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**DEFENSIVE STRATEGIES AND TACTICS IN MODERN ENGLISH**

**DIALOGICAL DISCOURSE**

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## INTRODUCTION

Communication is probably one of the greatest gifts ever given to mankind. It helps us share thoughts, feelings, messages and information. Powerful empires and countries, magnificent pieces of art and stunning technologies – all of it were made with the help of communication. Moreover it is a live process that is unprepared, unplanned and unrehearsed. Sometimes it can get out the control and cause unpleasant conflict situations, which in some cases may cross all the boundaries and even lead to wars. Taking all these factors into consideration, it would be a great mistake to underestimate all the power of communication and its consequences.

Since ancient times, people tried to avoid unsafe situations and they wanted to protect themselves from danger. So, defensive behavior is an inherent human quality and that is why this topic was studied by many researchers and it remains important nowadays.

In modern society, the problem of behavior in a conflict situation and effective conflict resolution is very relevant. Every day we face with confrontations and that is why it is important to know the basic strategies and tactics of behavior in such situations, especially in the course of interaction with the opponents in order to know how to cope with the problem.

The problem of defensive communication has been under consideration of linguists and psycholinguists for a long time. Folger, Poole, Stutman, Bowings, Freud, Cecil, Rothwell and others investigated defensive strategies and tactics in speech. The investigation of defensive communication is appropriate only on the discourse level and it is dialogical discourse that helps to get a deeper insight into linguistic characteristics of defensive strategies and tactics.

When communication gets out of control or the interlocutors misunderstand each other, it may cause conflict situations. Conflicts are the eternal part of our life.

**The object** of this Diploma Paper is defensive strategies and tactics in Modern English dialogical discourse.

**The subject** of the Diploma Paper is communicative and functional peculiarities of defensive strategies in tactics in Modern English dialogical discourse.

**The main aim** of the Diploma Paper is to find, investigate and classify defensive strategies and tactics.

To achieve the aim, the following **objectives** should be fulfilled:

- 1) to investigate the main features of communication;
- 2) to identify the notions of “conflict”, “defensive behaviour”, “defensive strategy”;
- 3) to point out cases when interlocutors resort to defence reaction in Modern English dialogical discourse;
- 4) to study the role of defensive mechanisms for successful communication;
- 5) to work out a functional classification of defensive strategies and tactics.

**Methodology** of this Paper includes the usage of a number of methods, both general scientific and specific linguistic ones. The method of generalization is applied to analyse the literature and the obtained materials. The descriptive method is used to describe the defensive strategies and tactics in communication, characterize their place in language and also their impact on the pragmatic situation as well as their functional peculiarities. Different discourse analysis methods are used to outline functions of communication in everyday life. Intentional method is used in order to reveal and analyse the speaker’s intention in dialogical discourse. Conversational and contextual methods are applied in order to investigate defensive strategies in different contexts in dialogical discourse.

**Theoretical significance** of the Paper lies in the fact that its results may contribute to the general theory of functioning of communicative defensive strategies in Modern English dialogical discourse.

**Practical value** of the work consists in further usage of its results in the courses of theoretical and practical grammar and speaking practice. This will also

enlarge the knowledge about the nature of the notion “defensive strategy” in communication and the importance of defending in communication.

**Materials** for the investigation served the abstracts from Modern English literature texts and TV-episodes which present the examples of defensive strategies in communication.

**Structurally** the Paper consists of Introduction, two Chapters, Conclusions to each Chapter, General Conclusions, resume, the list of references and the list of illustration materials.

**Chapter One** is concerned with theoretical description of the main features of communication and the notions of “conflict”, “defensive behaviour” in communication. It also deals with different structural and functional classifications of the words “conflict” and “defence”.

**Chapter Two** deals with functioning of defensive strategies in Modern English dialogical discourse. Various communicative situations with defensive strategies are singled out and analyzed. Functional classifications based on communicative peculiarities of interlocutors’ defensive behaviour are offered.

In **General Conclusions** we sum up the results of the investigation.



# CHAPTER ONE. DEFENSIVE COMMUNICATION IN MODERN ENGLISH DIALOGICAL DISCOURSE. ITS MAIN STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

## 1.1. General features of communication and conflict

Human existence is impossible without communicative activity. Regardless of gender, age, education, social status, and many other things characterizing human personality, we constantly request, transmit and store information, i.e. actively engaged in communication activities. Communication has become an essential part of our life, every day we express our ideas feelings, give advises and opinions. The ability to communicate ideas and feelings in a clear manner probably is one of the most important aspects of human interaction. So, what is communication and how does it work? According to Cambridge dictionary it is a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior (Crystal 2008, p 368). Searle has defined it as one of the methods of sending and receiving information. It is an interlocking, social, cognitive, linguistic enterprise, which includes the participants, the aim, the uttered information, and the result of the conversation (Searl 1996, p 152).

The term **communication** was introduced at the beginning of the 20th century; earlier, the issue of communication was considered in philosophy and science as a problem of human interaction (Sack 1994, p 93). The initial meaning of this term has changed in a course of time and is now widely interpreted. On the one hand, based on the meaning of the Latin verb “**communicare**” (to inform, to communicate), the concept of communication means the transmission of signals and messages, that is the exchange of information between any objects of natural or artificial nature. On the other hand, etymologically the concept of communication is closely related to such notion as community and unity. This connection plays an important role in the system of humanitarian discourses, and,

first of all, for socially oriented philosophical theories, in which a society or community is considered as a condition or goal of successful communication (Goto 2000, p. 232). That is why the term “communication” is polyhedral and includes a lot of different aspects.

One of the main varieties of communication is conversation. During the conversation takes place the process of sending and receiving information. The main goal for interlocutors is appropriately interpret the implied speech act. We usually use the term “speech event” for activities that are governed by certain norms for the speech use. There may be such speech events as lectures, interviews, debates, meetings, etc. Each of these speech events differs in the number of participants and the type and amount of talking expected from them. It is also important to mention that each speech event has its rules that should be followed.

Conversation may be defined as an informal talk in a small group of people or at least two people. It is the so called a live form of communication or face-to-face form. As we know, conversation is aimed at transmitting a piece of information, and the main textual information is a message (mono-aspect information about something) or text (complex information about many or several significant aspects of something). Thus, messages, texts, actions to build them and, conversely, actions to restore their content and meaning, as well as thinking and understanding associated with this, provide the content of social communication (Aitchison, 2001).

**Conversation** is a talk involving a small group of people or at least two people where thoughts, feelings, and ideas are expressed, questions are asked and answered, or news and information are shared. However, conversation involves more than only exchange of information (Goffman 1959, p.1).

Conversation has a number of specific features:

Firstly, it involves at list two interlocutors, and each of them is an active participant. Moreover, the specificity of the human exchange of information lies in the special role of each participant of the communication and significance of their information. This significance of information is due to the fact that people do not

simply “exchange” meanings, but longing to develop a common sense. So, we can see that each communicative process is represented as a unity of conversation and knowledge.

Secondly, there should be a possibility of mutual influence of interlocutors on each other through a system of signs. The exchange of information involves an impact on the communicator’s behavior and a change in the state in the communication process.

Thirdly, communication can have an influence only if a communicator (the person sending the information) and the recipient (the person receiving it) have a unified or similar codification and decoding system (Levinson 1995, p 214).

Fourth, communication barriers are always possible. In this case, we may speak about misunderstanding that leads to conflicts.

Communication as a process can perform various functions: criticizing, asking, praising, promising, flattering, warning, etc. In order to realize all these functions successfully, one should know that communication has special styles, which help to realize particular communicative purpose. Generally, there are ten basic communicative styles, which serve as ways of interacting with other people in the communicative process:

- 1) dominant (a strategy aimed to reduce the role of others in communication);
- 2) dramatic (exaggeration and emotional coloring of the message content);
- 3) controversial (aggressive or proving strategy);
- 4) soothing (a relaxing strategy aimed at reducing the anxiety of the interlocutor);
- 5) impressive (strategy aimed at impressing);
- 6) accurate (aimed at the accuracy and accuracy of the message);
- 7) attentive (expressing interest in what others say);
- 8) encouraging (using non-verbal signals like eye contact, gestures, body movement, etc.);

- 9) friendly (tendency to encourage others and interest in their contribution to communication);
- 10) defensive (reaction to rude or impolite behavior of interlocutor).

During the communication process, the interlocutors are aimed not only at sharing information, but also to be understood by partners properly. Thus, the correct interpretation of the message coming from the communicator to the recipient can be problematic. Firstly, the form and content of the message significantly depends on the personal characteristics of the communicator, his ideas and his attitude to the recipient, as well as on the whole situation in which communication takes place. Secondly, the message sent by a communicator does not remain unchanged – it is transformed under the influence of the individual psychological characteristics of the recipient's personality, as well as the personal attitude to the hearer, the text itself and the communicative situation (Bühler 1990, p. 347).

When communication gets out of control, the interlocutors misunderstand each other and it can cause conflict situations. Conflicts are the eternal part of our life. Contradiction is a heart of any conflict situation, which usually leads to either constructive or destructive consequences. The word **conflict** comes from the Latin **conflictus** – collision, and means an active disagreement between people with opposing opinions or principles (Katz 2011). Neumann and Morgenstein define “conflict” as the interaction of two objects that have incompatible goals and ways to achieve these goals. Such objects can be people, individual groups, armies, monopolies, classes, social institutions, etc., whose activities are somehow related to the formulation and solution of problems of organization and management, forecasting and decision-making, as well as planning of targeted actions (Neumann, Morgenstein, 1994). Levin characterizes the conflict as a situation in which oppositely directed forces of approximately equal magnitude simultaneously act on the individual. Along with the “power” lines of the situation, the personality itself plays an active role in resolving conflicts, their understanding and vision.

Therefore, in the works by Levin both intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts are considered (Левин 2008, с.132).

When people think about a conflict, they most often associate it with aggression, threats, disputes, hostility. As a result, there is an opinion that conflict is always an undesirable phenomenon, that it should be immediately resolved as soon as it arises. Of course, conflict is unpleasant situation that usually comes with aggression and negative emotions. For example, a person who argues with others just because he or she cannot explain his or her point of view properly is likely to reduce the group's ability to make effective decisions. The other interlocutors can accept the debater's point of view only in order to avoid the conflict and all its problems, without even being sure that they are doing the right thing. But on the other hand, some kinds of conflicts can be useful and it helps people to better understand each other. It helps people to make right decisions, and also gives the opportunity to express their thoughts and thereby satisfy their personal needs for respect and power. In companies it can also lead to a more efficient implementation of plans, strategies and projects, since the discussion of various points of view on these documents takes place before their actual implementation (Sharland 2005, p. 97).

Neumann and Morgenstein define positive and negative impacts of conflict. Among positive sides he defines:

1. conflict develops the process of self-consciousness;
2. a certain set of values is affirmed and confirmed under its influence;
3. leads to the unification of people with the same interests;
4. facilitates prioritization;
5. leads to the emergence of contacts with other people and groups;
6. leads to development of avoiding and preventing conflict situations.

The negative impact of conflict is often manifested in the following sides:

1. causes stress;
2. leads to loss of support;

3. leads to quick action instead of considered reply.
4. leads to losing trust to the interlocutor;
5. conflict tends to become more serious (Neumann, Morgenstein 1994);

Thus, conflict is a completely normal, natural and even healthy component of any relationship. Conflict is the expression of our own needs, and can help the relationship grow and improve when both parties' needs are clear. It also can have positive consequences as well as negative.

So, because of the expressed struggle or disagreement, a conflict arises. Moreover, sometimes we can express our disagreement not only verbally (with a help of words) but also non-verbally (through a mean look or a harsh tone of voice). Conflict occurs between people who in some way depend on each other, they also called interdependent parties. This interdependence exists in case when the actions of one person affect comfort of the other. That is why usually conflicts are common in relationships with high degrees of interdependence as family members, close friends, co-workers and lovers. If communicators are not interdependent, their disagreement is not considered interpersonal conflict. When we speak about conflict, we should know that it is not just about a simple disagreement or difference in goals; it is about incompatible goals, which means both cannot be satisfied. For example you want to watch football, but your roommate wants to watch famous TV series, and you cannot find common denominator. Conflict arises in the perception that resources are limited. If you have plenty, you don't have to fight for anything. Conflict also includes interference. Even if you disagree and have opposing goals regarding something, a genuine conflict arises only when you act in such a way that you do not allow each other to achieve your goals. For example, if your spouse drinks more than you want, you may not approve, but conflict only occurs when you step in and provide interference. It may come in the form of complaining about his habit, or hiding the alcohol from him. In these cases, you are interfering with his ability to achieve his aims (Grenny 2010, p.115).

There are numerous classifications of types of conflicts, all of these classifications are based on the following criteria^ the source of the conflict, content, significance, type of resolution, form of expression, type of relationship structure, social formalization, socio-psychological effect, social outcome.

According to its direction conflicts divides into:

- horizontal
- vertical
- mixed

To horizontal conflicts, we can regard conflicts in which its participants are not in interdependent relationships. Vertical conflicts are conflicts in which its parties are in interdependent relations to each other, for example family members, close friends, co-workers and lovers. Mixed conflicts can combine characteristics of both types: horizontal and vertical e.g. employer and employee during job interview, they are not yet in interdependent relations but they are about it.

According to its consequences, conflicts can be divided into constructive (positive) and destructive (negative). In first case it can help to solve some problems and help to find an unusual solution. There are two conflict models: structural and procedural (Patton 2009, p. 251).

Table 1.1.

### Conflict models

<b>Structural model</b>	<b>Procedural model</b>
Emphasis the importance of analyzing the conditions causes the conflict. The impact of the conflict on the situation can be destructive (negative), or it can be constructive (positive), capable of changing, identifying and resolving existing problems.	Emphasis the process of the conflict: on its occurrence, subsequent phases, and the final outcome. Emphasis the analysis of the dynamics of conflict stages, episodes. The development of the conflict goes through three stages: pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict.

As we may see from Table 1.1., structural model analyses the conditions that cause conflicts and their impact, while procedural model analyses the process of a conflict.

