

## **Alterity as a term and a communication category: linguocognitive and discursive approach**

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### **Abstract**

The article is devoted to alterity as a communication category in terms of linguocognitive and discursive approaches. The article gives an in-depth insight into alterity as a communication category in the cognitive and discursive aspects. Being an indispensable part of communication and cognition, the category has its own meaning presenting the communicative interaction within the frame "I – the Other". The category of alterity has its own set of category properties, which are specified uniquely in different languages. The article includes a description of the linguistic means and communicative strategies and tactics, with the help of which the category of alterity is realized in fiction. The category content is variable in the discourse, and it serves ground for the ecological and non-ecological modes of communication. The results of the research are verified with the help of the following methods employed in the research: the analysis of key concepts, comparative analysis, contextual analysis, discursive analysis. The study of special linguoallological (from allology – a science about the Other) competence forms the perspective of the research.

**Key words:** communicative mindset, communicative category, alterity, category properties, discourse, concept, linguocognitive and discursive approach, ecological/non-ecological mode

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### **Introduction**

Modern linguistic science postulates the fact that the human being is apt to perceive and assimilate new elements of knowledge within uniform cognitive frameworks. Different people share obviously similar needs and aims of communication, which, on the one hand, explains several certain uniform principles of the world perception and, on the other hand, sufficient similarity in the forms of cognitive functioning (Langacker, 2000).

However, along with the common ways of mirroring the reality, everyone is characterized by unique personal views of the world that determine their understanding of it (Semenova, 2006).

Even such basic notions as "other", "the same", "this", "that", which are classified as basic determiners by A. Wierzbicka (2001), may turn out to possess several culturally specific meanings, arrayed in different language forms.

The aim of the article is to render key properties of the communication category of alterity in modern English, with the Russian language means serving as a comparable background for identifying culturally specific meanings of the category under study.

### **Literature Review**

Hence otherness, categorized in terms of alterity, is to be considered in terms of universally basic notions, forming a key concept in this or that language and requiring certain linguistically and culturally specific categorization.

In contemporary humanitarian science, alterity is viewed as a complementary category, and its content is elaborated through philosophical, psychological, religious, sociological, literary as well as linguistic research (Bakhtin, 1997; Levinas, 1999; Baldry & Paul, 2006; Bamberg, De Fina & Schiffrin, 2011; Baker, 2015; Zheltukhina et al. 2016; 2017; 2021; Qazi & Shah, 2017; Boeva-Omelechko et al., 2018; Gazizov

et al., 2020; Repina et al., 2018; Tameryan et al., 2018; Tameryan et al., 2020; Baigozhina et al., 2020; Baranova et al., 2020; Zheltukhina, Zelenskaya & Ponomarenko, 2020; Nurutdinova et al., 2020; Abramova et al., 2020; Baktiyarova et al., 2021; Protassova, 2021; Shiryayeva et al., 2022; Tameryan, Zyubina & Zheltukhina, 2022).

If viewed philosophically, the category of alterity is contemplated as a binary entity, as it presupposes a meaningful correlation of one and the other regarding distinguishing similarities and differences.

Naturally, language reflects the person's capability of perceiving the world and understanding it in all its peculiarities and manifestations (Kubryakova, 2004: 17).

While recognizing the mediating function of the language in the processes of categorization and conceptualization, it is to be questioned in this article, on the strength of which linguistic means and within which linguistic categories the language embodies the binary perception, expressed by the dichotomy "other / different – identical / the same".

### **Methodology**

Addressing the study of alterity as a communication category is enhanced by the following issues:

- 1) it facilitates understanding of the communicative mind and communication categories as its main constituents;
- 2) it specifies the range of the principles and mechanisms of communication;
- 3) it extrapolates the methodologically relevant content of the humanitarian category of alterity into the linguistic branch of study, enlarging the conceptual means of communicology and the interpretation tools of linguistic research;
- 4) it allows to draw correlation between alterity and associatively connected categories with the view of improving the lexicographic aspect of its rendering in modern Russian and English;
- 5) it requires an in-depth discursive analysis which is to result in extracting implicit subtle properties of the category.

