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SPEECH ACTS, SPEECH GENRES, AND COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES IN MODERN PRAGMATICS

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: Due to the rapid development of modern communication theory, which examines various fragments of reality related to the interaction of subjects in society and is based on communicative human activity that takes into account both verbal and non-verbal factors of interpersonal interaction, diverse viewpoints and approaches have emerged in the study of issues concerning the identification and characterization of types of utterances, their functioning in speech activity, and the determination of the minimal meaningful unit of discourse.

Introduction. In this regard, alongside Speech Act Theory, such communication theories as the Theory of Speech Genres and the Theory of Speech Strategies and Tactics have appeared. In the present study, it seems logical to provide a characterization of these new directions in pragma-linguistics. Within Speech Act Theory (SAT), language in its pragmatic function is regarded as a means of influencing human behavior and consciousness in the process of communication. T.van Dijk states that “a speech act is an act or action if and only if there is a conscious individual who, intentionally performing a certain physical action, aims to bring about some change in the surrounding world (or to prevent such a change)”. By identifying the illocutionary act in every speech action, Speech Act Theory demonstrates that the goals of communication go beyond the mere transmission of information about an event or phenomenon and also include the speaker’s intention to influence and regulate the listener’s

behavior in a particular way. These intentions are reduced to functional regulatory goals, which, according to G. G. Matveeva, may involve direct, indirect, or implicit influence.

Materials and Methods. In modern linguistics, the communicative process is viewed, on the one hand, as a mutually oriented process of interaction between communicants—an approach characteristic of the Theory of Speech Genres and the Theory of Speech Strategies and Tactics. This perspective pays attention not only to the speaker's speech activity but also, to an equal extent, to the communicative activity of the listener, since in psycholinguistic reality they presuppose one another. The Theory of Speech Genres (TSG) has been studied by many contemporary Russian scholars M.M.Bakhtin's Theory of Speech Genres, which is based on a communicative-activity approach to the study of speech genres, assumes that "each sphere of language use develops its own relatively stable types of such utterances, which we call speech genres". According to Bakhtin, every utterance is characterized by three features:

1. thematic content ("object-semantic completeness"),
2. linguistic style (stylistic design), and
3. compositional structure (the speaker's speech intention).

Thus, "linguistic, or functional, styles are nothing other than genre styles of specific spheres of human activity and communication, each of which is characterized by its own genres". Speech genres, as ways of representing events of reality, are functionally connected with various types of human activity.

The principal distinction between M.M.Bakhtin's concept and Speech Act Theory (SAT) lies in the interpretation of speech communication and its units from the perspective of a sociological understanding of reality, whereas within SAT the process of communication is examined primarily from a psychological standpoint. Following M.M.Bakhtin, T.V.Shmeleva, in her "speech genre questionnaire," identifies six semantic and one formal feature of a speech genre:

communicative goal, which introduces the notion of "worlds of reality" determining the content of the dictum. Each world corresponds to specific types of genres, such as informing, agreement, condemnation, instruction, and others;

image of the author, defined by such parameters as authority, degree of awareness, and level of involvement;

image of the addressee as the immediate participant in the dialogue;

thematic and semantic completeness of the utterance;

the factor of the past, referring to communicative events preceding the given speech genre;

the factor of the future, which reveals the connection between the text and subsequent discourse;

lexical composition of the speech genre.

By analyzing the components of a speech genre, T.V.Shmeleva provides a detailed characterization of its internal structure, taking into account the complexity and multidimensional nature of speech communication. In her study, the author offers a distinction between the key notions of Speech Act Theory and the Theory of Speech Genres: "Speech Act Theory addresses the sphere of actions, whereas the theory of speech genres focuses on the sphere of texts—utterances as the results of actions."

Thus, SAT examines the most concrete minimal segment of reality—the speech act, that is, an action whose structure is determined by its pragmatic function. This action is always considered within the context of a specific situation. Proponents of the Theory of Speech Genres maintain that only the text can be regarded as a unit of communication. A text is created to provide verbal and non-verbal accompaniment to a certain event. Structurally and semantically, it is more complex than a speech act and, as a rule, includes several consecutive speech actions.