Conflicts can be direct or indirect. Many people deal with their conflict directly through verbal expression. When there is disagreement, usually it comes out in the argument form. It can also come out indirectly, or passive-aggressively, through hurtful or vengeful behaviors toward the other. *For example: Sue refuses to clean the house because she is angry with her.* Addressing conflict directly can lead to a quicker resolution, while it can also cause an emotional escalation and increase in the scale of seriousness of the conflict. On the other hand, indirect expressions of conflict may be easier and more comfortable, but can also leave the conflict unresolved for a longer time. Which approach is better depends on the situation, your aims, the importance of the desired outcome to you, and the person with whom you are having a conflict (Пономаренко 2006, с. 217).

Features of conflict are easy to recognize. However, appropriate conflict management can actually produce benefits. When people work through their conflict in a positive, constructive manner, they can learn more about each other and their relationship. Conflict can also lead them to find a more satisfactory resolution to the problem at hand than either of them could have come up with on their own. Constructive conflict management can also help prevent small problems from becoming large ones. Simply addressing the situation when it first arises can alleviate frustration early on, rather than allowing it to build. Over time, handling conflicts positively and constructively may give people increased confidence in their communication skills, and the strength of their relationships. Research shows that when married couples engage in constructive conflict behaviors, rather than aggressive and hostile ones, they are happier with their relationships and more satisfied with the outcome of their conflicts than couples who don't (Stone 2000, p. 209).

Many conflicts are power struggles. Sometimes it is the power to decide who has the right to control resources. As power influences conflict, conflict can also influence the balance and exercise of power.

According to classic research, power is classified into five specific forms. They are coercive reward, coercive, referent, legitimate, and expert power (Bowings 2004, p. 204). **Reward power** is an ability to provide rewards to the interlocutor. A teacher rewards a student with a good mark, a parent gives rewards in a form of a special privilege or treat, and your supervisor promotes you for good behavior. **Coercive power** is punitive power and it is the opposite of reward power. Teachers can punish students for bad work with poor grades, parents can punish misbehavior with a help of reduction in privileges, and supervisors can extend demotions, firings, or perhaps cuts in pay. **Referent power** is the power one person can have over another because this person likes you and want to please you. The well-liked supervisor often has a great staff that does whatever they want or ask, a friendly professor gets good marks out of students, and the child does whatever the favorite grandfather asks. **Legitimate power** is such a power that is instilled by position. That is, the judge has power because she determines your fate, a supervisor has power over you because he signs your checks, , the professor has power because he gives grades, and parents have power over their children merely by the fact of being parents. The last category, **expert power**, is the power people have when they are professionals or experts in a particular area. For example, if you are talking about football and suddenly a professional football player joins the conversation, you will listen to what he says, because he has expertise, and thus power, in this topic. However, once the topic shifts to world events, the football player no longer has power in the conversation (Felson Richard 1984, p.114).

How we behave during the conflict matters. It matters in terms of how we make the other person feel, and whether the conflict will actually be resolved. Psychologist E. Goffman extensively studied the communications and interactions

of married couples. His goal was to predict divorce or staying together based on couples' communications, particularly in times of conflict.

E. Goffman developed a model of conflict behavior that signal distress in a relationship. He named this model the "4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse" and it includes criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling. **Criticism** is offering complaints about each other and assigning blame. It also includes global statements about a person's value or virtue, instead of specific critiques about the topic. Because criticism includes personal attacks, it inflames an argument and escalates the negativity of the situation. **Contempt** is the expression of insults and attacks on another's self-worth. It includes name-calling, sarcasm, mockery of the other person, and hostile nonverbal behaviors, such as eye-rolling or sneering. It says, "I am better than you," and functions to put down and degrade the other person. The idea of gunny-sacking means recalling past grievances and bringing them up all at once, which is unproductive. Research suggests that contempt behaviors can increase physical stress and impair health. **Defensiveness** says you see yourself as a victim and deny responsibility for your behaviors. Instead of actually listening to a partner's concerns and acknowledging the need for change, defensive people whine, make excuses, and respond to complaints with complaints, such as, "Maybe I did this, but you did that." **Stonewalling** is simply shutting down and withdrawing from the conversation or interaction. In practicing stonewalling, people stop looking at their partners, stop speaking, and stop responding. Sometimes they even leave the room to end the conversation. Gottman has found that people tend to stonewall when they feel incapable of engaging in the conversation any longer (Goffman 1959, p. 106).

## 1.2. Defensive behavior and its mechanisms

In our everyday life we have to defend ourselves. People can do it in many ways. To understand defensive behavior, we need to think about what it means to defend. Defending something or someone means protecting them. A country can

take a military action to defend itself. Or parents might defend their child against danger. When you are being defensive in a psychological sense, you often attempt to defend yourself from someone or something important to you.

Defensive behavior is defined as a way of acting which takes place when a person feels threat in the group of people. The individual, who acts defensively, even though she or he pays spatial attention to the common task, burns a great portion of energy to defending himself or herself (Gibb 1996, p. 53). Apart from talking about the topic and concentrating upon the message, a person usually thinks how he or she looks through the eyes of others, thinks how to show him or herself in a better light, how to win a conversation, impress the hearer or get rid of punishment, and how to avoid an attack and save face.

Such outward acts and inner feelings can create correspondingly defensive postures in others; and, if unchecked, the circular response becomes increasingly destructive. To put it simply, defensive behavior provokes defensive listening, and this in turn makes postural, verbal and facial cues which raise the level of defense in the initial communicator.

Defense arousal does not allow the listener to concentrate on the topic. While defensive communicators send off multiple verbal and non verbal cues, defensive recipients can also twist the received message. As a result, a person becomes more and more defensive; he or she loses an ability to perceive accurately the emotions and the motives of the sender (Duncan 1977, p. 215).

Speech or other behavior seems to evaluate an increase of defensiveness. If the sender seems to be judging or evaluating the listener with the help of verbal content which includes such things like expression, speech manner, tone of voice, the receiver goes on guard. Naturally, other factors may prohibit the reaction. If the listener considers that the speaker regarded him as an equal and was open and spontaneous, for example, evaluation in a message would be neutralized and perhaps not even perceived (Ellison 1984, p. 110).

Because our attitudes toward others are sometimes evaluative, the hearer can regard any expressions as judgmental. Sometimes even a simple question that

usually conveys the answer of the speaker, implies the response that would fit into his or her value system. For example, immediately after an earth tremor that shook the house, mother looked for her small daughter with the question, “Polly, where are you?” The baby replied in a calm manner: “Mommy, I didn’t do it” indicated how Polly’s chronic mild defensiveness predisposed her to react with a projection of her own guilt and in the context of her chronic assumption that questions are full of accusation (Enfield 2017, p. 110).

Taking all the facts mentioned above into account, Gibb worked out six pairs of defensive and supportive categories of behavior that both the hearer and the speaker perceive as possessing any of the characteristics listed in the left-hand column arouses defensiveness, whereas that which he interprets as having any of the qualities designated as supportive reduces defensive feelings. He points out six defensive types of behavior that are used during interpersonal communication. According to Gibb, there are six opposing viewpoints which are also called supportive behaviors. In case when a person feels being pressured by the interlocutor, when he or she feels threatened during communication, a person activates his or her defensive mechanisms. Gibb claims that supportive communication usually comes along with defensive communication and it is important as a part of humans interact, because people want to feel a connection with other people. Moreover Gibb believes that there are special situations when his methods of communication may be used. Furthermore, he claims that his ideas are better realized in direct speech acts. Moreover, there are cases when supportive types of behavior may be regarded as the wrong and not acceptable type of communication in a particular situation. Gibb believes that for successful communication it is important to know all these types of communication and which of them to use in particular situations.

Table 1.2

**Categories of Behavior Characteristic of Supportive and Defensive  
Climates**

	<b>Defensive Climates</b>	<b>Supportive Climates</b>
--	---------------------------	----------------------------

1	Evaluation	Description
2	Control	Problem Orientation
3	Strategy	Spontaneity
4	Neutrality	Empathy
5	Superiority	Equality
6	Certainty	Provisionalism

**1. Evaluation and Description.** The first type of defensive behavior is evaluation. It is also known as "you" statements and shifts all the focus on the other person. Behavior or speech which becomes evaluative can increase defensiveness. For example when the sender seems to be evaluating or judging the listener by expression, manner of speech, tone of voice or verbal content the, the receiver goes on guard. Some factors may prohibit the reaction. Such evaluation in the message would be neutralized and maybe not even perceived in case when the hearer thought that the speaker regarded him as an equal. So this kind of defensive behavior is about judging the other communicator.

Opposite to evaluative speech, descriptive speech tends to arouse a minimum of uneasiness. Speech acts which the listener perceives as material with neutral loadings or as requests for information are descriptive. Specifically, presentation of events, feelings, processes or perceptions which do not ask or imply that the receiver change behavior or attitudes are hardly defense producing. All in all, descriptive speech focuses on the interlocutor's ideas rather than on blaming someone else. This type of behavior focuses on the feelings of the speaker and may be described as "I" statements (Gibb 1961, p.97).

**2. Control and Problem Orientation.** Speech that is aimed to control the listener provokes resistance. It means that the speaker is making a decision that influences both the speaker and the listener without taking into account desires of the listener. Usually in our social intercourse, somebody is trying to change an attitude towards something, to restrict the field of activity, or to influence behavior. These attempts to control as the result produce defensive behavior, furthermore the

degree of defensiveness depends on the openness of the effort, a suspicion that hidden motives exist as a rule increase resistance and defensiveness. Listeners must earn the perceptions that their efforts have no hidden motives, since the norm is control. A bombardment of obsessive “messages” in the fields of education, politics, religion, special causes, advertising, medicine, guidance and industrial relations has bred paranoid and cynical responses in listeners.

Implicit in all attempts to modify another person is the supposition by the change agent that the person is inadequate. That the speaker secretly regards the listener as unable to make her or his own decisions, ignorant, immature, uninformed, or possessed of inadequate attitudes or wrong is a subconscious perception which gives the latter a good base for defensive reactions (Brinton 1996, p. 302).

Problem orientation is the supportive behavior that contrasts control. It is when a person searches for a solution that will satisfy both communicators. In this situation, finding a solution that will please both interlocutors is more important than to show one’s superiority (Gibb 1961, p. 97-99).

**3. Strategy and Spontaneity.** When the sender is considered as a person involving multiple and ambiguous motivations, the receiver becomes defensive. No one wants to be a role player, a guinea pig so to say, or an amazed actor, and also no one wishes to be the victim of so called hidden motivation. Some hidden motives may look larger than it really is with the degree of defensiveness of the perceiver determining the perceived size of the element. The vivid reaction of the reading audience to the information in *The Hidden Persuaders* indicates the predominance of defensive reactions to numerous motivations behind strategy. Group members who are regarded as “taking a role” as pretending emotion, as playing with their colleagues, as restraining information or as having special sources of data that are particularly resented. One day a participant claimed that another one was “using a listening technique” on him!

So, it is about manipulating the communicator in order to come out on top. A deceitful strategy can be very harmful and cause a defensive reaction.

A big part of the negative reaction to much of the so-called human relations training is a feeling towards what are perceived as tricks to fool or to “engage” people, to make a person believe that he or she is really making their own decision, or to make the listener think that the speaker is sincerely interested in him or her as a person. Especially cruel and defensive reactions occur when it turns out that somebody is trying to make an artifice appear spontaneous. Moreover spontaneity is about being truthful and honest with the listener. There are special cases when the truth should not be so direct but more “tactful”. Knowing when to be subtle and when to be direct is a key to successful communication.

Meanwhile, behavior that seems to be free of deception and spontaneous reduces a defense. When the communicator is considered as having simple motivations, as behaving spontaneously in response to the situation, as being honest and forthright, the communicator is likely to arouse marginal defensiveness (Gibb 1961, p.100).

**4. Neutrality and Empathy.** Neutrality is when the speaker is not interested in the conversation. The listener can behave defensively when neutrality appears in speech and it seems that it indicates a lack of concern for his welfare. Usually group members want to be perceived as valued persons, as objects of concern and affection, and as a people with special worth. Speech with weak affect that communicates little caring or warmth is in such comparison with the affect-laden speech in contrast social situations sometimes leads to communication rejection. Neutrality makes the listener feel unimportant and unwelcome.

Communication, on the other hand, that transmits respect for the worth and empathy for the feelings of the listener, however, is especially supportive and defense reductive. The opposite of neutrality is empathy. It makes person more interested in conversation and allows for acceptance of the other person and their feelings. As communication is not linear and we constantly are giving and receiving messages, empathy can be taken as both verbal and non-verbal messages. When a speaker’s message shows that the speaker accepts listener’s emotional reactions at face value, identifies himself or herself with the listener's problems,

shares his or her feelings, and so on. Unreasonable efforts to deny the importance of the receiver's emotions by assuring the receiver that he/she need not feel rejected, that he or she should not feel badly, or that the listener is overly anxious, even though it is often intended as giving support, may give an impression of lack of acceptance. The mixture of empathizing with the other person's emotions and understanding these emotions can change listener's attitude and reduce defensiveness (Gibb 1961, p.102-104).

**5. Superiority and Equality.** When a person speaks about his or her superiority over other person, this superiority may be realized power, position, physical characteristics, wealth, intellectual ability, or other ways, this person arouses defensiveness. Here, we can notice that these factors make the listener to center upon the emotions and the affect loading of the statement rather than upon the cognitive elements and message. In that case the receiver cannot perceive the information in a proper way, the listener reacts by not hearing the message, by competing with the sender, by forgetting it, or even by becoming jealous of speaker. So, it is when a speaker believes that they are better than the listener and shows it by the way of delivering the message. For example, in conflict situation between boss and a simple worker, the first one feels his or her superiority over other.

Equality is the contrasting behavior and shows that all are equal and have same rights. The person who is viewed as feeling superior communicates that he or she is not interested in entering into a shared problem-solving relationship, that he or she probably is not willing to do feedback, and/or that he or she will be likely to try to reduce the status, the power, and the worth of the receiver.

There are plenty of ways for creating the friendly and relaxed atmosphere where both speaker and listener can feel themselves equal. When one perceives the speaker as being willing to enter into participative planning with whole respect and trust, in that case defenses are reduced. It is a common known fact that differences in ability, talent, worth, status, appearance, and power often exist, but the low

defense communicator seems to give little importance to these distinctions (Gibb 1961, p. 105-107).

