

# Chapter 9

## Disaffiliation and Pragmatic Strategies of Emotive Communication in a Multiparty Online Conflict Talk

Laura Bonelli

### 9.1 Introduction

Conflict talk is about challenges and counter-challenges, defenses, and retreats (Labov and Fanshel 1977: 59). Such moves and their possible impacts on the interactant's stances, on their communicative choices, and even on their relationship statuses are not only, but also determined by considerations on affect (Grimshaw 1990: 12).

The path I am walking in this chapter is an argued attempt of how emotive communication, or the strategic and co-constructed signaling of affective information in conversational interactions, constitutes a prerequisite of more general forms of connection (and disconnection) among people: what Malinowski (1923) referred to as a capability of aggregation of interests and attitudes or, using metaphors of authors who are closer to psychological and linguistic researches, what Watzlawick et al. (1967) called *interpersonal convergence*, what Clark (1996) defines as *joint actions*, and what Caffi (2001) more specifically connects to the ability of empathetic attunement among individuals. In order to achieve a state of *interpersonal convergence*, one has to be able to relate emotionally to her interlocutors, and, in particular, one needs to be attuned to their expressions of affect, both linguistic and paralinguistic. When speakers fail at this, conflictive exchanges are one possible consequence. Although conflicts lead to divergence and disconnection, they occur as joint actions nonetheless: our experience of speakers offers everyday confirmations of this possibility.

A phenomenon which is curious, however, and which became object of study only recently is how computer-mediated communication (henceforth CMC) can

---

L. Bonelli (✉)  
Università "La Sapienza" di Roma, Rome, Italy  
e-mail: [laura.bonelli@istc.cnr.it](mailto:laura.bonelli@istc.cnr.it)

provide similar opportunities of emotive cohesion or lack thereof through, *mutatis mutandis*, macro- and micro-stylistic strategies similar to those occurring in conversational settings.

Exchanges on CMC are a potentially fruitful unit of analysis in the research on emotive communication, since the impressions of interpersonal distance and proximity inferable from their tokens of interaction are so heavy and clear. These impressions contrast with the contextual “coldness” which distinguishes them: as in e-mail, so in online discussion groups (namely, *fora* or the Internet message boards) or on social network platforms (excluding those with integrated instant messaging systems), the interaction often occurs among strangers; the communication is asynchronous, which means that the production of a message and its answers occur at different times; and language is “disembodied” by its producers. Nevertheless, the intensity of the exchanges produced and communicated via these media is often strong enough to make communicative activities such as affiliation and disaffiliation or involvement and detachment particularly evident. At a first glance, it even seems that such manifestations of emotion and positive or negative affectivity are more heavily communicated online than in face-to-face conversations.

If CMC has received special attention since the early 1990s of the last century,<sup>1</sup> recently more attention has been paid to the expressions of emotionality through CMC (to mention a few recent works: Pistolesi 2002; Fabri et al. 2005; Provine et al. 2007; Rodham et al. 2007; Kleinke 2008; Gill et al. 2008; Hancock et al. 2007; Angouri and Tseliga 2010; Thelwall et al. 2010, 2011; Marwick and Boyd 2010; Chmiel et al. 2011; Langlotz and Locher 2012; *inter alia*). It is, however, an amount of researches still quite heterogeneous with regards to investigated objects and platforms, methodologies, and theoretical paradigms of reference.

The analysis I propose is an attempt to employ the resources and analytic tools related to the concept of emotive communication on contextualized tokens of conflict talk in CMC: in particular, I will try to consider how disaffiliation could be detected and measured by means of markers such as Caffi and Janney’s (1994) emotive devices. The methodological and disciplinary framework that I adopt is that of an “integrated” or “holistic” pragmatics (Caffi 2001, 2007), a framework which takes into account strategies and concepts coming from different perspectives (i.e., linguistic pragmatics, social psychology, rhetoric, stylistics, possibly also prosody and nonverbal communication).<sup>2</sup> The CMC platform I chose for this analysis will be that of Internet message boards. The language of reference is Italian or what Giuseppe Antonelli defined as “digital Italian.”<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Two important references with these regards are the volumes of *Language@Internet* and the *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, respectively available online from 2004 to 2012 and from June 1995 to July 2007.

<sup>2</sup>For an alternative approach to CMC tied to a framework of cognitive pragmatics, see Yus (2013).

<sup>3</sup>For an overview of features that the Italian language assumes through CMC, see Orletti (2004), Antonelli (2007), Tavosanis (2011), and Fiorentino (*in press*).

But what exactly is referred as emotive communication and what kind of tools are relevant for its investigation? What kind of pertinent concepts does the conversational analytic research offer and how do they relate with the former in the study of conflict talk? Before heading to data and charts, I will briefly try to answer these two questions.

## 9.2 Emotive Communication: Psychology and Linguistic Pragmatics at Their Interface

At the beginning of the twentieth century, *emotive communication* was broadly defined by Marty (1908: 364) as the strategic and intentional signaling of affective information in speech and writing aimed at influencing the interlocutor's communicative actions, perlocutions, dispositions, stances, and goals. This idea was set by the author against that of *emotional communication*, meaning the spontaneous bursting out of emotion in speech. Leaving behind the discussion on how emotional communication in this sense could also (both intentionally and unintentionally) modify the interlocutor's dispositions and perlocutions (e.g., Haakana 2012), I would like to draw attention on the type of commitments and stances speakers linguistically adopt to influence their interlocutors, either in contexts of negotiation or conflict, and quickly present how they have been treated in the literature.

### 9.2.1 Linguistic Markers of Psychological Attitudes

Conversations are overflowing with polyfunctional signals or markers (Hölker 1988) which indicate the quality of the self-presentation enacted by the speaker and the quality of her cooperation with her interlocutors on different levels (e.g., prosodic, morpho-syntactic, stylistic, and rhetorical levels). From psychological and sociological points of view, markers might act as cues of extralinguistic behaviors and attitudes: for example, they may index the speaker's belonging to a given social group, specific features of the speaker, or the degree of adherence to an uttered state of affairs and the affective bonds connected with it.

More or less evident and intense tokens of emotive communication are inferable from these cues. The idea of strategic *markedness* of discursive contents and modalities (Hübler 1987) has a long tradition in semiotic studies, as well as in social sciences (see, for instance, Abercrombie 1967). The signaling of speech markers is itself a communicative activity through which the speakers can negotiate needs, request and express information, and regulate personal attitudes (Caffi 2001: 26).

From the point of view of a pragmatics of emotive communication, it is important to identify a comprehensive operational category of markers able to detect and integrate the speaker's attitudes and the modality in which the conversational content is expressed. Tentatives in this direction are, among others, Goodwin et al. (2012), Couper-Kuhlen (2012), Selting (1994, 2010), Caffi (2001), Caffi and Janney

(1994), and Arndt and Janney (1987). Especially Caffi and Janney's emotive devices are a direct attempt of gathering Giles et al.'s (1979) speech markers and Gumperz's (1982) contextualization cues in a unique polyfunctional type of analytic tools.

