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CHARACTER ANALYSIS OF ORAL ACTIVITY: CONTACT PROFILING

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ABSTRACT
The article presents the results of our observations on syntactic, semantic and plot peculiarities of oral language activity, we find it justified to consider the above mentioned parameters as identification criteria for discovering characterological differences of Ukrainian-speaking and Russian-speaking objects of contact profiling. It describes the connection between mechanisms of psychological defenses as the character structural components, and agentive and non-agentive speech constructions, internal and external predicates. Localized and described plots of oral narratives inherent to representatives of different character types.

Key words*: character, mechanism of psychological defense, spoken language, contact profiling, agentive speech construction, predicate, plot, narrative negotiations.*

Introduction

Traditionally pressing issue on applied methods of psychodiagnostics of individual differences aiming at behavioral prognosis gains growing importance and exclusive specific nature in contemporary civilizational conditions. Extensification of interpersonal communications in unexceptionally all spheres of life activity is consistently accompanied by decrease of their intensive characteristics, in other words – by decrease of their qualitative part. This stipulates continuous increase in demand for psychodiagnostic tools, which allow credible prognostication of a human factor impact in certain conditions. At this we see growing interest towards the so-calledcontact methods as implementation of classical diagnostic means (biographic interview, laboratory experiment, testing and so on) often are either impossible or inappropriate (e.g., in case of commercial negotiations).

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“Contact profiling means compilation of a psychological profile of a person in the process of direct interaction with such a person” (Bielianin, 2004: 197).Such a profiling may be carried out (and, as a rule, is carried out) during the time of a contact beyond the frames of standardized conditions of psychodiagnostic procedures.That is why one of the utmost practical and immediately available (in the meaning of “here and now”) methods of psychodiagnostics in frames of wide range of contact interaction is the analysis of product of human activity.

The aim of this publication is a description of the summary of our observation concerning syntactic, semantic and narrative peculiarities of oral language activities (hereinafter – spoken language) of the representatives of different types of character. We would like to point out that the above mentioned observations are a part of the author’s methodological and discriminatingly-psychological discourse pertaining to structural-dynamic understanding of character anthology as a hierarchic combination of *ego*-defenses or mechanisms of psychological defenses (hereinafter – MPD) in frames of theoretical concept proposed by W. Reich (2000).

Unfolding of the mentioned author’s discourse is the result of consistently organized research activities that have been going on since 2005 and at the present moment are resting on experimental samples embracing over two thousand Ukrainian-speaking and Russian-speaking respondents (52% and 48% correspondingly). There were applied theoretical-psychological and methodological principles, methods and procedures of fixation, processing and interpretation of empirical observations as well as other characteristics of the above-mentioned research activities described in our previous publications (Shymko, 2007, 2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c). One of the applied tasks of the described research work is the development and improvement of contact profiling methods to the benefit of efficient psychological impact in communicative situations with the wide range of contextual, procedural, motivational, purposeful and other characteristics of contact interaction.

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Research methods and techniques

Theoretic-methodological component of the current research is connected with the peculiarities of the author's theoretic model of differential character analysis of the object of contact profiling (Shymko, 2010b). As has already been mentioned, this model is the result of systematization and system-structural development of respective views of W. Reich(2000).The principal difference of our approach involves construction of such a structural notion concerning characterological field, which is stipulated by four "clean" (sharpened) character types described by W. Reich (fig.1), however, includes eight "mixed" optionsoffered by us. Moreover, we initially selected Reich's characters according to their empirical occurrence and grouped them into dialectically opposed pairs according to conflicting MPD action.

