COMMUNICATIVE FAILURES PRESENTED IN AMERICAN COMEDY SERIES ANALYSED FROM A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract. The paper reveals and describes the causes of communicative failures from a perspective of the intersubjective approach to communication incorporating basic assumptions of psycholinguistics. It introduces a unit of communication analysis called an intersubjective act. It is defined as an inter-action, where verbal/non-verbal communicative actions of addressers are viewed as perceptual stimuli that, coming into the focus of addressees' attention, trigger parallel conscious/non-conscious inference processes involving cognition, volition, and affect to issue a command of a communicative and/or (immediate or postponed) social action. Inferential analysis applied in the research provides tools for the recreation of communicants' inferential processes and allows consideration of perceptual, cognitive, affective, and volitional aspects of interaction. Inferential analysis handles American cinema discourse represented by the genre of a situation comedy that models live communication, supplying instances of communicative failures to subject to analysis. A communicative failure is viewed as an inability on the part of an addressee to make an inference or make a faulty inference in an intersubjective act. Communicative failures are identified and classified in accordance with the element of the physical or mental experience of the participants of an intersubjective act, which plays a privileged role in causing them. We distinguish between perceptual, lingua-cognitive, cognitive and affective-volitional communicative failures.

Key words: affect, cinema, cognition, communicative failure, inference, intersubjectivity, volition

INTRODUCTION

Communicative failures have been studied from different linguistic perspectives. Representatives of formal approaches tackle them as deviations from language norms. In this vein, Kukushkina (1998), who focuses solely on verbal communication,

maintains that from the perspective of norms adopted within a certain speech community, such deviations are perceived as failures and can indicate an unusual or unclear, bad understanding of a typical way of comprehending any entity.

Proponents of functional approaches adopt a broader view of communicative failures as communication disruptions caused by the inability of certain speech patterns to fulfill their functions (e.g. Gorodetskiy, 1985: 67). Functionalists do not reduce the problem of communicative failures to the utterance conformity/non-conformity to language norms. In particular, Enkvist (1992: 24) points out that communication can be successful in terms of pragmatics and semantics even if syntactic and phonological structures were not properly formed. A number of researchers emphasize the role of a non-verbal aspect of communication in approaching communicative failures as communicants' misunderstanding or inadequate understanding of speech-behavioral acts of their communication partners (e.g. Gudkov, 2003; Loseva, 2007).

Within pragmatics, the problem of communicative failures is solved in the framework of the speech act theory. Most representatives of the pragmatic approach view communicative failures as the addresser's failure to achieve perlocutionary goals (Austin, 1986; Ermakova and Zemskaya, 1993; Teplyakova, 1998). Austin (1986), having developed a classification of infelicities, outlined a number of requirements for successful performative utterances within a conventional procedure. The problem with these conventions is that although they might work in rule-ridden institutional communicative situations, like ceremonial events, they cannot help avoid communicative failures in everyday interaction. Considering both pragmatic and socio-cultural factors, Thomas (1983: 91) has given the term 'pragmatic failure' to the inability to understand 'what is meant by what is said'. The scholar has concluded that a pragmatic failure occurs 'on any occasion on which hearer perceives the force of speaker's utterance as other than speaker intended she/he should perceive it' (ibid.: 94). An attempt to take into consideration the psychological and emotional characteristics of the speakers is exemplified by Polyakova (2009), who interprets a communicative failure as a result of the divergence between a predicted and actual effect of the utterance.

All the above-mentioned pragmatic studies of communicative failures rest (either explicitly or implicitly) on Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995; Wilson, 2016), which develops Grice's pragmatic approach to meaning in communication. Grice (1957, 1975) assumes that (a) a speaker's meaning is an overtly expressed intention that is fulfilled by being recognized; (b) it has to be inferred from the speaker's behavior and contextual information; (c) in inferring the hearer is guided by a cooperative principle and conversational maxims. Taking these assumptions as its starting point, Relevance Theory treats utterance comprehension as 'an inferential process which takes as input the production of an utterance by a speaker, together with contextual information, and yields as output an interpretation of the speaker's meaning' (Wilson, 2016: 3). Other things being equal, 'the greater the cognitive effect achieved, and the smaller

the mental effort required, the more relevant this input will be to you at the time' (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995: 260–266).