### 9.2.2 *Caffi and Janney's Emotive Devices (1994)*

Caffi and Janney's (1994) research effort aims at connecting psychological and linguistic research perspectives to the theme of emotive communication. The authors identified six different *emotive devices* based on the three most recurrent psychological dimensions of affect in the history of psychology—*evaluation*, *potency*, and *activity* (Osgood et al. 1957)—and on the most widespread linguistic categories up to the early 1990s. Rather than focusing solely on the propositional content of the conversational units of analysis (thus investigating emotive communication not exclusively on its semantic and lexical levels), Caffi and Janney (1994: 354) preferred to specify the communicative phenomena that could highlight a certain global affective tonality of the conversation, and they did so by systematically organizing the different types of rhetorical, stylistic, and possibly prosodic and paralinguistic choices that the speakers use in order to strategically produce different evocative effects connected with the kind of emotive stance they display.

The devices they proposed are:

1. *Evaluation devices* (polarity: positive/negative), which include all the verbal and nonverbal choices used to assess the speaking partner or the discursive content and context (e.g., friendly or hostile tones of voice, modal adverbs, adjectives, vocatives, diminutives, lexical, or stylistic choices conveying a positive or a negative attitude). According to the authors, these choices can be interpreted as indexes of pleasure or displeasure, agreement or disagreement, and sympathy or antipathy.
2. *Proximity devices* (polarity: close/far), which include all the verbal and nonverbal choices that can modify the metaphorical distances between the speakers and their conversational topics, between the speakers and the spatial and/or temporal objects belonging to their speaking context, or among the speakers themselves. Proximity is intended as a subjective dimension emotively experienced by the speakers and aimed at the shortening (or at the widening) of their own perceived distances, including the communicative ways of approach or withdrawal toward specific objects of appraisal.
3. *Specificity devices* (polarity: clear/vague), which include all the lexical choices, conversational techniques, and those organizational patterns in the utterance that can express a variation in the level of clarity and accuracy regarding objects and states of affairs, the interlocutor, and the conversation itself. Examples are direct or indirect vocatives, definite articles and pronouns versus indefinites, generic references to the whole versus specific references to parts of a whole (e.g., "Lunch was great"/"The salad dressing was great"), and explicit subjects versus generic subjects (e.g., "I think that"/"One thinks that").

4. *Evidentiality devices* (polarity: confident/doubtful), which include all the linguistic strategies that can regulate the speaker's subscription to the correctness and credibility of what she intends to speak of. From the point of view of an emotive approach to conversation, the most interesting feature of these devices is their ability to convey the speaker's level of confidence or insecurity toward specific topics and interlocutors (1994: 357). Examples are strategic uses of modal verbs (e.g., "It's correct"/"It might be correct"), the degree of explicitness of an intention (e.g., "I'm coming tomorrow"/"I might be coming tomorrow"), other sorts of parentheticals, modal adverbs, hedges (Brown and Levinson 1987; Lakoff 1974), verbal forms of epistemic commitment (Schiffrin 1987; Lyons 1977), verbal forms of self-identification with the conversational topic (Tannen 1989), and more generally all the prosodic and nonverbal choices that can express a major or minor level of intended clearness.
5. *Volitionality devices* (polarity: assertive/nonassertive), which include all the linguistic and conversational strategies that can give the conversational agents an active or a passive role. Examples are, again, strategic uses of modal verbs in requests (e.g., "Would you mind passing the salt?"/"Can you pass the salt"/"Give me the salt") or active versus passive verbal forms in regard to expressing opinions (e.g., "I thought that"/"It was claimed that"). The research on volitionality phenomena is central in studies of Western politeness (inter alia: Brown and Levinson 1987; Blum-Kulka 1987; see Locher and Graham 2010 for a recent overview).
6. *Quantity devices* (polarity: more intense/less intense), which include all the lexical, prosodic, and sometimes kinesic choices aimed at enhancing or reducing the level of conversational intensity (Volek 1987; Labov 1984). Heterogeneous examples are unexpected prosodic stress (e.g., "Don't do that"/"DON'T do that!"), emphatic adjectives (e.g., "It was a good experience"/"It was an awesome experience"), adverbs (e.g., "It was quite/definitely fun"), and various rhetorical strategies of repetition (e.g., "I'm happy, really happy we have met").

The emotive devices of evaluation, specificity, and evidentiality often seem to foreground the speaker-content relationship and to background the speaker-interlocutor relationship, while the devices of volitionality appear to be crucial in the speaker-interlocutor relationship but less important in the speaker-content relationship. When the *focus* of the communicative act is the interlocutor, preferred choices are rhetorical and stylistic strategies aimed at expressing the willingness to maintain the interlocutor's approval, displays of respect (i.e., low levels of assertiveness, recurring positive evaluations, high levels of vagueness, and politely doubtful choices), and face-saving strategies (Brown and Levinson 1987; Goffman 1971, among others). When the *focus* of the communicative act is the speaker herself instead, preferred choices are self-disclosures and choices related to the speaker's own attitudes and desires, primarily marked by devices of evaluation and proximity and enhanced by devices of quantity. Finally, when the *focus* of the communicative act is the conversational content, devices of (2.4) and generally the order in which the elements appear in each utterance are especially central in the expression of relevance and proximity to specific objects and states of affairs.

However, it is important to notice that this kind of perspective, more theoretically than practically clear-cut, may be valid mostly on micro-level units rather than on macro-level units (i.e., conversations, texts, or discourses as a whole), and it may vary depending on different speaking contexts, situations, registers, and cultures. In the extract I analyzed, recurring patterns of devices are organized around hearer-centered utterances, and they mostly present strategies of empathetic proximity and devices of low evidentiality and volitionality when understanding and affiliation is solicited and contrasting sets of devices of low empathetic proximity, negative evaluation, and high intensity in the interlocutor's replies.

### 9.2.3 *Mitigation: An Umbrella Category of Emotive Communication*

The communicative actions aimed at adjusting at one's interlocutor may also be seen from a perspective of cautious accounting of the risks and responsibilities that conversations generate per se, as well as a way of careful distancing from the possible negative perlocutionary effects that conversations lead to and a manner of protecting the interlocutor or the speaker herself from unwanted interactional outcomes. This form of adaptation is addressed in pragmatics metalanguage with the term *mitigation* (Fraser 1980) and potentially include all the communicative choices aimed at reducing the possible unwanted effects of a given speech act (e.g., indirect acts, justifications, impersonal or passive constructions as a means of non-immediacy, disclaimers, parentheticals, modal adverbs used in order to decrease the emotive subscription to an uttered state of affairs, tag questions, and hedges).

The multidimensionality of mitigation is given by the different resources every speaker has at her disposal in her metapragmatic awareness, resources which can be expressed prosodically (e.g., quieter tone of voice, less emphatic intonations), morpho-syntactically (e.g., impersonal and passive constructions), lexically (e.g., parentheticals, diminutives, modal adverbs aimed at expressing a minor degree of epistemic confidence), and on the conversational level (e.g., topic shifts, digressions). Other examples of mitigating devices are also phatic expressions, vocatives, empathetic datives and honorifics (especially in Asian languages), lexical markers of common ground, fillers, and discursive markers of agreement.

Mitigation is a *nomen actionis*: it can be referred to as the act of mitigating something or as a result of the mitigating process. On the one hand, the former can be seen as part of the speaker's metapragmatic competence where emotive, social, and linguistic abilities converge. On the other hand, the latter can be seen as the object of negotiation among different interlocutors.

