressee. In the linguistic aspect, the success of speech impact is determined by its stylistic form. The effect of stylization is achieved by means of expressive and emotive information highlighted by emotives and expressives at different language levels.

As mentioned before, the communicative strategy of emotional impact is manifested by the tactics of request, empathy, mitigation, apology, reproach, and promise. Before analysing their functioning in the fictional detectives' speech, pivotal linguistic surveys of these phenomena should be summarised.

As for request, Trosborg defines it as an illocutionary act in which the speaker (the requester) communicates to the hearer (the requested) that they want the requested party to perform an action for the benefit of the speaker (Trosborg 1995: 187). In Brown and Levinson's (1987) terms, request has a face-threatening nature. Some authors even refer it to impositive acts (see, e.g., Leech 1983) rather than to directives. However, as Sifianou (1999) contends, requests do not always bear an imposition on the hearer, although they frequently direct him/her to perform some action. Most importantly, they show the existing social relationship between participants (*ibid.*). And this is what matters in terms of detective-witness interaction. Request is a mild, indirect way of forcing a participant who is ranked lower in a social hierarchy into desired behaviour.

The term "mitigation" was introduced by Fraser and interpreted by him as a process of modifying a speech act aimed at reducing possible unwelcome effects in situations where a speaker's speech behaviour can lead to a communicative failure or even conflict (Fraser 1980: 341). Dede regards mitigation as a manifestation of negative politeness, directed at minimizing violation of the communication partner's territory by modifying the meaning of the proposition, reducing categoricalness, or evasion (Дедe 2023: 179).

The tactic of mitigation is aimed at reducing the illocutionary power of negative influence on the listener in conflict situations. Indeed, most interpretations of mitigation stress the diminishing, downgrading, or weakening of some discursive parameter. The 'reduction' is, as Marco and Arguedas (2021) contend, a very useful metaphor to identify most cases of mitigation, but not all of them.

Reproach is seen as the speaker's dissatisfaction or disapproval of the recipient's behaviour. According to Gulieva, the communicative intention of reproach can be realized both explicitly and

implicitly. Explicit realizations of the communicative intention of reproach are sentences with a compound verbal predicate, including the modal verbs *might / should / could* and the perfect infinitive. All other realizations of the communicative intention of reproach are considered implicit, since they require more effort to derive inferences about the content of the statement. For example, implicit means include sentences that verbalize the fact that the object of reproach did or did not perform an action desired by the subject of reproach (Гулієва 2015: 216).

Reproach was defined as an "exquisite strategy of stabbing" of the addressee, when the speaker negatively assesses the addressee's actions, behaviour, or lack of actions, and declares that they used to have a higher regard for them (Буренко 2018).

Promising is an act of undertaking to do a certain future act. The essence of a promise is "committing oneself to doing something", and this "something" must be in the addressee's interests³ (Клюев 2002: 13). In Searle's words, promising is a commissive speech act whose illocutionary force is that the speaker promises to carry out a future action to the benefit of a hearer by expressing its proposition to the hearer (1969). According to Dijk, the speaker wants the interpretation of their message to encourage the addressee to expect certain events in the future (2008). The speaker (in our case, a police officer) must realize that the promise must be of interest to the addressee (in our case, a witness) to ensure the success of the speech act.

Demonstrating empathy is another effective way of making an emotional impact on the addressee. Empathy implies a person's ability to guess the emotional state of others and express care and concern for their feelings. Martinovsky (2006: 26) points out that empathy integrates reasoning and prediction of other and own intentions and actions both on planning and emotional levels. She also maintains that empathy presupposes empathic listening, paraphrasing, and reflection (ibid.). Martinovsky reflects on how "reactive empathy" (as she called the type of empathy we are interested in) is verbalized. She claims that it involves voicing of other's mental states, comparing of inner experiences, and exchanges of generic and personal pronouns (ibid., 28).

