The Role of the Proxemic Factor in the Implementation of the Cooperative Strategy of Communication in the English Fairy Tale Discourse

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Abstract—**The functional and communicative potential of proxemic components is investigated in this article on the basis of the English fairy tale discourse. The interaction of proxemic components and verbal communicative components is taken into consideration. The regularities of the influence of proxemic means on the fairy tale speakers' achievement of communicative goals within the cooperative communicative strategy are established, and the discursive personality's tactical toolkit for its implementation is identified. The modulation of distance between fairy tale speakers and the change of a fairy tale speaker's posture in relation to his/her communicative partner are the most communicatively significant and effective proxemic means used in the process of communication. Insufficient diversity in the repertoire of proxemic components in comparison with other nonverbal components is their characteristic feature. As a result, proxemic components are frequently used in combination with kinesic and prosodic communicative components, accompanying the verbal components in the utterances of fairy tale speakers. In this way the strengthening of the semantic load of a fairy tale speaker's utterance takes place. The proxemic components are also used by a fairy tale discursive personality for more effective implementation of various communicative tactics within the frames of the cooperative communicative strategy in the English fairy tale discourse.**

Index Terms—**cooperative strategy, fairy tale discursive personality, proxemic component, tactics**

I. INTRODUCTION

The current level of linguistics development enables and emphasizes the need to study both linguistic and non-linguistic components of communication. This provides an opportunity to understand and interpret the regularities of the language system at a deeper and more adequate level. Human communicative activity is related to space, the feeling of which is a synthesis of many sensory signals produced by visual, auditory, kinesic, olfactory and thermal perception systems. Therefore, effective command of language, as well as effective usage of nonverbal means, in particular – proxemic nonverbal components, provide the successful communicative interaction. Thus, in the middle of the 20th century, while studying the everyday behavioural patterns of individuals, the famous scientist Edward Hall identified the presence of personal space (Hall et al., 1968), which arises during person-to-person interaction. The beginning of the communicative process involves the creation of a common communicative space by the speakers, which includes the personal space of each speaker (Soloshchuk, 2009). The speaker uses proxemic components, which denote the changes in his/her personal space within the common communicative space in order to implement certain communicative intentions and exert an effective influence on the communicative partner (Virotchenko, 2011, 2017).

Achieving communicative influence on the addressee with the help of proxemic components and the regularities of their functioning in various types of the English discourse are actively studied nowadays. In this research, the English fairy tale discourse, the importance of which is highlighted and substantiated in the works of modern linguists (Antonova & Neshko, 2017; Bahatska & Kozlova, 2018; Bottigheimer, 2009; Chaiuk, 2017; Glazer & Williams, 1979; Kishchenko, 2017; Mamonova, 2019; Tsapiv, 2019, 2020; Yefymenko, 2017, 2018) is analyzed. The **relevance** of the research of this type of discourse is supported by significant influence of fairy tales on children's socialization. Fairy tales turn out to be one of the initial sources for learning about real life and mastering the laws of communication. Knowledge and impressions received in childhood are firmly established and fixed in the associative-verbal domain of the discursive personality, subsequently influencing the way an adult speaker perceives reality. They also influence the choice of communicative strategies and tactics implemented by speakers in their activities (Chaiuk, 2017). Nevertheless,

there still exist unresolved issues related to the functioning of the proxemic system in the English fairy tale discourse. This fact explains modern scholars' growing interest in researching the phenomenon of the proxemic code.

The results of the studying of fairy tales permits to accept the fairy tale speaker as a fully-fledged and developed discursive personality: a fairy tale discursive personality (further – FTDP). The analysis of verbal and nonverbal components of communication within the frames of the cooperative strategy in the English fairy tale discourse contributes to the development of the theory of interaction of different code systems, which confirms the significance of this research. The **aim** of this paper is to underpin the foundation for studying the proxemic means of communication, thus establishing their communicative potential and their influence on the tactical variability of implementing the cooperative strategy in terms of lexical, semantic and structural content in various discursive situations. In order to reach the stated objective of this paper, **the methods** of discursive and pragmatic analysis are used.