In seeing mitigation as a process, Caffi (2001, 2007: 256) distinguishes between different types of mitigation and different types of mitigating devices. Types of mitigations are divided into:

- Mitigation per se: it includes all the communicative actions aimed at “protecting” the interlocutor from negative perlocutionary effects (i.e., altruistic moves) and all the communicative actions aimed at reducing the speaker’s responsibilities (i.e., self-serving moves, see also Fraser 1980).
- Nonnatural mitigation, further divided into two subclasses: *mitigazioni lenitive*, in which the speaker-interlocutor relationship is mostly relevant and which mainly operate on directive speech acts, and *mitigazioni temperatrici*, where the speaker-content relationship is mostly relevant and which mainly operate on representative speech acts.

Types of mitigating devices are divided into:

- *Bushes*: they are aimed at reducing the level of specificity of the propositional content.<sup>4</sup> Examples are approximators (e.g., “a bit,” “a sort of”), omission signals (e.g., “etc.,” “and so on”), euphemisms and nominal periphrases (e.g., “a bit of x + DIM”, “this and that”), fillers (e.g., “well,” “let’s say”), litotes, and understatements.
- *Hedges*: they are aimed at reducing the degree of evidentiality and assertivity of the illocutionary force. Examples are metapragmatic devices (e.g., “I don’t know . . .”), disclaimers, cautious premises, and markers of the preparatory conditions of the speech act (e.g., “If I understood correctly . . .”), attenuations of the interlocutor’s call to do something or to believe in something (e.g., “maybe,” “a tiny bit”), and modalizers of the epistemic commitment (e.g., “perhaps.” “I’d say,” “probably”).
- *Shields*: they are aimed at reducing or removing one or more aspects of the *instance d’énonciation* (Benveniste 1970). Examples are deictic shields (or “*nonego* devices,” e.g., footing shifts, quotes, impersonal subjects) and spatiotemporal shields (or “*non-hic* devices” and “*non-nunc* devices,” e.g., strategic uses of verbal past tenses and inclusive enallages).

In seeing mitigation as a product or as an effect, Caffi (2001: 452) presents a series of conversational macro-strategies such as semantic strategies (e.g., eventualization), metacommunicative strategies (e.g., fictionalization), sequential strategies (e.g., strategic turn-taking and strategic topic shifts and changes), and co-constructional strategies (e.g., stylistic actions on the speaking register aimed at increasing or decreasing the level of shared intimacy).

A very interesting type of co-constructional strategy of mitigation is empathetic attunement, which is defined by Caffi (2001: 218) as an operation of cognitive and emotive coordination enacted by the speakers of how they perceive each other and of what their interactional goals are. By attuning with each other, the communicative actors mutually verify the interpretation they should give to their exchange (i.e., cognitive operations) and mutually reduce their perceived distances (i.e., emotive operations). The author develops this concept from Stern (1985) and communication

---

<sup>4</sup>Lakoff (1974) included this type of devices among hedges.

accommodation theory, in particular Giles et al. (1991). Two kinds of attunement are hypothesized: “thematic attunement,” a strategy wherewith the speaker helps understanding her point (e.g., with reformulations), and “stylistic attunement,” a set of convergent strategies both on the topic and on the formal aspects of the conversation the speakers adopt in order to attempt a mutual approach to each other (e.g., by decreasing the level of formality and indirectness). The device of empathetic distance/proximity is proposed by Caffi as a manner of identification of the linguistic markedness of these two types of attunement.

However, why are mitigating devices and empathetic attunement relevant in the study of conflict talk? As I will show in the analysis that follows, sensitive issues are often presented with numerous kinds of mitigating strategies in order to avoid negative perlocutionary effects. On the contrary, the expression of contrasting stances can strategically present aggravating strategies (Merlini Barbaresi 2009) and generally emotive strategies opposite to mitigation as a manner of reinforcement of the status of distance and disagreement.

### 9.3 Key Concepts from the Conversational Analytic Framework

#### 9.3.1 *The Idea of Emotive Stance (Ochs 1986)*

Emotive or affective stance has different definitions throughout linguistic literature. Ochs (1986: 410) defines it as “a mood, attitude, feeling and disposition, as well as degrees of emotional intensity *vis-à-vis* some focus of concern.” More recently, Du Bois (2007: 169) generally defines stance taking as “a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means (language, gesture and other symbolic forms), through which social actors simultaneously evaluate objects, position subjects (themselves and others) and align with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the socio-cultural field.” Stivers (2008) uses the term stance to describe the affective treatment by a given speaker of the events she is speaking of.

Some authors postulate more forms of stance, of which the affective-emotive is one of the possible types. Ochs (1986) distinguishes between affective and epistemic stance, and she highlights the indexical nature of each of them. Goodwin (2007) distinguishes between five different types of stance: instrumental, cooperative, epistemic, moral, and affective. He imagines all of these stances manifested through verbal and mostly nonverbal strategies and devices, such as intonation, body posture, prosody, and gesture.

Other researches on the expressive modalities of emotive or affective stance are found, among others, in Goodwin et al. (2012), Niemelä (2010), Jaffe (2009), Englebretson (2007), and Kärkkäinen (2003, 2006). More recently, stance styles have begun to be regarded as intersubjective phenomena (Kärkkäinen 2003),



responsive to the interactional requirements and contexts in which the speakers interact. The *focus* has hence moved from the individual speaker toward a more co-constructive approach, the same approach my analysis aims at fitting into.

### 9.3.2 *The Concept of Affiliation (Stivers 2008)*

Affiliation is understood as that series of sequential actions in the context of a communicative exchange aimed at supporting or approving the speaker's emotive stance, this last being made explicit by the speaker herself in her conversational turns (Couper-Kuhlen 2012: 113).<sup>5</sup>

In his research on conversational storytelling, Stivers (2008) distinguished between two different types of reception adapted to the interlocutor: alignment and affiliation. Whereas the former indicates all the communicative tokens linked with the interlocutor's role (e.g., proper turn-taking or feedbacks on the understanding, like "mmh mmh," "a-ha," "yes"), the latter is the explicit endorsement of the speaker's affective orientation made evident by means of assessments congruous with those expressed by the speaker herself. Contrasting short replies, withholdings, and follow-up questions which appear in the conversational segment that follows the speaker's explanation or presentation of her emotive stance and generally all the communicative tokens which do not endorse the speaker's emotive stance are considered non-affiliative instead, together with those communicative tokens which are openly discordant with the speaker's affective stance (and that are thus based on a different and contrasting stance).

Even though affiliation is considered a preferred action in the communicative exchanges, responses are never intrinsically affiliative, but they become such depending on their position in the dialogue: for example, nodding is understood as a type of affiliative response if it occurs right after the speaker's presentation of her emotive stance, but it is viewed as non-affiliative if it occurs at the end of the speaker's storytelling sequence (Couper-Kuhlen 2012; Stivers 2008).

Lindström and Sorjonen (2012) consider complaint stories and trouble talks the conversational contexts where affiliative replies are more often preferred and exhibited (see also Selting 2010—*inter alia*). The relevance of affiliation as a fruitful practice in therapeutic contexts has been especially underlined by Ruusuvuori (2005, 2007, 2013).