**6. Certainty and Provisionalism.** People who seem to know all the answers, to require no extra data, and to see themselves as bosses or teachers rather than as colleagues or co-workers tend to put others on guard. Furthermore, according to Gibb, listeners often perceive manifest expressions of certainty as connoting inner feelings of inferiority. They regard the dogmatic individual as needing to be always right, as wanting to win an argument rather than find a solution or to solve a problem, and they see speaker's ideas as truths to be defended. This kind of behavior usually is associated with such acts which others regard as attempts to exercise control. So, it is when communicators believe they are smart and always, these people are not interested in other person's ideas.

A speaker can reduce the defensiveness of the listener when one shows an curiosity towards receiver, communicates that one is willing to experiment with one's own behavior, attitudes and ideas. The speaker who is taking provisional attitudes, is problem solving rather than doubting, is investigating issues rather than taking sides on them, and is willing to experiment and explore tends to communicate that the listener may have control over the shared quest or searching for the ideas. If one is genuinely searching for data and information, person does not resent help or company along the way (Gibb 1961, p. 107-110).

Defensive behavior was also viewed from psychological point of view. Defensive behavior is defined as such type of behavior that occurs when a person perceive threat or danger. A person, who behaves defensively, even when he or she focuses on general task, devotes a significant part of the energy to defending herself or himself. Apart from talking about the topic, a person thinks about how she or he perceived by others, how he or she can be seen more favorably, how he or she can defeat, dominate, impress or avoid punishment, and how a person can safe his face (Cialdini 1999, p. 203).

Such inner feelings and external actions tend to create similar protective postures in others; and if it left unchecked, it becomes more destructive. So,

defensive behavior provokes defensive listening, and leads to postural, facial and verbal signals that increase the level of protection of the communicator.

Aggressive protective actions do not allow the listener to focus on the message.

Defensive communicators as well as defensive recipients send off multiple motive, value and affect cues that can distort the meaning. As a person becomes more and more defensive, he becomes less able to accurately perceive the speaker's motives, values, and emotions (Chaika 2007, p. 314).

Defense mechanisms or protection are aimed to reduce stress anxiety and frustration that caused by conflict situations and aggressive behavior of an interlocutor. Sigmund Freud was the first person who investigated defensive mechanisms and he defined main types of it: denial, repression, projection, displacement, rationalization, regression, sublimation, dissociation, intellectualization, compensation (Фрейд 1993, с. 97).

1. **Denial.** It lies in pushing or burying thoughts and feelings that are distressing to the subconscious sphere. It occurs when a person does not want to accept reality, he or she tries to avoid painful events or feelings. It can happen when unrealizable desires, motives and intentions, as well as facts and actions are not recognized, are rejected by the unconscious denial of their existence (when denied, a real phenomenon is considered non-existent). In some cases, this can carry a positive affect. For example when a person is ill, but denying this fact, he or she finds the strength to continue fighting for life. However, in most cases denial interferes with living and working because when a person does not recognize constructive critic, he or she does not look for ways to get rid of existing shortcomings.

Denial is the first reaction of a person to the death of the loved one – “No!” It goes back to childish egocentrism – “If I don't admit it, then it didn't happen”. Another example, when an addict will deny they have an addiction because they can function at home and at work.

From the psychological aspect, denial can be viewed in terms of perceptual defense mechanisms. In this case, two types are distinguished. The first type is when perception itself suffers, and not consciousness, it is also called the non-verbal form. An unconscious distortion occurs at the level of perception of inconspicuous external stimuli (for example, for a lecturer noise on lectures can indicate a lack of interest in the lecture, “not loud, normal”). The second type is when the cognitive process is affected, i.e. the process of cognition is verbal (verbal form). In this case, the denied content is recognized, but to it is added as if the opposite sign (“they make noise because they are discussing me”).

In conversations, this denial can take place when an interlocutor denies obvious and true facts in order to defend him or herself. Perhaps a person does not want to accept his or her mistake, or a person believes that he or she is right (Фрейд 1993, с. 98-100).

2. **Repression.** It occurs when a person don't want to face with unsavory thoughts, painful memories that can upset a person. Repression may be seen as suppression or exclusion from consciousness of unpleasant or unacceptable events and phenomena, i.e. removal from consciousness of those moments, information that cause anxiety. At the same time, a person represses unpleasant experience or memories. Most often, those thoughts and desires are suppressed that contradict the moral values and norms accepted by the person himself. In neuroses, for example, the main event that caused it is often repressed. From the psychological point of view, a person usually forget the experience that repressed from consciousness is, but it can retain in the unconscious the psychic energy of attraction (cataxis) inherent in it. In an effort to return to consciousness, the repressed can be associated with other repressed material, forming mental complexes. On the part of the “I” (Ego), constant expenditure of energy is required to maintain the process of repression. Breaking dynamic balance in the weakening of defense mechanisms (anti-cathexis) can lead to returning to consciousness of previously repressed information. Such cases are observed with diseases, intoxications (for example, alcoholic), as well as during sleeping.

According to S. Freud, repression has two phases. The first phase is when no idea or attraction is allowed into consciousness. The second phase is repression in the proper sense, which concerns the mental derivatives of the repressed representation associated with an attraction or thoughts originating from other sources that have entered into an associative connection with these representations. This process acts selectively: it is directed against those memories, thoughts, feelings, desires that are connected with past experience that can give rise to fear, anxiety, and their activation in consciousness at the present time could again psychologically traumatize the personality.

According to another point of view, repression is activated only after other mechanisms (projection, isolation, etc.) stop working. Everything that was transferred from consciousness into the unconscious does not disappear completely and has a significant impact on the mental state and human behavior. From time to time there is a spontaneous “return of the repressed” to the consciousness, which appears in the form of individual symptoms, dreams, erroneous actions, etc.

The repression mechanism is based on the following physiological features: if a stimulus affects the sense organs that does not integrate with other mental phenomena, then this stimulus remains outside the consciousness (for example, after we are used to something “we do not hear” the striking of the clock; how little information we can remember in details that happened during day etc.). With “integration”, a kind of “sudden enlightenment” can occur, and the fragments that were not previously integrated into a single whole become a clear complete representation (Субботина 2013, с 114).

In general, most of the internal processes occur outside consciousness became automatic (walking, the motor mechanism of speech and functions of internal organs). However, the corresponding experience is fixed in memory and largely determines the behavior. We are talking about the accumulation and integration of experience at the subconscious level, and the perceived material can become unconscious. *Repression*, like any defense, protects a person from anxiety and stress, which often develops in situations of “unacceptability” (For example,

we notice other people's shortcomings in behavior, while their own ones remain unnoticed or repressed); "unsuccessfulness" (it is better to remember those tasks that are performed and to forget those that was poorly performed).

In conversation, this defensive mechanism can be used, when the speaker is sure of his or her rightness and repress the failures by success. The speaker denies everything and substitutes it by some good things in order to justify him or herself (Фрейд 1993, с. 101-103).

**3. Projection.** All people possess undesirable and unpleasant features of character, which they hardly admit, or sometimes completely do not recognize. The mechanism of projection is manifested by the fact that a person unconsciously ascribes his own negative features or qualities, a person can project his or her undesirable and unpleasant features and habits to another person and, as a rule, they do it in an exaggerated form (wealthy people take an elderly parent to senior home and are outraged by an indifferent or bad attitude towards him by staff).

It occurs when a person has some thoughts or feelings about another person that may make this person feel uncomfortable. It is the projection of one's own feelings, thoughts or motives onto someone else. For instance, the person who was cheating is under the impression that their partner is cheating on him too.

Projection can simplify the individuals behavior to some extent, so there is no need to evaluate one's actions in everyday life. People often transfer their behavior to other people, and project their emotions onto others. If a person is calm, self confident, benevolent, then in their perception those people around share this person's benevolence, and vice versa: a tense, frustrated person, dissatisfied in his desires, is hostile and ascribes, projects this hostility to others (Райгородский 1998 с. 104).

Projection is closely related to changes in the perception of others, when people with low self-esteem, however, have a low opinion of others, distortedly perceive and evaluate life situations, people, projecting their own shortcomings, their negative feelings onto them.

The projection can exist independently, without interference with other forms of defense. It is like an echo of sometimes unconscious attitudes, which frees a person from anxiety, feelings of guilt and brings relief. It should be noted that normally, if a person manages to make someone feel guilty, to shift the responsibility for difficulties onto others, and the person feels less guilty. There is a projection reaction element here.

In conversation, projection can be realized through sarcasm and irony. Hostility, causing a negative attitude of others, and this in turn increases the need to develop other defensive reactions.

Another form of a projection is shown in cases when the aggressive intentions and impulses of an individual are completely attributed to other people, while the role of the victim remains. As a further defense against anxiety, a person can react with hostile and aggressive behavior to an external object that is being projected. The attitude of the projecting person towards those on whom the projection is focused often becomes an attitude of suspicion or even hostility, alienation, which, in turn, causes a reciprocal feeling of enmity (Фрейд 1993, с. 104-108).

4. **Displacement.** It happens when a person directs strong emotions and frustrations toward a person or object that doesn't feel threatening. The diversion of emotions such as anger and annoyance are substituted by others. For example, your friend said something hurtful and instead of confronting your friend, you latter lash out at your sister.

5. **Rationalization.** It happens when a person attempt to explain undesirable behaviors with their own set of facts, when a person knows that he is wrong. It is also developing false though plausible excuses to justify and/or unacceptable behavior. For example, stealing from corporate chain store and justifying theft by saying: "They make millions of profit so it doesn't matter".

This type of defensive mechanism is associated with the awareness and use in thinking of only that part of the perceived information, and because of that one's

own behavior appears as well controlled and not contradicting objective circumstances.

6. **Regression.** It is reverting to childlike pattern of behavior. For example, a student gets a bad grade on their test and screams and cries at their parents or teacher.

7. **Sublimation.** It is the refocusing of unacceptable impulses, thoughts and raw emotions into more acceptable ones. For example, a person who is experiencing aggressive impulses instead challenges that energy into rigorous exercise.

8. **Dissociation.** It is the detachment from reality and from oneself and the finding of another representation of self to cope with extreme stress or conflict. A person uses dissociation as a defense mechanism disconnects from the reality and lives in their own world, in which they do not experience unbearable thoughts, feelings or memories for a period of time.

9. **Intellectualization.** It is overthinking and misdirection of focus when confronted with unacceptable situations, behaviors or impulses. For example, a person who has been told that his/her family member has died begins to focus on and overthinks the details of planning funerals etc. instead of expressing his or her grief.

In conversation this mechanism is a kind of attempt to avoid a conflict situation by changing the topic of conversation.

10. **Compensation.** It is the counterbalancing of perceived flaws of weaknesses by instead emphasizing strengths. For example, a person says they can't draw but they are really good at dancing.

Sigmund Freud studied psychodynamic theory and his works laid the foundation to defensive communication research. He believed that internal emotions such as guilt, anxiety and insecurities created defensive reactionary behaviors (Фрейд 1993, с. 110-137).

### 1.3. Classification of defensive strategies

In daily face-to-face communication people usually face with conflict communication. We have to be able to defend ourselves when the situation requires.

Defensive strategy in communication is a reaction to rudeness or criticism. Defensive strategies imply the desire to avoid the negative evaluation from interlocutor and to save the person's face, which is probably, the most important thing for every person. The desire to save one's face or self-image may show the mutual desire of interlocutors to avoid the limitation of independence and freedom of actions, or to show both unity and approval (Giacalone 1986, p. 322).

Nowadays there are many defensive strategies that can help reduce stress and take an upper hand in conflict situations. E. Goffman distinguishes the following strategies:

- Avoiding strategy. The interlocutors ignore or fail to deal with conflict in the first place. This suggests a low concern for self and a low concern for the other, because the conflict cannot be resolved with this strategy. It isn't always a poor strategy, however, as many people in satisfying relationships choose to ignore or avoid certain topics in an effort to maintain harmony. However, when avoidance is the main strategy, important conflicts remain unresolved, which leads to dissatisfying relationships.

- Accommodating strategy demonstrates a high concern for the other and a low concern for self. This is where you just give in. When you just give in, you put your own needs aside. It may work well in the short term, but can also lead to resentment over time. However, not all relationships have equal power in both parties, such as professor-student. In these types of relationships, accommodating is certainly not always a poor choice for the person in the less powerful position.

- Compromising strategy reflects some degree of concern for everyone's needs and desires. Here, everyone must give up a little bit of what they want. Compromising takes time and patience, but often leads to more desirable outcomes than some of the other strategies.

- Competing strategy means a high degree of concern for yourself, but a low degree of concern for the other. In this strategy, you just want your own way, regardless of what the other person wants. This isn't always a poor choice, as some relationships thrive on competition. It becomes problematic when it builds feelings of resentment, or desires to get even with the other person.

- Collaborating strategy involves a high concern for the self as well as high concern for the other. The goal here is a win-win for both parties. This strategy can require a good deal of time and creativity, but usually leads to satisfactory results (Cramer 2008, p. 98-12).

Folger Poole and Stutman defined defensive strategies as an important part of preserving the interlocutor's face that is one of the concepts of pragmatic linguistics. According to their research, defensive strategies involve actions to prevent threats to one's own face. These actions can be viewed as adjustment; verbal affords to resolve discrepancies between peoples conduct and cultural expectations. Defensive strategy includes the following tactics:

1. Apology: expresses regret over an earlier action (e.g. I am sorry, it is my fault.);
2. Excuse: acknowledge a mistake but resist responsibility because of mitigating circumstances (e.g. we sorry inform you about...);
3. Justifications: statements in which the party admits personal responsibility but denies negative consequences, usually by relating the action to some socially acceptable norms;
4. Accounts: reason-giving descriptions;
5. Quasi-theories: simplistic formulas or adages used to explain away complex situations;
6. Disclaimers: ask the hearer for a suspension of judgment to prevent a negative typification;
7. Counterclaims: devices used to deny unfavorable intentions (Folger 2008, p. 98-112).

## Conclusions to Chapter One

Without any doubt, communication plays an important role in our live. Every day we meet a lot of new people, and not all of them are friendly; sometimes we can be pressured by other people. Sometimes communication can get out of control, the interlocutors misunderstand each other, and consequently it can cause conflict situations. Conflicts are the eternal part of our life. **Conflict** can be defined as the interaction of two subjects that have incompatible goals and different ways to achieve these goals. Such subjects can be people, individual groups, armies, monopolies, classes, social institutions, etc., whose activities are somehow related to the formulation and solution of problems of organization and management, forecasting and decision-making as well as planning of targeted actions. Every day we face with confrontations and that is why it is important to know basic strategies and tactics of behavior in such situations, especially while communicating with the opponents in order to know how to cope with the confrontations.