Relevance Theory presupposes that while processing utterances, a person is trying to select the most probable way for their interpretation, hoping that the assumption being processed is relevant (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995: 142). 'Achieving maximal relevance involves selecting the best possible context in which to process an assumption' (ibid.: 144). The notion of relevance depends on two principles: cognitive ('Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximization of relevance' (ibid.: 260)) and communicative (Every utterance 'communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance' (ibid.: 260)).

As it might be obvious from the above statements, Relevance Theory relies on the mind-as-computer model of cognition. Consequently, the inference is viewed as a purely rational, logical cognitive procedure.

In cognitive studies, a communicative failure is interpreted as an addressee's inability to interpret an utterance, i.e., to correlate an addresser's utterance with his/her own cognitive model in the way expected by an addresser (Ringle, 1982); the speaker's inability to generate the desired mental state in the mind of his/her communication partner (Bara, 2010).

Cognitive linguistic theories relying on the embodied model of cognition view semantic content associated with a linguistic unit used by the speaker in an act of communication as a dynamic conceptual structure rooted in our bodily experience (Johnson, 1987; Turner, 1991; Lakoff, 1994; Fauconnier, 1997; Langacker, 2001; Cienki, 2016). Understanding is explained in terms of conceptualization, i.e., an array of cognitive operations recruiting conceptual structures for meaning construal (Langacker, 2001: 144–145). The notion of inference is also widely employed by cognitive linguists, who refer to it as purely rational cognitive structure, a logical conclusion a subject makes on the ground of the body of knowledge recruited by a linguistic unit used in a particular context.

We claim that existing theories leave us with a distorted picture of making meaning in communication and, consequently, of communicative failures, from the standpoint of an emerging interdisciplinary field of cognitive science, including philosophy, neuroscience, psychology, sociology, anthropology, ethology, aesthetics, linguistics that give rise to the intersubjective model of cognition and communication. Within this model, intersubjectivity is explained as a human capacity of 'sharing experiential content (e.g., feelings, perceptions, thoughts, linguistic meanings) among a plurality of subjects' (Zlatev, 2008: 1), 'not only, and not primarily, on a cognitive level, but also (and more basically) on the level of affect, perceptual processes and conative (action-oriented) engagements' (ibid.: 3). Against this background, the generation of meaning in communication is addressed as a range of conscious/subconscious parallel psychological processes of intersubjective nature, which take place during the subjects' dynamic interaction with the world (Varela, Thompson and Rosch, 1991) involving other subjects who are themselves sources of meaning (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/1962; Hardy, 1998; Trevarthen, 1998, 2012; Gallagher, 2012; Di Paolo and Thompson, 2014). These

processes are governed by our needs and desires (motivation) and go beyond rational thinking to rely on perception in movement/action (Noë, 2004; Ellis and Newton, 2012; Sheets-Johnstone, 2012), affect/emotion (Panksepp, 1998; 2000; Damasio, 1999; 2003), intuition and insight in combination with the execution of free will in taking a voluntary action (Hardy, 1998).

The intersubjective understanding of creating meaning in communication opens a new perspective for investigating communicative failures.

The goal of this paper is to address communicative failures from a perspective of the intersubjectivity paradigm, which makes it possible to account for the perceptual, lingua-cognitive, cognitive, emotional, and volitional psychological factors that motivate our verbal and non-verbal communication actions.

This goal is achieved through the following objectives:

- to introduce a unit of analysis of communicative failures that captures perceptual, cognitive, emotional, and volitional aspects of the generation of meaning in communication;
- to give a definition of a communicative failure from the intersubjective perspective;
- to discover perceptual, lingua-cognitive, cognitive, emotional, and volitional causes of communicative failures;
- to develop an intersubjective classification of communicative failures.