Affiliative and disaffiliative types of responses constitute a resourceful aspect of emotive communication, though their modalities of presentation in the communicative exchanges are yet in need of further exploration. As I will show in the following paragraphs, the degree of convergence of affiliation elicitation and of

---

<sup>5</sup>Affiliation in this sense is a conversational category similar (but not isomorphic) to the psychological-affective dimension of affiliation mentioned by authors such as Gough (1957) or Russell (1991).

disaffiliative replies with the possible emotive stances presented by the interactants in a conflict talk may be measurable with the different types of emotive devices that those interactants employ.

## 9.4 Data

The *corpus* I examined is a thread of 155 posts in Italian from the generalist *forum Postare.it*, which is divided into 38 boards featuring topics ranging from health to comics, from cooking to philosophy. It is a widely attended message board by Italian users remarkably heterogeneous in age, sex, and gender.

The use of nicknames by the users—or, at all events, the impossibility to recognize their true identity—guarantees the privacy of the people who participated to these discussions behind the screens of their computers. The threads I selected for this analysis are publicly visible on the website without any need of registration to the message board. The interactions were faithfully reported, including their typing, orthographic, and grammar mistakes. The transcription system I used follows the Internet message boards standards used by Langlotz (2010).

## 9.5 Methods and Objectives

Central in my analysis is above all the concept of emotive communication I previously presented: the inner state of the interactants, particularly inaccessible also due to the kind of exchange they are protagonists of, was not considered. I instead focused on the various effects of *approach* and *withdrawal* (Frijda 1998) and of interest and disinterest inferable from the interactant's communicative choices. The persuasive and strategic importance of these choices in the acts of co-construction of meaning will also be shown, as well as the implications of those choices for the management of the communicative exchange.

The presentation of the various strategies adopted by the users and their articulation in a wide range of dimensions has been considered sufficient thus far in order to explore the conflictive emotions in this kind of interaction. While detecting the linguistic markers in the text, the following dimensions have been taken into account: linguistic, in its pragmatics, semantic, syntactic, stylistic, and rhetorical aspects; discursive, in particular dealing with metacommunicative, contextual, and co-textual strategies; psychological, evaluated mainly by means of the emotive devices by Caffi and Janney (1994) and by means of the markers of empathetic proximity and mitigation by Caffi (2001, 2007) and boosters and markers of linguistic aggravation (Merlini Barbaresi 2009); and sequential strategies and strategies of presentation and reception of the affective message in their different phases, evaluated mainly thanks to conversational analytic concepts (i.e.,

disaffiliative replies, possible misalignments, sequences of introduction and exit from complaint stories, assessments. See Table 9.1).

Mutatis mutandis, perspectives and analytical tools typical of oral dialogic exchanges were employed. I made particular use of the integrated pragmatic methodologies used by Caffi (2001, 2007) and of those used to analyze affectivity in conversational storytelling by Selting (2010) and Couper-Kuhlen (2012). The type of methodology I adopted, however, differs from those generally employed in the analysis of oral conversations at least with respect to the following aspects:

- The interpretation of proxemic and kinesic resources was replaced, where possible, by an interpretation of alternative visual means, in particular the contextualized use of emoticons.
- Interpretations of prosodic, phonological, and tonal aspects of communicative exchanges were omitted, due to the obvious limitations of the object of analysis.
- Sequential and turn-taking aspects were detected in a simplified and reduced manner. Namely, (1) I consider each user's post as a complex turn composed by several turn constructional units (see Selting 2000). (2) The division into different lines in the transcripts does not correspond to different turns, but to single turn constructional units, and it faithfully reproduces the number of times each user started a new paragraph in the post. (3) Because of the structural difference of the tokens I analyzed with regard to face-to-face synchronous interactions, signals of interruption and overlap are absent, whereas those of alignment and disalignment are only shown when clearly evident in the turns.

The following analysis has, moreover, a triple objective:

- The proposal of a macro-connection of the methodologies of integrated pragmatic analysis (Caffi 2001, 2007) with those belonging to the research on affectivity in conversational storytelling (e.g., Selting 2010; Couper-Kuhlen 2012)
- The proposal of a micro-connection of linguistic, visual, psychological, and metacommunicative tools of analysis and some hypotheses about their possible correlations
- The presentation of possible starting points for potential future research on the management of conflict talk as well as the co-construction of affectivity in digital communicative interactions

## 9.6 Analysis of a Thread

The reflections I present are based on a fervent cross talk among a guy whose nickname is "Calcolatore83" and twenty-nine other members of the message board *Postare.it*. Some of them provided contribution to the discussion as real counterparts, while others appeared only as cynical and detached commenters. This thread is placed in the board *Relazioni e sentimenti* (in English: "Relationships and

**Table 9.1** A caption of the word-by-word analysis of the conflict talk (from line 1a to 1c) with English translations

1. Line no.	2. Type of outcome (contextual and co-textual description)	3. Syntactic, morphological, and lexical devices	4. Type of illocutionary acts	5. Rhetorical and stylistic devices	6. Metacom-municative and metadis-cursive devices	7. Nonverbal devices	8. Mitigating devices and markers of reinforcement and aggravation	9. Emotive devices and inferable empathetic distances	10. Sequential aspects: phases of reception of the affective message in the storytelling
1a	Calcolatore83 opens the thread and greets the users of the <i>forum</i>	Expressive acts		<i>Capitatio benevolentiae</i>				+Proximity (social): <i>amici</i> , i.e., “friends” –Specificity: <i>una dozzina di giorni</i> , i.e., “a dozen days”	
1b	Calcolatore83 warns the users of the forum and the prospective readers of his thread	Expressive and directive acts		Repetition with empathic purposes, e.g., <i>dall’inizio... inizio</i> (i.e., “since the beginning” “beginning”)	Metadiscursive resources: Calcolatore83 invites the readers not to read his thread if not interested			+Volitionality: <i>voglio</i> i.e., <i>I want</i> , +evidentiality <i>cominto che</i> , i.e., “confident that” –Specificity <i>della vicenda</i> i.e., “of the events”	

1c	Calcolatore83 invites the users to check his old thread regarding this same topic for those who are not yet acquainted with his problem	Representative acts		Co-textual anchor: <i>c'è l'altro post</i> (i.e., "there's the other thread," meaning the readers are kindly invited to check his previous discussion to catch up with the topic)	Reinforcing device: <i>tutta la storia</i> (i.e., "the whole story")	
----	---	---------------------	--	---	--	--

The second column on the left describes the type of outcome carried out in each post of the thread and possibly the topic of reference. Columns from 3 to 7 include a presentation of the various linguistic means employed in each post, as well as the possible visual and metacommunicative means. Columns 8–9 present the occurrences of the six emotive devices by Caffi and Janney (1994) as well as the occurring markers of reinforcement and mitigation and those of empathetic proximity (Caffi 2001, 2007; Merlini Barbaresi 2009). Finally, the tenth column retraces the steps of presentation and reception of the user's affective messages by means of conversational analytic definitions

feelings”) and counts over 6,830 views. It was opened on January 9, 2012, and it was closed by the moderator with the nickname of “Pannocchia” on February 23, 2012. The title chosen by Calcolatore83 for this thread is *Dopo 10 anni torna l'ex (Parte 2)* (i.e., “After 10 years the ex comes back (Part 2)”): after an initial, first outburst presented in a previous thread, the user updates the *forum* members about his personal life events—a girl he had been in a relationship with 10 years before has come back to his life. This fact represents for him a cause of curiosity and attraction but also a potential interference to his current relationship. Due to this last aspect, the user appears into a state of confusion and, at times, sense of guilt. He self-discloses several times and often seeks for the *forum* members’ understanding and empathy.