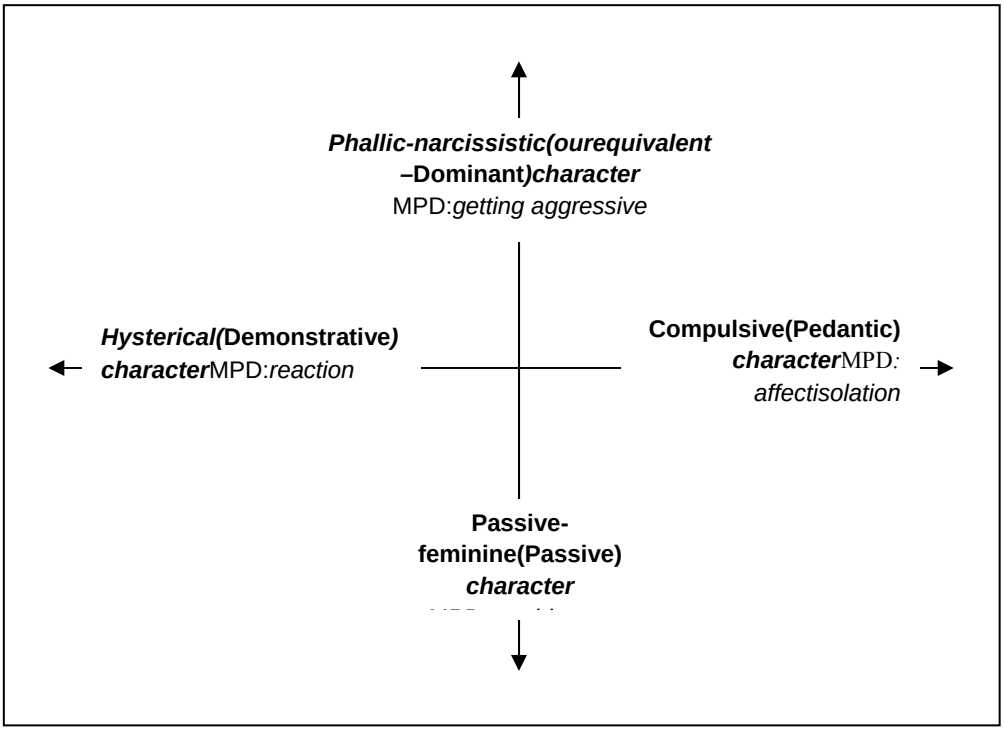

Fig. 1.Mapping of the leading characters according to W. Reich

While describing structural ontology of characterological field, we relied on W. Reich's theses about backbone factor of any character – hierarchic domination of one or other *ego*-defense (*leading* MPD). A the same time, alongside leading MPDs we have elaborated *supplementary* MPDs and empirically researched "mixed" characters in comparison with the "clean" ones inclusively. Moreover, we

have introduced semantically neutral correspondences to clinical names of characters according to W. Reich in view of the fact that contextual-purposeful orientation of our research goes beyond the boundaries of medical and psychological context and does not include pathopsychological experimental component (fig. 1).

We have discovered that hierarchic combination of leading and supplementary *ego*-defenses form "mixed" types of character (fig. 2), which alongside the general features (for each group of characters) contain autonomous unique (in the meaning of peculiarities of internal psychological dynamics and external behavioral activity) ones. That is a "mixed" type is an independent structural-ontological unit of characterological fieldand cannot be reduced to variable kind of "clean" type, therefore, it demands theoretical differentiation as well as practical identification.

Having been separated and grouped in such a way, eight "mixed" and four "clean" types allowed us to embrace wide characterologicalontology (according to the criterion of randomized occurrence of empirical cases in everyday life activity) and develop new or adapt (to the above-described author's theoretical model of differential character analysis) available applied tools meant to solve practical psychological tasks in the frames of classical triad: diagnosis-prognosis-impact.

One of the components of the mentioned tools is the means of contact profiling of characterological peculiarities with the help of spoken language analysis. In particular, it can be achieved by observation of syntactic and semantic peculiarities of spoken language of contact interaction objects. For these purposes we have used methodic approach by M.V. Novikova-Grund (2001, 2006, 2014) pertaining to research of individual semantics of respondents' worldview picture. In particular, we have used the *standard list of text parameters,* which is a part of a text technique suggested by the above-mentioned scientist (Novikova-Grund, 2014).