The results of the research are verified with the help of the following methods employed in the research:

- 1) the analysis of key concepts;
- 2) comparative analysis;
- 3) contextual analysis;
- 4) discursive analysis.

Each of the scientific methods was used at a definite stage of the study:

- 1) the analysis of the key concepts included a component-definitional analysis of the category concept – alterity, as well as all linguistic means, forming the same thesaurus and associative word-fields with it. This procedure was carried out through the semantic stretching of the key notion via interpretational analysis of its synonyms, antonyms, etymological analysis, construction of the nominative clusters of the parameters of the category.
- 2) the comparative analysis was employed in identifying culturally specific properties of alterity in the English language as considered in the background of the Russian language.
- 3) the contextual and discursive analysis of classic and contemporary British fiction consisted of defining macro- and microcontexts which allowed to trace the connection of one communicative event with another; at the next step the contexts were analysed by such criteria as the topic and the participants (status roles and communicative situations), chronotope, communicative environment, communicative strategies and tactics, communicators' intentions, etc.

The research employs linguistic material of both the Russian and English languages. The key concepts and their specifiers are analysed with the help of the data available in contemporary dictionaries of meanings, synonyms, antonyms, and thesaurus (more than 350 lexical means). The discursive part of the analysis is carried out with the aid of literary contexts (345 contexts) from classic and contemporary British prose, marked by otherness as the key topic.

## Results and Discussion

### Key Concept Analysis

The term *alterity* itself has been defined under philosophical scrutiny as a spectrum of notions and ideas, contributing overall to the idea of "otherness", strictly being in the sense of the other of two (Latin *alter*). The concept was established by Emmanuel Lévinas in a series of essays, collected under the title *Alterity and Transcendence* (Levinas, 1999).

Nowadays it is widely deployed outside philosophy, having gained use in such seemingly remote disciplines as historical musicology and other humanitarian spheres among which literary criticism is not an exception. Suffice to refer to the studies where alterity is a key concept and a literary category to be employed in textual analysis and interpretation (Polovtsev, 2006).

In terms of axiology alterity is prone to double ambivalent nature combining the ultimately tragic idea of destruction as well as harmoniously dynamic synthesis and elimination of all contradictions and emergence at a new level of self-development. From the linguistic and cultural point of view it can result in both positive and negative connotations of the communicative means. Reflecting on the abstract notion of alterity E.E. Boesch (1996) remarks: "There exists some known "other" – for example, our neighbours' houses, their habits – and at the same time some unknown "other"; there is attractive, tempting "other" as well as menacing and repulsive; we can face alternative "other" – the dessert we have not ordered, the tree we have not planted; (...) and there is "other" that is unreachable for us – grapes hanging too high and thus seeming sour or especially sweet to us" (Boesch, 1996: 90).

Speaking in terms of Derrida's viewpoint on the problem, present-day fragmentary man can be "a whole man" only by means of the Other, thus shifting the latter from the periphery to the centre of the social studies. Similar understanding is observed in Bakhtin's works, e.g. "The Self becomes conscious of oneself and turns into one only after it has revealed itself to the Other, via *the Other* and by means of *the Other*, whereas the most important acts that constitute self-consciousness are determined by the relation to the other consciousness (to You). As a result, the self obtains its consciousness interacting with the Other" (Bakhtin, 1997: 343).