Probably encouraged by the partial interest and support he had obtained in the previous discussion, Calcolatore83 opens a new thread to inform about the latest developments of his personal long-standing problem, but this time he mainly receives annoyed, angry, incredulous, sarcastic, and noncooperative replies, very few expressions of empathy and even some insults by the interacting users, visibly irritated by his continuous mood swings and indecisions.

The analysis was divided into the following sections:

- A section based on thematic macro-levels, which is useful to present the main stages of the polylogue.
- A section based on analytical micro-levels: an extract of the discussion was selected, and its main linguistic and emotive means have been identified.
- A section of comparative analysis where the detected emotive devices and the disaffiliative replies were matched.

### 9.6.1 Macroanalysis and Plot of the Interaction

The conflict talk is organized as follows:

- *Phase 1*: opening (lines 1a–3b). Calcolatore83 opens the thread after a brief introduction in which he refers to his previous discussion about the same subject. He also invites the users to avoid “unnecessary offences.”
- *Phase 2*: *Continuo a ripetermi che dovrei troncare, ma . . .* (i.e., “I keep on telling myself I should break up, but . . .” lines 4a–7c). Calcolatore83 reinforces his emotive stance after receiving the first cold answers from the board’s members.<sup>6</sup> After some premises aimed at getting him empathetic listening, he tells another part of his story, and he explains the emotional involvement this caused him. There are different reactions to this post: an affiliative one by Caracas (who contributes in creating a cooperative behavior although the user doesn’t appear to be set in Calcolatore83’s emotive stance) and a non-affiliative reply by Opunzia,

---

<sup>6</sup>This is a typical behavior in trouble talk, see, for example, Peräkylä and Sorjonen (2012).

who suggests Calcolatore83 to interrupt his current relationship. Calcolatore83 thanks Caracas and represents his conflicting and confused emotive stance.

- *Phase 3: Ma che abbiamo fatto di male noi?* (i.e., “But what did we do wrong?” lines 8a–25b). The disaffiliative replies increase, with the exception of Sendoh’s answer which is characterized by some sort of cooperative sarcasm. The users now directly attack and criticize Calcolatore83, and they sometimes show their irritation through sidetalks. After these reactions, Calcolatore83 highlights once more his sense of guilt and his confusion in order to obtain the users’ attention.
- *Phase 4: Una persona così autolesionista e autocommiserante...* (i.e., “Such a self-defeating and self-commiserating person...” lines 26a–143e). Calcolatore83 makes numerous attempts to obtain the users’ support and suggestions, now using persuasive techniques and then updating the telling of his personal affairs. He fails many times to receive any attention, and his posts get rare affiliative replies, many disaffiliative and evidently annoyed responses, some attacks, and several teasings.
- *Phase 5: È il caso di chiudere questo post!* (i.e., “This thread should be closed!” lines 144a–155b). Calcolatore83 gives up his search for empathetic listening and support, and he states with a certain resentment that he wants to end the discussion. This decision is greeted with sarcastic relief by many users. Moderator Pannocchia concludes the thread allowing Calcolatore83 to open another one on the same issues yet remarking that the possibility of being criticized is always present in Internet message boards.

The listed section considers the interpersonal orientation followed by most of the participants to the discussion. In Table 9.2, a caption of the interaction mainly containing disaffiliative and sarcastic replies is shown.<sup>7</sup>


### 9.6.2 *Distribution and Analysis of the Emotive Devices in Relation to the Users’ Disaffiliative Replies*

As it is shown in Fig. 9.1, the lack of affiliation in the interlocutor’s responses displays a concentration of emotive devices characterized by a trend which strongly contrasts the emotive stance of Calcolatore83. The internal homogeneity of these replies and the replies discrepancy with the evocative effects of Calcolatore83’s outcomes suggest that the users adopted and shared a different emotive stance, opposite to that of Calcolatore83.

Calcolatore83 is insecure, confused, and constantly torn between his attraction to his ex-girlfriend and the sense of guilt against his current relationship. He seems also split between the urge to express his consciously unethical fantasies and the desire

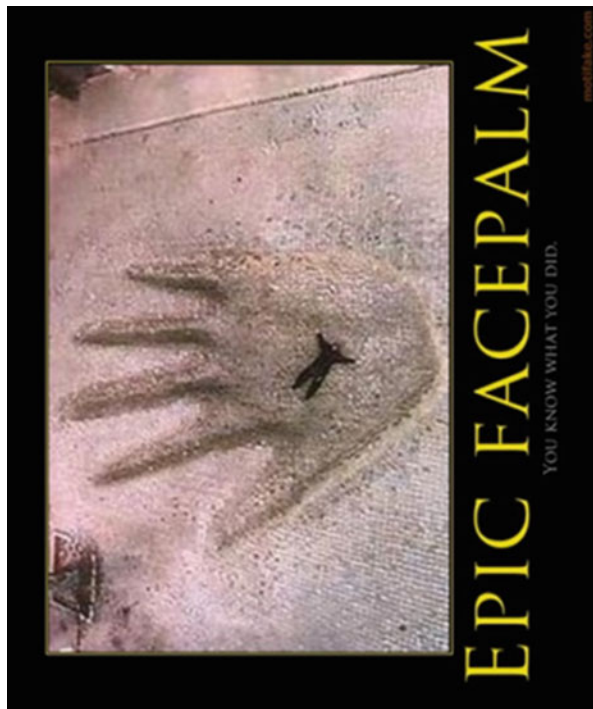
<sup>7</sup>The complete discussion (in Italian) is publicly available at <http://www.postare.it/showthread.php?s=1d08e3acb2813a2d469591bb6292af90&threadid=260285&perpage=10&pagenumber=1>.

**Table 9.2** A caption of the analyzed thread (from line 8a to 14b) with English translations

8a	<i>Pannocchia</i>
8b	<i>Ripetiamo ... con la tua fidanzata non può andare tutto benissimo. Tu non comprendi questo</i>
8c	We repeat ... not everything can't be perfect with your girlfriend. That's why you don't understand <i>Se andasse tutto veramente come dici tu, non ti troveresti in questa situazione</i> If everything went the way you say, you wouldn't find yourself in this situation
	<i>Quindi ... fermati un attimo e cerca di capire dove il tuo rapporto fa cilecca. Trova il problema e 1) lo risolvi 2) la lasci</i> So ... hang on for a while and try to understand where you're failing at your relationship. Find the problem and (1) solve it (2) you break up with her
9a	<i>Opunzia</i>
9b	... sì, però tu continui a pensare all'altra  ... yeah, but you keep thinking of the other one <i>edit: concordo in pieno con pannocchia</i> edit: I totally agree with pannocchia
11a	<i>Tennessee</i> <i>aspetto il :megasurfacepalm: dello Zio</i> I'm waiting for Zio's hyper facepalm
12a	<i>Mirrilla</i>
12b	<i>Qual è la domanda?</i> What's your question? <i>Cioè precisamente cosa vuoi sapere da noi?</i> That's to say, what do you want to know from us exactly?