*Defensive strategy* in communication is a reaction to rudeness or criticism. Defensive strategies imply the desire to avoid a negative evaluation from the interlocutor and to save the person's face, which is probably, the most important thing for every person. The desire to save one's face or self-image may show the mutual desire of interlocutors to avoid the limitation of independence and freedom of actions, or to show both unity and approval.

Defensive strategies and tactics were studied from different angels and by different scientists and that is why there are different classifications of them.

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E. Goffman distinguishes the following strategies:

1. Avoiding strategy. The interlocutors ignore or fail to deal with conflict in the first place. This suggests a low concern for self and a low concern for the other, because the conflict cannot be resolved with this strategy);
2. Accommodating strategy. It demonstrates a high concern for the other and a low concern for self. This is where you just give in;
3. Compromising strategy. It reflects some degree of concern for everyone's needs and desires. Here, everyone must give up a little bit of what they want;
4. Competing strategy. It means a high degree of concern for yourself, but a low degree of concern for the other. In this strategy, you just want your own way, regardless of what the other person wants;
5. Collaborating strategy. It involves a high concern for the self and the high concern for the other. The goal here is a win-win for both parties.

Defensive behavior was also studied from psychological point of view. It helps to understand the interlocutor's actions better. Sigmund Freud was the first

person, who investigated defensive mechanisms and he defined main types of it.

To this classification belong:

1. Denial. It occurs when a person doesn't want to accept reality, he or she tries to avoid the painful events or feelings.
2. Repression. It occurs when a person don't want to face with unsavory thoughts, painful memories that can upset a person.
3. Projection. It is manifested in the fact that a person unconsciously ascribes his own negative features or qualities, a person can project his or her undesirable and unpleasant features and habits to another person and, as a rule, they do it in an exaggerated form.
4. Displacement. It happens when a person produces strong emotions and frustrations toward a person or object that does not feel any threat.
5. Rationalization. It takes place when a person attempts to explain undesirable behaviors by relating their own state of things, when a person knows that he is wrong.
6. Regression. It is reverting to a childlike pattern of behavior. For example, a student gets a bad grade for his test and screams and cries at his parents or a teacher.
7. Sublimation. It is the refocusing of unacceptable impulses, thoughts and raw emotions into more acceptable ones.
8. Dissociation. It is the detachment from reality and from oneself and the finding of another representation of self to cope with extreme stress or conflict.
9. Intellectualization. It is overthinking and misdirection of focus when confronted with unacceptable situations, behaviors or impulses.
10. Compensation. It is the counterbalancing of perceived flaws of weaknesses by instead strength instead. For example, a person says he cannot draw but he is really good at dancing.

## CHAPTER TWO. FUNCTIONING OF DEFENSIVE STRATEGIES AND TACTICS IN MODERN ENGLISH DIALOGICAL DISCOURSE

### 2.1. Realization of defensive strategies and tactics in Modern English dialogical discourse

First things first, let us take apart the notion of dialogical discourse. Dialogical discourse refers to the use of shared dialogue or conversation, and it is aimed to the meaning of something. Dialogical discourse is realized through the opposition to monologue discourse which is aimed at one entity with all the information simply giving it to interlocutor without clarification or exploration of meaning through discussion (Fraser 1990, p. 388). The word **dialogic** is characterized by and relates to the dialogue and its use in real life. Dialogic communication is a type of communication that is realized in the form of the dialogue. Dialogic processes refer to the implied meaning that is conveyed by means of words and phrases uttered by the speaker and interpreted by the hearer. Dialogic works carry on a fluent dialogue that includes interaction with previous presented information. The term is used to describe concepts in literary theory and analysis as well as in philosophy (Hatch 1992, p. 279).

The term **discourse** is used to identify and describe spoken and written communications. In discourse analysis and in the field of semantics, discourse is a notional generalization of conversation. In the field of social practice, discourse is the vocabulary (codified language) for investigation of the subject.

The notion of discourse is has many approaches. For many linguists it is something “beyond the sentence”, for others it is the language use (Tannen 2011, p. 15).

In the semantic field, and in the general discourse analysis, discourse is regarded as a conceptual generalization of conversation within each modality context and each modality of communication. Moreover, thanks to discourse is a body of text supposed to communicate specific data, knowledge and information,

there are internal relations in the content of a particular discourse, as well as external relations between discourses (Leech 1994, p. 375).

By and large, dialogical discourse can be defined as spoken communication in the form of a dialogue, it is unplanned and unprepared, so it is hard to predict a person's reaction and avoid unpleasant and unplanned situations.

On the broad scale, one of the most important aspects of human cooperation and interaction is the ability to communicate ideas and feelings in a clear and effective manner. Communication is a two-way process of giving and receiving information, so that it is understood, hopefully, so that it invokes a response. But sometimes people misunderstand each other, their emotions take over and they make conflict situations (Leap 1999, p.102).

We all may face feelings of anger, hostility towards someone, we personally manifest the feelings in one way or another and are the object of someone's anger. Choosing a defensive strategy depends on different factors such as the speaker's behavior, attitude, situation, the speaker's status, mental health, character and so on.

Consider the following example:

*Laura: You're pretty cavalier, considering your carelessness almost killed my daughter.*

*Gabriel: I got to say, Laura, you're kind of a wet blanket since you quit smoking. Why don't you try a pipe?*

*Laura: And I've got to say, Gabby, I think you're a lousy mother.*

*Gabriel: Did you just say that to my face?*

*Laura: Yes. And I'm afraid I won't be bringing my daughter here anymore. The safety and well-being of my child must come first.*

*Gabriel: Fine! Juanita (her daughter) only had Rachel over because she felt sorry for her. It was a pity playdate.*

*Laura: And of course this means Rachel won't be attending Juanita's birthday party.*

*Gabriel: More cake for us. Beat it. You know, if you'd taught your kid how to tuck and roll on impact, we wouldn't even be having this conversation!*

*(Desperate Housewives; season 6, episode 5)*

Laura and Gabriel are friends, both have small children. One day Laura asked Gabriel to look after her four-year daughter, but Gabriel decided to mind her own business and did not notice that the child got hurt. So Laura become angry and started blaming her friend Gabriel.

This conflict can be regarded to vertical conflicts as its parties are in interdependent relations to each other, they are close friends.

Here we can see that Gabriel have chosen **counterclaims** and **denial** strategies. She does not admit her fault and blames her friend. At first Gabriel wants to change the topic of conversation by speaking about smoking but it does not work. These ladies have the same social status, so Gabriel speaks with her informally and emotionally.

Let us look at another example:

*Bree: What would you like to eat? I can do anything so long as it complements beef tenderloin.*

*Ashley: Actually, we don't eat meat. We're vegetarians. So is Benjamin. (her son)*

*Bree: Since when?*

*Ashley: Since I realized that meat was a byproduct of murder.*

*Bree: Would it be more acceptable if I shopped for a suicidal pork loin?*

*Ashley: It's no big deal. I'll just make a nice Risotto.*

*Bree: This isn't about dinner. This is about her nutty liberal politics getting in the way of our grandson's nutrition.*

*Ashley: He gets all the protein he needs from cheese, beans and tofu.*

*Bree: This isn't just about nutrition. Do you want him to be teased at school every time he pulls tofu out of his lunchbox?*

*Ashley: Actually, that won't be an issue. I am homeschooling him.*

*Bree: Excuse me? You're teaching him? So instead of sending him to a proper school, you're gonna give him the benefit of your straight C average?*

*Ashley: He's only 6, and he's already reading at a third grade level.*

*Bree: What happens next year when he overtakes you? You degrade his body and his mind.*

*Ashley: Criticize my parenting all you want. I don't care, because you don't get to decide how he's raised anymore. I'm his mother.*

*(Desperate Housewives; season 5, episode 3)*

Ashley is Bree's daughter-in-law, and it is not a big surprise that there are conflicts between a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law. In this situation, Bree and Ashley fight about the methods of raising children. This is a vivid example of vertical type of conflicts because both parties are in interdependent relations to each other, in this case, they are family members. In fact, this conflict has a positive outcome for Bree as well as for Ashley because Bree learned to respect the opinion and the way of living of her daughter-in-law and Ashley learned the same thing, so we may say that this is a constructive conflict model.

Bree is older than Ashley and has a higher social position so Ashley tries to avoid a conflict and uses **justification** and **competing** strategies. At first she justifies her methods of upbringing and gives arguments for her actions, but then Bree crosses the boundaries and says that she is not clever enough to teach her son, so her speech becomes very emotional.

The next example also shows a vertical type of conflicts as it is between two brothers.

*Lucifer: What do you want from me?*

*Amenadiel: I've been watching you, Lucifer.*

*Lucifer: You perv.*

*Amenadiel: And I'm not sure I like what I see. You're showing restraint, mercy.*

*Lucifer: You scared I'm turning my back on the dark side, bro?*

*Amenadiel: Lucifer, there is a balance here that we must maintain. I strongly suggest you do what I told you to do and go back to Hell.*

*Lucifer: Don't threaten me, Amenadiel. I mean, you don't want to start a war.*

*Amenadiel: I would love a war. Oh, Luci. My hatred for you grows stronger with every visit.*

*Lucifer: Well, I wouldn't have it any other way, pal. I look forward to eating your heart one day.*

*(Lucifer; season 1, episode 1)*

Lucifer and Amenadiel are brothers and they are in bad relationships. Amenadiel blames Lucifer for his actions and that he left Hell behind to take a vacation in Los Angeles. He blames Lucifer in a very rude manner for being reckless and irresponsible, and even threatens him. But Lucifer is not scared of him and resorts to his sense of humor to defend himself and change the topic of conversation but then he threatens him back. So he uses **threatening** and **joking** strategies.

A Jjoking strategy can be a good way to defend oneself or even avoid a conflict situation. Let us turn to another example where this strategy is also used but with a negative connotation:

*Ray: I am not entirely sure that this is the album you've promised.*

*Freddie: No, that's the better than album I've promised you. That's the better than any album anyone have promised you, darling. It's a masterpiece, anyway.*

*Ray: This "Bohemian Rhapsody" is six minutes, it's forever.*

*Freddie: I pity your wife if you think six minutes is forever.*

*Ray: It's expensive, and your single, this "bohemian rhapsody" consists of nonsense words. Change the head song. I pay for this record and I say what goes.*

*Freddie: No, It would be "bohemian rhapsody" or I walk. I know that my song is a masterpiece.*

*(Bohemian Rhapsody)*

Freddie is a very temperamental artist, he is self confident and he is not going to compromise his decisions. In this part of conversation, it can be noticed that Ray, who is the band producer, is not satisfied with the new song. Firstly, Freddie tries to change the topic of conversation using the contrastive particle “anyway” in the final position. It does not work, so he turns this critique into a rude joke and threatens his interlocutor. Despite the fact that Freddie is talking to his boss, and they have different social status, his speech manner is quite colloquial and rude. This type of defense is caused by his mind set, type of character and self confidence.

This is a horizontal type of conflicts, its participants are not in interdependent relationships and in this situation it has negative consequences for both parties, so we call this conflict model **destructive**.

But all people are different and they act differently. Here is another example of conflict between the boss and an employee.

*Sir: Mr Gardner, you are not aloud being here dressed like this. It's a very serious company. You're such an irresponsible employee. You failed the job interview.*

*Mr Gardner: I am sorry. I've been sitting there for the last half-hour... ..trying to come up with a story... ..that would explain my being here dressed like this. And I wanted to come up with a story that would demonstrate qualities... ..that I'm sure you all admire here, like earnestness or diligence. Team-playing, something. And I couldn't think of anything. So the truth is... ..I was arrested for failure to pay parking tickets.*

*Sir: Mr Gardner, I just think you not good enough for this job.*

*Mr. Gardner: I am pretty determined and smart.*

*Sir: Ok. And you want to learn this business?*

*Mr Gardner: Yes, sir, I wanna learn.*

*Sir: I think you impolite. What would you say if a guy walked in for an interview... ..without a shirt on... ..and I hired him? What would you say?*

*Mr. Gartner: He must've had on some really nice pants.*

Mr. Gartner is an intelligent person with a good education but he lives in poverty, and works at different jobs at the same time. One day he finds a very advantageous offer, so he decides to go to a job interview. Because of the tight schedule he was late and did not have enough time to dress up in a proper way. Given this fact, his boss was outraged and attacked him with complaints and dissatisfaction. Chris Gardner did not get lost and activated his defensive mechanisms of intellectualization, he overthinks the situation and focuses on other aspects of the situation when confronted with unacceptable situations, behaviors or impulses. This is an example of a mixed conflict because it is a combination of characteristics of both types: horizontal and vertical. Here we have an employer and employee during a job interview, they are not yet in interdependent relations but they are close to it.

At the begging of the dialogue Chris Gardner uses a **justification** strategy, he starts his speech by admitting his guilt and explaining his situation. Then he convinces his boss to hire him giving him a lot of reasons for that and also answers questions in a funny way, which reduces tension and makes the atmosphere more relaxing

As it was mentioned before, choosing the defensive strategy as well as choosing the style of conversation depends on the situation and the person. The fact in what relations we are with a certain person also plays an enormous role in choosing not only the defensive strategy but also the way we use it. These details also regulate the level of our emotions. Silly though it may sound, predominately we lash out at our closest and dearest people who love us more than others: friends, parents, lovers, and children. And no matter how cynical it may sound, but we only allow ourselves to raise our voice to those who will not fire us or injure us in return. It can happen for many reasons: firstly, we are sure that we are loved by them and they forgive us whatever we do. Psychologists have named this way of behavior as infantile. A mother-child relationship can be a vivid example. Whatever a child does, mother will accept him or her and will love him or her.

Secondly, the splash of emotion on loved ones is a sign of the highest degree of trust, we know that they always be on our side like our guardian angels (Patterson 2007, p. 243).

Let us move to another example of conflict between mother and her adult son, who is blaming her for his father being a serial killer.