METHODS

To achieve the goal and objectives, we employ a unit of analysis that is called *an intersubjective act of communication*, i.e., an inter-action, structurally including at least two verbal or/and non-verbal utterances (one initial and the other responsive), embedded in the dynamic psychophysical experiential context shared by the communicants focusing attention on the same verbal/non-verbal utterance. This utterance as a perceptual stimulus triggers parallel conscious/non-conscious inference processes involving cognition, volition, and affect to issue a command of a meaningful goal-oriented communicative and/or (immediate or postponed) social action (Martynyuk, 2017: 65).

Our sample consists of 1000 instances of communicative failures taking place in intersubjective acts, extracted from American situation comedy series ('Frasier', 'Friends', 'Home Improvement', 'Joey', 'New Girl', 'The Big Bang Theory', 'Will and Grace').

The choice of the material for the research has been stipulated by our attempt to approach live communication as close as possible. Having no access to real-life communication, we address sitcom series as its model, a physical 'representation of a real phenomenon that is difficult to observe directly' (Online 1). Scientific modelling has proved to be an established research practice used to predict and explain the behaviour of inaccessible real objects. Situation comedy series situate verbal interaction into a rich social, cultural and pragmatic context. Besides, this

context is multimodal since it includes gestures, facial expressions, intonation, which allows for getting better insight into communicants' intentions, feelings, attitudes and relationships, and thus identifying the causes of communicative failures in each speech act.

Within the framework of the intersubjectivity paradigm, *a communicative failure* is viewed as an inability of a subject to make any inference or making a faulty inference. The notion of an inference is interpreted in accordance with the findings and assumptions of the intersubjectivity paradigm (Martynyuk, 2017: 67). This paradigm advocates a definition of *an inference* as contextually motivated semantic structure, emerging in the minds of the subjects, engaged in an intersubjective act, as a result of complex parallel conscious and non-conscious multi-level associative processes recruiting perceptual, cognitive, volitional and affective elements of their psychophysical experience.

Here, we side with psycholinguists who address a communicative failure as a communication disruption resulting from communicants' complex psychological processes carried out through cognitive, motivational and emotional channels (e.g., Lavrinenko, 2015, who bases his interpretation of communicative failures on the works of Zalevskaya (2014), Zasiekina (2007)). This view represents a long-standing psycholinguistic tradition started by Vygotskiy (1934) and rooted in the ideas of Potebnya (1892).

To reveal the nature and causes of communicative failures, we apply *inferential analysis*. It should be noted that inferences occurring in live communication are not to be confused with inferences made by a researcher, which are products of conscious rational thinking. Carrying out inferential analysis, a researcher becomes a participant of an intersubjective act assuming the role of an observer interpreting the communicative actions of other participants. While watching TV series, the researcher comes to share the mental (becomes aware of the events, the participants' relationships, etc.) and physical (has access to all the perceptual stimuli – the wording of the utterances, intonation patterns, body language, facial expressions, etc.) context of the intersubjective act. The task of the researcher-interpreter is to make inferences about the addresser's intended meanings and the addressee's inferences, embodied in their verbal and non-verbal communicative actions, and, eventually, identify the causes of communicative failures, taking into account perceptual, cognitive, affective, and volitional aspects of interaction underpinning the motivation of these communicative actions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the inferential analysis reveal four types of communicative failures, which are identified in accordance with the element of the physical or mental experience of the participants of the intersubjective act, which plays a privileged role in causing a communicative failure: perceptual, lingua-cognitive, cognitive and affective-volitional.

In the physical experience of the participants of an intersubjective act, we differentiate between lingual (verbal utterances) and extra-lingual (non-verbal behavior of the participants and the setting of the intersubjective act) perceptual stimuli.