13a Zio

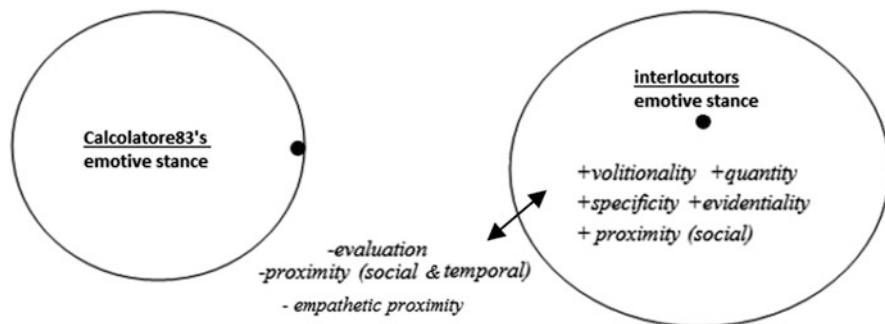
13b *Quote: aspetto il :megasuperfacepalm: dello Zio*

ti basta?  
enough?

(continued)

**Table 9.2** (continued)

14a	§Euriclea§ <i>Io ho sempre seguito il post precedente, ma non sono mai intervenuta ma ora che (non so con quale coraggio) lo hai riaperto te lo devo dire</i>
14b	<i>Io ti avrei dato un calcio tra le gambe .. del tipo un centesimo per ogni tuo pensiero... ecco..stesso sistema ma a suon di calci</i> I have followed the previous discussion, but I have never intervened But now that you re-opened it (I don't know with what sort of courage) I must say this to you I would have kicked you between your legs ... like, a penny for each of your thoughts ... there ... same system but translated with kicks <i>hai scritto tante di quelle volte che nonostante tutto con la tua ragazza va tutto benissimo che probabilmente con tutti i calci le pa*le sarebbero marcite e ti sarebbe passata la smania sessuale nei confronti dell'altra</i> You wrote so many times that despite everything it is going great with your girlfriend that probably with all my kicks your balls would have rotten and you would have recovered from your sexual frenzy for the other one



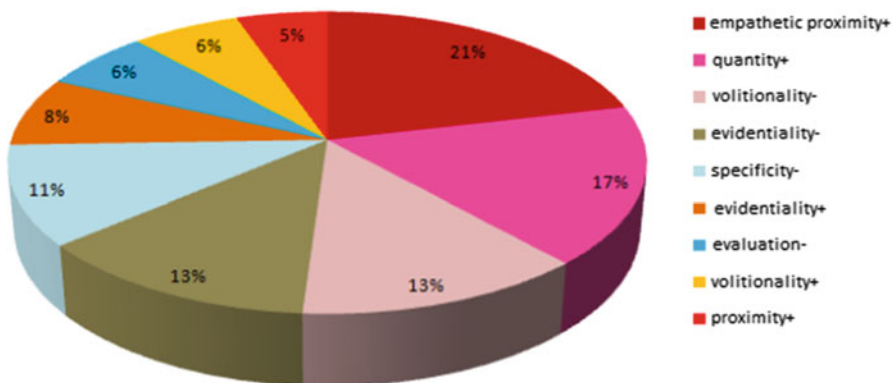
**Fig. 9.1** Distribution of the emotive devices in the disaffiliative replies of Calcolatore83's interlocutors. The devices of negative evaluation and of negative social, temporal, and empathetic proximity are referred to as Calcolatore83's stance. The devices of positive volitionality, quantity, specificity, evidentiality, and proximity are used as a manner of reinforcement of the interlocutor's contrasting stance

of a *captatio benevolentiae* from his interlocutors. The user is often unassertive and uncertain and floats between positive evaluations and demonstrations of affective proximity toward his love story (examples are phrases such as *ci troviamo a meraviglia*, in English “we are doing awesome”; *va tutto benissimo*, in English “everything is going great”) and evaluations and displays of proximity now positive and then negative toward the protagonist of his flirt (e.g., *poverina*, in English “poor little thing”; *le ho risposto subito*, i.e., “I replied immediately”; contrasting with phrases such as *relazione clandestina*, in English “a clandestine relationship”; *quest'altra storia*, i.e., “this other story”).

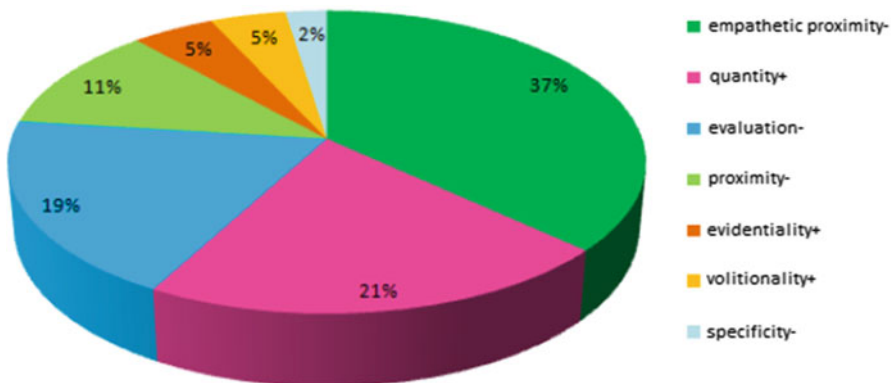
Calcolatore83's interlocutors, often annoyed and bored by his indecisions, show their lack of affiliation with two different behaviors: on the one hand, they devalue and detach from the content of Calcolatore83's emotive stance using devices of negative evaluation and distance (e.g., *mania sessuale*, i.e., “sexual frenzy”, or empathetic deixis such as *dell'altra*, i.e., “of the other one,” meaning the other girl). On the other hand, they constitute and strengthen their own emotive stance, in such a way that it appears internally coherent in its manners and sometimes internally cohesive in its contents. The interlocutor's stance is mainly reinforced by emotive devices of social proximity (e.g., *noi*, in English “us”), expressions of epistemic certainty (e.g., *evidente*, *semplicemente*, i.e., “obvious,” “simply”), signs of assertiveness (e.g., *te lo devo dire*, i.e., “I have to tell you”), and displays of intensity such as the use of exclamations, dysphemisms, hyperbolic images, and emoticons with emphatic expressions.

The interlocutor's lack of affiliation with the contents of Calcolatore83's affectively strong messages involves strategic and coherent choices. These choices are shown presumably after the recognition of Calcolatore83's emotive stance, a type of behavior partly predicted by Caffi and Janney (1994).

