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## SPEECH PERSONALITY: PSYCHOLINGUISTIC ASPECT (THE CASE OF SPEECH BEHAVIOUR OF SHERLOCK HOLMES)

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*The article discusses the speech personality of Sherlock Holmes in a psycholinguistic aspect. The aim of the article is to identify linguistic characteristics of Sherlock Holmes's speech behaviour. In order to achieve the aim we use the psychological classification of speech personalities where one can belong to either harmonious, or conflict or impulsive psychotype. Identifying Sherlock Holmes's psychotype we followed several parameters: general attitude of the speech personality to the process of communication, role and status in communication, compliance with social norms during the conversation, coherence of the conversation topic, intentions of the communicant. Analysis of the lexical and grammatical layers of Sherlock Holmes' speech gave grounds to classify the personality speech to a certain psychotype.*

**Key words:** speech personality, linguistic features, speech behaviour, communication, psycholinguistics, psychotype.

**Куліш А. Р.**

### **Мовленнєва особистість: психолінгвістичний аспект (на матеріалі мовленнєвої поведінки Шерлока Холмса)**

*У статті розглядається мовленнєва особистість Шерлока Холмса в психолінгвістичному аспекті. Метою статті є виявлення лінгвістичних характеристик мовленнєвої поведінки Шерлока Холмса. Для досягнення мети було використано психологічну класифікацію мовленнєвої особистості, де остання може належати до гармонійного, конфліктного чи імпульсивного психотипу. Визначення психотипу Шерлока Холмса здійснювалося за такими параметрами: загальна установка мовленнєвої особистості до процесу комунікації, роль і статус у спілкуванні, дотримання соціальних норм під час розмови, когерентність теми розмови, інтенції комуніканта.*

**Ключові слова:** мовленнєва особистість, мовні риси, мовленнєва поведінка, комунікація, психолінгвістика, психотип.

### **Introduction**

Studies of the peculiarities of speech personality communicative behaviour is a current direction in psycholinguistics. There are four main areas related to the study of personality through communication:

- 1) age psycholinguistics;
- 2) research of norm and pathology in speech;
- 3) typology of linguistic communities and personalities;
- 4) characteristics of communicative behaviour of a linguistic personality.

Within such research, different psychological types of a speech personality are defined on the grounds of separate language features (speech markers) [4].

The aim of the article is to identify the main linguistic features of Sherlock Holmes through the analysis of his speech behaviour taking into account the psychological factors in communication. Despite

the interest of researchers in speech personality, there is a noticeable lag in the formation of speech portraits of TV characters in the aspect of psycholinguistics.

Generally, the study of a personality speech portrait in the aspect of linguo personology starts from studying the psychological attitudes and level of communicative competence of real representatives of a particular nation with the whole spectrum of speech manifestation. However, when it comes to a TV character or a protagonist of some work of art, the spectrum of speech manifestation is narrowed and restricted to a certain communicative situation (discourse). This article focuses on one of many interpretations of Sherlock Holmes, thus, the material of our research is the TV series «Sherlock».

### **Theoretical Background**

The tradition of studying the speech personality originated in the works of V. Vinogradov, Yu. Karaulov,

O. Leontiev, G. Bogin, and others. The ways of speech personality formation are laid down in the theory of linguistic personality by Yu. Prokhorov, V. Krasnykh, L. Klobukova, etc. Yu. Prokhorov [6] suggests that speech personality is revealed in a specific communication situation, and in order to achieve a positive result of this communication, all components of the speech personality are realized.

Research on the typology of linguistic personality depending on the characteristics of individual discourse behavior (communicative strategies, communicative competence, speech culture) is laid in the works of O. Pushkin, O. Syrotynina, V. Holdin, I. Susov, S. Sukhykh, etc. I. Susov [10] recognizes the typology structure of linguistic personalities, based on speech acts, techniques, tactics and strategies of the individual in the process of communication. O. Pushkin [7] concludes that the type of personality depends on the structure of its discourse. S. Sukhykh [9] turns to the study of the pragmatic level of linguistic personality and, depending on the attitude of the communicant and his/her personality traits, identifies harmonious, conflict and impulsive psychotypes of linguistic personality. Further perspectives in the studies of linguistic personality of a writer and fiction characters are revealed in the works of Ya. Bondarenko, I. Moriakina, L. Churylina, Z. Kuznevych, T. Surian, etc. These researchers consider the individual/collective linguistic personality, based on their discourse, which covers a set of statements of individual character /characters in the text.