Perceptual communicative failures stem from some physical obstacles in the setting that cause a distorted perception of the utterance:

> Chandler was talking to his mother and Joey was listening at the door when Ross walked up.
>
> JOEY: *He said 'When are you gonna grow up and start being a mom?'*
> ROSS: *Wow!*
>
> JOEY: *Then she came back with 'The question is, when are you gonna grow up and realize I have a bomb?'*
>
> ROSS: *Okay, wait a minute, are you sure she didn't say 'When are you gonna grow up and realize I am your mom?'*
>
> JOEY: *That makes more sense* (Online 3: season 1, episode 11).

Eavesdropping at the closed door, Joey confuses the words *bomb* and *mom* since he cannot hear the speakers well enough. The closed door creates a physical barrier that distorts his comprehension. Besides, he does not have eye contact with the speaker, which can also interfere with his listening.

Lingua-cognitive communicative failures stem from the inadequacy of a lingual perceptual stimulus (unknown language or use of nonce words invented for a single occasion). Being unfamiliar to the addressee, linguistic units causing this type of communicative failure do not activate any conceptual content. In other words, they do not perform their semiotic function generating no semiosis:

> Chandler was very excited as he met 'the perfect woman'.
>
> CHANDLER: *Hey, stick a fork in me, I am done.*
>
> PHOEBE: *Stick a fork what?*
>
> CHANDLER: *Like, when you're cooking a steak.*
>
> PHOEBE: *Oh, OK, I don't eat meat.*
>
> CHANDLER: *Well then, how do you know when vegetables are done?*
>
> PHOEBE: *Well you know, you just, you eat them and you can tell.*
>
> CHANDLER: *OK, then, eat me, I'm done* (Online 3: season 2, episode 12).

Chandler's utterance *Hey, stick a fork in me, I am done* represents an individual occasional metaphor A MAN IN LOVE is A WELL-DONE STEAK. The addressee cannot interpret it since it is non-conventional and therefore does not perform its semiotic function: the verbal utterance fails to evoke any concept in the addressee's mind. There is no semiosis; the utterance does not make sense as if the addresser were speaking some unknown language, though taken separately, all the words making this utterance are familiar.

Speaking about the mental experience activated in an intersubjective act, we take into consideration not only the body of knowledge that is evoked by verbal utterances but also, and primarily, the motivation of the participants, since 'our knowledge involved in the generation of meaning is being affected by our interests, wishes, needs, and feelings shaping our motives and goals' (Martynyuk, 2017: 65). Thus, besides cognitive factors influencing the interpretation of communicative actions, we consider affective (feelings, emotional states and attitudes) and volitional (interests, needs and desires) ones.

Cognitive communicative failures result from the specificity of the communicants' cognitive experience influencing the content and structure of encyclopedic knowledge evoked by the verbal/non-verbal communicative action in an intersubjective act. This specificity is explained in terms of centrality (Langacker, 1987: 159), i.e., specific conceptual content becomes the most salient (central) in the process of interpretation of a linguistic unit. Centrality depends on how well a particular conceptual content is established ('entrenched') in the memory and also on a particular context in which a linguistic unit is embedded. The centrality 'tends to correlate with the extent to which a specification is conventional, generic, intrinsic, and characteristic' (ibid.: 159). Knowledge shared by the majority of speech community members is considered conventional. Generic knowledge is understood as information about properties inherent to the majority of representatives of a certain group of entities/situations. 'A property is intrinsic to the extent that its characterization makes no essential reference to external entities' (ibid.: 159). And 'the final factor contributing to centrality is the extent to which a specification is characteristic in the sense of being unique to the class of entities designated by an expression and consequently sufficient to identify a class member' (ibid.: 161).