Within the frames of modern humanitarian discourse, *alterity* appears to be a category realizing the relations between the I and the Other depending on the following interpretations of the Other: 1) another I (the Other in the structure of the I); 2) You as *the Other* (opposed to any other); 3) the Other as any other; 4) the Other as a stranger, alien, foreigner, outsider (Dorogavtseva, 2006). The above-mentioned interpretation leads to the following definition of alterity: a category of Subject-Subject and/or Subject-Object relations between *the I* and *the Other* as realized through self-identity as well as at the levels of interpersonal, social, and intercultural communication. As a result, the category of *alterity* is of key relevance to how communicative interaction is structured. Thus, it is going to be viewed as a communication category in the cognitive and discursive aspects. In addition, we believe that the subjective nature of the term speech is opposed to its objective linguistic content, focused on cognitive function, and fixed in the terminology dictionary (Madzhaeva, 2017: 87).

In our previous research (Kislyakova, 2018), we concluded with a complex conceptual structure of the category of *alterity*, which is presented in its binary properties defined as its parameters. These parameters are viewed as opposing

subcategories: singularity – plurality, identity – non-identity, similarity – difference, normality – abnormality, nativity – strangeness, definiteness – indefiniteness, reality – unreality.

Alterity is mainly an implicit category, which can get explicit under a particular context, marked by certain linguistic and stylistic means. Like any other communication category, *alterity* is closely connected with the notion of the communicative norm, understood as a set of speaking rules accepted by society, and determining different types of verbal interaction in various situations. The core component of the communicative norm is the principle of communicative relevance, adequacy of verbal performance in a certain communicative situation. Here comes into logical view D.H. Hymes's (1974) SPEAKING model of communication, in which each of the letters stands for a respectively abbreviated word – setting, participants, ends, act sequence, key, instrumentalities (linguistic means), norms of interaction, genres (Hymes, 1974). So, the speaker's choice of communicative strategy and tactics has a crucial influence on the course of interaction and its effectiveness as well as ecological/non-ecological mode.

Alterity as a communication category determines the following functions of interaction:

- 1) orientative function, when the Other appears to be a 'guide' in adapting oneself to the setting;
- 2) manipulative function, which is realized on condition of unequal statuses of participants, thus leading to a conflicting type of communication.

Speaking about the unequal status, we mean the communicative status rather than the social one. As an example, illustrating the latter function, is the situation of communicative inequality rendered in one of the novels by D. Lodge (1984):

*Then we went to Anitkabir to lay a wreath on Ataturk's tomb <...> Mr. Custer thought it would be a nice gesture. And a funny thing happened <...> Perhaps I should not have told Professor Swallow that it was a capital offence to show disrespect to the memory of Ataturk <...> I said it as a kind of joke. However, he seemed to be very worried by the information <...> Anyway, Mr. Custer told him, 'Don't worry, just do exactly what I do.' So we march down the concourse, Mr. Custer in front carrying the wreath, and Professor Swallow and I following in step, under the eyes of the soldiers <...> And then Mr. Custer had the misfortune to trip over a paving stone that was sticking up and? Being impeded by the wreath, fell on to his hands and knees. Before I could stop him, Professor Swallow flung himself to the ground and lay prostrate like a Muslim at prayer (Lodge, 1984: 180).*

As the given example shows, the British professor is worried about causing a conflict by putting himself in the wrong, as he is not fully aware of the SPEAKING criteria of the situation described. He is forced to imitate the behavior of the people around and he is manipulated by signs that he tends to misinterpret, thus revealing his otherness.

In theory of communication, it has been established to differentiate the notions Other and Familiar (Hogrebe, 1993). But this differentiation is more likely to be indicated as the opposition insider / outsider. However, in the social, historic, and imagined dimensions culture is viewed as heterogeneous: being members of the same discourse community, people still have different life experiences and biographies, they also differ in age, gender, or ethnicity, they may have different political opinions and preferences; moreover, cultures change over time (Kramsch, 1998). Therefore, even an insider may possess features of otherness that reflect his constant alteration. It seems more relevant to distinguish the notion "other" as contrastive to "the same", which is a hyperonymous dichotomy for the notions "familiar – foreign".