Finally, an apology is seen as a verbal contribution to establishing contact and maintaining good, cooperative relations. In Darby and Schlenker's view, apologies are admissions of blameworthiness for an undesirable event and allow speakers to try to obtain a pardon (1981). They claim that apologies can contain a number of components, and can range from a perfunctory "Pardon me" used in a ritualistic manner, to a more full-blown expression that, apart from direct attempts to obtain forgiveness, might include expressions of remorse, sorrow, embarrassment, self-castigation, and

offers to help the injured party. The researchers maintain that through these components, an apology can attempt to redress the damage that has been done, extends a promise of more (ibid.: 274). In Smith's opinion, an apology is an admission of responsibility by the speakers on the attitude, behaviour, or failure to implement something (2008). As Sari remarks, unwillingness to hurt Hearer, or lack of intent can be expressed by means of an utterance like "I did not mean to upset you", recognition of mistakes can become explicit by means of the phrases like "I forgot", "I have not read it"; an expression of embarrassment, because of one's guilt is manifested with the help of "I feel awful about it" (2016: 15).

In the present study the outlined phenomena are viewed as communicative tactics that manifest the communicative strategy of emotional impact. We will now report on the methods, data and results of following up these tactics in the fictional detectives' speech.

5. Material and methods

The empirical data used for the study are taken from modern English fictional detective discourse, namely communicative exchanges that the detective – the protagonist, has with other characters: witnesses of the crime, as well as suspects, during the investigation of the crime. These communicative exchanges have been observed in the detective novels written by Beaton: the series about Hamish Macbeth, a police sergeant, and the series about Agatha Raisin, a private detective. The total corpus of factual data includes 993 speech exchanges (597 from the Hamish Macbeth series and 396 from the Agatha Raisin series).

It should be mentioned that in fictional discourse, characters' exchanges are the author's imitation of natural conversation. Fictional discourse is seen as a product of the author's cognitive activity implemented in reproduced conversation of the characters. Thus, though fictional discourse cannot be viewed as real-life conversation it is nevertheless contrived as an imitation of the latter, aimed at reproducing its main regulations. Speech authenticity in fiction is achieved by imitating the main characteristics of oral speech: emotionality, spontaneity, its situational and contact-oriented character, etc.

With such a setting in mind, this research is focused on singling out the communicative strategies and tactics used by the professional detective and the amateur detective, depicted in English-language fictional detective discourse, in pursuit of information necessary for solving the crime. It should be clarified right from the start that on no account should the two detectives (the policeman Macbeth and the amateur detective Raisin) be opposed in terms of their authority, intentions, and therefore, the

strategies and tactics that they use. They are in a similar status position: not only is Agatha Raisin deprived of police authority and access to the relevant data, police sergeant Macbeth does not possess all the information either. Moreover, he quite often exceeds his authority by questioning people who do not belong to his 'beat', by trying to elicit information from forensics: he acts more like a 'sheriff' in his wish to get to the bottom of things. Quite often, because of his unconventional methods he is withdrawn from an investigation and demoted to a constable, thus having even less power. So both the police detective and the amateur detective have to use various communicative strategies and tactics to elicit information from witnesses and suspects.

Among the general scientific methods used in the work are the *method of synthesis and analysis* – for a holistic study of fictional discourse using a systematic approach to the consideration of individual communicative constructions in terms of their participation in the implementation of the speaker's strategic plan; *the method of observation* that was used to identify the characteristic features of the empirical data. Within the framework of special linguistic methods, *contextual-interpretive analysis* was used to identify the detective's intentions in each context of the sample; *conversation analysis* was used to study how the reproduced conversation is structured.

6. The implementation of the communicative strategy of emotional impact in fictional detective discourse

Since the analysis is based on the material of fictional detective discourse, there is a good reason for shedding some light on its nature. For this purpose, we have made our contribution to defining fictional detective discourse, its chronotope, modelling detective discourse characters.

In our view, fictional detective discourse is a status-role communication, built as a certain sequence in accordance with the stereotype, depicted by the author in such a way as to keep the reader in suspense until the moment of identifying the murderer's identity. Detective discourse is characterized by proceduralism (interviewing witnesses and suspects) and logical analysis of facts performed by the detective and their assistant(s).