The place a semantic structure takes in the continuum of 'conventionality – non-conventionality/specificity' in the experience of a person is defined by the nature and number of socio-cultural communities of practice (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1995: 469–470) he/she participates in. Socio-cultural communities of practice are formed on different principles: ethnicity, gender, education, social status, income, family, profession, territory, religion, friendly ties, interests and hobbies like sports, fishing, diving, etc. The number and variety of socio-cultural communities of practice 'an individual can become involved in during his/her social life is only limited by his/her motives/purposes, biological faculties and the opportunities given by the family at birth, on the one hand, and also the opportunities offered by the socio-culture, on the other hand' (Martynyuk, 2017: 63). Participating or not participating in the social practices of different social-cultural communities shapes peoples' experience in a specific way and defines the place this or that conceptual structure occupies in the continuum of 'conventionality – non-conventionality/specificity' in their minds. Accordingly, encyclopedic knowledge is divided into universal, lingua-cultural, social-cultural (group) and individual in most existing classifications.

Encyclopaedic knowledge includes both *declarative knowledge*, i.e., conscious precise memories and recognition of objects and events as expressed through language (Anderson, 1976) and *procedural knowledge*, i.e., implicit memory of

psychomotor processes as procedures that have become automatic and non-conscious (ibid.). Declarative (what?) knowledge is organized by static models like image-schemas (Johnson, 1987), frames (Fillmore, 1982)/domains (Langacker, 1987) and mental spaces (Fauconnier, 1985/1994), structuring concepts of entities and events, while procedural (how?) knowledge is organized by scripts, i.e., dynamic models structuring a canonic sequence of events in some socio-cultural context (Schank and Abelson, 1977: 151).

The example given below represents a communicative failure that stems from the misbalance between the addresser's and the addressee's socio-cultural (group) declarative knowledge:

> The hallway. Sheldon scuttles out of the apartment door and crosses to Penny's. Knocks on it urgently.
>
> PENNY: [opening door] *Oh, hey Sheldon, what's going on?*
>
> SHELDON: *I need your opinion on a matter of semiotics.*
>
> PENNY: *I'm sorry?*
>
> SHELDON: *Semiotics. The study of signs and symbols, it's a branch of philosophy related to linguistics.*
>
> PENNY: *Okay, sweetie, I know you think you're explaining yourself, but you're really not* (Online 4: season 1, episode 5).

Sheldon uses the linguistic term *semiotics* in a conversation with a person who has no philological educational background. Trying to explain the meaning of the term, he uses other terms, which, like the previous one, do not trigger any conceptual content in the addressee's mind. For Sheldon, who is an intellectual, the concept of SEMIOTICS is part of conventional knowledge, while for Penny, who is a waitress, this concept is unknown, not established in the memory.

Cognitive communicative failures can come from the specificity of the addressee's lingua-cultural declarative knowledge:

> Chandler and Joey are sitting on the couch reading.
>
> JOEY: *Can I see the comics?*
>
> CHANDLER: *This is the New York Times.*
>
> JOEY: *Okay, may I see the comics?* (Online 3: season 3, episode 17).

This example illustrates a communicative failure resulting from the addressee's ignorance about such a reality of American life as the *New York Times* newspaper. When Joey asks Chandler to give him the newspaper so he could see the comics, Chandler answers that it is the *New York Times* implying an inference that the *New York Times* does not feature comics as it is a broadsheet newspaper. Joey's repeated request to give him the newspaper suggests that the name does not evoke the concept of A SERIOUS NEWSPAPER in his mind centralizing the concept of AN ENTERTAINMENT NEWSPAPER. For the majority of representatives of

the American speech community, this knowledge is generic and hence conventional, whereas, for Joey, it is specific. This misbalance causes the communicative failure.

The following dialogue exemplifies a situation in which the addressee belonging to a youth community and looking for a partner demonstrates a lack of both declarative and procedural communicative experience of 'dating language':

> Phoebe was telling everyone how she had parted with her boyfriend.
>
> PHOEBE: *Um, not so good. He walked me to the subway and said 'We should do this again!'*
>
> ALL: *Ohh. Ouch.*
>
> RACHEL: *What? He said 'we should do it again', that's good, right?*
>
> MONICA: *Uh, no. Loosely translated 'We should do this again' means 'You will never see me naked'.*
>
> RACHEL: *Since when?*
>
> JOEY: *Since always. It's like dating language. You know, like 'It's not you' means 'It is you'.*
>
> CHANDLER: *Or 'You're such a nice guy' means 'I'm gonna be dating leather-wearing alcoholics and complaining about them to you'.*
>
> PHOEBE: *Or, or, you know, um, 'I think we should see other people' means 'Ha, ha, I already am'* (Online 3: season 1, episode 3).