In its turn, alterity should be considered twofold as a category of logics and as a category of linguistics. In classical logics alterity is opposed to the following categories:

- 1) the category of self (*I, me, myself – you, yourself; Я – Ты*) (Korepina, 2015);
- 2) the category of identity (*this, the same – that, another; этот же – иной, другой*) (Arutyunova, 1990).

As the examples above indicate, the category of alterity has its own language manifestations. The linguistic status of the category under analysis is firstly revealed through the universal meaning in most languages (e.g., lexical means of expressing the idea of otherness), and secondly, through some specific peculiarities of meaning, varying from language to language, that need to be uncovered in this research. In some languages there are explicit as well as implicit ways of rendering the categorical meaning of otherness, such as contextual negotiation of meaning, cues, and inferences.

To categorize the quantity of language means, denoting alterity in both Russian and English, it is relevant to follow the parametrical representation of the category, which was mentioned earlier in the article. The most common linguistic manifestations of alterity in Russian are presented in the table below.

**Table 1: Categorical parameters of alterity and their specifiers**

Parameters of alterity	Specifiers of alterity
1) singularity – plurality	<p><b>English linguistic means:</b> <i>another, different, other, the other, heterogeneous, assorted, mixed, miscellaneous, multifarious, varied, sundry, various, etc.;</i></p> <p><b>Russian linguistic means:</b> <i>другой, другие, некоторые люди, прочий, прочие, отдельные люди, остальные, остальной, оставшиеся, каждый, иной, иные, другого рода, всякий, всякие, всяческий, всевозможный, частный, частичный, разнообразный, многообразный и пр.;</i></p>
2) identity - non-identity	<p><b>English linguistic means:</b> <i>another, alter ego, other, the other, resembling, the likes of me/us, similar, etc.;</i></p> <p><b>Russian linguistic means:</b> <i>другой, другие, не этот, не тот, иной, иные, видоизмененный, второй, не такой, схожий, сходный, подобный, наподобие и пр.;</i></p>
3) similarity – difference	<p><b>English linguistic means:</b> <i>differential, clashing, contradictory, conflicting, deviating, contrasting, discordant, developing, disparate, discrepant, dissimilar, distinct, ill-matched, distinguishable, diverse, divergent, incongruous, incompatible, modified, varying, inconsistent, opposed, controversial, opposite, etc.;</i></p> <p><b>Russian linguistic means:</b> <i>другой, разный, отличный, непохожий, обратный, противоположный, несхожий, несходный, диаметральный, противолежащий, супротивный, различный, особенный, особый, неодинаковый, отличающийся, противоречивый, дифференциальный и пр.;</i></p>
4) normality – abnormality	<p><b>English linguistic means:</b> <i>altered, abnormal, atypical, anomalous, changed, bizarre, distinctive, distinct, extraordinary, eccentric, individual, fresh, original, irregular, peculiar, particular, personal, separate, revolutionary, special, singular, strange, specific, uncommon, unique, unorthodox, unconventional, dissonant, unusual, etc.;</i></p> <p><b>Russian linguistic means:</b> <i>другой, непривычный, необычный, в диковинку, забавный, смешной, выдающийся, исключительный, уединенный, индивидуальный, единственный, розничный, нехарактерный, странный, особый, спорадический, партикулярный, нехарактерный,</i></p>