As for the chronotope of detective discourse, it is the spatial-temporal coordinates within which the investigation of a crime (usually a murder) takes place, from the moment of committing the crime to the moment of its disclosure, localized not only at the scene of the crime, but also at the places where witnesses and suspects are interviewed and, finally, charged.

In our view, the modelling of detective discourse characters includes six types of communicative personalities: Murderer, Victim, Detective, Assistant Detective, Witness, Suspect. It should be clarified that Murderer is unknown until the end of the investigation, so this character takes on the role of the Witness or Suspect. As for the Victim, fictional detective discourse sometimes portrays communications they have with the Detective before the murder. This might happen because a perspective Victim is threatened, or becomes aware of some danger to themselves. It is the Detective who takes on the leading role and carries out a series of questioning of witnesses and suspects.

In our view, detectives, the main characters of fictional discourse, take advantage of three primary strategies: the strategy of direct questioning and controlling the course of the conversation, the strategy of emotional impact, and the strategy of manipulation, each of those manifested by a number of tactics. These strategies and tactics enable the detectives to elicit necessary information from the interviewed witnesses.

The efficacious interaction between the detective and the witnesses presupposes creating conducive conditions for obtaining evidence from the interviewee and ensuring its reliability. This involves establishing psychological contact with the interlocutor. Psychological contact promotes conflict-free communication and eliciting necessary facts.

In order to effectively engage with the witnesses and suspects, the detective attempts to create a wide range of emotional impacts on them. This can include feelings of inspiration, motivation, empathy, excitement, sadness, etc., depending on the intentions the detectives have in mind. To achieve this purpose the detective can use their tone of voice, facial expressions, body language, and choice of words to evoke specific emotions in their audience, leading to a powerful and efficacious communication.

7. Communicative tactics of emotional impact in English fictional detective discourse

Contextual-interpretive analysis of the communicative exchanges that the detectives have with witnesses and suspects, as well as component analysis of their intentions, have enabled the authors to put forward a classification of tactics that manifest the communicative strategy of emotional impact. These tactics are request, empathy, mitigation, apology, reproach, and promise. They help the detective to provide communicative support to the addressee who holds a weaker position. The detective shows empathy for the interlocutor, demonstrates willingness to listen to them, to share their emotions, provoking them to sincerity. Otherwise, the detective may reproach the witness, make them feel guilty and therefore be willing to cooperate and earn forgiveness.

The tactics manifesting the strategy of emotional impact are aimed at providing a comfortable, supportive background for communicative interaction which fosters the realization of the detective's ambition – to solve the crime.

The results of our observations are presented in the following table:

Table 1. The proportion of tactics of emotional impact in detective discourse, %. Source: Own processing

Tactics of emotional impact	Police detective (Hamish)	Amateur detective (Agatha)
Request	44.8	27.8
Mitigation	20.6	26.2
Reproach	13.0	21.3
Promise	12.6	8.4
Empathy	6.8	11.4
Apology	2.2	4.9

7.1 The tactic of request

Of all the advanced tactics, the most widely used and effective is the tactic of request. The research shows that 44.8% of the speech acts uttered by the police detective and 27.8% of the acts uttered by the amateur detective express request.

The tactic of request is usually expressed through quesitives and modal verbs *can/could/would*, which can be observed in the following example:

(1) *"When they got to Flood Street, Hamish said tentatively, "I won't keep you much longer, Mrs. Frobisher. I have another call to make. **Could I just see some of Captain Bartlett's things?**" "I have them all in a room upstairs. The police have been through them already, of course." She led the way upstairs and pushed open a bedroom door ("Death of a cad", p. 182)².*

In this example, the speech act of request is actualized with the modal verb *could* and the adverb of manner *just*, which diminishes the requested action and lowers the risk of refusal from the requested.