On the one hand, it is possible to identify in Calcolatore83's hearer-centered posts a prevalence of emotive devices of request of agreement and



**Fig. 9.2** Distribution of the emotive devices in Calcaltore83's hearer-centered posts. Prevailing are the devices of empathetic proximity, quantity, and low evidentiality and volitionality, as indexes of the user affiliation elicitation



**Fig. 9.3** Distribution of the emotive devices in the disaffiliative replies that Calcaltore83 receives. The users clearly and intensely distance themselves from Calcaltore83's stance and requests of affiliation: devices of empathetic distance, quantity, and negative evaluation are prevalent

approach elicitation *à la* Frijda (1998) (26 % of the total devices, divided into *+empathetic closeness*, 21 %, and *+proximity*, 5 %), juxtaposed by emotive devices of uncertainty and low assertiveness (26 % of the total, divided into *-evidentiality*, 13 %, and *-volitionality*, 13 %), and followed by devices of intensity (*+quantity*, 17 %) and devices of vagueness (*-specificity*, 11 %), as it is shown in Fig. 9.2.

On the other hand, in the user's disaffiliative replies, devices of strong emotive distance from Calcaltore83 are prevalent (*-empathetic closeness*, 37 %, and *-proximity*, 11 %, that being an amount of 48 %, almost half of the total devices), followed by devices of intensity (*+quantity*, 21 %) that can be interpreted as a sign of strong intemperance and *aggravation* (Merlini Barbaresi 2009) and devices of negative evaluation (whose assessed object is, clearly, Calcaltore83 himself: *-evaluation*, 19 %), as it is shown in Fig. 9.3.

The coloring criteria used for the charts in Figs. 9.2 and 9.3 are the same: the two main contrasting stances are also evident from the discrepancy both in quantity and in quality of the emotive devices and markers respectively employed.

## 9.7 Conclusions

To give interpretations often remain conjectural, probabilistic, abductive, and of exploratory nature, in particular for the humble and circumscribed goal and the sake of brevity of this work. Although it is not possible to generalize, I briefly resubmit below the results I obtained and thus try to give some concluding remarks.

In the online conflict talk I took into account, the user *Calcolatore83*'s emotive stance (confused, repetitive, and ambiguous) obtains a second contrasting stance from his interlocutors in the message board, who act as completely detached from his concerns. *Calcolatore83*'s *emotive stance* seems built through illocutionary, structural, semantic, sequential, stylistic, and rhetorical means characterized by insecurity, a low level of assertiveness, and contradictory evaluations, while the *emotive stance* of his interlocutors seem to display an opposite opinion, characterized by epistemic certainty, assertiveness, and a considerable distance from the semantic contents of *Calcolatore83*'s disclosures. This divergence is evident in the distribution of the emotive devices present in the interlocutor's outcomes, very often characterized by devices presenting negative polarities opposite to those emerging from *Calcolatore83*'s posts (e.g., devices of negative evaluation and distance, whereas *Calcolatore83* expresses, despite his insecurity, positive evaluations of his own story and displays of proximity). The user's outcomes also present devices with positive polarities (in particular, devices of assertiveness, evidentiality, and quantity), these last representing indexes of a second, divergent, and internally cohesive emotive stance: this aspect of internal cohesion is inferable, for example, from the markers of social proximity referred to as the interlocutors themselves.

While waiting for further and more deepened research results, the resource of the emotive devices by Caffi and Janney (1994), possibly joined with the analytical tools of integrated pragmatics (Caffi 2001, 2007) and to those of conversation analysis relating to affectivity in storytelling (e.g., Selting 2010; Fox et al. 2013; Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori 2013; inter alia), is a potentially fruitful heuristic for the prospects of research on emotive communication and also a potential way to connect different methodologies on communicative research all together.

Nevertheless, numerous explanations and more insights on the theoretical front are yet much needed: for example, it would be relevant to see if speakers use boosters and reinforcing devices opposite to the three more broadly known types of mitigators (i.e., bushes, hedges, and shields) and in what interactional contexts or for what purposes they are mainly employed. Also, the connection between the idea of emotive stance and that of the emotive devices should be further clarified. The objects, types, and objectives of the emotive devices should be more specifically investigated, too. Moreover, the analysis of the emotive activities of co-orientation in talk-in-interaction should be deepened by means of more interdisciplinary research, for instance, by seeing if the displays of affiliation and

disaffiliation can be considered the perlocutionary counterparts of the strategies of empathetic attunement. Finally, differences and analogies between CMC exchanges and face-to-face interactions with regard to emotions and affectivity should be further explored.

## References

- Abercrombie D (1967) *Elements of general phonetics*. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh
- Angouri J, Tseliga T (2010) “You Have No Idea What You are Talking About!” From e-disagreement to e-impoliteness in two online fora. *J Politeness Res* 6:57–82
- Antonelli G (2007) *L’italiano nella società della comunicazione*. Il Mulino, Bologna
- Arndt H, Janney RW (1987) *InterGrammar. Toward an integrative model of verbal, prosodic and kinesic choices in speech*. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin
- Benveniste E (1970) *L’appareil formel de l’énonciation*. *Langages*, vol 17. Rist. In: Id., *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, II, 1974, pp 79–88. *Problemi di linguistica generale II*, Il Saggiatore, Milano, 1985, pp 96–106
- Blum-Kulka S (1987) Indirectness and politeness in requests: Same or different? *J Pragmatics* 11:147–160
- Brown P, Levinson S [1978] (1987) *Politeness. Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Caffi C (2007) *On mitigation*. Emerald, Bingley
- Caffi C (2001) *La Mitigazione. Un approccio pragmatico alla comunicazione nei contesti terapeutici*. LIT, Münster, Hamburg, London
- Caffi C, Janney RW (1994) Toward a pragmatics of emotive communication. *J Pragmatics* 22: 325–373
- Chmiel A, Sienkiewicz J, Thelwall M, Paltoglou G, Buckley K (2011) Collective emotions online and their influence on community life. *PLoS One* 6(7):e22207
- Clark HH (1996) *Using language*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Couper-Kuhlen E (2012) In: Peräkylä A, Sorjonen ML (eds) *Exploring affiliation in the reception of conversational complaint stories*. pp 113–146
- Du Bois JW (2007) In: Englebretson R (ed) *The stance triangle*. pp 140–182
- Englebretson R (ed) (2007) *Stancetaking in discourse: subjectivity, evaluation, interaction*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam
- Fabri M, Moore DJ, Hobbs DJ (2005) Empathy and enjoyment in instant messaging. In: *Proceedings of 19th British HCI group annual conference (HCI2005)*, Edinburgh, UK, pp 4–9
- Fiorentino G (in press) *Forme di scrittura in rete: dal web 1.0 al web 2.0*
- Fox B, Thompson S, Ford C, Couper-Kuhlen E (2013) *Handbook of conversation analysis* (Stivers T, Sidnell J (eds.)). Wiley-Blackwell, New York
- Fraser B (1980) Conversational mitigation. *J Pragmatics* 4:341–350
- Frijda NH (1998) The laws of emotion. In: Jenkins JM, Oatley K, Stein N (eds) *Human emotions: a reader* (Gumperz JJ, Levinson SC (eds.)). Blackwell Publishers, Malden, MA, pp 271–287
- Giles H, Coupland J, Coupland N (eds) (1991) *Contexts of accommodation: developments in applied sociolinguistics*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Giles H, Scherer KR, Talor DM (1979) In: Scherer K, Giles H (eds) *Speech markers in social interaction*. pp 343–381
- Gill AJ, Gergle D, French RM, Oberlander J (2008) Emotion rating from short blog texts. *Proceedings of the ACM conference on human factors in computing systems (CHI 2008)*, pp 1121–1124
- Goodwin C (2007) Participation, stance, and affect in the organization of activities. *Discourse Soc* 18:53–73