	<p>несвойственный, чрезвычайный, дикий, непонятный, удивительный, необычайный, необыкновенный, нелепый, чудной, чудный, неестественный, ненормальный, оригинальный, отстраненный, экзотический, противоестественный, диковинный, вычурный, неординарный, экстраординарный, эксцентричный, парадоксальный, самобытный, странноватый, чудаческий, чудаковатый и пр.;</p>
5) nativity – strangeness	<p><b>English linguistic means:</b> <i>outsider, separated, distant, dissimilar, disagreeable, divarified, unequal, divided, discriminating, disunified, alien, split, foreign, extra-terrestrial, outlandish, faraway, unfamiliar, remote, imported, external, overseas, dissent, uncharacteristic, etc;</i></p> <p><b>Russian linguistic means:</b> <i>незнакомый, неизвестный, далекий, иностранный, посторонний, чужеземный, иноземный, приезжий, чужой, чуждый, отдаленный, варяг, зарубежный, заграничный, экзотический, сторонний, отрешенный, неместный, заморский, непричастный, отчужденный, внешний, экзотичный, варяжский, неродной, чужестранный, пригульный, приходящий, не свой, новоприбывший, новоявленный, особняком, одинокий и пр.;</i></p>
6) definity – indefinity	<p><b>English linguistic means:</b> <i>inconsistent, erroneous, incongruous, alterable, vague, bias, ambiguous, changeable, disputable, dubious, new, distorted, etc;</i></p> <p><b>Russian linguistic means:</b> <i>какой-то, какой-нибудь, некоторый, некоторые, кто-то другой, кое-кто, кто-либо другой, новый, кто-нибудь другой, свежий, новоизбранный, малоизвестный и пр.;</i></p>
7) reality – unreality	<p><b>English linguistic means:</b> <i>alternative, far-fetched, possible, reputable, variant, optional, etc;</i></p> <p><b>Russian linguistic means:</b> <i>альтернативный, вероятный, возможный, предполагаемый, мыслимый, допустимый, правдоподобный, неестественный, энный, нереальный, надуманный, выдуманный и пр.;</i></p>

Resuming the data derived from the examples, it should be noted that both the languages display similar tendencies in conceptualizing otherness. There are common meanings in Russian and English, such as:

- 1) "unlikeness, absence of similarity" (*different, clashing, conflicting, differential, disparate, dissimilar, divergent, diverse, inconsistent, unlike – непохожий, не такой, несходный, отличный, другого рода, несхожий*);
- 2) "variety, belonging to different groups" (*multifarious, assorted, heterogeneous, ill-matched, miscellaneous, mixed, sundry, varied, various – другой, не тот, не этот*);
- 3) "firm opposition / contradiction" (*opposed, opposite, contradictory, contrasting, incompatible – противоположный, противный, спротивный, обратный*).

However, apart from the common semantic characteristics the English language obviously differs from Russian in terms of conceptual subtleties of the notion otherness, categorized as alterity. First, the English language representation of the category is strongly associated with disharmony, norm-violation (*deviating, discordant, abnormal, atypical, incongruous*). Another difference lies in interpreting otherness as strange, unusual, incomprehensive (*anomalous, bizarre, strange,*

*uncommon, unconventional, unorthodox, unusual*). Moreover, the English language means focus on the idea of brightness, originality, and eccentricity (*particular, peculiar, personal, singular, special, specific, unique, distinguishable, distinct, distinctive, eccentric, extraordinary, individual, irregular, original*). Furthermore, otherness for the English-speaking individual is something new, whereas the Russian perception does not make it explicit. Also, it is of great scientific interest to admit the metaphorical rendering of otherness as something revolutionary and fresh. To crown it all, the category of alterity can be verbalized with the help of English lexemes *altered* and *changed*.

In contrast to English, the category of alterity in the Russian language is semantically less constituent, as most categorical meanings discovered in English can be expressed in Russian owing to polysemantic forms that cover the notion of otherness. It is worth mentioning that the Russian polysemantic determiner "не такой" has the meaning of "strange" (e.g., "Он не такой, как все", "Он какой-то не такой"). Judging by the generalizing nature of the Russian language means it can be deduced that the category of alterity is more abstract in the Russian language in comparison with English where it is more specified. The word *otherness* itself that nominates the basic notion of the category in English is a dual notion (the quality of being strange or different (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1995), unlike the Russian term *инакость*, which puts forth plentiful interpretations and designations of "other".