Another way of expressing request is using the verb *mind* in the quesitives *would you mind + -ing*, and *do you mind + -ing*, e.g., followed by an object clause manifesting the desired action:

(2) *When Chalmers had at last finished, Hamish asked, "**Do you mind if we see the cupboards where you keep your cleaning materials and things like that?**" "I am very tired," said Mrs. Wellington, "and I see no reason...oh, very well. They're over here, underneath the sinks" ("Death of a cad", p. 163).*

In some speech situations, the requester may use so-called "pre-requests", directed at either finding the partner's ability to perform the relevant actions or preparing them for the request (Jacobs & Jackson 1983: 292), as in the following example:

(3) *"Aye, left everything to Paul. He owns the house already but she left twenty thousand pounds."*
*"Not bad for someone who was aye pleading poverty," said Hamish. "But not enough to kill for. **Look, maybe you can help me out of a jam.**"* He told Anderson about Iain Gunn and the bats ("Death of a perfect wife", p. 72).

Before providing the story itself and expressing his request, Hamish uses vague, or "tentative" language, in the "pre-request": adverb of probability *maybe*, as well as modal word *can*, both mitigating further request.

Here is another example of an indirect request which is in the form of an object clause involving the use of the modal verb *could*. In this case the policeman also uses a vocative to sound even more polite:

(4) *"**I wonder if you, Tilly, could tell me what sort of a person Ina was,**" began Hamish. "I never really knew her that well."*
"Very quiet," said Tilly ("Death of a witch", p. 14).

The indirect request helps the police detective to be less categorical and more polite, which enables him to extract valuable information about the victim from the witness and eventually solve the murder.

Another communicative exchange demonstrates the use of hedged forms of indirect request in the form of a quesitive by Agatha, an amateur detective. The modal verb *may* and the downtoner *a little* are used to make the speaker sound less categorical:

(5) *They walked up to the front door and rang the bell. Joyce Wilson answered the door. Her eyes were almost as red as her hair with recent weeping.*
*Agatha introduced them and said, "**May we talk to you for a little?**"*
Joyce ushered them in ("Agatha Raisin and the perfect paragon", p. 17).

In the following interaction, Agatha is greeted by the witness with displeasure (*Greta ... frowned when she saw her visitor was Agatha*). So, she feels she has to be persuasive. In this case the tactic of request is realized in a more categorical way, by using the modal verb *must*, which indicates the utmost urgency to perform the requested action – to communicate with her. In order to achieve her aim, Agatha also uses convincing arguments, and she hints that she knows who the murderer is.

Agatha's pleading tone is described in the author's commentary (*pleaded Agatha*):

(6) *Greta answered the door and frowned when she saw her visitor was Agatha.*

*'I **must speak to you**' pleaded Agatha. "You see, I've been threatened. Someone stole my cats to stop me investigating and I think I might know who that someone might be'.*

Greta sighed but held open the door. 'Come in' ("Agatha Raisin and the vicious vet", p. 12).

Thus, a request is a mild, indirect way of forcing a participant (the interviewed witness) into performing an action (tell all the facts) for the benefit of the speaker (the detective). In the investigated fictional detective discourse, it is the most widely used and effective tactic: it helps the detective to elicit the necessary information. A request is realized in indirect, "hedged" form, by means of quesitives (*Do you mind if...*), object clauses (*I wonder if*), modal verbs (*could, may, might, would*), adverbs of degree (*a little*), manner (*just*), and probability (*maybe*) that mitigate request.

7.2 The tactic of mitigation

The research shows that the police detective uses mitigation in 20.6% of the utterances and the amateur detective uses it 26.2% of the utterances.

Mitigation is generally expressed by vague language, such as adverbs of degree (*a little*), manner (*just*), and probability (*maybe, perhaps*). For example, when Agatha and her assistant detective Charles start questioning Lizzie, they become aware that she is frightened, so they resort to mitigation by means of the adverb *just*, which weakens the significance of the talk:

(7) *Lizzie Findlay came in, blinking in the light. She looked small and faded and scared.*

'Are you going to blackmail me?' she asked.