*Mother: Why did you go back? You know what your father can do to your mental health. You are not sleeping after visiting him.*

*Malcolm: I have work to do.*

*Mother: Your father has agreed to remove you from his visitor list.*

*Malcolm: What? What did you do?*

*Mother: Anything to keep my son safe.*

*Malcolm: You went to see him?*

*Mother: Yes, I went in prison to see him.*

*Malcolm: You swore you never visit him. You kept this promise for twenty years until now. Why? Why are you so hell-bent on keeping me from him?*

*Mother: Look in the mirror you are fallen apart with each visit.*

*Malcolm: I need these visits for my work.*

*Mother: He needs them more.*

*Malcolm: You're right, he wouldn't agree without a prize. What was that?*

*Mother: Why are you interrogating me?*

*Malcolm: Because there is something you want me not to know. (speaks in high voice)*

*Mother: It was you who kept visits from me, at list I told you truth.*

*Malcolm: Did you know about the murders? It that you hiding from me? You don't want me to see him because you knew that he was a killer?*

*Mother: I expected it from strangers but not from my son. It took me for everything that I hade to walk in this cell.*

*Malcolm: No, you knew about his victims, you are an accomplice to the crime.*

*Mother: How could you? I am your mother. (slaps him).*

*(Prodigal Son; season 1, episode 4)*

Malcolm Bright, one of the best criminal psychologists around, uses his twisted genius to help the police solve crimes. His father is a violent serial killer, who is in prison and serving his sentence. Because of his father, Malcolm has problems with mental health and nightmares; apart from this he has serious problems at work, so he lashed out at his mother.

At the begging of this conversation Malcolm's mother blames her son of being impolite, tolerant form for Malcolm visiting his father. He does not like the topic of the conversation and does not want to carry on the dialog that is why he says that has to work. But mother continues the dialogue and says she knows Malcolm visited his father in prison, she is worried about her son, so she expressed her outrage because of the situation. As for Malcolm, he does not like these complaints, he interpreted her actions like a threat and personal insult. Furthermore, he has some psychological issues, Malcolm is an adult person who wants more freedom in taking decisions of his own but his mother is hovering over him with devices, so he gets angry about this.

In this dialogical fragment between mother and son, Malcolm applies defensive mechanisms of **repression** and **displacement**. He does not want to face with unsavory thoughts, painful memories about his father that can upset him. Moreover, he directs strong emotions and frustrations toward a person (in this case it is her mother) that doesn't feel threatening. By and large, he is angry at his father and he projects these negative feelings on his mother, applying defensive mechanisms of repression and displacement. These psychological mechanisms play a crucial role in choosing defensive strategies and tactics in conversation, so he applies a competing strategy and an account strategy as he gives reason for his actions: *"I need these visits for my work"*. Moving on, he replaces her mother complains towards her, so in this way he changes his role of victim in this conversation and instead been defendant he becomes accuser, and blames her mother. Thus mother should defend herself and uses justification and accounts strategies. At first she admits personal responsibility but denies negative

consequences and then she gives reasons for her actions. She wants her son to be happy and that is why, to her mind, he should not see his father. As the tension of their dialogue increases, she activates non-verbal defensive tactics and slaps Malcolm on the face and stops the conversation.

It is interesting enough that both interlocutors use questions in order to interrupt the speaker from blaming actions. It is a good defensive tactic: you ask your interlocutor questions and shift attention from you to him or her.

Let us consider another example:

*Laurel: Why are you here, Ollie?*

*Oliver: To apologize. It was my fault. I wanted to ask you not to blame her.*

*Laurel: For what? Falling under your spell. How could I possibly blame her for doing the same things that I did?*

*Oliver: I never meant to...*

*Laurel: She was my sister. I couldn't be angry because she was dead. I couldn't grieve because I was so angry. We buried an empty coffin...because her body was at the bottom of the ocean where you left her. It should have been you.*

*Oliver: I know that it's too late to say this, but I'm sorry.*

*Laurel: Yeah, I'm sorry, too. I'd hoped that you'd rot in hell a whole lot longer than 5 years.*

*(Arrow; season 1, episode 1)*

Oliver and Laurel are ex-lovers, and now they are in bad relations. Oliver Queen is a man who has been stranded on a desert island for five years. For years he was missing and presumed dead following the accident at sea which claimed "The Queen's Gambit". Queen was a regular tabloid presence and a fixture at the Starling City club scene. Shortly before his disappearance, he was accused of assault charges stemming from a highly publicized drunken altercation with paparazzi. And now after five years he came back. Oliver traveled with Laurel's sister – Sarah, but she disappeared and is still presumed dead. In the light of all of these facts, Laurel is blaming Oliver for death of her sister, so she feels rage at him. Laurel blames Oliver in a very aggressive form and says rude things. Oliver

knows that it is really his fault that is why he chooses **excuse** and **apology** strategies. He acknowledges his mistake but resists responsibility because of mitigating circumstances, he uses such phrases: “I’m sorry”; “It was my fault”; “I never meant to...”

Let us have a look at another example of using an apology strategy.

*Bree: I’ve apologized till I’m blue in the face, but they’re still leaving in the morning. You’re not speaking to me, either? They’re just mad. Things will be better next time.*

*Peter: You honestly think there’ll be a next time? It took us three years to talk them into this visit. It took you one day... to ruin it.*

*Bree: I’m really sorry. It’s just, seeing... it’s just so hard for me.*

*Peter: Ok*

*(Desperate Housewives; season 5, episode 7)*

Bree and Peter is a couple. Once Peter’s parents visited them, but Bree was too rude to them so they left. Peter was very disappointed because of that as he did not see them for a long time. As in the previous example, an excuse strategy and an **apology** strategy were applied, Bree knows that it was her fault and admits it. She uses such marker as *really*: “*I’m really sorry*”. As we can see from her reply, she regrets about what she has done, she uses a concessive particle “really” to intensify the degree of her regret and sorrow. “Really” is used here as a component of the convincing strategy, so she convinces her husband that it will not happens again and besides that she regrets about her actions. Peter accepts her apology, but he is still offended so he replied unemotionally using a dry word: “Ok”.

*Father: Hey, you want to talk about this?*

*Son: Yeah, sure. Let’s have a nice father-son chat about how you’re cheating on Mom. Do you know how stupid I felt? I got into a huge fight with Julie because I thought she was lying to me, that she was just telling me she had a boyfriend to blow me off. Then I followed her home, and it turns out she does have a boyfriend. You.*

*Father: I’m sorry. And for what it’s worth, it’s over.*

*Son: If I ever see you two together again, I'm going to tell Mom.*

*Father: You want to tell your mother? Okay, come on. You want to destroy her life? Your mom finding out that I had an affair won't destroy her. Her finding out that you knew about it, yeah, that will.*

*(Desperate Housewives; season 6, episode 5)*

It this dialogical fragment, father and son have a confrontation. Son is angry at father because he is cheating on his mom, so he is threatening to reveal his secret and is blaming him for his actions. Father resorts to **manipulating** strategy and says that the truth can tear her mother apart and destroy her life. In this situation, father uses a manipulating strategy and speaks with his son in a very aggressive manner because he feels his superiority over his son, besides he has a very rough temperament and he is an abusive father, that is why he applied this defensive strategy and it successfully successfully.

*Linda: When do you find a job?*

*Chris: I'm gonna stop by a brokerage firm. I wanna see about a job there.*

*Linda: What job?*

*Chris: Stockbroker.*

*Linda: Stockbroker? Not an astronaut?*

*Chris: Don't talk to me like that, Linda.*

*Linda: I'm gonna go down and see about this, and I'm gonna do it during the day. You should probably do your sales calls.*

*Chris: I don't need you to tell me about my sales calls, Linda. I got three of them before the damn office is even open. I am working day and night, and what you do?*

*Linda: Do you remember that rent is due next week? Probably not. We're already two months behind. Next week we'll owe three months. I've been pulling double shifts for four months now, Chris. Just sell what's in your contract. Get us out of that business.*

*Chris: Linda, that is what I am trying to do. This is what I'm trying to do for my family... ...for you and for Christopher. What's the matter with you?*

*(The Pursuit of Happiness)*

Linda and Chris are a married couple that are having a confrontation because of their poverty. They have a lot of debts and that is why Linda has lashed out at her husband. She asks him about his job hunting, and she does it in an interrogative form, so Chris feels upset about this situation and uses a **justification** strategy. He knows that he does not have job and that is one of the reasons why they do have debts. He says he does his best and asks her a question. As we know questions help shift attention to another topic.

So, the reality is that everyone, even the most conservative person, needs to unleash his/her emotions. And no matter how cynical it may sound, but we only allow ourselves to raise our voice at those who will not fire us or injure us in return. These are our family members. This happens for several reasons at once: firstly, we are sure that everyone loves us. Psychologists say that, the outburst of emotion at our loved ones is a sign of the highest degree of trust, the only question is at what this trust will cost your family members. In confrontations with the closest people the defensive strategies that we use usually are accompanied with emotions and different non-verbal expressions like facial expressions, body movement and posture, gestures, eye contact, touch, space, voice (Anderson 2004, p. 115). One should not underestimate the role of non-verbal clues in dialogical discourse^ they can help to defend us in conflict situations and to take an upper hand.

Let us consider the following example:

*Gabriel: I saw that! Kids, get inside!*

*Susan: First off, it wasn't as bad as it looked.*

*Gabriel: Really? 'Cause it looked like you body slammed my daughter.*

*Susan: I barely tapped her. She was milking it.*

*Gabriel: That's your defense? You were only assaulting her "a little"?*

*Susan: I was trying to teach her not to be a bully – something she should have learned from her mother.*

*Gabriel: I'm sorry. I was too busy trying to explain to her why your son doesn't wear a dress like all the other little girls.*

*Susan: This conversation is over. Tell Bob and Lee that I'll pay for the dent in their lawn.*

*Gabriel: You did not!*

*Susan: I did. You know what? We've both been incredibly childish here, and it is time one of us took the high road, so I am now going to walk away. Please take note of this conflict resolution, and try to pass the lesson on to your daughter.*

*(Desperate Housewives; season5, episode 3)*

Gabriel and Susan are close friends, but one day their small children got into a fight. Susan came up to stop them but accidentally pushed Gabriel's daughter. Gabriel as a caring mother gets mad at Susan and starts blaming her and does it very emotionally, she uses unconsciously non-verbal clues. The way she moves and carries herself reveals a wealth of information to the world. She aggressively waves her hands, the way she looks also shows her irritation towards her friend, besides, that her anger is written all over her face. Gabriel looks like a bull that saw a red flag.

Susan uses **justification** or reason giving and avoiding defensive strategies. She denies that she is guilty than she explains her actions and tries to convince Gabriel that she did everything right and that it is Gabriel's daughter who behaved mischievously. Gabriel does not want Susan's convoluted explanation here, so Susan ends this conversation by accepting the fact that both of them are incredibly childish and walks away. **Avoiding** strategy can be really effective when you have a confrontation with friends or members of the family, and you can just stop the conversation and go away. However, with co-workers, headmasters, teachers and other people with whom you are in official relationships and who hold a higher position in the society, are from a higher social class, you cannot just walk away, because it is impolite and you will lose your face. If a person wants to escape from a conflict, it is better to change the topic of conversation or joke but not just leave the interlocutor, because if you do that, people may stop respecting you.

Let us have a look at one more, a completely different example of the conflict situation between people who are not only from different social classes but also of different age.

*Gabriel: Virginia. What are you doing here?*

*Virginia: I came to give Celia her birthday gift. You see, for my present, I'm going to take her to a shop that sells the most exquisite antique dolls and let her pick whichever one she likes.*

*Gabriel: Well, she's not going to leave her party to go buy a doll.*

*Virginia: Well, of course not. I'll wait on the porch till it's over.*

*Gabriel: Look, I'm sorry, but I don't want you driving off with my daughter.*

*Virginia: You know she'll be safe with me. But if you'd feel better joining us...*

*Gabriel: I have tried to be nice, but I am running out of polite here, so I'm just gonna say knock it off.*

*Virginia: I'm sorry. Knock off what?*

*Gabriel: This whole creepy, clingy, "I'm your grandma" routine.*

*Virginia: But I've come to feel like a grandmother to the girls.*

*Gabriel: In three days. That's the creepy part.*

*Virginia: What a hurtful thing to say. Especially given how generous I've been to your family.*

*Gabriel: Yeah, too generous. It's like you're trying to buy us or something. Well, we're not for sale, so just back off!*

*Virginia: Who do you think you're talking to? You wicked, ungrateful girl! You're not the first stupid girl who's tried to bleed me dry, and then wash her hands of me.*

*Gabriel: Okay, we're done here. Goodbye.*

*(Desperate Housewives; season 5, episode 7)*

Virginia is an old lonely lady without a husband and a family, so it is obvious that she wants to take care of somebody and to have children. She formed

a close bond with her coworker's kids, but Gabriel (her colleague) is angry about that because Virginia is acting like a helicopter parent hovering around Gabriel's children. One day Virginia comes to Juanita's birthday party (Gabriel's daughter) and wants to take her to a shop, but her mother is against that.

From this dialogue, we can understand that Gabriel does not like Virginia's behavior and actions towards her daughter Juanita, and expresses her irritation. She complains about Virginia's behavior and condemn her for being too generous. It scares Gabriel because she thinks that Virginia has some hidden bad intentions.

At the begging Virginia is intrusive and does not understand Gabriel's hints but after she explains everything clearly, Virginia understands that she is not welcome anymore. She gets angry and applies an **offence** strategy, Virginia says that Gabriel is a wicked, ungrateful and stupid girl and also mentions her low class status. Gabriel feels upset about it, she uses an escaping strategy, stops the conversation and leaves.

*Laura: What happened?*

*Gabriel: Don't worry, she's okay. These two knuckleheads decided to sled down the staircase.*

*Laura: Why would you let them do that? Now my daughter is injured, because of you.*

*Gabriel: Oh, don't blame me. I wasn't even in the room.*

*Laura: You left the girls unsupervised? How could you?*

*Gabriel: They were playing. Come on, I can't watch them every second.*

*Laura: Why not? I look after Juanita when she's at my house, and she goes home without a scratch.*

*Gabriel: Only because she's indestructible. Honey, do that thing where you run into the wall. Watch, this is hilarious.*

*(Desperate Housewives; season 6, episode 5)*

Laura and Gabriel are friends, and one day Laura asked Gabriel to look after her four-year daughter, but Gabriel decided to mind her own business and did not

notice how the child got hurt. So Laura become angry and started blaming her friend Gabriel.