Alterity as a linguistic category may express an outlook on reality (similar, i.e., familiar, devoid of risk, other, different, vague, evidently evoking fear or curiosity). Because a person's opinion is necessarily evaluative, the category of alterity should be viewed as evaluative as well. In the Russian language, it is linked to the emotional clusters of curiosity, fear, and suspense, whereas in the English language, it is associated with curiosity, admiration, surprise, and novice.

### **1. Alterity via Communicative Strategies and Tactics**

As well as through the linguistic means presented in this article, the category of alterity may be manifested through the choice of communicative strategies and tactics relevant to a concrete communicative situation.

Judging by the variety of contexts studied (2,500 contexts), every level of the manifestation of alterity (in self-identity, interpersonal, social, and intercultural communication) is characterized by confirmative and disfirmative strategies (Matyash, 2011), used to accept or abject the Other as a significant interactor. Confirmation is based on non-conflicting, non-imposing and glorifying prescriptions (Sternin, 2004; Takhtarova, 2017), followed by a focus on cooperative communication (ecological), mitigation and face-saving of interlocutors. Respectively, disfirmation takes place in conscious or subconscious violations of these prescriptions. In this case, interlocutors deal with Self-centered opinions, while in confirmative acts, communication is Other-centered.

The following passage from I. McEwan's (2007) novel *Atonement* can be viewed as an example of confirmative communication:

*Henri Bonnet said, 'All that fighting we did twenty-five years ago. All those dead. Now the Germans back in France. In two days they'll be here, taking everything we have. Who would have believed it?'*

*Turner felt, for the first time, the full ignominy of the retreat. He was ashamed. He said, with even less conviction than before, 'We'll be back to throw them out, I promise you.'* (McEwan, 2007).

It is known from the microcontext of the novel that the quoted conversation takes place between British soldiers and French peasants, the chronotope being France in the times of World War II. The microcontext of the passage renders emotional contemplation of the British troops' retreat at Dunkirk, which is verbalized as *felt ... the full ignominy, he was ashamed*. Despite the unequal status of the interlocutors as

well as their belonging to different cultures, their communication is channeled in a friendly tone, owing to a great degree to the interpretational skills of the main character Turner and his empathy towards the problematic issues experienced by the Others. Turner does not refuse to make a remark in an awkward situation in which he must admit the failure of his army as if it were his own: being far from certain about the British troops' return to the territory of France with the aim to free it, he still prefers to express sympathy and support, promising to come back.

Despite being doomed, the French peasants are welcoming, friendly, and respectful in their communicative manner: they avoid saying negative things about the British army retreat and bitterly state the inescapable future. They break their last bread with the British soldiers, who are about to abandon the country occupied by Germans. Thus, the situation described demonstrates an active exchange of communicative roles and remark steps, based on the leading strategy of both the British soldiers and the French peasants. As a result, the degree of the communication activity in this context is characterized as high: their perception of their own role in this discourse, their own contribution to the communication, self-attitude, and attitude to the Other are means of the common communicative aim – to support each other in a hopeless situation.

Discursive representation of alterity reveals its variability within its parameters, considering changes in the communicative status of the interlocutors and the other communication criteria. The category of alterity may get conceptually developed latent specifiers of the main parameters may be uncovered. Also, the theme and the purpose of the discourse may realize new parameters of alterity. As such, the parameters of *conformity* – *disconformity* can be actualized in the discourse of mass-media:

- 1) alterity viewed as disconformity to official political opinions (Steinbuch, 2019);
- 2) alterity viewed as disconformity to the political, social, and ethical expectations (Fisk, 2018 and Garger, 2019, Borger, 2019), examples:

*Jonathan Whittall of Medecins Sans Frontieres scathingly attacked what he called 'stethoscopes for hire', those who operated 'as contractors driven by profit rather than the principles that guide humanitarian action in conflict'* (Fisk, 2018);

See also (Garger, 2019);

*Senator van Hollen called the Trump measures a "pathetic response", pointing out that steel exports to the US were a fraction of one per cent of Turkey's total exports* (Borger, 2019).