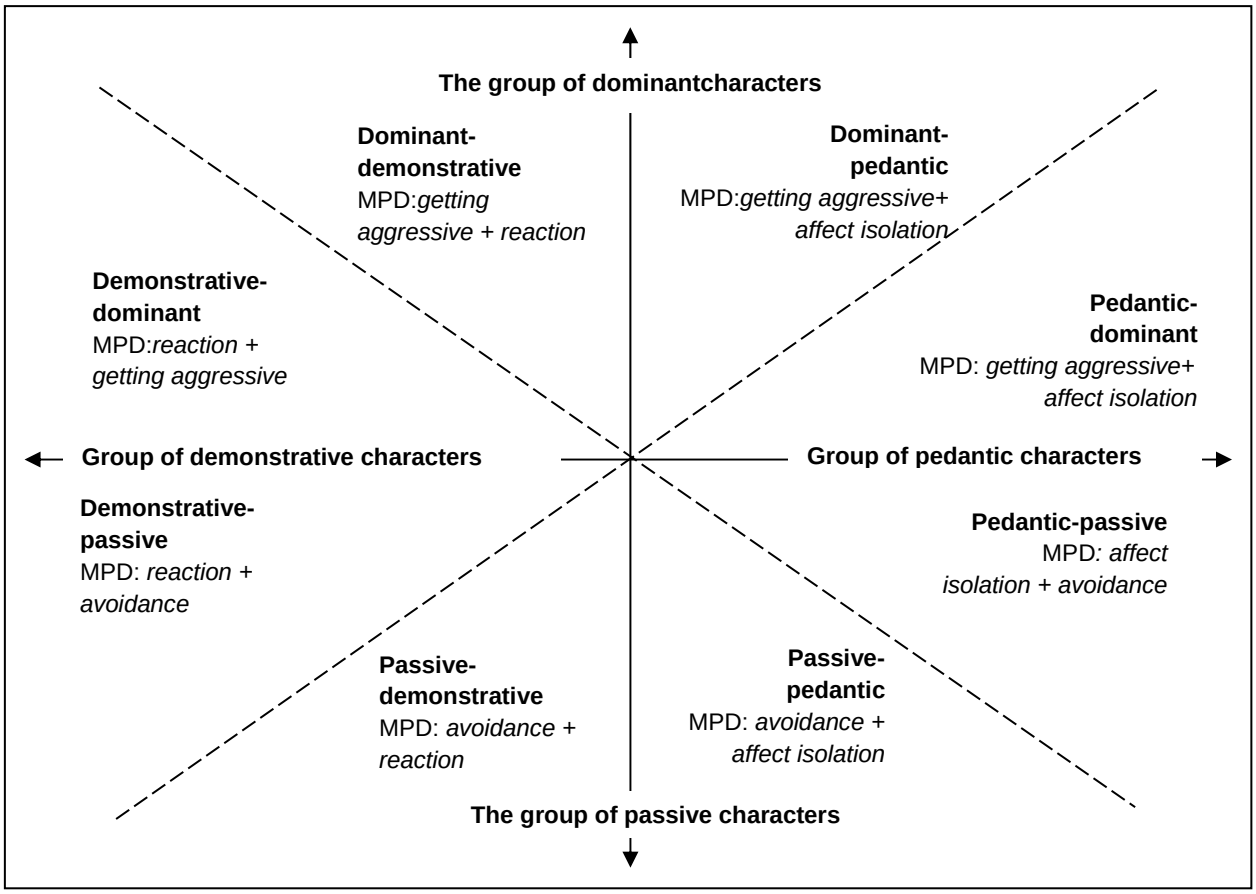

Fig. 2. Structural ontology of characterological field.

"The standard list consists of 16 items presented as binary variables… The parameters included into the list have an important attribute – they are mutually independent and may be present in a text in any composition. Individual worldview picture of a person may be received from the person's texts, then formalized and presented in the image of a "map" as a unique combination of text parameters"(Novikova-Grund, 2014: p.89). This tool was applied as a means of formalization and systematization of researched spoken language. In the given case we did not aim at learning existential worldview content, alternatively we have concentrated on checking a hypothesis on availability in representatives of different character groups of set differences of spoken language, which would be suitable for applied purposes of contact profiling.