Laura was in a state of shock when she saw her daughter injured so she asked what happened and then she starts blaming her friend. Gabriel activated her defensive mechanisms of **rationalization** as she attempts to explain undesirable behaviors and its consequences with her own set of facts. Simply put, she knows that she is wrong but does not want to accept this fact. Apart from using a rationalization strategy, she uses a **joking strategy**, she is joking that her daughter is indestructible and that is why goes home without a scratch but not because Laura looks after Juanita. Gabriel's daughter has some extra kilograms, that is why she makes fun of her daughter and calls her indestructible. In this case, this strategy helped to reduce tension in the conversation and to make the atmosphere more relaxed.

*Charlie: Christopher. Hey, listen. I need the rent. I can't wait anymore.*

*Chris: Yeah, I'm good for that, Charlie. I'm gonna get it.*

*Charlie: Why don't you go two blocks over at the Mission Inn motel? It's half what you pay here. Listen, Chris. I need you out of here in the morning. I need my money.*

*Chris: The hell am I supposed to be out of here tomorrow? I am sorry, I don't have money.*

*Charlie: I got painters coming in.*

*Chris: All right, look. I need more time.*

*Charlie: No*

*Chris: All right, I'll paint it myself. All right, but I just... I gotta have some more time... I got my son up in here.*

*Charlie: All right. One week. And you paint it.*

*(The Pursuit of Happiness)*

Chris rents an apartment in Charlie, and he cannot pay the rent because of his joblessness. In this dialog Charlie demands the rent, he do it in very categorical form. Christopher applies justification strategy he explains why he cannot pay for

living in apartment. Moreover he tries to convince this man to postpone the rent by offering his services as painter. In substance he uses three defensive strategies: **convincing, justification and compromising strategies.**

This is a horizontal type of conflict, as the participants are not in interdependent relationships.

As it can be seen, people use more than one strategy to defend themselves in the conversation, this is a very good tactic because life conversation is unplanned, and it can change its direction. When our interlocutor changes his or her tactics, we also have to be ready to do it.

Let us move on to another example:

*Orson: So, you did it? You actually gave up a business we spent eight years building?*

*Bree: What other choice did I have? What I cannot do is send my son to jail.*

*Orson: You sent me to jail. You insisted I turn myself in. You said it was the only way you'd take me back.*

*Bree: That was a completely different situation.*

*Orson: Really? I ran over Mike and told no one. Andrew ran over Carlos' mother and told no one. How is that different?*

*Bree: Andrew was a child at the time.*

*Orson: He's not anymore.*

*Bree: I am sorry, didn't mean to upset you.*

*Orson: I don't want an apology. I'm leaving. You're not the woman I thought you were.*

*(Desperate Housewives; season 6, episode 23)*

First of all, this is an example of vertical conflict as the parties are in interdependent relations to each other, in this case they are a husband and a wife so family members. Their son has just killed a woman, he ran over her. Bree, as an overprotecting mother, does not want him does not want him to get to prison so she decided to reach the only witness. Her husband Orson does not like it happen like

this and he blames Bree. In his speech he uses the concessive particle “really” which here has the implicit meaning of distrust.

Bree uses an **excuse** strategy, she knows that she is doing the wrong thing and feels sorry about her actions. She uses several discourse markers of the excuse strategy: *I am sorry, didn't mean to...*

Let us turn to another example:

*Mr. Brown: Your son, he stole money from me.*

*Mr. Anderson: Uh, excuse me?*

*Mr. Brown: Your son stole money from me. I pulled out my wallet, and I specifically remembered I had three 20s. Now I only have one. I used one to pay for the mouse, and then I had two left. Your son was standing right behind me when I had my money out on the counter.*

*Mr. Anderson: Just calm down. I'm sure there's an explanation for this.*

*Mr. Brown: I don't want an explanation. The only thing I want from you is my money and a bloody apology.*

*Mr. Anderson: There's no need for that. I'm just trying to figure it out.*

*Mr. Brown: Ugh. I don't have time for this. Are you giving me my money or not? Look, do the right thing here, guy.*

*Mr. Anderson: Then, no. The answer's no. I can't help you*

*Mr. Brown: You're really just gonna sit there and lie? I should call the cops! What an example you're setting. I earn my money, and you're just teaching him how to steal. You're a terrible father.*

*Mr. Anderson: I'm gonna have to ask you to leave.*

*Mr. Brown: You're a nobody. You're a middle-aged man doing what my retarded nephew could do. That's your life. You know what? Keep your 20. I'll just go to Best Buy (another shop) from now on.*

*(Mr. Robot; season 1, episode 9).*

This is an example of horizontal conflict. Its participants – Mr. Anderson and Mr. Brown – are not in interdependent relations. For this reason, their speech manner is quite awkward. Both interlocutors have negative consequences: Mr.

Anderson lost his client and money, Mr. Brown lost his computer master. Thus, this conflict model can be defined as destructive.

As it can be seen from this dialogue, Mr. Brown is angry because Mr. Anderson's son robbed him. Mr. Brown attacks his interlocutor with complainers and after that this conversation turns into personal insults. Mr. Anderson uses an investigating strategy, he tries to find out the truth and who is guilty. To do it, he asks his interlocutor what has happened, how it has happened, also he says that there must be the reason for this and promises to figure it out. Such actions are representation of a soothing defensive strategy. Moreover, his speech is calm and tempered and in addition, he does not switch to Mr. Brown's emotional way of speaking which helps him to save his face and nerves. Just because Mr. Anderson stays calm, annoyed Mr. Brown spat feathers and gets angry with this situation. It can be said that Mr. Robot keeps his head high in this situation.

So, in this confrontation between the client and the computer master, the last one applies investigating and soothing defensive strategies. Firstly he tries to investigate who is guilty and what has happened, then he soothes his interlocutor and convinces him that everything will be alright. In this situation, this strategy is not very effective because they did not come to common denominator and this conflict has a negative effect for both parties.

Below is another example of confrontation. Darlene and Angela are close friends who have been working at the presentation for their promotion for a long time. When the presentation day has come, Angela could not come because of some family issues but now she feels sorry and tries to justify and to defend herself.

*Darlene: We need to talk*

*Angela: I don't want talk to you. Leave now.*

*Darlene: You're right. I shouldn't talk to you like that.*

*Angela: You left me alone on the conference and I couldn't hold my presentation.*

*Darlene: I'm sorry for what I did. I've made a cake, would you like it?*

*(Mr. Robot; season 1, episode 3)*

This is an example of a vertical conflict. Vertical conflicts are the conflicts in which its parties are in interdependent relations to each other. In the given example they are close friends and co-workers. It can be seen that this conflict happened earlier but Darlene still feels guilty and wants to shed some light on this situation and uses an **apology** strategy. The discourse markers of this strategy that she used are “*I'm sorry*”, “*You're right*”. At the end of this conversation Darlene offers a cake, this is a representation of a **cajoling** strategy.

In the following example the situation is the following^ Steve is a friend of Angela's father but he is a toxic person who does not like Angela because she has changed the company. One day they met in a karaoke pub.

*Steve: Hey, hey there, Ang. You've missed your dad's barbecue today.*

*Angela: Yeah, I couldn't make it.*

*Steve: You gotta be busy these days. Congrats on everything. Still, though, that's gotta be tough on your father, though. Having to watch while you bow down to those people that killed your mother. Just, who do you think you are, anyway?*

*Angela: You're a plumber. Right, Steve? You've had, what, 60 years at life? That's the best you can come up with? I'm 27, and I've got a six-figure salary at the biggest conglomerate in history, and I'm just getting started. That's who I am.*

*(Mr. Robot; season 2, episode 8)*

This is a bright example of a horizontal conflict, they know each other but they are not in interdependent relations. That is why her defensive behavior is quite aggressive. Steve blames Angela for working on another company and in the end of his reply he uses the concessive particle “*anyway*” which serves to summarize his ideas and to change the topic of conversation.

Angela picks up his aggressive and offensive way of speaking and as a result applies an **offending** strategy. By and large, she fights back using the strategy of

her interlocutor, so he does not know what to say and leaves. Angela wins the conversation and saves her face in this stressful dialogue.

Mr. James and Miss Moss are co-workers but Mr. James has a higher position and one day she did not managed to do her work so her boss decided to lay off her.

*Mr. James: Miss Moss, You've failed this task, I am not satisfied with your report, you are fired.*

*Miss Moss: Excuse me?*

*Mr. James: You can pack your stuff.*

*Miss Moss: Oh no, you won't do it. I saw the pattern. In every version of the settlement draft for the Washington Township suit, there was one small point that your team wouldn't agree on. It remained the same, even from the original case: That a third-party company must perform inspections on the Washington Township plant. You continue to give up power on all these other provisions that appear to be a lot more expensive and important, all in an attempt to drop this one small point. I know why you had those guys arrested. You want to convince the class to remove the contingency. And I will revile this little secret if you fire me.*

*(Mr. Robot; season 2, episode 4)*

This conflict is an example of vertical conflicts as its parties are in interdependent relations to each other, they are co-workers. In this situation, in order to save her workplace and defend herself in the conversation, the woman uses a **blackmail** strategy. She threatens her boss that she would revile his machinations at work if he fires her. In this situation, it is a good strategy.

## 2.2. Using defensive mechanisms in conversations

**Conversation** can be defined as an informal talk involving a small group of people or at least two people. This notion is a little bit broader than dialogical discourse and involves more participants and functions. Moreover, conversation involves more than only the exchange of information. Of course, during the

conversation the process of sending and receiving information takes place. As we know, two main functions of language are normally distinguished: **transactional** which serves for the expression of content and **interactional** which serves for the expression of social relations and personal attitude (Cutting, 2002). We must admit here that although these two main functions normally coexist together, everyday communication is more characterized by the use of primarily interactional function rather than transactional.

The process of communication can fulfill various functions: asking, promising, criticizing, praising, flattering, warning, etc. The main aim for both interlocutors is to interpret the intended speech act appropriately, to put it simpler communicators should understand decoded information properly, otherwise it causes misunderstanding that causes conflicts and than interlocutors forced to defend themselves (Carter 1997, p. 143).

Generally, the term **speech event** is applied for activities that are governed by certain norms for the speech use. There may be such speech events as lectures, interviews, debates, meetings, etc. Each of these speech events differs in the number of participants and the type and amount of talking expected from them. It is also important to mention that each speech event has its rules that should be followed. These factors like speech event, number of participants, rules of behavior plays a crucial role in choosing defensive strategy and tactics (Fox-Tree 1995, p. 704).

Let us consider the example of using defensive mechanisms during the conversation that takes place in a courtroom. The judicial proceeding is a special speech event with its special norms, rules of behavior. Moreover, when we hear a word “defense” the first thing that comes to our mind is a courtroom and a judicial proceeding, where a lawyer or an accused defend themselves.

*Elle: Miss Windham, can you tell us what you'd been doing earlier in the day?*

*Chutney: I got up, went to Starbucks, went to the gym, got a perm, and came home and took a shower.*

*Elle: You got in the shower...*

*And as we know it is the first cardinal rule of perm maintenance that you are forbidden to wet your hair for at least twenty-four hours after getting a perm at the risk of de-activating the ammonium thiglycolate. And wouldn't someone who's had – thirty perms? –throughout her lifetime, be well aware of this rule? And if you, in fact, were not washing your hair, as I suspect you were not, since your curls are still intact, wouldn't you have heard the gunshot?*

*Chutney: Yes, you are right.*

*Elle: And if you in fact, heard the gunshot, then Brooke Windham wouldn't have had time to hide the gun before you got downstairs. Which would mean that you would've had to have found Mrs. Windham with a gun in her hand to make your story sound plausible. Isn't that right?*

*Chutney: She's younger than I am. Did she tell you that? How would you feel if your father married someone younger than you?*

*Elle: You, however, had time to hide the gun, didn't you, Chutney? After you shot your father?*

*Chutney: I didn't mean to shoot him. I meant to shoot Brooke! Yes, that was me, and I hate Brooke.*

*(Legally Blonde)*

In this example, we can see that Ellie is a lawyer who is defends the accused person who is charged with murder. She questions the witness – Chutney, who also defends herself during this conversation.

Firstly Ellie uses an **investigating** strategy and asks provocative questions to find out the truth. Further, when Ellie discovers that the witness is actually is suspected of murder, she comes to the **attacking** strategy to make her confess and Ellie brightly did it.

Chutney is guilty, so she is nervous during this conversation that is in the form of interrogation and that is her mistake while defending. Chutney activated the defensive mechanism of **denial**, she denies that she is guilty but then she understands that all the facts are against her. Thus she has agreed to plead guilty

but demonstrates a childlike pattern of behavior she starts crying and blames another person in everything – her step mother Brooke.

Let us move to the similar example of applying defensive mechanisms during a trial process. In this case, the interlocutor is a child, and as we already know, age is also very important in choosing not only a defensive strategy but any other communicative strategy in the conversation.

*Kevin: Have you had any discipline problems in math class this year?*

*Barbara: No*

*Kevin: No? Isn't it true Mr. Gettys has had to talk to you repeatedly about your behavior? Isn't that why he asked you to stay after class?*

*Barbara: No*

*Kevin: Have other teachers ever asked you to stay after class?*

*Barbara: Once or twice.*

*Kevin: Did they want to talk about your behavior?*

*Barbara: I don't know what the other teachers wanted. You'd have to talk to them.*

*Kevin: You ever pass notes in class, Barbara? Maybe a note that made fun of Mr. Gettys?*

*Barbara: No*

*Kevin: No? Never called him a "disgusting pig monster"?*

*Barbara: No*

*Kevin: Your Honor, I've pre-marked this Defense Exhibit (handing out paperwork). (Right to the note) I'm sorry, Barbara, I was wrong, it's "huge hog beast". This is your handwriting, isn't it?*

*Barbara: Yes, but...*

*Kevin: You wrote this in his class.*

*Barbara: It's a joke.*

*Kevin: "He's a huge hog beast. He probably eats a thousand pancakes for breakfast." You're writing here about Mr. Gettys, aren't you?*

*Barbara: It was meant to be a joke.*

*Kevin: Have you ever had a party at your house when your parents were away? Yes or no?*

*Barbara: Yes*

*Kevin: The word special came up in your testimony earlier. You claimed that Mr. Gettys asked you whether you had special feelings, if you felt special. Have you ever heard of a game called “Special Places?” You’re under oath, Barbara. A man's career – his reputation –his life is on the line. This is not a joke. Have you ever played the game Special Places?*

*Barbara: yes.*

*Kevin: This special party, Barbara, this was the first time you told the story about Mr. Gettys.*

*Barbara: Yes.*

*Kevin: I've spoken to the other children who were there that day. Can you think of anything else, Barbara, they might have told me about that party? If I need to call those other children, I will. You threatened those children, didn't you?*

*Barbara: That's not the way it happened.*

*Kevin: You told them to falsely claim that Mr. Gettys had hurt them, didn't you?*

*Barbara: These things did happen!*

*Kevin: So you made up a story. A special story, about a math teacher – a disgusting pig monster – you didn't like. That's what really happened, isn't it?*

*Barbara: I didn't want to be the only one!*

*(The Devil's Advocate)*

Kevin is the best lawyer and in this case he defends the innocent teacher. Despite the fact that the victim is a child, his speaking strategy is quite rough and categorical which helps him to win this case. As for Barbara, her behavior in court is a little bit childish, she applies a **denial** strategy and brushes off all the evidence but then Kevin forces her into a corner and forces her into agreement to plead guilty. Thus, she uses **denial** and **regression** defensive strategies. Regression

strategy is common for children as they perceive the reality from a different prospective and usually do not take seriously others actions.