The **object** of this research is presented by the proxemic communicative components in combination with verbal and other nonverbal components (kinesic and prosodic) in the English fairy tale discourse. The **subject** lies in the establishing the pragmatic characteristics and regularities of functioning of the proxemic components in combination with verbal and nonverbal components of communication. **The material** for the analysis includes 445 discursive fragments containing proxemic components from fairy tales by British and American authors**.**

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The interaction takes place in the space that has a significant impact both on the process of communication itself and its outcome. Space is one of the most significant realities of human existence since it is structured around a person, and the communicative interaction itself takes place directly in it (Virotchenko, 2017).

Discourse presents a multifaceted complex combining human verbal activity and extralinguistic factors (Shevchenko & Morozova, 2005). Extralinguistic factors include the spatial plane in which the communicative interaction takes place, and the nonverbal behaviour of discursive personalities, including their movement in this space (Virotchenko, 2011, p. 7). Therefore, space is one of the high-priority components in any type of discourse, including the English fairy tale discourse.

Based on observations of communicative situations and Hall's axioms, we analysed the interaction of fairy tale discursive personalities in four spatial zones: intimate, personal, social and public (Hall et al., 1968). According to L.V. Soloshchuk, in the process of communication in these spatial zones, the FTDP can interact within the frames of three types of the discursive surrounding: nuclear, marginal and peripheral (Soloshchuk, 2020, p. 56).

The intimate zone of communication, which is one of the most important in the life of a human being, mostly involves the nonverbal components of communication (Hall et al., 1968). The main communicative partners in this spatial zone are permanent communicative partners from the FTDP's nuclear discursive surrounding (Soloshchuk, 2009). This type of discursive surrounding of FTDP includes fairy tale characters performing social roles of husband and wife, lovers, parents, children, close friends, etc.

The interaction in the personal zone of communication depends on the individual traits and the communicative style (Hall et al., 1968) of a fairy tale discursive personality. Keeping a personal distance, fairy tale discursive personalities interact under various communication conditions with representatives from the nuclear and marginal spheres of the discursive surrounding (Soloshchuk, 2009). In comparison with those in the nuclear discursive surrounding, the representatives of the marginal zone do not belong to the permanent communicative partners of FTDP, and usually perform social roles of the FTDP's distant relatives, friends, acquaintances, and colleagues (Soloshchuk, 2009). The fairy tale process of communication in this case takes place, for example, at royal parties, balls and at official meetings in different institutions.

The interaction in the social zone involves communication of a FTDP with fairy tale communicative partners with whom a FTDP only begins to develop the communicative contacts (Hall et al., 1968), and, thus, they constitute the peripheral discursive surrounding of a FTDP (Soloshchuk, 2009).

Functioning in the public zone involves keeping a distance between a fairy tale discursive personality and a large number of people. For example, the FTDP could speak in public before a large crowd of people including different fairy tale characters. The effectiveness of communicative interaction in this zone requires a louder voice, a reduced rate of speech and a formal communication style (Hall et al., 1968).

The factors determining the FTDP's choice of a spatial zone for interaction include the level of the development of mutual relations between fairy tale discursive personalities (the greater is the sympathy between the partners, the smaller is the distance between them); the personal characteristics of a FTDP (possible intolerance to a very close distance, social status, etc.); the fixed national traditions and culture, which the FTDP presents; a FTDP's age and gender (age determines communication between fairy tale discursive personalities and their discursive surrounding in the vertical area, while gender puts communicative relationships in the horizontal area).

Violation of the personal space of FTDPs, such as interference with the intimate zone, can negatively affect both their emotional state and the effectiveness of the communicative process as a whole, which may lead to a conflict. The defined placement of FTDPs during communicative process will set the stage for the cooperative communication in the fairy tale discourse. Otherwise, the FTDP suffers from the resulting physical, psychological, and cognitive barriers

(Dailey, 2017). The proxemic barrier, which turns out to be one of the strongest communicative obstacles, may prevent fairy tale communicators from effective cooperation (Dailey, 2017) and achieving their communicative intentions.

Thus, the proxemic factor, as a regulator of relationships, is an integral part of communication (Hall, 1959, p. 205), in which fairy tale discursive personalities are the main participants; it adjusts the tone of communication and affects its comfort and efficiency (Martynova, 2016, p. 267) while reaching the set communicative goals. During direct communication, fairy tale discursive personalities perceive the characteristics and differences of each other's proxemic behaviour. Proxemic components interact with verbal components in accordance with the coordination principle (Soloshchuk, 2006), which contributes to the expansion of basic communicatively significant information, increases the effectiveness of communication in terms of saving time, and increases the probability of a fairy tale addressee perceiving and interpreting the information adequately (Virotchenko, 2011).