For this purpose, we have chosen 160 respondents (20 representatives of each "mixed" type of character) out of our experimental collection. The age range of research subjects was from 24 to 58 years of age; women's share – 31,25%,

mother tongue criterion – exact equal proportion. At this we have separately researched respondents' spoken language in the frames of biographic narrative interview (hereinafter – narrative), as well as during performance by research subjects of training exercise (conducted in pairs), which was modelling the situation of business negotiations and providing necessity of psychological impact on the interlocutor by using spontaneous argumentation in the dialogue (hereinafter – negotiations).Narrative and negotiations were carried out in mother tongue of the respondents.

On the one hand, biographic narrative foresees producing in spoken language of that worldview content that is connected with the subjective-historical aspect of *ego.* The character, in its turn, according to W. Reich "consists of chronic distortion of *ego*by <mechanisms of psychological defense>, which could be called as rigidity. This is the basis of a set characteristic model of human behavior. The sense of such a behavior is the defense of *ego* from external and internal dangers"(Reich, 2000: 161).Thus, in narrative spoken language of different character types it is logical to expect "traces" of the corresponding distortions. On the other hand, speech in frames of negotiations (at the training there were used additional means of stimulating competitive intentions of participants) with no possibility of preliminary preparation took place against the background of evident actualization of stress dynamics and, as a result, activation of MPD.

In both cases the results of spoken language activity were transcribed with further allocation and calculation of frequency and ratio of agentive and non-agentive constructions; external and internal predicates and evaluation of peculiarities of other components of the standard list of text parameters by M.V. Novikova-Grund(2014). The data on respondents were grouped according to the criteria of their mother tongue and belonging to a certain character type (fig. 2), which was defined through psychodiagnostic methods and techniques described in our other publication(Shymko, 2010b). There was carried out frequency data analysis and comparison of average values. Taking into account statistic peculiarities of data distribution, we used the following: a) H-test non-parameter

criterion according to Kruskal-Wallis'smethod for K of independent samples; b) Pearson's chi-squared criterion to evaluate density of variables in paired tables; c) Lambda coefficient for summary on prognostic efficiency of researched spoken language parameters acting as possible attributes for contact profiling(IBM SPSS Statistics,Version 22).Results and interpretations described below rely on corresponding statistic tendencies with the level of asymptotic significance value $p < 0,01$and the level of connection of not less than moderate ($\lambda > 0,3$).

Results

Analysis of syntactic spoken language peculiarities in both narratives and negotiations revealed statistically valid connections of dominant, passive groups of characters with agentive and non-agentive speech constructions. Let us specify the definition of agentive constructions: "Parameter of correlation with the act of freedom. Semantics of the parameter: someone acts on his own free will. Formal markers: presence of animated noun or personal pronoun as its substitute in nominative case (except for verbs 'be' and 'must'). Examples: he goes, writes, thinks" (Novikova-Grund, 2014: p.89).Definition of non-agentive construction in its turn is as follows: "Parameter of correlation with the act of unfreedom and absence of strength. Semantics of the parameter: someone acts not on his own free will or someone else acts on him or something else. Formal markers: absence of animated noun or personal pronoun as its substitute in nominative case at the verb or their absence at the verbs 'be' and 'must'. Examples: he was told, invention was made, computers will take over the world"(Novikova-Grund, 2014: p.89).

Comparison of frequency of appearance of these constructions among mentioned groups testify to conclusion of agentive spoken language trend in dominant characters and non-agentive in passive ones. Judging from our practical experience, this is quite an evident spoken language peculiarity of the mentioned characters, which may be conveniently used for the needs of contact profiling. We believe these trends are connected with structural-dynamic characteristics of corresponding MPD (fig.3).

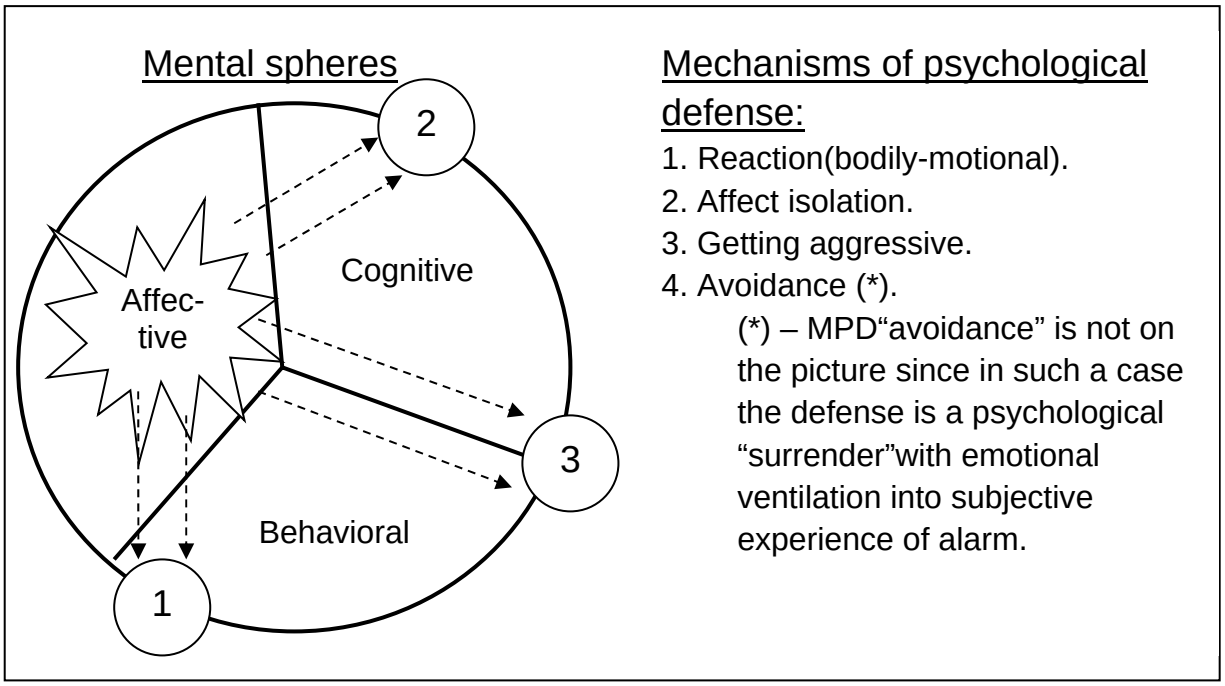

Рис. 3. Mapping of dynamic characteristics of MPD in mental structure.

At the same time the carried out analysis discovered less evident connection of prevalence of agentive constructions (in narratives and negotiations) in the spoken language of pedantic-dominant character similar to characters of dominant group. To our mind, this could be due to specifics of combination of *affect isolation* with *getting aggressive*, which against the background of emotional disengagement and apprehension towards subjectively unsystematic phenomena of internal and external life characteristic of pedantic-dominant character, forms such a worldview according to which activeness, strength, responsibility, etc. become the means of provision of such leading characterological needs of the representative of the given type as arrangement of today’s world and providing predictability of life perspective. However, this assumption needs additional research observation and verification.

Demonstrative-dominant character has showed tendency towards prevalence of agentive constructions only at the time of negotiations (dotted part of the line “1” on fig. 4), whereas demonstrative-passive character (under the same conditions) differs with spoken language trend towards non-agentive constructions (dotted part of the line “2” on fig. 4). At the time of narrative, the corresponding

markers of the mentioned characters are in the insignificance area. We concede that these features are related to high lability of characters of demonstrative group through the action of leading MPD – *reaction*.Simultaneously stress activation (during negotiations) actualizes supplementary MPDs, which determine the above mentioned trends.