Rachel interprets the utterance of Phoebe's boyfriend in line with CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP script, that is, literally, as she doesn't know that in 'dating language', the phrase *We should do this again* means ENDING RELATIONSHIP.

Affective-volitional communicative failures arise from feelings, emotional states and attitudes that are inseparable from the interests, needs and desires of the communicants in the motivation of inferencing processes, which cannot be explained within the framework of pragmatic and cognitive linguistic theories. Let us consider the following example:

> Jack came to Karen to massage her.
>
> JACK: *All right. I guess we're ready. Ahem* [reading from an index card] *'Hello. Welcome. My name is Jack McFarland, and I will be your massage therapist'.* [to Karen] *Now, I want you to take off your robe, and I don't want you to feel uncomfortable. The sheet will drape you, so –*
>
> KAREN: *Yeah, I've done this before, honey.* [throwing off robe] *Skin to the wind* [lies on the table].
>
> JACK: *Wow, Karen! You could bounce a quarter off that thing. Ok…* [reading from card] *'Are there any specific areas that are troubling you?'*
>
> KAREN: *Yeah. My marriage.*
>
> JACK: *I mean your body, Karen* (Online 5: season 1, episode 8).

This example illustrates a communicative failure occurring in a conversation between a massage therapist (actually, a person who is trying to play this professional role) and a patient. Asking *Are there any specific areas that are troubling you?* the alleged therapist expects the patient to interpret his question within VISITING A MASSAGE THERAPIST script where the words *any specific areas* would refer to a literal conceptual content BODY PROBLEM AREAS TROUBLING A PATIENT. Within the framework of Relevance Theory, this is the most relevant inference in this communicative context. However, the addressee interprets the words metaphorically as MARRIAGE PROBLEMS within VISITING A PSYCHOANALYST script, making an inference irrelevant in the given communicative context. This misinterpretation does not stem from the lack of knowledge. It is motivated by the addressee's emotional state (at the moment, Karen's psychological problems concerning her marriage trouble her much more than her physical shape), which brings about the need to talk about them. Thus, in this case, we can speak about an emotional inference resulting from the addressee's psychological state and and a volitional inference prompted by the addressee's interests and needs, both motivating this unexpected interpretation of the utterance.

Let us look at another example:

> Frasier has spent the night with his ex-wife, who wants to renew their relations. The waiter has just brought their breakfast. She starts to inspect the breakfast.
> FRASIER: *And – I mean, it's not that we were overly impulsive or anything, or that what we did was wrong, I just…*
> LILITH: *This is a mistake.*
> FRASIER: *Oh, thank God you said that! Oh, it's not that last night wasn't very enjoyable, but who are we kidding? You've gotten on with your life, I've gotten on with mine! I've got a new career, I've re-established relationships with my family, I've got a whole new set of friends – for the first time in years, I'm happy! I mean, for us to even consider getting back together –it's just the stupidest thing two people could do!*
> LILITH: [staring at him with horror] *I meant the eggs. I ordered poached, not fried.*
> FRASIER: [trying to cover] *Well, you didn't let me finish, you see… after I played Devil's advocate, I –*
> LILITH: *Oh, Frasier, don't insult me! That's how you really feel, isn't it?*
> (Online 2: season 1, episode 16).

Interpreting Lilith's utterance *It was a mistake* Frasier makes a faulty inference that Lilith doubts the appropriateness of resuming their relationship. Frasier thinks that his ex-wife means they are making a mistake in their personal life (MISTAKE IN A PERSONAL LIFE script), while she actually wants to focus his attention on the mistake of the people from the hotel service who brought her fried eggs though she had ordered poached ones (MISTAKE IN A HOTEL SERVICE script).