'Not at all,' said Charles. 'Take off your coat and come into the sitting-mom.'

He helped her out of her coat.

When they were all seated in front of the fire, Charles said, 'We've found out you spent some time with Tolly, masquerading as his wife, in Norwich.'

Lizzie went white. 'You won't tell my husband!'

*'No,' said Agatha. 'We **just want to know what it's all about**. We won't tell the police either.'*

I suppose I'll have to tell you,' said Lizzie, looking miserably down at her work-worn hands ("Agatha Raisin and the fairies of Fryfam", p. 27).

It should be mentioned that in the given episode, mitigation is used along with promise (*We won't tell the police either*). These tactics turn out to be efficacious judging by Lizzie's reaction (*I suppose I'll have to tell you*).

The tactic of mitigation is also realized by words of broad semantics, such as the adjective *general* and the adverb *all*, which reduce the degree of importance and formality of the upcoming questioning:

(8) *"I would like to talk to your husband."*

"What about?"

*"I'm making **general enquiries, that is all**"* ("Death of a poison pen", p. 12).

The tactic of mitigation also helps the detective to be evasive and politely leave an undesired question unanswered, as it can be observed in Hamish's conversation with Jill, the witness:

(9) *'You're thorough, I'll say that, ' said Jill, handing him a cup of coffee. 'It seems you think that Peter had something to do with this woman's death or that he has been killed himself. '*

*'**Something like that,**' said Hamish. 'What did you think of Peter?'* ("Death of a charming man", p. 70).

So in this case mitigation is achieved through the use of vague language (the indefinite pronoun *something* in the stereotyped phrase *something like that*).

Thus, mitigation techniques used by detectives include vague language and modal markers, such as adverbs of degree (*a little*), manner (*just*), probability (*maybe, perhaps*) and words of broad semantics that reduce the degree of categoricalness.

7.3 The tactic of reproach

The research shows that the police detective uses reproach in 13.0 % of the utterances and the amateur detective uses it in 21.3% of the utterances.

In the following fragment, Hamish reproaches the witness for failing to go to the police. If she had done it and reported on the charlatan, a lot of women would have been alive. Traditionally, for hypothetical scenarios like this one the subjunctive mood is used, namely the past subjunctive (*should have gone, could have written*):

(10) *"When they came out, this Mrs. McBride said she would get her period like normal and abort and there would be no pain. I don't know what that woman did to her but she was found on the street, dead, a week later. She'd bled to death."*

*"**You should have gone to the police, Mary.**"*

"Me, a prostitute, going to the police and saying a respectable doctor's wife was on the game!"

*"**You could have written an anonymous letter**"* ("Death of a witch", p. 10).

A similar example of using reproach by the police detective Hamish is observed in a situation when he tells Mr Ferrari that he doesn't approve of his unwillingness to co-operate with the police and identify the murderer:

(11) *"So Sean saw that cleaver and began to run and Giovanni went after him and chased him right back to that bus. Then he told me. So we all went to see him, me and Luigi and Giovanni, and we told Sean Gourlay that if he came near the restaurant or Lucia ever again, we would cut his balls off. So that's it".*

"You should have told me this before," said Hamish.

"Why?" demanded Mr. Ferrari. "None of us killed him".

But Hamish left very worried ("Death of a travelling man", p. 67).

Again, by means of the past subjunctive mood the police detective expresses dissatisfaction with the behaviour of the witness, who is trying to conceal the circumstances of the crime that are necessary for the investigation.

We cannot but agree with Tulimirović who claims that the act of reproach is produced as a response to the interlocutor's past action, which does not meet the speaker's expectations. The speaker's ultimate aim is to make the interlocutor amend his or her actions that have caused negative feelings. If the interlocutor does not rectify his/her actions, the act loses its directive function and the situation evokes a feeling of discomfort and disagreement between the speakers (2023: 588), as happens in the following case of explicit reproach:

(12) *Agatha decided to get down to some hard business. "I paid you twenty pounds for information yesterday," she said bluntly, "which I have not yet received".*

"I spent it."