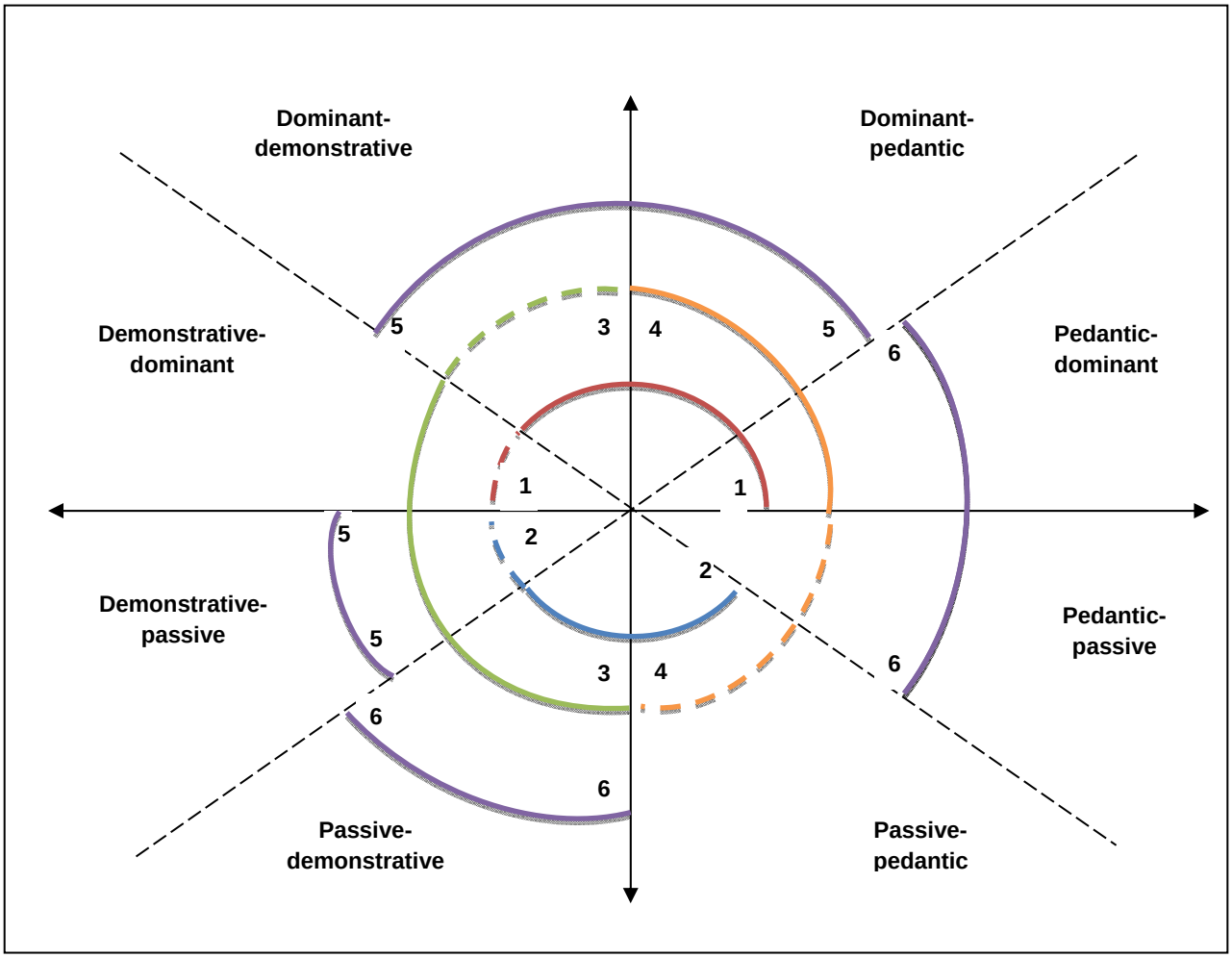

Рис. 4. Mapping of characterological peculiarities of spoken language.