### Methods

The subject of this study are the linguistic characteristics of Sherlock Holmes' speech behaviour. Respectively, the object is the speech personality of Sherlock Holmes. The material of the research is audio and video recordings and scripts of the TV series «Sherlock» [3]. The series have 4 seasons, each includes 3 episodes, so a total of 12 episodes are under our scrutiny. In each episode we find and focus on certain set of lexical and grammatical characteristics that help identify Sherlock as a speech personality with a certain psychotype.

To achieve the aim, the following methods were used: descriptive and structural methods allow us to characterize the typological features of the psycholinguistic classification; contextual and intentional analysis were applied to identify the communicative intentions of Sherlock Holmes's utterances and his attitude to the conversation; the method of linguistic modeling helped to create a psychotype of Sherlock Holmes's speech personality on the basis of his speech behaviour.

### Results and Discussion

Before analyzing the speech personality of Sherlock Holmes, we need to clarify the meaning

of each of the psychotypes. The harmonious psychotype is characterized by the following qualities: the flexible and dynamic attitudes to the general topic of communication, coherence in its development; the dominance of confidence markers; compliance with social norms during the conversation; no struggle for the role of communicative leader; the ability to change attitudes under the influence of argumentation; maintaining the principles of communicative cooperation. Conflict psychotype is characterized by the unaltered and static attitudes, impulsiveness, leadership in communication, self-centered speech, lack of coherence, rejection of social norms during the conversation, conflict of intentions during a conversation, prevailing linguistic markers of uncertainty, abundance of irony and sarcasm in speech. The impulsive psychotype follows the communication situation. It is characterized by the desire to gain leadership in communication, violation of the coherence of the conversation topic, sharp change of the topic of communication.

In order to determine the psychotype of Sherlock Holmes's speech behaviour, we used the following parameters: general attitude of the speech personality to the process of communication, role and status in communication, compliance with social norms during the conversation, topic coherence, intentions of the communicant.

First, we explore the role and status Sherlock Holmes gains in communication and what linguistic markers are available in the interactions with other people. Let's analyze the following examples of Sherlock Holmes' speech behaviour:

*"Because you cater to the whims of the pathetic and take your clothes off to make an impression. Stop boring me and think. It's the new sexy."* (Season 2, episode 1, 28:05)

*"No, sorry, Doctor Mortimer wins. Childhood trauma masked by an invented memory. Boring! Goodbye, Mr. Knight. Thank you for smoking."* (Season 2, episode 2, 12:10)

*"Shut up, everybody, shut up! Don't move, don't speak, don't breathe."* (Season 1, episode 1, 59:20)

*"Very nice, yes, good. Get out!"* (Season 3, episode 1, 56:39)

*"HENRY: It's an amazing place. It's like nowhere else. It's sort of ... bleak but beautiful."*

*SHERLOCK: Mmm, not interested. Move on!"* (Season 2, episode 2, 06:50)

*"MRS HUDSON: Isn't the doorbell working? Your taxi's here."*

*SHERLOCK: I didn't order a taxi. Go away!"* (Season 1, episode 1, 59:05) [3; 8]

Examining Sherlock Holmes' speech behaviour, we confirm that he intends to take the lead in the communication: he uses imperative sentences with intention to change, avoid or terminate

the conversation; applying of imperative phrasal verbs such as “get out”, “go away”, “shut up”, “move on”, imperative auxiliary verb “don’t”, “stop”. The use of the imperative mood in Sherlock Holmes’ speech indicates his dominance in communication. The adverb “boring” encourage Sherlock Holmes’ interlocutors to obey his orders and prohibitions. Sherlock Holmes is prone to control the situation, the decisive word is always behind him. The aforesaid linguistic characteristics of Sherlock Holmes’s speech behaviour allow us to identify his speech personality as the conflict psychotype.

In order to change the topic of communication, Sherlock Holmes resorts to infraction of the logical development of the conversation. This is an indicator of Sherlock Holmes’s dominance over his interlocutor in a conversation.

“JOHN: So, she’s alive then. How are we feeling about that?”

SHERLOCK: *Happy New Year, John*”. (Season 2, episode 1, 01:01:34)

“JOHN: Okay, this is too much. We need to be more careful.

SHERLOCK: *It’s got flaps ... ear flaps. It’s an ear hat, John*”.

“SHERLOCK: Four people are dead. There isn’t time to talk to the police.

JOHN: *So why are you talking to me?*

SHERLOCK: *Mrs Hudson took my skull*”. (Season 1, episode 1, 47:27)

“SHERLOCK: *Might need some food.*

MRS HUDSON: *I’m your landlady, dear, not your housekeeper.*

SHERLOCK: *Something cold will do. John, have a cup of tea, make yourself at home. Don’t wait up!*” (Season 1, episode 1, 16:09)

“SHERLOCK: *’Scuse me.*

JOHN: *What — what’s up, Sherlock?*

SHERLOCK: *I said excuse me.*” (Season 2, episode 1, 44:14) [3; 8]

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned examples of Sherlock Holmes’ speech behaviour, we can confidently attribute him to a conflict psychotype of speech personality, since lack of coherence in a conversation is the characteristic features of the conflict psychotype of the speech personality.

Sherlock Holmes calls himself a highly active sociopath, which is reflected in his speech behavior. He does not abide by social norms in a conversation and therefore he often uses offensive language:

“*I dislike being outnumbered. It makes for too much stupid in the room*”. (Season 2, episode 1, 57:53)

“*Lestrade. We’ve had a break-in at Baker Street. Send your least irritating officers and an ambulance*”. (Season 2, episode 1, 59:38)

“*Your mind: it’s so placid, straightforward, barely used*”. (Season 2, episode 2, 04:20)

“*Anderson, don’t talk out loud. You lower the I.Q. of the whole street*”. (Season 1, episode 1, 01:00:41)

“*Miss Mackenzie, you’re in charge of pupil welfare, yet you left this place wide open last night. What are you: an idiot, a drunk or a criminal?*” (Season 2, episode 3, 32:26)

“*Well, anybody who wears a hat as stupid as this isn’t in the habit of hanging around other people, is he?*” (Season 3, episode 1, 36:12)

SHERLOCK: *Brilliant, Anderson.*

ANDERSON: *Really?*

SHERLOCK: *Yes. Brilliant impression of an idiot*”. (Season 2, episode 3, 34:30)

“SHERLOCK: *I don’t care what people think.*

JOHN: *You’d care if they thought you were stupid, or wrong.*

SHERLOCK: *No, that would just make them stupid or wrong*”. (Season 2, episode 3, 50:54) [3; 8]

Based on the analysis of the Sherlock Holmes’ speech behaviour given above, the use of negatively marked lexemes like “stupid”, “idiot”, “drunk”, “criminal” and adjectives “wrong”, “straightforward”, “placid”, “barely used”, “irritating” demonstrates the intention of Sherlock Holmes to point out the conflict of intentions during a conversation.

A clear manifestation of the violation of social and moral norms in communication occurs in the context of the investigation. when all kinds of crimes happen, the expected communicative routine for people is to express condolences, show sympathy. However, for Sherlock Holmes, murders are connected with the pleasure of revealing his mental potential. Such communicative intention of the speech personality is manifested in his speech behaviour:

“*The hungrier they got, the more they ate ... the faster they died. (He grins.) Neat*”. (Season 2, episode 3, 42:45)

“*Twenty year old disappearance; a monstrous hound? I wouldn’t miss this for the world!*” (Season 2, episode 2, 13:56)

“*Murder weapon and scene of the crime all at once. (He laughs with delight.) Oh, this case, Henry! Thank you. It’s been brilliant*”. (Season 2, episode 2, 01:22:34)

“*Bit mean, springing it on you like that, I know. Could have given you a heart attack, probably still will. But in my defence, it was very funny*”. (Season 3, episode 1, 21:17)

“*We’ve got ourselves a serial killer. I love those. There’s always something to look forward to*”. (Season 1, episode 1, 29:36)

SHERLOCK: *Yeah, well, this is more fun.*

JOHN: *Fun? There’s a woman lying dead*”. (Season 1, episode 1, 26:30)

“*The case itself remains the most ingenious and brilliantly-planned murder — or attempted murder — I’ve ever had the pleasure to encounter; the most perfect locked-room mystery of which I am aware*”. (Season 3, episode 2, 42:56) [3; 8]



In the given examples of Sherlock Holmes' speech behaviour we trace a sharp and ill-considered reaction to various crimes (serial murders, suicides, mysterious disappearances, etc.) which is denoted by the exclamatory sentences and adverbs such as "neat", "brilliant", "fun", "I wouldn't miss this for the world" showing the non-social speech behaviour and gives us the reason to attribute Sherlock Holmes to a conflict psychotype.

The lack of criminal cases sends Sherlock Holmes to antipathy, accompanied by irritability and anxiety expressed in speech behaviour. Sherlock Holmes is clearly an outstanding person, who perceives what is comfortable for most people (silence, peace, harmony) as discomfort and something "terrible":

*"SHERLOCK: Look at that, Mrs Hudson. Quiet, calm, peaceful. (Sighs) Isn't it hateful?*

*MRS HUDSON: Oh, I'm sure something'll turn up, Sherlock. A nice murder — that'll cheer you up.*

*SHERLOCK: Can't come too soon". (Season 1, episode 3, 05:48) [3; 8]*

Sherlock Holmes is characterised with the obsessive speech behaviour, lack of social understanding, insufficiently developed emotional intelligence, attachment to rituals (drugs, violin), literal perception of the figure of speech, socially and emotionally inappropriate behaviour, formal speech style, a narrow circle of fixed interests. It could explain Sherlock Holmes' dislike of communication and the narrow circle of his loved ones, it also explains the peculiarities of his language and why he is so absorbed in investigating crimes.

The characteristic feature of Sherlock Holmes is the ability to make quick and spontaneous decisions based on negative consequences. This character trait is the result of categorical self-confidence, impatience and impulsiveness. This set of qualities generates unconscious tactlessness in his speech behaviour:

*"Brilliant! Yes! Ah, four serial suicides, and now a note! Oh, it's Christmas!" (Season 1, episode 1, 16:01)*

*"SHERLOCK: Good, because this is going to be incredibly dangerous. One false move and we'll have betrayed the security of the United Kingdom and be in prison for.*

*JOHN: But it's Christmas.*

*SHERLOCK: I feel the same. Oh, you mean it's actually Christmas". (Season 3, episode 3, 01:10:13)*

*"JOHN: The body in the car — dead for a week.*

*SHERLOCK: Oh, this is a good one. Is it my birthday?" (Season 4, episode 1, 14:00) [3; 8]*

"Christmas" is accompanied by positive emotions and gifts, similar to a birthday. Given the speech portrait of Sherlock Holmes, it can be argued that for him to investigate some mysterious murders or suicides or to get some clues in the investigation associate with a gift, that is a real holiday for Sherlock

Holmes. Also, Sherlock Holmes uses exclamatory sentences in his speech which are accompanied by interjections "oh" and "ah" to express his elation. Taking into account the presented examples, it can be argued that the speech behaviour of Sherlock Holmes is characterized by impulsiveness, which is an indicator of the conflict psychotype.

Sherlock Holmes turns to sarcasm and irony in his speech with intentions to indicate the deficiency and ignorance of his interlocutor or the whole society. In addition, the use of sarcasm and irony in speech denotes high level of intelligence. However, despite the sarcasm and irony in Sherlock Holmes' speech, they are not always appropriate, as they are offensive to the people around him, or can be considered as "black humor":

*"SHERLOCK: The only mystery is this: why is my brother so determined to bore me when somebody else is being so delightfully interesting?*

*JOHN: Try and remember there's a woman here who might die.*

*SHERLOCK: What for? This hospital's full of people dying, Doctor. Why don't you go and cry by their bedside and see what good it does them?" (Season 1, episode 3, 17:46)*

*"SHERLOCK: Well, it had to be pink, obviously.*

*JOHN: Why didn't I think of that?*

*SHERLOCK: Because you're an idiot. No, no, no, don't look like that. Practically everyone is". (Season 1, episode 1, 46:12)*

*"SHERLOCK: I'm a consulting detective. Only one in the world. I invented the job.*

*JOHN: What does that mean?*

*SHERLOCK: It means when the police are out of their depth, which is always, they consult me". (Season 1, episode 1, 18:33) [3; 8]*

In the presented examples of Sherlock Holmes' speech, we trace ironic statements about society and its ignorance. Here Sherlock Holmes uses the word "idiot" with the intention to show the stupidity of people and his superiority on the contrary. Based on the analysis of the Sherlock Holmes' speech behaviour given above, the use of presented sentences demonstrates the intention of Sherlock Holmes to mock his interlocutor.

*"SHERLOCK: I used to think I was an idiot.*

*MYCROFT: Both of us thought you were an idiot, Sherlock. We had nothing else to go on 'til we met other children.*

*SHERLOCK: Oh, yes. That was a mistake.*

*MYCROFT: Ghastly. What were they thinking of?*

*SHERLOCK: Probably something about trying to make friends". (Season 3, episode 1, 33:19) [3; 8]*

Likewise, the ironic remarks of the speech personality of Sherlock Holmes can demonstrate his negative attitude to the interlocutors or described

situation, emphasize the absurdity of the situation, reduce the pathos and apparent significance of the images. In his speech, Sherlock Holmes uses both simple and compound sentences, as well as imperative sentences.

*“Sorry, did I say “murder”? I meant to say “marriage” — but, you know, they’re quite similar procedures when you think about it. The participants tend to know each other, and it’s over when one of them’s dead. In fairness, murder is a lot quicker”.* (Season 3, episode 2, 01:08:12) [3; 8]

In this example, Sherlock Holmes compares marriage to murder, concluding that these concepts are the same in meaning. Sherlock renounces all relationships, for him, the “union of two loving hearts” is associated with violence, both physically and mentally. Here it is possible to trace the non-compliance with social norms of communication in Sherlock Holmes’ speech behaviour.

Sherlock Holmes’ speech in particular is characterized by markers of confidence, the most popular of which is an adverb “obviously”:

*“You said trained at Bart’s, so Army doctor — obvious”.* (Season 1, episode 1, 19:02)

*“Of course she’s not. She’s from out of town, though. Intended to stay in London for one night... before returning home to Cardiff. So far, so obvious”.* (Season 1, episode 1, 25:48)

*“Yes, obviously. Oh, perhaps I should mention: I didn’t kill her”.* (Season 1, episode 1, 45:18)

*“Oh, well, perhaps he shouldn’t have done. He was obviously just trying to show off”.* (Season 3, episode 1, 32:38)

*“SHERLOCK: I have high hopes for you, Inspector. A glittering career.*

*DIMMOCK: I go where you point me.*

*SHERLOCK: Exactly”.* (Season 1, episode 2, 01:22:16)

*“You’ve got a psychosomatic limp — of course you’ve got a therapist”.* (Season 1, episode 1, 19:25)

*“I know it wasn’t. The same way that I know the victim was an excellent sportsman recently returned from foreign travel and that the photographs I’m looking for are in this room”.* (Season 2, episode 1, 27:03) [3; 8]

Sherlock Holmes makes use of adverbs “obviously”, “exactly”, modal verb “of course” and simple sentences “I know”, “I think” with the intention of demonstrating his superiority both in communication and in social ranks. Such speech behaviour determines the conflict psychotype of the speech personality.

To summarize we note that Sherlock Holmes strives for leadership and dominance in communication, he violates communication norms by using the offensive language. During conversation, Sherlock Holmes operates with sharp taunts, full of contempt and resentment. In his speech, he often uses sarcasm and irony with the intention to criticize society, emphasizing its incompatible principles and norms. Sherlock Holmes often uses the imperative mood of verbs and sentences, he changes the topic of communication, speaks quickly and a lot, not allowing the interlocutors to express their opinion. Motivated by a drive to dominate, Sherlock Holmes strives for communicative superiority, which is expressed by the appropriate lexical and grammatical constructions.

### Conclusions

In this article we have outlined and described Sherlock Holmes as the speech personality in a psycholinguistic aspect. The speech behaviour of Sherlock Holmes was analyzed and systematized on the basis of particular linguistic characteristics and the communicative intentions. In order to determine the psychotype of Sherlock Holmes’ speech behaviour, we used the following parameters: general attitude to the process of communication, role and status in communication, compliance with social norms during the conversation, coherence of the topic of conversation, intentions of the communicant. The above-mentioned analysis of Sherlock Holmes’ speech behaviour as well as the linguistic characteristics of his speech gave grounds to identify Sherlock Holmes’s speech personality as a conflict psychotype. The prospect of further study of Sherlock Holmes’ speech personality lies in the communicative and cognitive aspects, mainly in exploration of tactics and strategies in communication.

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