Moving back to literary contexts, it should be noted that variability of alterity produces a definite pragmatic effect. In keeping with the example of imperial Britain, the literature of that period reflected the general policy of perceiving the other in the light of their weakness and inferiority, thus extenuating the moral responsibility of the stronger self to educate, convert, or civilize depending on the identity of the other. In this respect, othering can be done with any racial, ethnic, religious, or geographically defined category of people.

On balance, "contemporary British fiction is keen to explore the cultural representation of geographical spaces, especially in relation to the urban environment and national identity," while "postmodernism and postcolonialism in fiction have both served to loosen traditional discourses of Englishness" (Bentley, 2008: 189). One of the ways to approach the phenomenon of alterity as it is reflected in fiction is to address the postwar literature which is associated with a deep interest in immigrants and exiles (May, 2010). The problem of immigrants and national identity has been raised on a wider scale than ever before. To a certain degree, it is touched upon in such novels as *Small World* by D. Lodge (1984), *White Teeth* by Z. Smith (2017), which is considered to be a multicultural novel (May 2010).

In these novels, racial and ethnic otherness is rendered in the form of identity clusters, in which some characters are apt to retain their cultural and national peculiarities, not

willing to develop any features of sameness by means of mimesis. For example, such characters can be observed in *Magpie* (Josh and some other neighbors in the Flanders estate). Others might seem dissatisfied with their ethnical or religious background and seek ways of fitting into the society they have found themselves in.

The novel *White Teeth* ushers the readers into the fictional world of different ethnical representatives whose lives appear to be entangled in the complex social structure of today's London. A second-generation immigrant, the son of a former citizen of India, and a schoolchild Magid finds himself in the classical position of the Other, a foreigner that should be avoided, a derelict. On the one hand, he is almost devoid of any connection with the culture of his ancestors because of he was born into an immigrant family. On the other hand, he cannot integrate into British culture and acclimatize in it because his attempts are confronted by his family life routine. As a result, he is a constant target of his parents' reprimands and depressive moods. The disparity and consequent frustration stand for the problem of alterity in this novel.

## **2. Alterity as a Factor in the Ecological/Non-Ecological Mode of Communication**

As a result of the contextual analysis of the implicit or explicit representation of alterity, we arrived at the conclusion that the crucial success of communication is determined by the ability to construct the image of the Other as the starting point for choosing linguistic means and communicative strategies and tactics for further interaction. The image of the Other is considered a component of the communicative mind and is defined because of the conscious or subconscious impact of one interlocutor on the Other. Along with the category of the self, the image of the Other is one of the categorical meanings of alterity, and it belongs to the circle of closely-knit notions of the Self-image, another I, and it means a situational image of the interlocutor, representing a significant component of a communicative act which is the basis of the common communicative center of the interaction as well as all the possible I's of an interlocutor that can be brought about under the influence of the other I.

Overlapping the sphere of the Other entails dealing with a person's emotional sphere and defines the ecological mode of communicative situations, representing the category of alterity. Ecological communication, in the most general sense is viewed as the kind of communication that does not harm the life and health of a person. According to our data analysis, the formation of the ecological / non-ecological mode of communication is influenced by the role of the Other and is relevant regarding the construction of the image of the Other.

An example of co-tuning in communication which may be successful (ecological) or unsuccessful (non-ecological), is the following literary context:

*A word, a look, a smile, a frown, did something to another human being, waking response or aversion, and a web was woven which had no beginning and no end, spreading outward and inward too, merging, entangling, so that the struggle of one depended upon the struggle of the other* (Du Maurier, 2007).

The context under discussion represents a case of explicit emotivity as well as emotional evaluation in equalizing One and the Other. The Other is considered as an indispensable quality of any relationship since the extended metaphor about a web that describes the whole continuum of people's relations denotes the utmost necessity and inalienability of the Other in the matter of Self-construing, the development and growth/regress of the I of a person and his/her boundaries.