Let us consider predicative peculiarities of spoken language after specifying corresponding definitions. Thus, external predicate is “the parameter of correlation with external space and motion. Semantics: the action takes place in external space, i.e. it can be seen and/or heard. Formal markers are absent since we speak of semantic opposition; however, there are such diagnostic markers as: description of acts of physical movement from one place to another, description of mimic and pantomimic motions, acts of oral speech and other sound (i.e. movement of vocal

cords and sound waves); acts of changes of physical attributes and characteristics; acts of categorization according to physical attributes. Examples: he started running, got red, was fat, is an alcoholic" (Novikova-Grund, 2014: p.89).On the other hand, internal predicate is "the parameter of correlation with internal space unavailable for observation. Semantics: action takes place in the internal, soul or body space. It cannot be observed from the outside. Formal markersare absent since we speak of semantic opposition; however, there are such diagnostic markers as:an internal space that is unavailable for eyes and ears and also (and due to it) existence of events, which cannot be comprehended as a physical motion. Examples: he remembers, wishes, is afraid of, his way of thinking has changed (in the latter example there is a metaphor of a motion but not the motion itself) (Novikova-Grund, 2014: p.89).

Spoken language trend concerning internal predicates was determined in research subjects of demonstrative group characters and passive-demonstrative type under conditions of narrative and negotiations (line "3" on fig. 4) as well as in dominant-demonstrative character at the time of negotiations only (dotted part of line "3" on fig. 4). External predicates in both cases (narrative, negotiations) prevail in the speech of dominant-pedantic and pedantic-dominant characters (line "4" in fig. 4), whereas in pedantic-passive and passive-pedantic groups they prevail only during negotiations (dotted part of line "4" on fig. 4). As we see, such a distribution testifies to the benefit of connection between peculiar features of predicativity of spoken language and mutually opposed pair of MPD: *reaction – affect isolation*. At this, explanations of internal predication prevalence in demonstrative characters and their "neighbors" may reflect a tendency to "spill" emotions on the surface, which is characteristic of the characters with MPD *reaction*. At the same time untrusting detached attitude to the world by the representatives of characters with MPD *affect isolation* probably presupposes prevalence of external predication as a manifestation of defensive concentration of attention on externally localized factors of potential danger.

Characterological peculiarities of egocentrism manifestation in the spoken language have been researched only based onmaterial of narratives. Impact of situation of dialogueness on the spoken language under conditions of negotiations significantly complicates such formalization of spoken language products that is necessary for correct statistical processing of relative data.In received results, it has been found out that among the representatives of dominant group and demonstrative-passive character in narratives there was statistically valid 2 and more of other people present (line "5" on fig. 4), who did not show semantic attributes of autonomy.That is activity of the mentioned images (actions, thoughts, feelings, emotions, etc.) takes place in the context of description of the narrative's author himself/herself (as his/her continuations). Principle autonomy of other people is detected in pedantic types as well as in passive-demonstrative character. Demonstrative-dominant character mentions the other people formally (mostly without description of activity) or they are either present as undifferentiated background or completely absent. In narratives of passive-pedantic character autonomous forms of other people are present, however, spoken language presentation of the narrator himself/herself is absent. Narration goes on behalf of an implicitly present anonymous and indifferent witness of events.

Characterological features of time parameter in spoken language have been studied on the material of negotiations as biographical orientation of narratives has respectively conditioned spoken language discourse. In particular, we have analyzed in what time different types of characters "placed" their arguments in negotiations. The majority of characters in their argumentation addresses facts, events, their conditions and characteristic features, etc. in past, present and future time without statistically valid differences and trends. The exception is passive-pedantic type (discourse is unfolding in absolute time) and characters of pedantic group. Thus, pedantic-dominant type negatively evaluates current situation (as an "understatement" among negotiation parties) and consecutively moves to the future creating a model of "statement" or agreement. On the other hand, pedantic-passive type directs argumentation discourse into the past, where it makes a causal revision

of the reasons for current “understatement” to eliminate or correct their impact in the present time.

These particulars of time parameter in the spoken language of the representatives of pedantic characters and passive-pedantic type during negotiations turned out to be interconnected with structural differences mainly present in plot lines in respondents’ narratives.That is the time parameter for these three characters may be considered as a plot-making factor. Justification of such a view is confirmed by related research works on plot-making of other contemporary authors(Nefiodov, 2007; Lobin, 2008). Among those, we should separately mention attitude pertaining to plot-making function of phraseology(Fokina, 2008).

Since above described results of our research confirm presence of connection between MPD and syntactic and semantic peculiarities of spoken language, we see it as quite methodologically justified to broaden object field of this study in plot-logical direction. We have carried the respective research since 2005 on a bigger sampling, which was mentioned in the introduction of the given publication. We research plot peculiarities of spoken language in narratives with wide classification range. Current results of this study, first of all, confirmed the described above thoughts on role of time parameter in plots of the representatives of pedantic types and passive-pedantic character.For the second, they allowed us to determine specific plot particulars of spoken language of the representatives of other character types.Synthesis of these observations according to criterion of simple majority of empirical occurrence of respective plots is provided in table 1.

Table 1

Differential character analysis of plots(oral narratives)

No	Character type (leading and supplementaryMPD)	Plot	
		Name	General semantics
1.	Demonstrative-dominant (*reaction* + *getting*	Drama of exceptionalism	Opposition/adversarial position of a bright individual against grey and indifferent/ malicious world. Uniqueness and uncompromising

	aggressive)		attitude of an individuality.
2.	Demonstrative-passive (*reaction+ avoidance*)	Moral dilemma	An individual and a group (local).Equality, interaction and competition.Loyalty and betray. Drama of individual and group dialectics. Value conflict.
3.	Passive-demonstrative (*avoidanceя+reaction*)	Fate. Submission. Empathy.	An individual as a part of a collective. Be as everyone else. Black and white ethics of traditions. Fatality and fate.Lucky – unlucky.Do what you can and come what may.
4.	Passive-pedantic (*avoidance+ affect isolation*)	Indifferent witness of life.	Helplessness of an individual and detachment of the world.Loneliness. Oddness of life. Antagonism of internal and external. Mysterious (metaphysic) forces.
5.	Pedantic-passive (*affect isolation+ avoidance*)	Revision of the past.	Skepticism and dissatisfaction with today's world. Historicity of the real. Retrospective investigation of past mysteries for rethinking of contemporary world.
6.	Pedantic-dominant (*affect isolation+getting aggressive*)	Reformatory model of the future.	Skepticism and dissatisfaction with today's world.Prognosis of probability, evaluation of impendence of events, etc. Justification and planning of reforms for better future.
7.	Dominant-pedantic (*getting aggressive+ affect isolation*)	Achievement through efficiency.	Leadership as an aiming focus, persistence and efficiency. Pragmatism, endurance, functionality of the team members and competitive spirit. The ends justify the means.
8.	Dominant-demonstrative (*getting aggressive+ reaction*)	Efficiency of achievement.	If you cannot be the first, be the best and vice versa. Leadership has a look and a size. Competition and adversarial position. Loyalty of team members. Success is never blamed.

Conclusions

Summarizing the depicted results of our observations on syntactic, semantic and plot peculiarities of oral language activity, we find it justified to consider the above mentioned parameters as identification criteria for discovering characterological differences of Ukrainian-speaking and Russian-speaking objects of contact profiling (we found no statistically valid differences related to research parameters according to attribute of respondents' mother tongue). We connect the perspectives of further research activities with implementation of experimental means, which will allow us qualitatively to update and correct samples in order to evaluate statistically corresponding diagnostic attributes. This will provide the possibility of checking presence of hierarchic links peculiarities both inside spoken language criteria and together with non-spoken language diagnostic criteria (paralinguistics, mimics, eye-moving reactions, gesticulation, walking and other bodily-dynamic and behavioral manifestations) and their study. This, in its turn, will allow optimization of contact profiling methods of characterological peculiarities. In particular, it will allow us shorten the time of formation and check in the process of contact of diagnostic hypotheses and simplify the procedure of experts training for practical implementation of the described technique.

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