"Yes, but how you spent it or what you spent it on is not my affair," snapped Agatha ("Agatha Raisin and the quiche of death", p. 8).

Consequently, the essence of reproach is dissatisfaction with and disapproval of the addressee. The function of this tactic is to regulate the addressee's actions. The tactic of reproach can be realized explicitly or implicitly.

7.4 The tactic of promise

The tactic of promise has been used by the professional detective in 12.6% of speech episodes and by the amateur detective in 8.4% of speech episodes.

As for the language of promising, it is either the performative verbs *promise*, *swear* or non performative verbs, such as "try, do, come" that explicitly nominate the promised actions. At the morphological level the Future Indefinite is used. At the syntactic level, apart from simple clauses (*I promise, I'll do it, I'll be there*), the tactic of promise can be expressed by conditional constructions such as: *I will promise...unless*. This happens when the speaker (the detective) feels the pressure of the promise and would like to reduce the degree of responsibility. A detective can also use a vocative as a contact-establishing means and a way to show respect for the witness. To illustrate, here is a situation in which the policeman promises not to disclose information that could compromise Angela and other people involved in the case in exchange for the witness's frank confession:

(13) *"But if you find the murderer," said Angela in a croaky voice, "it will all come out in court and the video will be shown as well."*

*"Not necessarily. I am in as bad trouble as the rest of you for I could easily lose my job for suppressing this evidence. If I find the murderer, it is possible I can do a deal. **I will promise him or her not to mention the blackmailing so that charge will not be added on to the one of murder. But I'll never find out who murdered Sean unless everyone here tells the truth.**" He turned to Angela. "You first "* ("Death of a travelling man", p. 56).

The tactic of promise enables the detective to obtain the most secretive information:

"I'll tell you if you don't let on."

*"Penny, **I promise to let anything you say to me stay between these four walls – unless, of course, it relates directly to the murder**" ("Death of a poison pen", p. 15).*

As the given communicative exchange demonstrates, promise is based on the conditional clause with the performative verb: *I will promise...unless*; and the sincerity of the promise is emphasized by the idiom *stay between these four walls*.

The amateur detective promises the widow to investigate her husband's murder, but restricts the promise by mentioning the police who might preclude her from investigation:

(14) *"**I'll try to start tomorrow**, but the police will be swarming all over the place."*

Mabel rose to her feet. "I will leave you to it. Do your best. Robert's murderer must not go unpunished" ("Agatha Raisin and the perfect paragon", p. 43).

In the given communicative exchange promise is expressed by the non-performative verbs "try" and "start", the first of which denotes effort, while the second specifies future action (*start investigating the crime*).

So, the carried-out analysis shows that promise represents the speaker's obligation to do something in the addressee's interests in exchange for something useful for themselves, in our case, for useful evidence.

The language means of expressing promise include past conditional constructions with the performative verb *promise* or non-performative verbs denoting the promised actions in The Future Indefinite tense.

7.5 The tactic of empathy

The proportion of emphatic utterances is 6.89% in the speech of the professional detective, and 21.62% in the speech of the amateur detective.

The observations on our empirical data have proved Martinovsky's reflections on how "reactive empathy" is verbalized: by voicing of other's mental states, comparing of inner experiences, and exchanges of generic and personal pronouns (Martinovsky 2006: 28). We can specify that verbally these intentions are manifested through the use of clichés in the form of imperatives (*Don't worry, Take it easy*), commissives (*You're going to be okay*), expressives (*Poor old you, You must be worried*), or declarations (*I can well understand that*). Let us provide the context for these considerations. In the episode below the police detective Hamish, confronted with the rudeness of the witness and her servant, does not give up and expresses empathy to Mrs. Frobisher, which helps him to get into the house and elicit the necessary information:

(15) *"Good morning," said Hamish politely. "I am Police Constable Hamish Macbeth of Lochdubh, and I am here to speak to Mrs. Frobisher".*

"Get lost, pig," said the girl. The door began to close.