- Goodwin MH, Cekaite A, Goodwin C (2012) In: Peräkylä A, Sorjonen ML (eds) *Emotion as stance*. pp 16–41
- Goffman E (1971) *The territories of the self. Relations in public*, pp 28–61
- Gough HH (ed) (1957) *Manual for the California psychological inventory*. Consulting Psychologist Press, Palo Alto, CA
- Grimshaw AD (ed) (1990) *Conflict talk. Sociolinguistic investigations of arguments in conversations*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Gumperz JJ (1982) *Discourse strategies*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Haakana M (2012) In: Peräkylä A, Sorjonen ML (eds) *Laughter in conversation: the case of “Fake Laughter.”* pp 174–194
- Hancock JT, Landrigan C, Silver C (2007) *Expressing emotion in text-based communication. Proceedings of ACM conference on human factors in computing systems (CHI 2007)*. pp 929–932
- Hölker K (1988) *Zur Analyse von Markern*. Franz Steiner, Stuttgart
- Hübler A (1987) In: Dirven R, Fried V (eds) *Communication and expressivity*. pp 357–380
- Jaffe AM (ed) (2009) *Stance: sociolinguistic perspectives*. Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Kärkkäinen E (2006) *Stance taking in conversation: from subjectivity to intersubjectivity*. *Text Talk* 26:699–731
- Kärkkäinen E (ed) (2003) *Epistemic stance in english conversation: a description of its interactional functions, with a focus on “I think”*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam
- Kleinke S (2008) *Emotional commitment in public political internet message boards*. *J Lang Soc Psychol* 27:409–421
- Labov W (1984) In: Schiffrin D (ed) *Intensity*. pp 43–70
- Labov W, Fanshel D (1977) *Therapeutic discourse: psychotherapy as conversation*. Academic, New York
- Lakoff R (1974) *Remarks on this and that in papers from the tenth regional meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp 345–356
- Langlotz A (2010) In: Locher MA, Graham SL (eds) *Social cognition*. pp 167–202
- Langlotz A, Locher MA (2012) *Ways of communicating emotional stance in online disagreements*. *J Pragmatics* 44:1591–1606
- Lindström A, Sorjonen ML (2012) In: Sidnell J, Stivers T (eds) *Affiliation in conversation*. pp 250–369
- Locher M, Graham SL (2010) *Handbook of pragmatics, vol Interpersonal pragmatics*. De Gruyter Mouton, Berlin, NY
- Lyons J (1977) *Semantics, vol 2*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Malinowski B (1923) In: Ogden K, Richards IA (eds) *The problem of meaning in primitive languages*. pp 296–336
- Merlini Barbaresi L (2009) In: Gili Fivela B, Bazzanella C (eds) *Linguaggio intemperante e linguaggio temperato. Ovvero intensificazione arrogante e attenuazione cortese*. pp 59–78
- Marty A (1908) *Untersuchungen zur Grundlegung der allgemeinen Grammatik und Sprachphilosophie*. Halle an der Salle, Niemeyer
- Marwick AE, Boyd D (2011) *I tweet honestly, I tweet passionately: Twitter users, context collapse, and the imagined audience*. *New Media Soc* 13:1–20
- Niemelä M (2010) *The reporting space in conversational storytelling: orchestrating all semiotic channels for taking a stance*. *J Pragmatics* 42:3258–3270
- Och E (1996) *Linguistic resources for socializing humanity. Rethinking linguistic relativity*. University Press, Cambridge, pp 407–437
- Orletti F (ed) (2004) *Scrittura e nuovi media. Dalle conversazioni in rete alla Web usability*. Carocci, Roma
- Osgood CE, Suci GJ, Tannenbaum PH (1957) *The measurement of meaning*. University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Chicago, London
- Peräkylä A, Ruusuvuori J (2006) *Facial expression in an assessment*. In: Knoblauch HJ, Raab J, Soeffne H-G, Schnettler B (eds) *Video-analysis: methodology and methods. Qualitative audiovisual data analysis in sociology*. Peter Lang, Frankfurt

- Peräkylä A, Sorjonen ML (2012) *Emotion in interaction*. Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Pistolessi E (2002) Flame e coinvolgimento in IRC (Internet relay chat). In: Bazzanella C, Kobau P (eds) *Passioni, emozioni, affetti*. McGraw-Hill, Milano, pp 261–277
- Provine RR, Spencer RJ, Mandell DL (2007) Emotional expression online emoticons punctuate website text messages. *J Lang Soc Psychol* 26:299–307
- Rodham K, Gavin J, Miles M (2007) I hear, I listen and I care: a qualitative investigation into the function of a self-harm message board. *Suicide Life Threat Behav* 37:422–430
- Russell JA (1991) Culture and the categorization of emotions. *Psychol Bull* 110:426–450
- Ruusuvuori J (2013) In: Sidnell J, Stivers T (eds) *Emotion, affect and conversation*. pp 330–349
- Ruusuvuori J (2007) Managing affect: integrating empathy and problem solving in two types of health care consultation. *Discourse Stud* 9:597–622
- Ruusuvuori J (2005) “Empathy” and “sympathy” in action: attending to patients’ troubles in Finnish homeopathic and general practice consultations. *Soc Psychol Q* 68:204–222
- Schiffrin D (1987) *Discourse markers*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Selting M (2010) Affectivity in conversational storytelling. *Pragmatics* 20:229–277
- Selting M (2000) The construction of units in conversational talk. *Lang Soc* 29:477–517
- Selting M (1994) Emphatic speech style: with special focus on the prosodic signalling of heightened emotive involvement in conversation. *J Pragmatics* 22:375–408
- Stern DN [1985] (1987) The interpersonal world of the infant. In: Ammaniti M (ed) *Il mondo interpersonale del bambino*. Basic Books, New York, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino
- Stivers T (2008) Stance, alignment and affiliation during story telling: when nodding is a token of preliminary affiliation. *Res Lang Soc Interact* 41:29–55
- Tannen D [1989] (2007) *Talking voices. Repetition, dialogue, and imagery*. In: *Conversational discourse*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Tavosanis M (2011) *L’italiano del web*. Carocci, Roma
- Thelwall M, Buckley K, Paltoglou G (2011) Sentiment in Twitter events. *J Am Soc Inform Sci Technol* 62:406–418
- Thelwall M, Wilkinson D, Uppal S (2010) Data mining emotion in social network communication: Gender differences in MySpace. *J Am Soc Inform Sci Technol* 21:190–199
- Volek B (1987) Emotive signs in language and semantic functioning of derived nouns in Russian. John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam, PA
- Watzlawick P, Helmick Beavin J, Jackson DD (1967) *Pragmatics of human communication. A study of interactional patterns, pathologies and paradoxes*. Norton & Co., New York
- Yus F (2013) *Cyberpragmatics. Internet-mediated communication in context*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam