
COMMUNICATION STYLE PREFERENCES AND USAGE AS EMPLOYED IN A RANGE OF SOCIAL SITUATIONS

*Adam Kucharski*¹

¹ *Phd, Uniwersytet Szczeciński, Szczecin (Poland)*

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2689-3797>

UDC: 159.9

ABSTRACT

Aimed: The following research was aimed at establishing whether situations differentiate the use of utterance styles between affiliative, aggressive, self-defeating and self-enhancing. Additionally, an attempt was made to determine if context may induce a need to change a given utterance style.

Methods: Four stories were used for the purpose of this research. Story 1 was meant as a speaker-threatening situation, whereby the participants were expected to relate to the sender. Moreover, the sender was facing a dominant addressee. Story 2 was meant as an addressee-threatening situation (ATS), whereby the sender appeared in a dominant position. Two more stories were used to illustrate situations where respectively speaker assertiveness (SAN) and addressee assertiveness (AAN) were required.

Participants: There were 119 participants, average age being 21, with 54 male and 66 female participants.

Results: Data was analysed by means of Student's t-test, which was to outline differences in usage regarding a given utterance style in two varied contexts. The analysis has shown that what is mostly preferred are styles which ensure positive relations with other participants as well as enhance the self, however, not at the expense of others. Thus, aggressive styles are disliked. The use of a given style seems correlated with an obligation to utilise a different style, which might be context-dependant. In self-threatening situations participants tend to opt for more control, which demonstrates their hope for a more symmetrical speaker-addressee relationship. Here also, the tendency to refrain from domineering behaviour for the sake of a better relation may be observed. The following research raises an important issue of correlation between human behaviour and situational context. The literature on the subject rarely investigates the problem of composing utterances, which would provide insight into the patterns of usage of a given style within a given context. Furthermore, the following research tries to verify whether the need to use a given style pattern is situation-dependant.

Keywords: communication styles, communicative competence, social situations, interpersonal interaction, Interpersonal Circumplex, Wiggins' model, human behavior, verbal response

Social situations

Social situations are defined as a given set of circumstances whereby several individuals affect one another. Sztompka (2016) believes it to be one of the components of social relations as well as an opportunity for such a relation to occur. In contrast, according to Szewczuk (2016) social situations are such circumstances whereby an individual's disposition constitutes a kind of response to the behaviour

of the others or whereby such a disposition changes depending on whether other individuals are present or not. To complement the above statements, let us turn to Znaniecki (1991) who pointed out three important components of social situations. The first component is the social object, or to put it simpler a unit or a community which a given subject affects. The second element is the anticipated result, which is an expected reaction evoked by the subject in the

Address for correspondence, e-mail: editpsychas@gmail.com
Copyright: © Adam Kucharski

This is an Open Access journal, all articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>), allowing third parties to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format and to remix, transform, and build upon the material, provided the original work is properly cited and states its license.

social object. The third element is commonly known as intended objective process, which may be the means to elicit social reaction. The process of interpersonal communication illustrates the phenomenon well, as interlocutors influence one another in order to achieve a desired effect.

Moreover, social situations are characterised by diverse context, i.e. all kinds of realities which accompany or enable communication process. These include physical, historical, psychological and cultural aspects. Physical conditions are determined by such factors as surroundings, atmosphere, temperature, light, space, time etc.; historical conditions incorporate all the referenced past events; psychological aspects are defined as the aspects in which individuals perceive each other; while cultural aspects comprise socially accepted values, symbols, beliefs and behaviour (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2004).

Another important feature is the fact that under social situations humans make decisions spontaneously or, at times, purposefully organised. Thus, actions of an individual may progress inadvertently or according to an individual's intention. Furthermore, such action might exhibit focused or dispersed mass character, as well as be of lasting and long-term or episodic nature (Borkowski, 2003).

That being said, social situations are an outcome of several factors, which seem interrelated and are capable of shaping situation dynamics. People tend to demonstrate a variety of attitudes when in contact with other individuals. Some patterns stem from inner motivation (the so called inner-directed behaviour, e.g. inspiration); others are formed by external factors (the so called other-directed behaviour). Interpersonal contacts may evoke egoistic or altruistic behaviours. Egoistic attitude entails a significant focus on the self and own needs, while simultaneously ignoring the needs of others. In contrast, altruistic (prosocial) attitude entails friendliness towards others, an interest in their needs and readiness to offer support (Wierzejska, 2016).

Also, we distinguish social behaviour defined by creative or dogmatic traits. Creative behaviour is characteristic of open-minded, tolerant and flexible individuals; whereas dogmatic attitudes are noticeable in individuals who impose strict and rigid rules whenever in contact with other individuals. Moreover, a behaviour might be categorised as active or passive. Active behaviour is here understood as

individual actions performed while entering into an interaction with other participants. In contrast, passive attitude evinces lack of commitment to social relations. Additionally, individuals of passive attitude also tend to surrender to the course of interaction and await further development. Behaviour intended to avoid interpersonal contact or relational distancing provides textbook examples of passive attitude (Borkowski, 2003).

What is more, the nature of social situations requires participants to enter a range of interactions. Such interactions could be defined as a mutual influence of two or more units (such as a community, an organisation or an institution) which acknowledge one another, i.e. they enter a given social situation. Furthermore, in the process of interaction individual or group participants engage each other both as a subject which affects other participants as well as a subject which experiences such an influence. According to Turner, interactions which occur at social planes depend on the roles performed and are based on stereotypical sets of gestures. Also, social interactions result from a participant's conscious effort to recognise the existence of desires in people who need not be directly involved (Borkowski, 2003).

Another key element of social situations, which influences individual attitudes, are the rules and norms that state what is acceptable and what is forbidden or inadvisable under given circumstances. Additionally, social roles constitute another important component. Moreover, environmental conditions come into play, too (Kenrick, Neuberg and Cialdini, 2002).

By narrowing down the perspective to include only the physical properties of a given situation we fail to fully understand the nature of social behaviour. The issue should be approached from a participant's standpoint and include their perspective in such a way as to enable an insight into their perception of the world. Thus, individual feelings and sensations, subjective perceptions and impressions, which arise in particular circumstances should be considered when interpreting a given phenomenon (Aronson, 1997).

Social behaviour

Social psychologists tend to claim that there are varieties of *self*, which is a result of diversified situations and the presence of various people. An individual learns to

control their private and public *self*; the former remains entirely hidden in front of other people, unless we choose to be honest with ourselves; the latter constitutes our public image or our face, which we manifest to the world and other people (Goffman, 2011). A question, thus, follows whether the nature of our behaviour remains constant or changes depending on the situation. Trait theory stipulates that personality traits form the basis of cognitive mechanisms, whereas other theories indicate that the reverse is true and it is the cognitive processes that lay the foundations to processes by which personality traits emerge. Despite a rich research tradition, several questions seem to have been overlooked (Funder, 2006, 2007; Leikas et al., 2012). For example, whether or not personality exerts a stronger influence under specific circumstances or whether there is a varied time limit under similar circumstances (Cooper & Withney, 2009; Funder, 2009a). What is stressed is the necessity to observe individual behaviour in a variety of situations, although, just two situations may reveal important findings (Funder & Colvin, 1991).

In accordance with Wiggins' model (1980) social behaviour may be plotted on two perpendicular dimensions. The vertical *agentic* dimension includes interests related to autonomy and control spread on a cline from dominance to submission. The horizontal *communal* dimension includes interests related to communion spread between quarrelsomeness and agreeableness. Interpersonal Circumplex provides content and allows to conceptualise everyday social behaviour. Moskowitz (1994) claims that the interpersonal circle may be used to conceptualise both interpersonal behaviour and situations. According to interpersonal psychologists, in response to the initial behaviour of every individual there tends to emerge a complimentary set of reactions (Kiesler, 1983; Leary, 1957) defined in relation to both the vertical *agentic* dimension (dominance prompts submission) as well as the horizontal *communal* dimension (quarrelsomeness prompts quarrelsomeness). Fournier, Moskowitz & Zuroff (2008) describe human behaviour accounting for four dimensions: dominant, agreeable, submissive, quarrelsome. They consider four basic interactions: agreeable vs. dominant, agreeable vs. submissive, quarrelsome vs. submissive and quarrelsome vs. dominant. The rules of complementarity were assumed probabilistic in character, while individuals could display ideographic pat-

terns of behaviour in situations which deviate to a degree from nomothetic rules of complementarity. It follows, then, that key traits of interpersonal situations are coded and designated in terms of individual goals, convictions, expectations and competence. Every individual is unique and as such negotiates the meaning of an interpersonal situation idiosyncratically. Even though ideographic approach to interpersonal circle is expected, the behavioural responses should align into a nomothetic structure and organisation, as regards both individual behaviour and the interaction between each participant in accordance with the two dimensions of the circumplex. A few assumptions regarding the structure and behavioural stability in day-to-day social cooperation were made:

A common meaning for a given interpersonal situation is established; all participants will at least to a degree comply with the rules of complementarity to preserve the nomothetic organisation of a given situation.

A specific understanding is established for a given rule; all participants will at least to a degree deviate from the rule of complementarity displaying an ideographic organisation; removal of the influence of nomothetic situation should reveal unique disposition and signature of each participant, which forms the basis of individual differences.

The interpersonal circumplex represents the organisation of interpersonal behaviour adequately. Participants' behaviour should show a two dimensional structure.

Research showed that the rules of complementarity are a human convention and result from cooperation. However, the submission factor turned out to be lower than expected in a situation where the other participants displayed both agreeableness and dominance.

Furthermore, research revealed an intra-individual and inter-individual variation in the behavioural pattern. Behaviour in a given situation is stable and varied to a degree, which, according to the researchers, proves the trait theory approach, but does not exclude other factors.

Research by Fournier, Moskowitz & Zuroff (2008) evidenced that human behaviour follows a two dimensional structure. Dominance was significantly and inversely correspondent to submission, agreeableness was significantly and inversely correlated with quarrelsomeness. The correlation for each opposite of the same cline were at least two times greater than correlations for adjoining sectors.

Fournier, Moskowitz & Zuroff (2008) maintain that any deviation from the typological structure of the circumplex may be related to interpersonal beliefs and competence (Anderson & Chen, 2002; Baldwin 1992; Mischel, 1973). A person may assume that status winning dominance is correlated with quarrelsomeness, which subdues others. Also, others may lack behavioural skills to remain in a submissive relation. Thus, agreeable behaviour, i.e. a focus on the interests and needs of others, seems correlated with submissive behaviour, which forfeits one's own interests and needs. Similarly, submission need not counter dominance, as interpersonal motivation and goals come into play, too.

Communication in social situations

Human behaviour varies across a range of situations depending on the goals, motivation and competence, including communicative competence. Often, research participants wanted to behave in a specific manner, however, they could not, as they did not possess specialised competences; they wanted to communicate a certain message, but they lacked communicative competence to do so. Communicative competence is also a social behaviour.

Communicative competence is defined as a usage of verbal or non verbal behaviour to achieve a preferred goal in a context-appropriate way (Morreale et al., 2012). What is noteworthy is the fact that the higher the motivational level, knowledge and personal skills of the communicators, the more likely are they to communicate competently. Each participant brings in their own motivation, knowledge and skills. Skills are the element most directly conspicuous in the process of communication. Morreale et al (2012) point out that it is impossible to interact directly with a person's motivation and knowledge. First, knowledge and motivation might not be noticeable, as they may not have been developed into a skill. This, in turn, results in communication failures.

Second, despite communication skills possessed, a person may be unwilling or unable to use them either due to little motivation or inadequate knowledge.

Third, interpersonal context is dynamic, its forms and functions are ever changing depending on the situation and the manner in which they are defined.

Last, any effect reached will influence both people and their future interactions.

The above four rules depict the complexity of communication under a given situation which requires specific knowledge, motivation and especially skill. Occasionally we speak, what we feel. Under different circumstances, we just intend to achieve a certain goal, and thus communicate certain content. Motivation is different for each interlocutor. This variety of motivations may be captured in three basic dimensions: affective – cognitive, positive – negative and self-oriented – other-oriented.

Other-oriented motivation is connected with the multidimensional relational aspect of communication. Affiliation and control constitute two main dimensions here.

Still, we are not always other-oriented, often we aim at self-emphasis or self-preservation.

This duality in motivation gives rise to four communication styles. Two are other-oriented: affiliative and aggressive style. The remaining two are intraindividual in nature and comprise self-oriented styles: self-enhancing and self-defeating.

While communicating with other people we make use of a context, which delineates the framework of a given interaction. According to Spitzberg & Brunner (1991) the most common types of context refer to culture, time, relationship, situation and function. There are two dimensions for the context of a relationship: affiliation and control. Communication participants might not share status, often their positions are asymmetrical. Nonetheless, competent communication renders such relations dynamic. Additionally, dominating your interlocutor is but one of the goals, with attempts at intimacy or hostility constituting other major drives (Morreale, 2012).

To sum up, as Znaniecki formulated it, communication in a social situation is a social process, while verbal symbols used in the process comprise a cultural element. The content and meaning of each symbol are available to all interested parties. Moreover, the process of communication occurs under a set of particular circumstances. There is a mutual relation between the process of communication and a situation. The process of communication impacts the social situation, especially its form and interlocutors' power that co-occur in the situation. In turn, communicative situations give rise to an opportunity of communication exchange and influence it by means of social, cultural, ecological, demographic, topical and other as-

pects. Communicative situations could be viewed as a component of a larger set of social situations. What is characteristic of a communicative situation is the usage of symbolic code, which allows the codification and exchange of thought. All participants of communicative situations have their individual opinions, thoughts and goals on the object of communication and fellow interlocutors (Frydrychowicz, 2017).

Materials and methods

Competent communication requires continuous adjustments to the changing situation in a way that does not inhibit achieving the set goals in an appropriate manner. Thus, utterances formulated during such communication have to allow maximum effectiveness and propriety. Research was aimed at establishing whether situations differentiate the use of utterance styles. Two speaker oriented situations were posited. The first was termed Speaker-Threatening Situation (STS); the second included a Situation where Speaker Assertiveness was Needed (SAN). Similarly, two addressee oriented situations were also posited: Addressee-Threatening Situation (ATS) and a Situation where Addressee Assertiveness was Needed (AAN). An additional aim was to verify whether there existed a difference between an actually formulated type of utterance and the need to formulate in a given utterance style.

The additional aim was based on an assumption that communication participants may not possess the competences required to formulate a given type of an utterance.

The following hypothesis were postulated:

Hypotheses 1: There are differences in the utterance styles as actually formulated in speaker-threatening situations and addressee-threatening situations.

Hypotheses 2: There are differences in the utterance styles as actually formulated in a situation where speaker assertiveness and where addressee assertiveness is needed.

Hypotheses 3: There are differences in the need to formulate an utterance in a given style in speaker-threatening situation and addressee-threatening situation.

Hypotheses 4: There are differences in the need to

formulate an utterance in a given style in a situation where speaker assertiveness and where addressee assertiveness is needed.

Considering that utterances formed in a particular style may carry such associations unintentionally, we often feel like reacting otherwise in a specific situation. Thus, a few additional hypothesis were postulated assuming that there are differences between the need to formulate an utterance in a given style and its actual formulation dependant on the type of situation as differentiated above.

Hypotheses 5: There are differences in the utterance styles as actually formulated and the need to formulate them in speaker-threatening situations.

Hypotheses 6: There are differences in the utterance styles as actually formulated and the need to formulate them in addressee-threatening situations.

Hypotheses 7: There are differences in the utterance styles as actually formulated and the need to formulate them in a situation where speaker assertiveness is needed.

Hypotheses 8: There are differences in the utterance styles as actually formulated and the need to formulate them in a situation where addressee assertiveness is needed.

Research Method

Research participants were presented with a sheet, which contained four stories. For the purpose of Story 1, each participant was asked to empathise with the main character, who failed at a task. There were four possible responses given: assertive (self-enhancing), aggressive, affiliative and self-defeating¹. The participants were to order the responses starting with the response most corresponding to their own behaviour and ending with the least characteristic one. Next, the participants were asked to re-read and re-order the responses starting with the most desirable or appropriate response, i.e. one they would prefer to formulate in a given situation, and finishing with the least desirable or appropriate (see Appendix 1).

Story 2 told of a different character, who also failed at a task. Participants were tasked with ordering res-

¹ The choices given were an allusion to humour styles devised by Rod Martin and team (2003), who referencing Wiggins's idea differentiated the following styles: self-defeating, affiliative, self-enhancing and aggressive.

ponses addressed to the main character in accordance with the aforementioned rules.

For the purpose of Story 3 each participant was asked to empathise with an employee, who has received a pay rise, however the increase was lower than previously awarded to other employees. The employee attempts to resolve the situation with a superior, but is refused. Participants were asked to respond and order responses in accordance with the aforementioned rules (see Appendix 1).

Last, while reading Story 4 participants were asked to empathise with a superior, whose employee requested a higher pay rise than the one received, and to order responses from the most to the least characteristic of their own behaviour. Next, the participants were asked to arrange the responses starting with the most desirable response and finishing with the least desirable one (see Appendix 1).

The procedure was meant to allow a comparison of utterance styles for each participant under two different situations: speaker-threatening and addressee-threatening context, as well as a *situation where speaker assertiveness was needed* and a *situation where addressee assertiveness was needed*. Furthermore, their need to formulate a particular utterance depending on the situation was explored.

Results

IBM SPSS Statistic 25 statistic package software was used. First, the basic frequency of actual and desirable responses was established. Analysis was carried out using dependant sample Student's t-test.

The analysis suggests that there exist differences in the styles of utterances actually formulated depending on the situation. A preference for self-defeating utterances was noticeable more often under speaker-threatening situation than under non-threatening context. Statistically significant differences also occurred for affiliative utterances formulated. These were formulated more often when speaker assertiveness was required (SAN). No differences were observed as regards self-enhancing and aggressive styles with respect to each situation (cf. Table 2). For either situation the participants tended to choose self-enhancing or affiliative styles most eagerly. Aggressive style was the least often used (cf. Table 1). These findings seem to, at least partially, corroborate Hypotheses 1.

Statistical analysis showed no differences in styles of utterance formulation with regard to addressee-threatening situation (ATS) and a situation where addressee assertiveness was needed (AAN), cf. Table 4. Affiliative and self-enhancing styles were used for both addressee-

Table 1: Mean values for utterance styles as used in speaker-threatening situation (STS) and situations where speaker assertiveness was needed (SAN)

	Mean	N	Standard Deviation	Standard error of the mean
Self-defeating utterance used in STS	2.44	119	.971	.089
Self-defeating utterance used in SAN	2.06	119	.705	.065
Affiliative utterance used in STS	2.86	119	.795	.073
Affiliative utterance used in SAN	3.34	119	.847	.078
Self-enhancing utterance used in STS	3.17	119	.968	.089
Self-enhancing utterance used in SAN	3.13	119	.869	.080
Aggressive utterance used in STS	1.56	119	1.014	.093
Aggressive utterance used in SAN	1.53	119	.900	.083

Table 2: Differences between utterances as used in speaker-threatening situation (STS) and where speaker assertiveness was needed (SAN).

	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean	t	df	Significance (two-tailed)
Self-defeating utterance used	.378	1.089	.100	3.787	118	.000
Affiliative utterance used	-.479	1.149	.105	-4.549	118	.000
Self-enhancing utterance used	.042	1.123	.103	.408	118	.684
Aggressive utterance used	.034	1.235	-.191	.297	118	7.67

threatening situation and where addressee assertiveness was required. Self-defeating and aggressive styles were used to a lesser degree (cf. Table 3). The latter style was least used when formulating an utterance, which disproves Hypotheses 2.

threatening situations. This partially confirms Hypotheses 3.

There were no differences observed for a desirable utterance style as far as the remaining styles were concerned in situation-dependant usage. Either self-enhancing or

Table 3: Mean values for utterance styles as used in addressee-threatening situation (AST) and where addressee assertiveness was needed (AAN).

	Mean	N	Standard Deviation	Standard error of the mean
Self-defeating utterance used in ATS	2.37	108	.882	.085
Self-defeating utterance used in AAN	2.27	108	.871	.084
Affiliative utterance used in ATS	3.11	108	.980	.094
Affiliative utterance used in AAN	3.10	108	.947	.091
Self-enhancing utterance used in ATS	2.98	108	.886	.085
Self-enhancing utterance used in AAN	3.12	108	.733	.070
Aggressive utterance used in ATS	1.55	108	.970	.093
Budowanie wypowiedzi agresywnej SAN	1,52	108	.962	.093

Table 4: Differences in the need to use a particular utterance style in addressee-threatening situations (ATS) and where addressee assertiveness was needed (AAN).

	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean	t	df	Significance (two-tailed)
Self-defeating utterance preferable	.102	1.260	.121	.840	107	.403
Affiliative utterance preferable	.009	1.293	.124	.074	107	.941
Self-enhancing utterance preferable	-.139	1.195	.115	-1.207	107	.230
Aggressive utterance preferable	.028	1.156	.111	.250	107	.803

Analysis showed that there occur differences in the need to formulate an utterance in a given style depending on the situation. Where assertiveness was required on the part of the sender participants would have preferred to formulate more self-enhancing utterances than under speaker-

affiliative utterances, as well as self-defeating styles were marked as preferable where speaker assertiveness was needed. However, aggressive style was rarely marked as desirable (cf. Table 6).

Also, no statistically significant differences were

Table 5: Mean values for the need to use a given utterance in speaker-threatening situation (STS) and where speaker assertiveness was needed (SAN).

	Mean	N	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean
Self-defeating utterance preferable in STS	2.57	105	1.055	.103
Self-defeating utterance preferable in SAN	2.56	105	.929	.091
Affiliative utterance preferable in STS	2.89	117	.838	.078
Affiliative utterance preferable in SAN	2.94	117	.893	.083
Self-enhancing utterance preferable in STS	3.02	117	.991	.092
Self-enhancing utterance preferable in SAN	3.26	117	.894	.083
Aggressive utterance preferable in STS	1.54	117	.987	.091
Aggressive utterance preferable in SAN	1.44	117	.885	.082

Table 6: Differences in the need to use a particular utterance style in speaker-threatening situation (STS) and where speaker

	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean	t	df	Significance (two-tailed)
Self-defeating utterance preferable	.010	1.383	.135	.071	104	.944
Affiliative utterance preferable	-.051	1.128	.104	-.492	116	.624
Self-enhancing utterance preferable	-.248	1.144	.106	-2.344	116	.021
Aggressive utterance preferable	.094	1.106	.102	.919	116	.360

observed with regard to a preferable style depending on the situation, either in addressee-threatening situation or where addressee assertiveness was needed (cf. Table 8). Here, also the preference for a particular utterance style was clearly marked, with self-enhancing and affiliative styles being most preferable. A slightly lower preference was expressed

comparison to those contexts where addressee assertiveness was required. No difference in terms of usage was observed between the utterance actually formulated in a given style and the need (or lack of thereof) to formulate an utterance in a particular style (cf. Table 9).

Also, Hypotheses 6 appears partially confirmed.

Table 7: Mean values for the need to use a particular utterance style in addressee-threatening situation (ATS) and where addressee assertiveness was needed (AAN).

	Mean	N	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean
Self-defeating utterance preferable in ATS	2.57	106	.926	.090
Self-defeating utterance preferable in AAN	2.46	106	1.034	.100
Affiliative utterance preferable in ATS	3.07	106	1.007	.098
Affiliative utterance preferable in AAN	2.91	106	1.000	.097
Self-enhancing utterance preferable in ATS	2.90	106	.915	.089
Self-enhancing utterance preferable in AAN	3.01	106	.811	.079
Aggressive utterance preferable in ATS	1.53	106	.958	.093
Aggressive utterance preferable in AAN	1.59	106	1.021	.099

Table 8: Differences in the need to formulate an utterance in addressee-threatening situation (ATS) and where addressee assertiveness was needed (AAN).

	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean	t	df	Significance (two-tailed)
Self-defeating utterance preferable	.104	1.338	.130	.799	105	.426
Affiliative utterance preferable	.160	1.251	.121	1.320	105	.190
Self-enhancing utterance preferable	-.113	1.198	.116	-.973	105	.333
Aggressive utterance preferable	-.066	1.054	.102	-.645	105	.520

for the self-defeating style; aggressive style ranked at the bottom of the preference scale. This confirms Hypotheses 4 (cf. Table 7).

Hypotheses 5 seems partly corroborated. Noticeably, participants tended to mark self-enhancing style as preferable under addressee-threatening situation more in

Analysis suggests that under addressee-threatening situations the participants would rather have used self-defeating style than they actually did (cf. Table 10).

Where speaker assertiveness was needed participants would rather have used the self-defeating style more, and less rely on the affiliative style than they actually did

Table 9: Differences in utterances as actually formulated in a given style and the need to use a particular utterance style under addressee-threatening situation.

	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean	t	df	Significance (two-tailed)
Self-defeating utterance used	.004	1.148	.054	.081	457	.935
Affiliative utterance used	-.015	1.094	.051	-.299	457	.765
Self-enhancing utterance used	.124	.907	.042	2.937	457	.003
Aggressive utterance used	-.011	1.024	.048	-.228	457	.820

Table 10: Difference in utterance style actually used and the need to utilise a particular style under addressee-threatening situation.

	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean	t	df	Significance (two-tailed)
Self-defeating utterance used	-.198	.888	.086	-2.296	105	.024
Affiliative utterance used	.047	.877	.085	.554	105	.581
Self-enhancing utterance used	.104	.975	.095	1.096	105	.276
Aggressive utterance used	.000	.816	.079	.000	105	1.000

(cf. Table 11). The difference in the need to utilize the self-enhancing or aggressive style and their actual usage bordered statistical significance. Hypotheses 7 was partially confirmed.

threatening situation than when situation is of less confrontational a character or requires assertiveness on their part. In such situations, research participants appear to have assumed affiliative styles to be more effective and their inter-

Table 11: Difference in utterance style as actually used and the need to utilize a given utterance style where speaker

	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean	t	df	Significance (two-tailed)
Self-defeating utterance used	-.333	.816	.074	-4.528	122	.000
Affiliative utterance used	.447	1.344	.121	3.690	122	.000
Self-enhancing utterance used	-.179	1.355	.122	-1.464	122	.146
Aggressive utterance used	.081	.660	.060	1.366	122	.175

Hypotheses 8 was, however, disproved. No differences were observed in utterance style as used and the need to formulate an utterance in a given style where addressee assertiveness was required. The differences proved statistically insignificant (cf. Table 12).

locutor was classified as opponent rather than enemy. Moreover, self-enhancing and affiliative styles dominate in either situation, whereas self-defeating and aggressive styles tend to be used less. Analyses suggests that the so called adaptive styles prevail, as they secure the self, dama-

Table 12: Differences in utterance style as actually used and the need to utilize a given utterance style where addressee

	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean	t	df	Significance (two-tailed)
Self-defeating utterance used	-.098	1.074	.097	-1.007	122	.316
Affiliative utterance used	.130	1.130	.102	1.276	122	.204
Self-enhancing utterance used	.098	.936	.084	1.156	122	.250
Aggressive utterance used	-.098	.814	.073	-1.329	122	.186

Discussion and conclusion

Social situations require the means to react and adjust communication styles adequately. This research shows that there are situation-dependant differences in utterance styles employed by interlocutors. Message senders tend to differentiate their communication style to suit social situations. When under speaker-threatening situation, they prefer to formulate utterances in self-defeating style more so than when situation requires speaker assertiveness. This supports the claim that aggression prompts submission, which could be attributed to a perceived asymmetry in social standing between the speaker and addressee in social situations.

When addressee is of superior standing in terms of dominance/submission dimension, utterances which follow on the part of an addressee tend to strengthen the relation by means of accommodative behaviour. Speakers also less willingly resort to affiliative style under speaker-

ing nobody's self (self-enhancing style) or they secure the relation without endangering the self (affiliative style).

What is interesting is the divergence between the need to formulate self-enhancing utterances across the two situations. A higher number of such utterances was expected where addressee assertiveness was required. The participants found self-enhancing style preferable and would have liked to use it more often in situations where opponents expressed their needs, yet were not treated as enemies or rule breakers about to be punished. This preference might suggest that refusal appeared problematic and employed strategies failed to maintain the speaker's own standpoint.

Interestingly, the need to utilise a self-enhancing style by the speaker in a situation of conflict is lower than the actually declared usage, which might imply that this utterance style is perceived as cooling and, especially where the participants felt subordinate, might have been considered less effective. The fact that self-enhancing style was applied more readily in addressee-threatening situation

seems to corroborate the above observation. Although, an individual seems to be at the focus of self-defeating style, it would appear that what drives its usage is actually the need to maintain a positive relation and to win approval.

Where context required speaker assertiveness, the participants would have liked to use self-defeating utterances more, and fewer affiliative utterances than their actual usage demonstrated. This also points to the fact that when speaker-threatening circumstances arise or the speakers are dependant on the decision of others, the participants opted for a more submissive and self-deprecating behaviour.

References :

- Anderson, S. M. & Chen, S. (2002). The relational self: An interpersonal social-cognitive theory. *Psychological Review*, 109, 619–645.
- Aronson, E. (2009). *Człowiek – istota społeczna*. [The Social Animal] Warszawa: PWN.
- Baldwin, M. W. (1992). Relational schemas and the processing of social information. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 461–484.
- Borkowski, J. (2003). *Podstawy psychologii społecznej*. [Fundamentals of Social Psychology] Warszawa: Dom Wydawniczy ELPIA.
- Cooper, W. H., & Withey, M. J. (2009). The strong situation hypothesis. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 13, 62–72.
- Dobek-Ostrowska, B. (2004). *Podstawy komunikowania społecznego* [Social Communication Basics]. Wrocław: Astrum.
- Domachowski, W. (2007). *Przewodnik po psychologii społecznej*. [A Practical Guide to Social Psychology] Warszawa: PWN.
- Frydrychowicz, S. (2017). Sytuacja komunikacji interpersonalnej – aspekty indywidualne i społeczno-kulturowe [Interpersonal Communicative Situation – Individual and Socio-Cultural Aspects], in W. Domachowski, A. Kucharski (ed.), *Granice komunikowania się* [Communication boundaries] (pp. 75-88), Szczecin: volumina.pl.
- Funder, D. C., & Colvin, C. R. (1991). Explorations in behavioural consistency: Properties of persons, situations, and behaviors. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 773–794.
- Funder, D. C. (2006)(2006). Towards a resolution of the personality triad: Persons, situations, and behaviors. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 40, 21–34.
- Funder, D. C. (2007). Beyond just-so stories towards a psychology of situations: Evolutionary accounts of individual differences require independent assessment of personality and situational variables. *European Journal of Personality*, 21, 599–601.
- Funder, D. C. (2009). Persons, behaviors and situations: An agenda for personality psychology in the postwar era. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 43, 120–126.
- Fournier, A.M., Moskowitz, D. S., Zuroff, C. D. (2008). Integrating Dispositions, Signatures, and the Interpersonal Domain. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 94, No. 3, 531–545.
- Goffman, E. (2011). *Człowiek w teatrze życia codziennego* [Presentation of Self in Everyday Life]. Warszawa: Aletheia.
- Kenrick, D. T., Neuberg, S. L., Cialdini, R. B. (2002). *Psychologia społeczna. Rozwiązane tajemnice*. [Social Psychology: Unravelling the Mystery] Gdańsk: GWP.
- Kiesler, D. J. (1983). The 1982 interpersonal circle: A taxonomy for complementarity in human transactions. *Psychological Review*, 90, 185–214.
- Leary, T. (1957). *Interpersonal diagnosis of personality*. New York: Ronald.
- Leikas, S., Jan-Erik Lönnqvist, E. J., Verkasalo, M. (2012). Persons, Situations, and Behaviors: Consistency and Variability of Different Behaviors in Four Interpersonal Situations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 103, No. 6, 1007–1022
- Martin, R. A., Puhlik-Doris, P., Larsen, G., Gray, J., & Weir, K. (2003). Individual differences in uses of humor and their relation to psychological well-being: Development of the Humor Styles Questionnaire. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 37(1), 48–75.
- Morreale, S.P., Spitzberg, B.H., & Barge, J.K. (2012). *Komunikowanie między ludźmi* Human [Communication: Motivation, Knowledge, Skills]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- Mischel, W. (1973). Toward a cognitive social learning reconceptualization of personality. *Psychological Review*, 80, 252–283.
- Moskowitz, D. S. (1994). Cross-situational generality and the interpersonal circumplex. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 66, 921–933.
- Spitzberg, B. H., Brunner, C. C. (1991). Toward a theoretical integration of context and competence inference research. *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 55(1): 28–46.
- Szewczuk, W. (1979). *Słownik psychologiczny*. [A Dictionary of Psychological Terms] Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna.
- Sztompka, P. (2016). *Kapitał społeczny. Teoria przestrzeni międzyludzkiej*. [Social Capital. Interpersonal Space Theory] Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak.
- Wierzejska, J. (2016). Kompetencje społeczne studentów kierunków technicznych i społecznych. [Social Competences in University Students of Technical and Social Studies] *Studia Edukacyjne*, 2016 (39), pp. 155-168.
- Wiggins, J. S. (1980). Circumplex models of interpersonal behavior. In L. Wheeler (Ed.), *Review of personality and social psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 265–294). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Znaniecki, F. (1991). *Prawa psychologii społecznej*. [Laws of Social Psychology] Warszawa: PWN.

APPENDIX

Situation 1

An employee has promised to prepare a report on activities of his team. You have clearly stated the deadline. However, your employee understood the deadline was not firmly set, as such reports are merely a means of checking progress. The employee had other pressing responsibilities, which could entail company loss unless delivered. Having prioritised, the employee decided to postpone the report and provide an explanation later on. Once the deadline arrived you asked the employee to hand in the report only to receive an explanation why the report hadn't been prepared.

What's your response?

Please choose the response which best suits your style. Mark answers a)-d) with a number 1-4 corresponding to your actual preference, not what you would deem most appropriate, where 1 refers to your most frequently used response and 4 denotes a response you would never use. Use Roman numbers (I, II, III, IV) to mark those responses which you believe to be the most appropriate reaction in a given situation.

		Which response is most characteristic of your actual behaviour? (1-4)	Which response would you like to use or which you believe most appropriate? (I-IV)
D	What on earth were you thinking?! Since when is decision making a part of your job, this is irresponsible of you and you have even come up with a silly excuse. If everyone did that and missed all deadlines, we could never guarantee that task are completed.		
E	I asked you to complete a task and I expect it to be carried out. I haven't considered the fact that this is not your only responsibility. Thank you for bringing that up, I cannot see how I missed that.		
F	I understand you explanation and you are indeed right that carrying out the pressing company task was more important. However, if everyone did that and missed all deadlines, we could never guarantee that task are completed.		
G	I understand you explanation and you are indeed right that carrying out the pressing company task was more important. However, I would appreciate it if you consulted such decisions with me in the future. I am always happy to listen to you.		

Situation 2

You have promised to prepare a report on your teams activities. You supervisor has clearly stated the deadline. You knew, though, that the deadline is not a firmly set date as such reports are merely a means of checking progress. You had a lot of other pressing responsibilities and if you failed to deliver those it would have entailed losses. Having prioritised you decided to postpone the deadline on the report and explain that to your superior later on. Once the deadline arrived your superior asked you to deliver the report. You tried to explain why you had failed at carrying out the task. To which your superior responded: "What on earth were you thinking?! Since when is decision making a part of your job, this is irresponsible of you and you have even come up with a silly excuse. If everyone did that and missed all deadlines, we could never guarantee that task are completed".

What's your response?

Please choose the response which best suits your style. Mark answers a)-d) with a number 1-4 corresponding to your actual preference, not what you would deem most appropriate, where 1 refers to your most frequently used response and 4 denotes

a response you would never use. Use Roman numbers (I, II, III, IV) to mark those responses which you believe to be the most appropriate reaction in a given situation.

Situation 3

You have just learnt that your employee has exceeded the set target and made up for all the backlogs at work, which improved your company's financial standing. You have decided to reward that employee with a pay rise, however you realise you

		Which response is most characteristic of your actual behaviour? (1-4)	Which response would you like to use or which you believe most appropriate? (I-IV)
A	I am sorry, I know that I shouldn't have done that and that I failed to account for that. You're right. It was really irresponsible of me. It will never happen again, I cannot afford to let it happen again.		
B	I am sorry for this turn of events. Indeed, deadlines must be observed, as we might misjudge the importance of a task.		
C	I am sorry about this turn of event, however I cannot agree with you that it was irresponsible of me. I work diligently. I might have misjudged the situation, but it was for the good of the company.		
D	I do not appreciate that tone, how dare you. I will not stand for such treatment!		

cannot afford too large a sum. Your employee has learnt about it and felt offended and unfairly treated. The employee has asked for a word with you.

What's your response?

Please choose the response which best suits your style. Mark answers a)-d) with a number 1-4 corresponding to your actual preference, not what you would deem most appropriate, where 1 refers to your most frequently used response and 4 denotes a response you would never use. Use Roman numbers (I, II, III, IV) to mark those responses which you believe to be the most appropriate reaction in a given situation.

Situation 4

		Which response is most characteristic of your actual behaviour? (1-4)	Which response would you like to use or which you believe most appropriate? (I-IV)
A	What are you thinking?! Even though you received a pay rise you still have the audacity to complain?!		
B	I understand your resentment, however at the moment the company cannot afford to offer so large a pay rise as you would expect.		
C	I agree with what you're saying and admittedly I have not realised that you might feel it's unfair or that you have been underappreciated. Naturally, I will see to it that you get an even higher pay rise.		
D	I realise what you might feel now, so I will try to resolve this situation in a way that will make you feel appreciated.		

You have promised to make up for all missing reports and missed deadlines and task within a month. Afterwards it turned out that the company has started an Employee of the Month programme, and your superior to show appreciation for your work performance and input has awarded you the title of Employee of the Month. You were given a pay rise. You have also learnt that the pay rise so far had been higher than yours. You decided to confront your superior on this. To which he responded: "You are right, however, at the moment the company is experiencing some financial turbulence, which is why I

decided to decrease you pay rise so as not to affect the entire company”.

What's your response?

Please choose the response which best suits your style. Mark answers a)-d) with a number 1-4 corresponding to your actual preference, not what you would deem most appropriate, where 1 refers to your most frequently used response and 4 denotes a response you would never use. Use Roman numbers (I, II, III, IV) to mark those responses which you believe to be the most appropriate reaction in a given situation.

		Which response is most characteristic of your actual behaviour? (1-4)	Which response would you like to use or which you believe most appropriate? (I-IV)
A	I see, you're right, I didn't realise that the company's might be experiencing problems. I do accept the pay rise. The good of the company takes priority.		
B	I understand, yet it feels like I have been underappreciated in comparison to other employees.		
C	I do understand that the company has experienced financial problems, and I am sorry about that. However, I believe I am entitled to a pay rise of the same amount as other employees.		
D	How dare you?! I will not accept such treatment and cannot see why you should solve company's financial problems at my expense, especially that you have neglected to inform your employees about such problems.		

Адам Кучарський

доктор філософії, Uniwersytet Szczeciński, Щецин (Польща)

ВПОДОБАННЯ СТИЛЮ СПІЛКУВАННЯ ТА ВИКОРИСТАННЯ ПІД ЧАС ВИКОРИСТАННЯ У РІЗНИХ СОЦІАЛЬНИХ СИТУАЦІЯХ

АНОТАЦІЯ

Мета: Наступне дослідження мало на меті встановити, чи різняться ситуації використання стилів висловлювання між афіліативними, агресивними, самозакханими та самозміцнюючими. Крім того, була зроблена спроба визначити, чи може контекст викликати необхідність зміни заданого стилю висловлювання.

Методи: для цього дослідження були використані чотири історії. Історія 1 малася на увазі як ситуація, що загрожує оратору, в результаті чого учасники повинні були мати відношення до відправника. Більше того, відправник опинився перед домінуючим адресатом. Історія 2 малася на увазі як ситуація, що загрожує адресату (ОБС), внаслідок чого відправник опинився в домінуючому становищі. Ще два сюжети були використані для ілюстрації ситуацій, коли відповідно необхідна напористисть оратора (SAN) та асертивність адресата (AAN).

Учасники: 119 учасників, середній вік - 21, із

54 чоловіків та 66 жінок.

Результати: Дані були проаналізовані за допомогою t-тесту Стьюдента, який мав окреслити відмінності у використанні щодо заданого стилю висловлювання у двох різних контекстах. Аналіз показав, що найбільш переважними є стилі, які забезпечують позитивні відносини з іншими учасниками, а також зміцнюють самооцінку, однак, не за рахунок інших. Таким чином, агресивні стилі не подобаються. Використання заданого стилю здається співвіднесеним із зобов'язанням використовувати інший стиль, який може залежати від контексту. У ситуаціях, що загрожують самозагрозі, учасники схильні вибирати більше контролю, що демонструє надію на більш симетричні стосунки оратора та адресата. Тут також може спостерігатися тенденція утримуватися від домінуючої поведінки заради кращих відносин. Наступне дослідження порушує важливе питання співвідношення поведінки людини та ситуаційного контексту. У літературі з цього приводу рідко досліджується проблема складання висловлювань, яка б дала уявлення про закономірності використання даного стилю в заданому контексті. Крім того, наступне дослідження намагається перевірити, чи потребує в застосуванні заданого стилю залежить від ситуації.

Ключові слова: стилі спілкування, комунікативна компетентність, соціальні ситуації, міжособистісна взаємодія, міжособистісний кругозір, модель Вігінса, поведінка людини, словесна відповідь

Адам Кучарски

Phd, Uniwersytet Szczeciński, Щецин (Польща)

ПРЕДПОЧТЕНИЯ В ОТНОШЕНИИ СТИЛЯ ОБЩЕНИЯ И ИХ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ В РАЗЛИЧНЫХ СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ СИТУАЦИЯХ

АННОТАЦИЯ

Цель: следующее исследование было направлено на установление того, различают ли ситуации использование стилей высказывания между аффилиативным, агрессивным, саморазрушительным и самосовершенствующимся. Кроме того, была предпринята попытка определить, может ли контекст вызывать необходимость изменить данный стиль высказывания.

Методы: четыре истории были использованы для целей этого исследования. Рассказ 1 был задуман как угрожающая оратору ситуация, когда участники должны были относиться к отправителю. Более того, отправитель столкнулся с доминирующим адресатом. Рассказ 2 был задуман как ситуация, угрожающая адресату (САР), когда отправитель оказался в доминирующем положении. Еще две истории были использованы, чтобы проиллюстрировать ситуации, когда требовались соответственно уверенность в себе (SAN) и уверенность в адресате (AAN).

Участники: было 119 лиц, среднего возраста — 21, из которых 54 мужчин и 66 женщин.

Результаты: Данные были проанализированы с помощью t-критерия Стьюдента, который должен был очертить различия в использовании в отношении данного стиля высказывания в двух различных контекстах. Анализ показал, что наиболее предпочтительными являются стили, которые обеспечивают позитивные отношения с другими участниками, а также улучшают самоощущение, однако не за счет других. Таким образом, агрессивные стили не нравятся. Использование данного стиля, похоже, связано с обязательством использовать другой стиль, который может зависеть от контекста. В ситуациях, угрожающих самому себе, участники, как прави-

ло, выбирают больший контроль, что демонстрирует их надежду на более симметричные отношения говорящего и адресата. Здесь также наблюдается тенденция воздерживаться от властного поведения ради лучшего отношения. Следующее исследование поднимает важную проблему взаимосвязи между поведением человека и ситуационным контекстом. Литература по этому вопросу редко исследует проблему составления высказываний, которая обеспечила бы понимание закономерностей использования данного стиля в данном контексте. Кроме того, следующее исследование пытается проверить, зависит ли необходимость использования данного шаблона стиля от ситуации.

Ключевые слова: стили общения, коммуникативная компетентность, социальные ситуации, межличностное взаимодействие, межличностный циркумplex, модель Вигинса, поведение человека, речевой ответ

Дата отримання статті: 09.04.2020

Дата рекомендації до друку: 26.04.2020

Дата оприлюднення: 30.04.2020