According to A. Wierzbicka, the study of speech genres should be conducted within the framework of the theory of elementary semantic units, that is, through modeling a genre by means of a sequence of simple sentences explaining the motives, intentions, and other mental acts of the speaker, which determine the type of utterance. In this context, a speech act is viewed as "the intersection of a purely grammatical concept—the 'sentence'—with an inconsistently and insufficiently elaborated concept of verbal interaction among language users". A. Wierzbicka argues that an exclusively grammatical description of elementary speech acts is insufficient for an adequate representation of the communicative process. She proposes shifting the analytical focus from the notion of the "speech act" to Bakhtin's concept of the "speech genre" and analyzing it on the basis of elementary illocutionary components corresponding to the speaker's simple mental acts. After identifying the communicative goal of a speech genre, it becomes necessary to decompose all genres into their constituent motives, emotions, propositions, and other elements, thereby establishing a systematic classification.

A speech genre, therefore, reflects the communicative process as an event of reality. Such an event is based on a certain scenario consisting of one or several consecutively changing representations of the world. Common principles of Speech Act Theory (SAT) and the Theory of Speech Genres (TSG) include the study of these units within the context of extralinguistic factors: the speaker and the listener, the communicative content of the utterance, the conditions

and circumstances of the production of a speech act and a speech genre, the goal of communication (the speaker's intentions), the situation, and the sphere of communicative activity, among others.

Within SAT, the primary focus is on the utterance produced under specific conditions; the speech act is interpreted as an action. Consequently, researchers concentrate mainly on performative verbs and the realization of the speaker's illocutionary intention. In contrast, the parameters of a speech genre are considerably broader. Research conducted within the framework of TSG is devoted to the study of stable forms of speech and patterns of speech behavior, the description of speech actions in accordance with types of reality, and the identification of the stylistic aspect as an element of the genre unity of an utterance.

Results and Discussion. A common feature of both the speech act and the speech genre is the dynamic aspect, namely their examination in the process of text construction and within the dynamics of dialogue. N.M.Kozhina notes that a sociolinguistic perspective on the study of speech genres encourages scholars to emphasize the dialogical nature of communication, whereas in the analysis of speech acts the primary focus lies on the speaker's influence on the addressee. In this connection, the problem arises of distinguishing the speech act from the speech genre and from speech strategies and tactics. The latter are associated with the study of issues related to the planning and control of speech activity in order to determine how and by what means the speaker's goals can be achieved.

The concepts of speech strategy and speech tactic are examined in the works of many scholars who investigate the interactive nature of speech activity. The theories of speech influence proposed by A.N.Baranov and R.Blakar interpret the process of verbal influence as the exercise of power, an impact on the perception of the world and on the way it is structured: "the everyday use of language, our casual conversation, presupposes the exercise of dominance...". There is a widely held view that speech strategies determine the general character of speech behavior required to achieve a particular goal; according to T. van Dijk, they define how and by what means such goals may be attained.

I.N.Borisova considers a communicative strategy as the result of organizing the speaker's verbal behavior in accordance with a pragmatic goal-setting, as well as "a general intention, a superordinate task of speech dictated by the practical aim of the producer". O.S.Issers argues that the terms speech strategy and speech tactic denote verbal influence as one of the aspects of an individual's cognitive activity. The analysis of verbal influence is usually carried out from the perspective of one of the communicants—the subject of influence—while the object of influence is the communication partner. Thus, speech strategies and tactics are

characterized by a unidirectional nature: the interlocutor functions as a passive object who perceives the influence exerted by the speaker.

Viewing communication as an act of interaction between participants, V.V.Krasnykh defines a communicative act as “a functionally integral fragment of communication, the core of which is a text (monologue, dialogue, or polylogue)”. Within each communicative act, he distinguishes two structural components: situation and discourse. The situation is understood as a fragment of objectively existing reality. Discourse, in turn, is presented as verbalized speech-and-thought activity, which constitutes a unity of process and result and includes several components: the extralinguistic aspect—namely, the situation, the conditions of communication, and its participants; the semantic aspect or context—implicitly and explicitly expressed meanings that are actually realized in discourse; the cognitive aspect—presupposition; and the strictly linguistic aspect of immediate speech production.

Conclusion. A strategy of speech behavior encompasses the entire sphere of constructing the communicative process when the aim is to achieve certain long-term results. In the most general sense, a speech strategy includes the planning of verbal communication in accordance with specific communicative conditions and the personalities of the interlocutors, as well as the implementation of this plan. In other words, a speech strategy represents a complex of speech actions (tactics) aimed at achieving a particular communicative goal.

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