It is known that language and speech can be subdivided into **spoken** and **written** (Aitchison, 2001). Spoken speech in its turn can be planned and unplanned or prepared and unprepared, but when we talk about a real life conversation, it is always unplanned and unprepared and it is always accompanied by emotions. Non-verbal clues and emotions can be used as a powerful tool during defending in conversations. Let us look at the following example:

*Ross: I didn't get a cat.*

*Rachel: That's interesting.*

*Ross: No, it's not "interesting". It's very, very not interesting. It's actually 100% the opposite of interesting.*

*Rachel: I got it, Ross.*

*Ross: You had no right to say you had feelings for me. I was doing great with Julie before I knew!*

*Rachel: I was doing great before I knew about you! You think it's easy to see you with Julie?*

*Ross: You should've said something before I've met her!*

*Rachel: I didn't know then. And how come you never said anything to me?*

*Ross: There was never a good time.*

*Rachel: You only had a year. And we only hung out every night!*

*Ross: Not...every night. It's not like I didn't try. But things got in the way. You know, like Italian guys... or ex-fiances... or Italian guys.*

*Rachel: There was one Italian guy, okay? And do you have a point?*

*Ross: The point is, I don't need this right now! Okay? It's too late. I'm with somebody else. I'm happy. This ship has sailed!*

*Rachel: You're just gonna put away your feelings for me?*

*Ross: I've done it since ninth grade. I'm good at it.*

*Rachel: All right, fine. You go ahead and do that. I don't need your ship!  
(Rachel stats crying)*

*Ross: I am sorry, that was my fault. I shouldn't talk to you like that. I just love you.*

*(Friends; season 2, episode 7)*

Ross and Rachel are in love with each other but they have their own relations and that is why they are not together. Ross feels guilty but complains about this situation and says very hurtful things to Rachel. Rachel uses an **accounts** strategy: she gives reasons for her actions and explains her decisions. Then she acts out of emotions and bursts into tears. This touches Ross emotionally and she forgets about his grievances and makes peace with Rachel.

Here is another interesting example of how non-verbal actions can help to win the day.

*Shrek: I'll kill that cat! What should we do with him?*

*Donkey: Take the sword and neuter him.*

*Cat: Oh, no! Por favor! Please! I implore you! It was nothing personal, Señor. I was doing it only for my family. My mother, she is sick. And my father lives off the garbage! The King offered me much in gold and I have a litter of brothers...*

*Shrek: Whoa, whoa, whoa! Fiona's father paid you to do this?*

*Cat: The rich King? Sí.*

*Shrek: Well, so much for Dad's royal blessing...*

*Cat: Stop Ogre, I have misjudged you.*

*Shrek: Join the club with black jackets.*

*Cat: I am sorry for that. Now I am obliged to accompany you and save your life.*

*Donkey: Oh, the position of annoying and talking animal is already taken. We cannot trust you. Let's go, Shrek.*

*Shrek: Common Donkey. Look at him in these little boots. How many cats can wear boots? Honestly, let's keep him. Oh listen, he is purring.*

*(Shrek-2)*

This is an abstract from the conversation between two friends (Shrek and Donkey) and Puss in Bots who is initially hired by the father of Princess Fiona (Shrek's wife) to kill Shrek. He meets Shrek and his companion, Donkey, and unsuccessfully attacks Shrek. Puss explains Shrek the reason for his attack and begs for mercy. Because Shrek spares his life, Puss offers to join him and becomes his partner.

In order to defend himself and save his life, cat applies a **begging** strategy, he is playing the pity when tells he has a family, a sick mother. Moving on, a **begging** strategy turns into a **manipulating** strategy. He manipulated Shrek and Donkey with his big, dark, cute, deep eyes. Of course, this is a fictional situation that is taken from the animation film, it is a little bit exaggerated but there is some truth in that. In real life people can tell sad stories about their hard life, cry, show sorrow on their face just to play on your emotions and to achieve the desired effect.

Here the example of using emotions as a part of defense:

*Monica: Thanks for jacket.*

*Rachel: Oh, no problem. You can borrow it, by the way. Here you keys, honey. If you are lunched alone, how come it cost you 53 dollars?*

*Monica: You know probably what happened? Someone stole my credit card.*

*Rachel: And put the receipt back in your pocket?*

*Monica: That is an excellent, excellent question. That is excellent.*

*Rachel: Monica, what's wrong with you? Who did you have lunch with?*

*Monica: Julie*

*Rachel: Who?*

*Monica: Jody*

*Rachel: What? You were with Julie?*

*Monica: Look, when it started, I was just trying to be nice to her...because she was my brother's girlfriend. And then one thing led to another and... and before I knew it, we were... shopping.*

*Rachel: Oh my God.*

Monica: Wait, we only did it once. It didn't mean anything to me.

Rachel: Yeah, right, sure.

Monica: Rachel, I was thinking of you the whole time. Look, I am sorry, all right? I never meant for you to find out.

Rachel: Oh please! Please, you wanted to get caught.

Monica: That in not true!

Rachel: So you just happened to leave it here?

Monica: Didn't occur to you that I might be that stupid?

Rachel: Ok, I just have to know one more thing. Did you go with her to Bloomingdale's?

Monica: (slights)

Rachel: Ok, I just really need not to be with you right now.

(Friends; season 2, episode 2)

Rachel is jealous because her best friend Monica has found another friend, she gets angry and cries. Monica uses a **justification** strategy. At first she tries to hide the fact that she was walking with another friend she denies this. Rachel feels upset so she stops this conversation and leaves. After this, Monica feels guilty and comes to Rachel in a week:

Monica: I feel terrible. I really do.

Rachel: Oh I am sorry. Did my back hurt your knife?

Monica: Say that I am friends with her. I spend some time with her. Is that so terrible?

Rachel: Yes Monica, you don't get it. It's bad enough cause she stole the guy, who may be the person I'm supposed to be with. But now...she's actually...stealing you...

Monica: What are you talking about? Nobody can steal me from you. I mean, just because I'm friends with her does not make me any less friends with you (both crying and hugging).

(Friends; season 2, episode 2)

Monica uses **justification** and **counterclaims** strategies, she uses discourse markers of this strategy “*I am sorry*”, “*I feel terrible*” and asks Rachel for forgiveness and starts crying to increase the degree of her sorrow, just like Puss in the Boots from previous example. Monica successfully defended herself and saves face in this conversation and her friendship with Rachel.

As it was mentioned before, emotions and non-verbal devices are often used during the conversation.

Let us have a look at the following example:

*Lucifer: Great. Now that we've solved that, I can get back to the case and...*

*Maze: Ooh! God! What?! What? You just made everything worse. Why am I surprised? Just leave. Since that's been your plan all along anyway.*

*Lucifer: Is that what all this has been about? Amenadiel told you about our trip back to Heaven, didn't he?*

*Maze: Don't you blame him. You...! Should have told me. (hits him)*

*Lucifer: Well, if you understood the full picture... Oh! Stop hitting me.*

*Maze: Then explain.*

*Lucifer: Well, I'd like to, but you have a tendency to get emotional about things. (Maze hits him) Case in point.*

*Maze: So I needed to be controlled, is that it? What the hell am I, Lucifer... A pawn in some plan of yours?*

*Lucifer: No, I wouldn't put it like that.*

*Maze: Of course you wouldn't, because that would actually require you understanding how you affect people. How you hurt them. (hits him)*

*Lucifer: You seem to be the one doing the hurting at the moment.*

*Maze: You don't care about anyone other than yourself. Unless they can be of use to you. Sound familiar?*

*Lucifer: Tread very carefully, Maze... I had no idea that you were this mad at me.*

*Maze: You were gonna leave me. I would never do that.*

*Lucifer: Look. I am sorry. I didn't mean it.*

Lucifer is the devil and Maze is a demon who is working on. Maze is upset and expresses her outrage because Lucifer betrayed her. She shouts at him and hits him. In this situation, Lucifer ignores to deal with the conflict in the first place, his position suggests a low concern for self and a low concern for the other, because the conflict cannot be resolved with this strategy. Generally, he denies his fault and does not understand what is wrong. Such a behavior is a manifestation of **avoiding** and **denial** strategies.

This example is also a bit exaggerated, it is a fictional situation. However, the defensive strategies that were used here are real and can be used in real-life situations.

As we know, the conflicts between the members of family are the most emotional and cruel. We do not painstakingly choose every word we say and sometimes it can be very hurtful. Let us look at the example of a family quarrel:

*Malcolm: Hello, I am here to say that you are in danger. I guess A.R.G.U.S. is looking for a few guards to volunteer for island duty.*

*Thea: You almost got us killed.*

*Malcolm: I simply had more faith in you and my daughter than you obviously have for yourselves.*

*Thea: How could you do that?*

*Malcolm: To challenge you, to see if you both could work.*

*Thea: How could you make me kill a friend?*

*Malcolm: He should not have told you that. I trusted you.*

*Thea: I let you into my life. How could you have done this to me?*

*Malcolm: Because you are my daughter, Thea, and I care about you.*

*Thea: Oh, God, that's sick. And not even remotely true!*

*Malcolm: You do not understand the danger we face from Ra's al Ghul!*

*Thea: Just stop! Stop using him as an excuse. The only person that I'm afraid of right now is you.*

*Malcolm: I am really sorry. Please, do not do this...*

*Thea: Oh, just stop. I will work with you to stop Ra's. Because that's what my brother says we need to do. So I will be your student. I'll be your partner. Even if I have to, I will be your soldier. But never again will I be your daughter.*

*(Arrow; season 3, episode 14)*

This fragment of conversation is taken from the superhero TV show. Malcolm is Thea's father that is the leader of League of Assassins organization, so he kills people for money. Thea does not like her father because recently she found out this aspect of his life. Nevertheless, Malcolm really loves his daughter and comes to rescue her from another killer, but Thea blames him for everything. Malcolm uses an **accounts** strategy, he gives reasons for his actions, he justifies his actions and tries to convince her that everything that he has done was for his daughter wellbeing. Their conflict can be regarded as a **vertical** conflict as its parties are in interdependent relations to each other, they are family members.

Sometimes people that we trust hurt us more than others or even betray us:

*Freddie: Why didn't you tell me about "Live aid" this concert?*

*Paul: I didn't want to waste your time.*

*Freddie: You should tell me*

*Paul: Of course I did. You've forgot. You always forget things.*

*Freddie: Go out. You are fired.*

*Paul: I didn't mean to upset you. I am sorry, I'll make it better.*

*(Bohemian Rhapsody)*

Paul is Freddie's friend and a manager who was reckless and did not managed his work. Thus the type of this conflict is **vertical** as its parties are in interdependent relations to each other: they are close friends and co-workers. In fact, Paul envies Freddie's success but he does not want to lose his job, so he uses **justification** and **compromising** strategies. We can find here discourse markers that activate the justification strategy: "I didn't mean to...", "I didn't want..." He promises to fix everything and tries to resolve this conflict, he reflects some degree of concern for everyone's needs and desires. Here, everyone must give up a little bit of what they want to resolve this conflict. But Freddie feels outrage about

Paul's mean action and as a result Paul did not manage to resolve this conflict and to save his face.

*Paul: What is this? You filmed my surgery?*

*Ainslie: I was going to tell you. I just... I-I got so caught up in the adrenaline, and it was so compelling that I...*

*Paul: Oh, was it? Was it compelling when I almost died?*

*Ainslie: We went there to get a great story and we got one. I was doing my job.*

*Paul: I understand. This is who you are. I just...don't think that's the kind of person I want to be with.*

*(Prodigal Son; season 1, episode 8)*

This is a conflict conversation between lovers. Ainslie is a real workaholic so when her boyfriend was dying she filmed his surgery and did not help him. When Paul finds it out, he feels like his girlfriend has betrayed him and he expresses his complaint to Ainslie. To defend herself, she uses a defensive mechanism of **rationalization** and attempts to explain her undesirable behavior with her own set of facts. Moreover, she tries to convince Paul that she was right and wants to save their relations. But Paul does not what to listen to her explanations and ends up this relationship. Thus this vertical conflict has negative consequences so it is a destructive conflict model.

We use speech to communicate with each other every day and everywhere, including our workplace. There are several different ways we share information with each other. For example, we might use verbal communication when sharing a presentation with a group or we might use written communication when applying for a job or sending an email.

Communication can be a powerful tool in setting up ones ideas to another person or a group of people. We can drum the ideas into people's heads with the help of language. Sometimes theses ideas and information can be dangerous, so we have to resist and defend ourselves. Defensive strategies help not only to save face but also to defend our interests and desires.