III. RESULTS

The proxemic components, in combination with kinesic and prosodic communicative components, accompany the verbal utterances of the FTDP, strengthening their semantic load (Soloshchuk, 2020). The proxemic components are used by FTDPs to implement a) the tactic of awakening interest and emphasizing the addressee's attention (33% of the entire set of tactic samples implemented by proxemic means), b) the tactic of calming down the addressee (31%), c) the tactic of demonstrating obedience and submission without conflict-oriented threat (22%), and d) the tactic of persuading and convincing the communicative partner (14%).

In situations where a FTDP expresses the interest to the subject of speaking or is stimulated to think or act, the incorporation of proxemic means serves as the auxiliary tool for implementing the tactic of awakening interest and emphasizing the addressee's attention. The proxemic code is usually used in combination with other nonverbal codes. Under such conditions, a fairy tale discursive personality violates the addressee's communicative space by reducing the distance between them and getting closer to the communicative partner. The information transmitted through the verbal channel has a secret, confidential nature, and the proxemic factor contributes to the strengthening of its illocutionary force. A typical toolkit for the implementation of this tactic is the combination of the proxemic component and the prosodic one, presented by the regulation of the volume of speech. In this case, the information is presented by a quiet and calm tone and a slow and intelligible manner of speaking. In example 1 it is demonstrated that, in an effort to stir his grandson's interest, Grandpa Joe interrupts his verbal expression, shortens the distance to Charlie, the addressee, and lowers the volume of his voice tone, thereby creating the conditions for the culmination of their communicative interaction:

> *(1)   "And I'll tell you something else that's true", said Grandpa Joe, and now he leaned closer to Charlie, and lowered his voice to a soft, secret whisper. "Nobody… ever… comes… out!" "Out of where?" asked Charlie. "And… nobody… ever… goes… in!" "In where?" cried Charlie. "Wonka's factory, of course!" "Grandpa, what do you mean?" "I mean workers, Charlie." "Workers?" "All factories", said Grandpa Joe, "have workers streaming in and out of the gates in the mornings and evenings – except Wonka's!"* (Dahl, 2010, p. 28).

In example (2) it is demonstrated that in order to get Charlie interested in their interaction, Grandpa Joe produces the directive speech act *('Listen!')* and subsequent declarative speech acts *(You can hear the machines! They're all whirring again! And you can smell the smell of melting chocolate in the air!)*. However, before transmitting the more mysterious information, the grandfather joins the grandson's personal space *(leaned forward)*, introducing the proxemic component into the communicative process. The kinesic contact component *(laid a long bony finger)* and prosodic component *(said softly)* contribute significantly to increasing the effectiveness of the old man's influence and reaching the communicative goal:

> *(2)   "Listen! You can hear the machines! They're all whirring again! And you can smell the smell of melting chocolate in the air!" Grandpa Joe leaned forward and laid a long bony finger on Charlie's knee, and he said softly, "But most mysterious of all, Charlie, were the shadows in the windows of the factory. The people standing on the street outside could see small dark shadows moving about behind the frosted glass windows". "Shadows of whom?" said Charlie quickly. "That's exactly what everybody else wanted to know"* (Dahl, 2010, p. 30).

The fact that Grandpa Joe's communicative goal has been achieved is signalled by the interrogative constructions produced by the addressee *(Shadows of whom?)*; Charlie became interested in the information presented by Grandpa Joe. The fast pace of speech indicates the wish to learn the secret information faster.

When implementing the tactic of awakening interest and emphasizing the addressee's attention, an effective proxemic component is presented not only by reducing the distance between him and addresser, but also by changing the addresser's posture in the communicative space. The communicative goal in this case lies in drawing the addressee's attention to a certain object or process. In example (3) it is demonstrated that Charlie cautiously performs the suggested action reacting to his grandmother Georgina's requests *(Open it, my dear)* and her manipulative pleas *(You're making me jumpy)*, which are typical for the representatives of the nuclear zone of the discursive environment as they are closely related to each other and aware of each other's behavioural patterns (Soloshchuk, 2020, p. 56). The grandparents minimize the distance and change the postures of their bodies in the bed, stretching their necks in order to

focus the boy's attention on the process of unwrapping the gift and the gift itself. The modification of the grandparents' postures contributes to the strengthening of the expressiveness of their interest:

> (3)   *"You'd better go ahead and open it up, or you'll be late for school", Grandpa Joe said. "You might as well get it over with", Grandpa George said. "Open it, my dear", Grandma Georgina said. "Please open it. You're making me jumpy." Very slowly, Charlie's fingers began to tear open one small corner of the wrapping paper. The old people in the bed <u>all leaned forward, craning their scraggy necks</u>"* (Dahl, 2010, p. 39).