There is no way to explain this communicative failure in terms of the centrality of knowledge, as the concept of MISTAKE seems to be well entrenched in the memory of both the speakers, presenting no problem in itself. Neither is it possible to explain it in terms of 'optimal relevance' since, in this case, making relevant inferences is not so much the matter of 'maximum effect for less effort' as the matter of motivation, driven by the communicants' interests and emotions. The addressee is quite happy with his new life and does not want to renew the relationship with his ex-wife; he seeks to find a way out of this awkward situation, so he makes the inference which best suits his interests. He wants to believe that Lilith shares his feelings because this is a solution to his problem. Thus, we can speak about an emotional inference resulting from the addressee's psychological state, his feelings and emotions and also about a volitional inference driven by his needs.

> In the next example, a communicative failure occurs in the process of interpretation of a non-verbal communicative action:
>
> Eric broke up with Daphne. Daphne is sitting on the couch, staring at the fire. Niles brings in some firewood.
>
> NILES: *We'd better make this last, this is all that's left of the wood.*
>
> DAPHNE: [begins to cry].
>
> NILES: *Oh no, don't worry, if this runs out there's an antique sideboard in the drawing room that I think is reproduction.* [She looks at him] *Oh. It's Eric, isn't it?* [She nods, then stands and walks closer to the fire] (Online 2: season 1, episode 17).

Keeping the fire burning, Niles mentions that he is running out of wood. Daphne starts crying, and Niles interprets her non-verbal action as a reaction to losing the energy source in fear of freezing. However, Daphne's facial expression suggests that her tears are a reaction to the loss of her beloved.

The addressee's faulty inference does not fall under centrality misbalance cases. It is explained by his psychological state. Niles has feelings for Daphne and wants to act as her protector. Though he undoubtedly realizes that she might cry for Eric, the person she loves, as he eventually offers this inference without any verbal prompts from her, he does not want to open this possibility for interpretation of her tears until it becomes obvious. Thus, as in the two above cases, this communicative failure is of affective-volitional nature.

CONCLUSION

Understanding communication as an intersubjective phenomenon being fully compliant with the main provisions of psycholinguistics provides new opportunities for the study of communicative failures. Application of the inferential analysis, having in its foreground the intersubjective view of inference, makes it possible to account not only for cognitive experience serving as a basis for the generation of

meaning in communication but also for volition and affect adjusting this experience to the communicants' needs, desires and feelings.

Within the intersubjective framework, a communicative failure is seen as an inability of a subject to make any inference or making a faulty inference. An inference is addressed as a mental structure that emerges in an intersubjective act as a result of conscious and non-conscious psychological processes at work employing rational thinking, affect, and volition, and being triggered by a communicative action (verbal or non-verbal).

The results of the inferential analysis yield four types of communicative failures: perceptual, lingua-cognitive, cognitive and affective-volitional. The name of the failure centralizes the parameter of the physical or mental context of the intersubjective act, which plays a privileged role in causing the failure. However, it is inseparable from all the other parameters as part of gestalt.

Perceptual communicative failures result from obstacles in the physical context of the intersubjective act that causes a distorted perception of the utterance.

Lingua-cognitive communicative failures grow out of the inadequacy of lingual perceptual stimuli as part of the physical context of the intersubjective act (the addresser uses a language unknown to the addressee or creates a nonce word/phrase for a single occasion).

Cognitive communicative failures derive from a misbalance in the conceptual system of the addresser and the addressee as part of the mental context of the intersubjective act, as a result of which the addresser's verbal/non-verbal utterance evokes no concept in the addressee's mind or activates a concept different from the one intended by the addressee.

Affective-volitional communicative failures stem from the feelings, emotional states and attitudes as much as the interests, needs and desires of the addressee.

The study opens perspectives for further inquiry into the specificity of communicative failures in different types of discourse and their further classification and description on the basis of the intersubjectivity model of communication.

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