Hamish put his foot in it. "Now, what is a beautiful creature like yourself doing using such ugly words?" he marvelled.

"She don't want to see you".

"I can well understand that," said Hamish. "I'll try not to take up too much of your time".

"You seem harmless enough," said Mrs. Frobisher. "Come in. Bring us some coffee, Miranda" ("Death of a cad", p. 178).

The amateur detective expresses empathy, guessing and sharing the emotional state of the witness, Miss Simms:

(16) *"What did she say?"*

Miss Simms turned pink. "Reckon as I don't want to say".

"You mean what she said hurt." Agatha looked at her *sympathetically*. **"You're not the only one"**. Miss Simms looked at her in surprise. "I'm not? But everyone else said how she was an angel" ("Agatha Raisin and the potted gardener", p. 338).

Agatha's sympathetic tone of voice is described by the author (*looked at her sympathetically*). Showing empathy helps Agatha to achieve her goal – to persuade Miss Simms to provide the true details about the murdered person's life that she has been hitherto trying to hide.

Another typical exchange demonstrates the manifestation of empathy by the cliché *You must be very worried*, again reinforced by the author's commentary (*said sympathetically*):

(17) *After tea was poured, Agatha said sympathetically, "You must be very worried about your daughter"* ("Agatha Raisin and the vicious vet", p. 459).

Thus, in the detective discourse empathy is verbalized through the use of various stereotyped phrases emphasized with intensifying adverbs.

7.6 The tactic of apology

In terms of frequency, it has been found that the professional detective uses this tactic in 2.29% of utterances, while the amateur detective uses it in 8% of utterances. Apology is expressed through clichés with performative verbs like "Sorry", "Excuse me", "I apologize for", "Forgive me", "Pardon me", "I regret". Let us follow up, first of all, a case of explicit apology with the help of the performative verb "apologize":

(18) *"We won't keep you long," said Chalmers soothingly. He took her through her statement, and then said mildly he was surprised she had not told Mr. Blair about throwing her drink at the captain. "I lied to him," said Vera defiantly. "He kept shouting and shouting at me, so I thought it better to say nothing."*

"I apologize on behalf of the Strathbane police", said Chalmers. *"No-one is going to shout at you. You are a valuable witness. Now, what caused that scene?"* ("Death of a cad", p. 57).

In the provided situation the tactic of apology is applied because the witness is complaining about the rude manners of the police officer who questioned her. So another police officer has to apologize on behalf of the police before going any further with the enquiries. He also uses a promise (*No-one is going to shout at you*) and flattery (*You are a valuable witness*) to ensure a cooperative climate for the further conversation.

It should be mentioned that apology and mitigation sometimes overlap. This can happen when apology performs the function of mitigation. This phenomenon was described by Dede, who views mitigation as a communication strategy and apology as one of the tactics that manifest it (2023: 76). This can be demonstrated in the episode when Agatha does not believe the witness, but the norms of politeness and her strategic plan to create a positive emotional atmosphere do not allow her to put things bluntly. Therefore, apology is used as a mitigation technique:

(19) *'Amy, I haven't been to Florida. ' Agatha sat down on a sofa, and Amy sat in an armchair facing her.*

'Why? ' asked Amy in a croaky voice.

'I'm sorry to say this, Amy, but I did not believe you. A police contact told me that you have confessed that you were lying, that you were never in Florida and it was Tom Richards who paid for you to go to LA for the transformation. I naturally began to wonder if you wanted me out of the way and why.' ("As the pig turns", p. 13).

Thus, the tactic of apology is an attempt to redress the damage that has been done and in detective discourse it helps the detective to establish contact, maintain cooperative relations, and demonstrate respect for the addressee.