In the course of performing the social roles of spouses, parents, grandparents or children, FTDPs act within the nuclear zone of the discursive environment (Soloshchuk, 2009). The nuclear zone of the discursive environment is characterized by a high degree of awareness of the partners' communicative behaviour, especially those using proxemic means, and a high degree of trust in relationships during the communicative activity (Soloshchuk, 2009, p. 96). Getting closer to a communicative partner, minimizing the distance, and entering each other's personal space in the nuclear zone during the cooperative communication are influential means for implementing the tactic of calming down the FTDP. The characteristic formats for verbal utterances are quesitive and commissive speech acts. When Joe, who was in love with the princess, saw her in tears, he approached her and expressed his desire to help and to solve her problem:

> (4)   *"Here he found nobody at all but a lovely girl in tears. In her white dress, with her lemon-coloured hair, she reminded Joe of his Clumber Pup. He could not bear to see her in trouble, so <u>he approached her</u> and said, "If it's a hurt, show me, and perhaps I can heal it". The girl checked her sobs enough to answer... "I have lost my kitten", said the girl, and began to cry again. "I will give you my kitten in its place", said Joe* (Farjeon, 2016, pp. 28-29).

The situations when the FTDP lets his communicative partner get into his personal space and permits him to break it without feeling discomfort indicates trust and close relationships. In example 4, a proxemic component produced by Joe influences the princess positively: Joe's close location frees her from negative emotions for a certain period of time, stopping the body's autonomic reactions *(The girl checked her sobs enough to answer)*. His presence in her personal space along with verbally expressed questions to construct a plan to help *(Whereabouts? / How did it happen?)* and promises that he will solve her problem *(show me, and perhaps I can heal it / I will give you my kitten in its place)* allows the FTDP to implement the tactic of calming down the communicative partner.

The relationships between FTDPs performing social roles of parents and children in the English fairy tale discourse usually have a trusting and harmonious character. Parents, when in a communicative interaction with children, usually try to influence them in a positive way. Therefore, in cases of communication under difficult or nervous circumstances, fairy tale parents who have a reliable and strong authority over their children can effectively implement calming down tactics on their children. In example (5), Charlie is very nervous about his present. His subconscious facial expression *(smiled nervously)* and his position in the communicative space *(sat down on the edge of the bed)* demonstrate the boy's excitement. The presence of parents, namely their being very close to the boy *(came in and stood at the foot of the bed)*, their verbal instructive appeals to him reinforced by prosodic means *(said gently)*, Mrs. Bucket's request not to be disappointed and Mr. Bucket's demonstrative authoritative approval of Mrs. Bucket's statement give the boy the feelings of supportiveness and tranquillity:

> (5)   *"Happy birthday!" cried the four old grandparents, as <u>Charlie came into their room</u> early the next morning. Charlie <u>smiled nervously</u> and <u>sat down on the edge of the bed</u>. He was holding his present, his only present, very carefully in his two hands. WONKA'S WHIPPLE-SCRUMPTIOUS FUDGEMALLOW DELIGHT, it said on the wrapper. The four old people, <u>two at either end of the bed</u>, <u>propped themselves up on their pillows</u> and <u>stared with anxious eyes at the bar of chocolate</u> in Charlie's hands. <u>Mr. and Mrs. Bucket came in and stood at the foot of the bed, watching Charlie</u>. The room became silent... Then Mrs. Bucket <u>said gently,</u> "You mustn't be too disappointed, my darling, if you don't find what you're looking for underneath that wrapper. You really can't expect to be as lucky as all that". "She's quite right", Mr. Bucket said* (Dahl, 2010, p. 38).

An indicator of dominance and the desire to take an influential position in relation to another FTDP is also presented by a change of distance – namely its minimization – such as an invasion of the personal space of a FTDP with a less authoritative status, or a change of the posture or the spatial position in relation to another discursive personality (Bull, 1987).