The main character of the novel *The Scapegoat* makes use of such strategies and tactics as emotional balancing, conflict depreciation, emotional tolerance as well as decreasing communicative aggression, which all add up to the markers of ecological communication (Ionova, 2013). The character appears to be able to break his sister's (Blanche) 15-year-long silence caused by the anger and detestment on Blanche's part

because he murdered her fiancé during World War II. The new Jean lessens the conflict by means of his sincere confession and repentance:

*'I had never looked at those photographs before. I realized, turning the pages, that he was good, and that the workmen must have loved and respected him. It came to me that when he was killed it was through jealousy; the man who shot him, or ordered him to be shot, did it not from mistaken patriotism but because he envied him, because Maurice Duval was finer than he was himself.'* (Du Maurier, 2007).

The quoted passage dwells on Jean's admittance that he was envious and jealous of his sister's loved one because he was kinder and more open-hearted to his nearest. He confirms his being a murderer as well, and at the verbal level, it is rendered through several pejorative words and phrases: *killed, through jealousy, mistaken patriotism, envied him.*

Furthermore, the main character makes use of such tactics as splitting his own 'I', self-denial, and transformation into a new image by means of empathy. He turns into a *homo ludens* but he is a *homo sentiens* at the same time, who puts on a new image depending on the circumstances he finds himself in. It all brings out the best qualities in his human nature and becomes the reason for pacifying the nearly belligerent atmosphere in the chateau. For example, in his talk to the mother, the main character shows interest in the needs of his interlocutor, not his own. He irons the old conflict and disagreements that have been a matter of discretion in the family.

The emotional energy that fosters John's verbal communication has a positive impact on the interlocutors – the inhabitants of the chateau, although they are not willing to construct any common emotional center with him. This fact justifies the idea that even the efforts of one communicator may have an ecological effect in any emotional situation. This novel is a good example of how the ecological mode can reverse through the contextual re-evaluation of the notion of otherness that develops its meaning and acquires many adherent sense derivatives. This ever-changing process is grounded on human nature, which can be dominant by either its ecological or non-ecological quality.

## **Conclusion**

As revealed in the study, the category of alterity can be viewed as a parameter of the communicative process that predetermines the realization of communicative strategies and tactics as well as the structure of the communicative situation, which ultimately results in effective (cooperative, ecological)/ non-effective (destructive, non-ecological) communication.

The linguistic study of alterity evolves our understanding of the association of language with the person's sense of self and of the complex relationship between language and cultural identity. Thus the research undertaken represents theoretically important and relevant results for such branches of science as a theory of communication and general and applied linguistics. The conception of alterity as a communication category has been recently introduced into the study of the language and, therefore, requires further substantiation. It has been pointed out that the category of alterity is culturally specific in different languages, preserving the same core components of the meaning. The linguistic peculiarities, reflecting specific cultural interpretations of otherness, are taken as complementary notions that construct the complex category of alterity and that serve as its main semantic parameters.

One of the significant conclusions for theory and practice of communication is the fact that otherness, brought out as a dominant category in any kind of human relations, turns into a factor decreasing the quality of life, leading to unsuccessfulness and dissatisfaction, and resulting in non-ecological impacts on a person's health. On the other hand, employing cooperative strategies on behalf of at least one of the interlocutors can have an ecological effect in many emotional situations.

To recapitulate, the main properties of alterity as a complex multifold communication category are the ones of being implicit, parametrical, variable, and situational. Depending on the level of awareness of the category's significant content, interlocutors are capable/incapable of regulating communicative interaction (the choice of certain language means, use of discursive markers and communicative strategies and tactics). On top of that, effective and ecologically relevant communication is possible on the condition of constructing the image of the Other that must be adequate to the communicative situation. It presupposes developing a special competence – linguoallological (from allology – a science about the Other) that forms the perspective of our research.

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