Thus, the amateur detective Agatha Raisin, having no authority to question the witnesses, has to find ways to persuade them into cooperation. Neither can Hamish Macbeth, who is low in the rank (sergeant in some novels, constable in others), legally force the witnesses of the crime to give him evidence. Moreover, he is often withdrawn from the investigation and told by his superiors to steer away from any questioning. Anyway, Macbeth always gets to the bottom of things, acting more like a "sheriff", than a policeman. These considerations account for the similar strategies, methods, used by both protagonists, and, in particular, the wide applicability of the communicative strategy of emotional impact by both of them.

8. Discussion and results

It was of interest to investigate the fragments of modern English language detective discourse (namely Beaton's detective novels) in which the detectives question witnesses and suspects, sometimes formally, but more often informally. The informal character of such communication, determined by the detectives' lack of authority, denies the option of an autocratic, "pushy" style of questioning and calls forth an "unorthodox" style, in particular following the strategy of positive emotional impact in order to gain trust and elicit confessions.

The communication strategy of positive emotional impact helps the detectives to set the witnesses up for safe, trusting communication. This strategy creates a friendly environment, helping to establish contact with the interviewee, who, as a result, releases the information necessary for the investigation. The strategy of emotional impact is explicated by the communicative tactics of request, mitigation, reproach, promise, empathy, and apology. The most widely used tactic in English fictional detective discourse has proved to be the tactic of request, the least used is the tactic of apology. Each of the tactics is characterized by certain semantic and pragmatic features and is expressed by certain lexical, morphological and syntactic language means, followed up in the paper.

Of all the advanced tactics, the most effective and widely used (44.8% of the police detective's utterances and 27.8% of the amateur's) is the tactic of **request**, seen as a mild, indirect way of forcing a witness into telling the facts. Request is realized in indirect, "hedged" form, by means of quesitives (*Do you mind if...*), object clauses (*I wonder if*), modal verbs (*could, may, might, would*), adverbs of degree (*a little*), manner (*just*), probability (*maybe*).

The tactic of **mitigation** is the second most widely used tactic (20.6 % and 26.2% accordingly). Mitigation is expressed by vague language, such as adverbs of degree (*a little*), manner (*just*), probability (*maybe, perhaps*), and words of broad semantics (*general, all*).

Reproach as the expression of dissatisfaction and disapproval is used in 13.0 % of the policeman's utterances and twice as often (21.3%) in the amateur's speech. Finding fault with the witness helps the amateur to shift the attention from her vulnerable status (having no legal right to interfere). **Promise** as the detective's obligation to do something in the interviewee's interests in exchange for useful evidence is used less often (12.6 and 8.4 % accordingly) and is expressed by the performative verbs *promise, swear* or non-performative verbs, such as "try, do, come" that explicitly nominate the promised actions, and by conditionals (*I will promise...unless*).

The proportion of utterances that denote **empathy** is quite small in the speech of the professional detective (6.89%) and rather substantial in the amateur detective's speech (21.62%), which is caused by the amateur's lack of authority and therefore the need to appeal to the witness's feelings. Empathy is manifested through the use of clichés in the form of imperatives (*Don't worry, Take it easy*), commissives (*You're going to be okay*), expressives (*Poor old you, You must be worried*), and declarations (*I can well understand that*).

While the professional detective uses the tactic of **apology** in only 2.29 % of utterances, the amateur

detective makes use of it 3.5 times more often (8 % of utterances). Apology helps the amateur detective to get the questioning started and is expressed through cliches with performatives verbs like "Sorry", "Excuse me", "I apologize for", "Forgive me", "Pardon me", or "I regret".

Taking into account the idea that models of communicative behaviour are determined by certain communicative strategies, the research has proven the hypothesis that the perception and evaluation of information occur on a common emotional basis: showing care for the addressee's feelings, opting for requests rather than commands, mitigating unpleasant things and apologizing for them are effective ways of communicating, which is true not solely for the participants of detective discourse.

Notes

1. Translation from Ukrainian into English was done by the authors
2. The author is the same in all the examples so hereinafter her name (M.C. Beaton) is not mentioned
3. Translation from Russian into English was done by the authors

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