The proxemic code within the framework of the constructive communication conveys a FTDP's positive attitude towards a communicative partner and the desire to impose on him the idea that it will be beneficial to him. For communication in the cooperative plane, in order to implement the tactic of persuading and convincing the communicative partner, the FTDP tries to acquire a higher position than the position of the communicative partner. It makes it possible to feel more confident, and it strengthens the content of the verbal messages. At the lexical level, the addressee appeals to the arguments and facts in the format of affirmative/negative constructions; affectionate vocatives are used as well as positively evaluative semantic units that contribute to the harmonious development of communication. Among the stylistic techniques characteristic in such situations the hyperbolized constructions are to be mentioned. To the inquisitive boy's question *(And is Mr Willy Wonka really the cleverest chocolate maker in the world?)*, Grandpa Joe manifests an affectionate vocative with the possessive pronoun *my*, he rises higher on his pillow, thereby changing his position in relation to Charlie, and then produces various arguments of positive semantics:

(6)   "One evening, when Charlie went in to see his grandparents, he said to them, "Is it really true that Wonka's Chocolate Factory is the biggest in the world?" "True?" cried all four of them at once. "Of course, it's true! Good heavens, <u>didn't you know that? It's about fifty times as big as any other!</u>" "And is Mr. Willy Wonka really the cleverest chocolate maker in the world?" "<u>My dear boy</u>", <u>said Grandpa Joe, raising himself up a little higher on his pillow</u>, "Mr. Willy Wonka is <u>the most amazing, the most fantastic, the most extraordinary chocolate maker the world has ever seen!</u> I thought everybody knew that!" (Dahl, 2010, pp. 23-24).

In the situations of "superior-inferior" communicative contact, the fairy tale addressee uses the proxemic component of communication as a response, thus implementing the tactic of demonstrating obedience and submissiveness without a conflict-oriented threat. The proxemic components are combined with other communicative components, both verbal and non-verbal, at the micro- and macrolevel of their interaction (Soloshchuk, 2006). In example (7), the King establishes his dominant position with the help of negatively coloured prosodic means *(snapped the King)*, tense and reproachful intonations of the verbal marker *(Learn to know your place, Selina!)*. The directive speech acts addressed to the girl are quite natural for the subordinate relationship between the king and his maid:

(7)   "How did you like the Princess of the North?" "Not at all", said the King. "Wouldn't have you, wouldn't she?" "Learn to know your place, Selina!" <u>snapped the King</u>. "Oh, all right. Anything more?" "Yes. Unpack my bag, and pack it up again. Tomorrow I'm going to see the Princess of Southlands". You'll want your straw hat and your linen pyjamas", said Selina, and prepared to leave the room. But the King said, "Er— Selina—er—er—" <u>She paused at the door</u> (Farjeon, 2016, p. 49).

After completing her duties, when Selina was about to leave the room, the king called out to the girl. The addressee had to stop at the door, showing her submission to the speaker, thus implementing the tactic of demonstrating obedience. The process of communication takes place in the vertical area, so the manner of communication does not turn cooperation into conflict.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The cooperative communication between fairy tale discursive personalities using proxemic means is possible in four spatial zones: intimate, personal, social and public. The intimate and personal zones are intended for communication with permanent communicative partners who are closely related to each other and well-informed about each other's communicative habits. In social and public zones, communicative partners of a FTDP are usually not permanent and very often new for him. All in all, the choice of the proxemic components and the distance between the communicative partners directly depend on their discursive surrounding. During the process of interaction, proxemic components are functioning effectively in combination with prosodic and kinesic communicative means, accompanying verbal components of the identical content. Fairy tale discursive personalities use these informative combinations as apt toolkits for implementing a variety of cooperative tactics: the tactic of awakening interest and emphasizing the addressee's attention, the tactic of calming down, the tactic of demonstrating obedience and submission without a conflict-oriented threat and the tactic of persuading and convincing. Summing up the role of proxemic means, it should be noted that though they are frequently used in the process of communication and influence it greatly the repertoire of proxemic communicative components is characterized by a less variability compared to other non-verbal code systems. As a result, combinations of various non-verbal components, such as proxemic and prosodic or proxemic and kinesic, are effective, which increases their influence in achieving communicative intentions by fairy tale discursive personalities in the English fairy tale discourse.

The results achieved in this paper open up the **perspectives** for further research of the variations of verbal and nonverbal parameters of communication in terms of age and gender asymmetry of fairy tale discursive personalities.

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