Talking about defending interests, let us turn to examples:

O'Connell: *I thought you didn't believe in this stuff!?*

Evelyn: *Having an encounter with a four thousand year old walking-talking corpse tends to convert one.*

O'Connell: *Forget it, we're out the door down the hall and gone.*

Evelyn: *No, we are not.*

O'Connell: *Oh yes we are.*

Evelyn: *No we are not. We woke him up, and we must try and stop him.*

O'Connell: *We?! What we?! You didn't read that book. I told you not to play around with that thing.*

Evelyn: *Alright then, Me, I... I read the book, I woke him up and I intend to stop him.*

O'Connell: *How!? You heard the man, no mortal weapons can kill this guy.*

Evelyn: *Then we'll have to find some immortal ones.*

O'Connell: *There goes that belief again. Not me, I am outta here!*

Evelyn: *According to that Book, once this creature has been reborn, his curse will spread, and as he grows in strength, so will his curse grow, infecting the people until the whole of the earth is destroyed.*

O'Connell: *Yeah? So? Is that my problem?*

Evelyn: *It's everybody's problem!*

O'Connell: *Look lady, I appreciate you saving my life and all, but when I signed on, I agreed to take you out there and bring you back, and I did, now were even, end of job, end of story, contract terminated.*

Evelyn: *That's what I am to you? A contract?*

O'Connell: *You can either tag along with me, or you can stay here and play around with Mister Maggot.*

Evelyn: *I'm staying.*

O'Connell: *Fine.*

*(The Mummy)*

Evelyn and O’Connell are friends and co-workers. Evelyn is an English librarian, who becomes interested in starting an archaeological search at the ancient city of Hamunaptra. She gains help of Rick O’Connell after saving him from death. What Evelyn, her brother Jonathan and Rick are unaware of the fact that another group of explorers are interested in the same digging. Unfortunately for everyone, this group ends up unleashing a curse which been laid on the dead High Priest Imhotep. Now “The Mummy” is awake and it is going to take a lot more than guns to send him back to where he came from.

In this conversation, O’Connell is trying to convince his friend Evelyn to leave this place in order to save her life. He blames her for unleashing a curse which brings to life “The Mummy”. Both of them use **convincing** strategy to defend their interests. Evelyn combines different strategies: firstly she applies a **quasi-theories** strategy to put the information simpler and to explain a complex situation. After that she admits that she is guilty and proposes her solution to this problem, thus she uses a **collaborating** strategy. O’Connell does not want to sacrifice his decision and insisted decides to leave this place.

Sometimes we can communicate with people with certain psychological problems or with people that we are afraid of (like criminals or just toxic people). In such a way we also try to defend ourselves, and our main aim is not only so save our face and to win the conversation but also save our life and as we know, language is a very efficient tool. Speaking about defensive strategies in conversations with dangerous people, let us turn to the following example:

*Dave: Hey, I robbed a bank for you.*

*Affina: What are you talking about?*

*Dave: I changed my mind. You can go to that school, and I'm gonna come with you. Okay? But we gotta leave now. So big city, here we come.*

*Affina: Are you insane?*

*Dave: No, look, I can pawn jewelry for stuff like concert tickets. But if we're skipping down, digging up a few bodies just ain't gonna cut it.*

*Affina: You're the grave robber? But that would mean...*

*Dave: That cop that got killed? he was tailing me. I had no choice. I had to do it. I had to do it.*

*Affina: You killed someone.*

*Dave: I did it for you. I love you, please come with me.*

*Affina: No, I won't go with you anywhere. Anyway, You are a murder. I am sorry I got to go...*

*(Supernatural; season 13, episode 6)*

Dave is a murderer who in love with Affina, moreover, he is obsessed with her. In this conversation she finally finds out who he is. She is in a state of shock and she is frightened, furthermore he insists she should come with him. Affina uses a **leaving** strategy, she attempts to stop the conversation. She cries, and it moves Dave emotionally, then she uses constructive particle “anyway” in utterance-initial position to change the topic of conversation and go away.

Sometimes people emulate the tactics of their opponents and defend themselves in such a way. Here is an example of such behavior:

*Lynette: We can't afford to have you fail.*

*Tom: I know. That's why I did this. So that I can focus all of my attention on my core classes.*

*Lynette: Are you failing those, too?*

*Tom: No. But it's touch and go. My advisor warned me that learning a language at my age would be difficult, and Mandarin is one of the hardest. I study and I study, but I'm... I'm always behind. Lynette, you've got to understand, I am drowning here.*

*Lynette: I don't care.*

*Tom: What?*

*Lynette: You're having trouble in school? Talk to me. Talk to your professors. Hire a tutor. What you don't do, is cheat*

*Tom: Come on, Lynette. It is... It's statistics. I'm never going to use it.*

*Lynette: It's the principle of the thing, Tom! What if the kids found out? What kind of example are you setting for them?*

*Tom: The same one you're setting. When Gabrielle asked you if you were gaining weight, didn't you lie?*

*Lynette: Clearly, that's different.*

*Tom: Why?*

*Lynette: Because of the consequences. You could get kicked out of school.*

*Tom: And you could lose one of your best friends. I'm going to tell Gabby the truth, eventually. And when you do, she'll tell Carlos. And when he finds out that his new vice president lied to him, he may fire you.*

Tom and Lynette are a married couple, so the conflict between them can be distinguished as vertical. Tom was undergoing retraining to increase his technical skills and to get a promotion. During the exam he was cheating and this fact drives his conservative wife crazy. She starts blaming him, so he uses **avoiding** strategy and fails to deal with conflict in the first place; this suggests a low concern for self and a low concern for the other, because the conflict cannot be resolved with this strategy. Moving on, **Lynette** says her husband is setting a bad example to their kinds. After these words Tom resorts to the **blaming** strategy and turns to the **projection** strategy, he projects his situation on his wife's life for her to understand his actions.

So on balance, we can distinguish the following defensive strategies:

1. Denial strategy (a person does not want to accept his or her fault and denies the problem. Discourse markers used in this case are: *it's not my fault...; I don't understand where I was wrong...;*
2. Justification strategy (a person admits personal responsibility but denies negative consequences, usually by relating the action to some socially acceptable norms. Discourse markers are: *It is my fault...; I know that should not do this...;*
3. Counterclaiming strategy (a person denies unfavorable intentions; Discourse markers are: *I didn't mean...;*

4. Competing strategy (a person just wants his or her own way, regardless of what the other person wants. Discourse markers are: *I don't care...*; *It doesn't matter...*);
5. Threatening strategy (a person threatens his or her interlocutor);
6. Joking strategy (a person uses jokes to reduce tension and make conversation more friendly);
7. Convincing strategy (a person convince his or her interlocutor that this person is right);
8. Excuse strategy (a person acknowledges a mistake. Discourse markers: *I am sorry; excuse me*);
9. Apology strategy (the speaker expresses regret over an earlier action. Discourse markers are: *I am sorry, it is my fault*);
10. Manipulating strategy (a person manipulates the interlocutor in order to achieve desirable goal);
11. Avoiding strategy (a person avoids conflict, usually tries to stop the conversation). Discourse markers are: *I got to go; I don't want stay here*;
12. Offending strategy (a person offends interlocutor, usually by saying hurtful things);
13. Cajoling strategy (a person gives a present to interlocutor in order to gain favor with a person);
14. Blackmail strategy;
15. Compromising strategy (both interlocutors give up a little bit of what they want in order to end the conflict).
16. Begging strategy (a person begs for mercy or asks for forgiveness). Discourse markers are: *please, I beg you...*

Moreover, natural communication is unplanned and unprepared, and it is always accompanied with emotions. Non-verbal clues and emotions can be used as a powerful tool during defending strategies in conversation.

## Conclusions to Chapter Two

Unfortunately, there are a lot of different conflict situations between people. Some of them we create ourselves. Some of them are created by other people. In many cases it depends on the situation we are in. That is why it is very important to know how defend ourselves.

Conversation is an informal talk involving a small group of people or at least two people. This notion is a little bit broader than dialogical discourse and involves more participants and functions. Moreover, any conversation involves more than only the exchange of information. It is natural that during the conversation, the process of sending and receiving information takes place.

Dialogical discourse refers to the use of shared dialogue or conversation, and it is aimed at revealing meaning. Dialogical discourse is realized through the opposition to monologue discourse, which is aimed to one entity with all the information by simply giving it to the interlocutor without any clarification or exploration of meaning through discussion. Dialogical discourse can be defined as spoken communication in the form of a dialogue, it is unplanned and unprepared, so it is hard to predict a person's reaction and avoid unpleasant and unplanned situations.

By and large, live communication is unplanned and spontaneous, that is why it is hard to predict the interlocutor's reaction, especially in conflict situations. Nevertheless, there are a number of defensive strategies that can help us to save face and to defend our interests and desires in conflict situations. Here typical defensive strategies:

Natural communication is unpredictable and can change its direction, so we can apply more than one strategy if it is required by the situation. Moreover, it is accompanied by emotions that also can play an important role.

Our research made it possible for us to single out the following defensive strategies:

1. Denial strategy (a person doesn't want to accept his or her fault and denies the existing problem. Discourse markers used in this case most typically are: *it's not my fault...; I don't understand where I was wrong...;*
2. Justification strategy (a person admits personal responsibility but denies negative consequences, usually by relating the action to some socially acceptable norms. Discourse markers are: *It is my fault...; I know that should not do this...;*
3. Counterclaiming strategy (a person denies unfavorable intentions). Discourse markers are: *I didn't mean...;*
4. Competing strategy (a person just wants his or her own way, regardless of what the other person wants. Discourse markers are: *I don't care...; It doesn't matter ;*
5. Threatening strategy ( a person threatens his or her interlocutor);
6. Joking strategy (a person uses jokes to reduce tension and make conversation more friendly);
7. Convincing strategy (a person convince his or her interlocutor that this person is right);
8. Excuse strategy (a person acknowledges a mistake. Discourse markers: *I am sorry; excuse me);*
9. Apology strategy (the speaker expresses his regret over an earlier action). Discourse markers are: *I am sorry, it is my fault;*
10. Manipulating strategy (a person manipulates the interlocutor in order to achieve a desirable goal);
11. Avoiding strategy (a person avoids conflict, usually tries to stop the conversation. Discourse markers are: *I got to go; I don't want stay here;*
12. Offending strategy(a person offends interlocutor, usually by saying hurtful things);
13. Cajoling strategy (a person gives a present to interlocutor in order to gain favor with a person);
14. Blackmail strategy;

15. Compromising strategy (both interlocutors give up a little bit of what they want in order to end the conflict).

16. Begging strategy (a person begs for mercy or asks for forgiveness. Discourse markers are: *please, I beg you...*).

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Nowadays communication is an interactional process in which conflict situations happen very often. Every day we meet a lot of new people, and not all of them are friendly and sometimes we can be pressured by other people. Conflict happens between people that have incompatible goals and ways to achieve these goals. Moreover, every day we face with confrontations and that is why it is important to know basic strategies and tactics of behavior in such situations, especially while communicating with opponents in order to know how to cope with it.

Defensive strategy in communication is defined as a reaction to rudeness or criticism. Defensive strategies imply the desire to avoid negative evaluation from interlocutor and to save the person's face, which is probably, the most important thing for every person. The desire to save one's face or self-image may show the mutual desire of interlocutors to avoid the limitation of independence and freedom of actions, or to show both unity and approval.

The factors like age, social status of person, character, speech event, number of participants, rules of behavior plays a crucial role in choosing defensive strategy and tactics. Moreover in live communication is unplanned and unprepared, and it is always accompanied with emotions. Non-verbal clues and emotions can be used as a powerful tool during defending in conversation.

In this Paper, we carried out the analysis of the basic defensive strategies. We came up with our own classification of defensive strategies:

1. **Denial strategy**
2. **Justification strategy**
3. **Counterclaiming**
4. **Competing strategy**
5. **Threatening strategy**
6. **Joking strategy**
7. **Convincing strategy**

8. **Excuse strategy**
9. **Apology strategy**
10. **Manipulating strategy**
11. **Avoiding strategy**
12. **Offending strategy**
13. **Cajoling strategy**
14. **Blackmail strategy**
15. **Compromising strategy**
16. **Begging strategy**

All these strategies are verbalized in speech by special tactics expressed by a set of discourse markers and other speech means described in Chapter Two.

Having analyzed the main defensive strategies and tactics, we have defined the term “defensive strategy” and found out how to apply these strategies in various communicative situations.

We may conclude that the aims of the research have been achieved, and the tasks we have set have been fulfilled. Hopefully, the results of our research will contribute to the general knowledge on this topic and will be useful for language learners.

## RESUME

Діалогічне спілкування – комунікативний процес, який неможливо спланувати й підготувати заздалегідь. Тому під час розмови ми часто припиняємо говорити на кілька секунд, запинаємось, щоб згадати щось важливе, підібрати необхідні слова, правильно виразити думку чи просто обдумати нашу наступну відповідь співрозмовнику. Під час розмови мовці, як правило, дотримуються принципів кооперації та змінюють комунікативні ролі. Іноді співрозмовнику потрібно просто показати, що він уважно слухає або виразити власне емоційне ставлення щодо обговорюваної теми.

Якщо ми візьмемо до уваги всі ці фактори, то побачимо, що наше щоденне мовлення не є таким зв'язним і бездоганим, на відміну від писемного мовлення, оскільки ми не завжди контролюємо сказане, і в результаті ми потрапляємо в конфліктні ситуації або в незручне для нас становище і можемо втратити обличчя або ж власну репутацію, що є дуже важливою умовою для власного розвитку і у співпраці з людьми. Дуже часто трапляється так, що нас звинувачують у чомусь, на нас сваряться, або просто щось вимагають, тому дуже важливо знати як правильно захистити себе у конфліктній ситуації, не втративши при цьому обличчя та зберегти гідність.

У майбутньому результати роботи можуть окреслити шляхи подальшого дослідження когнітивного та соціокультурного аспектів мовленнєвих дій, що допомагають захистити репутацію комуніканта в сучасному діалогічному дискурсі, а також можуть бути корисними для тих, хто вивчає англійську мову як іноземну.

За теоретичну основу взято принцип кооперації П. Грайса, принцип ввічливості Дж. Ліча, теорію ввічливості П. Браун і С. Левінсона, а також захисні стратегії і тактики Д. Гібба і З. Фрейда.

Дипломна робота складається зі вступу, двох розділів та висновків. У списку використаної літератури нараховується 71 джерел теоретичного матеріалу.

У першому розділі роботи увага зосереджується на аналізі основних функцій усного спілкування, теоретичному описі понять конфліктної ситуації, захисних механізмів, стратегій і тактик. Також в роботі описані основні захисні стратегії і тактики спілкування.

У другому розділі надається інтерактивна класифікація захисних стратегій у сучасному англомовному діалогічному дискурсі. Робиться спроба системного опису основних комунікативних характеристик зазначених стратегій і тактик. Лінгвістичний аналіз здійснено на матеріалі сучасних англомовних фільмів та серіалів.

**Ключові слова:** конфлікт, захисні стратегії, захисні механізми, захисна поведінка, прагматика, діалогічний дискурс, маркери дискурсу, сигнали взаємодії.

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