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TYPOLOGY OF SPEECH ACTS. ETIQUETTE SPEECH ACTS

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ABOUT ARTICLE

Keywords: speech act; illocutionary act; perlocutionary act; locutionary act; performative verb; representatives; directives; commissives; expressives; declaratives; mixed speech acts; communicative intention; pragmatics; etiquette speech acts.

Kalit so'zlar: nutq akti; illokutsion akt; perlokutsion akt; lokutsion akt; performativ fe'l; vakillovchi aktlar; direktiv aktlar; komissiv aktlar; ekspressiv aktlar; deklarativ aktlar; aralash nutq aktlari; kommunikativ niyat; pragmatika; etiket nutq aktlari.

Ключевые слова: речевой акт; иллокутивный акт; перлокутивный акт; локутивный акт; перформативный глагол; репрезентативы; директивы; комиссивы; экспрессивы; декларативы; смешанные речевые акты; коммуникативное намерение; прагматика; этикетные речевые акты.

Abstract. This paper examines the typology and functions of speech acts, with particular attention to illocutionary, perlocutionary, and locutionary components as theorized by J. L. Austin and J. R. Searle. By analyzing speech acts, including representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives, the study highlights the complexity and multidimensionality of communicative behavior. The research emphasizes that a single utterance can simultaneously perform multiple functions depending on context, speaker intention, and social norms. Special focus is placed on etiquette speech acts and the ways in which nonverbal cues, performative verbs, and illocutionary force shape meaning.

Annotatsiya: shbu maqolada J. L. Ostin va J. R. Searl nazariyalariga asoslanib, nutq aktlarining tipologiyasi va funksiyalari tahlil qilinadi hamda lokutsion, illokutsion va perlokutsion komponentlarga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Vakillovchi (representatives), buyruq va iltimos bildiruvchi (directives), majburiyat yuklovchi (commissives), hissiy munosabatni ifodalovchi (expressives) hamda deklarativ nutq aktlarini tahlil qilish orqali kommunikativ xulq-atvorning murakkab va ko'p o'lchovli xususiyati yoritib beriladi. Tadqiqot bitta nutqiy birlik kontekst, so'zlovchining niyati va ijtimoiy me'yorlarga bog'liq holda bir vaqtning o'zida bir nechta funksiyani bajarishi mumkinligini ta'kidlaydi. Xushmuomalalik (etiket) nutq aktlariga alohida urg'u berilib, noverbal vositalar, performativ fe'llar va illokutsion kuchning ma'no shakllanishidagi o'rni tahlil qilinadi.

Аннотация: В статье рассматриваются типология и функции речевых актов с особым вниманием к локутивному, иллокутивному и перлокутивному компонентам в рамках теорий Дж. Л. Остина и Дж. Р. Серля. Анализ речевых актов — представителей (representatives), директивов, комиссивов, экспрессивов и декларативов — позволяет выявить сложность и многомерность коммуникативного поведения. В исследовании подчёркивается, что одно высказывание может одновременно выполнять несколько функций в зависимости от контекста, коммуникативного намерения говорящего и социальных норм. Особое внимание уделяется этикетным речевым актам, а также роли невербальных средств, перформативных глаголов и иллокутивной силы в формировании значения.

INTRODUCTION

The anthropocentric principle in science contributed to the emergence of new humanities disciplines such as ergonomics, axiology, heuristics, and others. In linguistics, anthropocentrism led to the development of interdisciplinary fields including ethnolinguistics, sociolinguistics, linguoculturology, cognitive linguistics, cultural semantics, linguo-country studies, and speech act theory. The large number of emerging disciplines is connected with the special position of linguistics among the humanities: one of the most important sources of knowledge about humans is language. Within the anthropocentric framework, the human being is studied as an integrated phenomenon. In relation to communicative abilities, a person acquires the status of a linguistic personality.

Materials and methods

A speech act is understood as a purposeful action performed in accordance with the rules and principles of linguistic behavior accepted within a society. Speech act theory distinguishes three levels (or aspects) in the analysis of a speech act: the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary levels. A locutionary act refers to the act of saying something to which meaning can be assigned. This act consists of three subordinate components: the phonetic act (in spoken language — sound articulation according to phonetic rules; in written language — graphical representation according to orthographic conventions); the phatic act (organizing sound sequences so they conform to rules governing the formation and connection of words); and the rhetic act (the use of words and sentences in accordance with the semantic rules of the language).

It is important to note that linguistics focused for a long time primarily on the study of locutionary acts, which inevitably limited the analysis of utterances in relation to communicative situations. Credit for expanding the scope of research and identifying illocutionary and perlocutionary acts belongs to J. Austin. An illocutionary act represents the speaker's intention — for example, informing, warning, ordering, and similar communicative purposes. In such cases, an utterance is produced with a particular force. According to Austin, speakers aim to express their intentions in a way that ensures accurate interpretation. To avoid misunderstanding, not only verbal expressions but also nonverbal cues — such as blinking, shoulder movements, or intonation — may be used.

A perlocutionary act, in Austin's view, concerns the actual effect of an utterance on the addressee, provoking various reactions such as anger or satisfaction. Its most significant function is to influence the addressee to adopt a belief or perform an action. Austin also recognized that nonverbal means can exert influence, highlighting the perlocutionary potential of "body language."

Based on the premise that an utterance in a given situation is not merely a description of how an action would be classified nor a statement that an act is being performed — but rather that the utterance itself constitutes the performance of the action — John Austin identified performative verbs and proposed a classification that also serves as a classification of illocutionary acts, namely acts aimed at expressing the speaker's communicative intention. According to Austin, five categories of performative verbs can be distinguished:

- Verdictives — acts expressing evaluative judgments.
- **Exercitives** — verbs expressing decision-making, the exercise of authority, or the manifestation of power;
- **Commissives** — verbs of commitment and promise;
- **Behabitives** — verbs expressing social relations, such as apologies, requests, or insults;
- **Expositives** — verbs used in discussion to clarify one's viewpoint or provide argumentation.

Later, J. Searle, who further developed speech act theory, emphasized that the illocutionary act is governed by and subordinate to rules similar to the rules of a game. He examined three central concepts: rules, propositions, and meanings. Searle devoted particular attention to constitutive rules, although much of his analysis focused on the propositional component of the illocutionary act. He observed that illocutionary acts frequently share a common structure — namely, reference to a particular entity and the predication of an action with respect to that entity. The proposition serves as an indicator of content and forms part of the illocutionary act alongside the marker of illocutionary force. In other words, for analytical purposes, many sentences used to perform illocutionary acts may be viewed as consisting of two (not necessarily separate) elements: one indicating the propositional content and another indicating the function of the act.

Searle also pointed out that an essential feature of the illocutionary act is the combination of the act's meaning and the speaker's intention. In this context, he drew upon the ideas of Paul Grice, who examined the notion of meaning in relation to the signs and sounds through which speech acts are carried out, as well as the speaker's intention when using those signs and sounds — that is, when the speaker “means something.” Searle concluded that the connection between what we intend when speaking and what a sentence means in the language we use is far from accidental. When performing an illocutionary act, the speaker aims to achieve a specific outcome by enabling the listener to recognize this intention.

Such recognition occurs because the rules governing the use of linguistic expressions link those expressions with the intended result.

Results and discussion

In addition to his detailed treatment of illocutionary acts, Searle identified significant shortcomings in Austin's classification of performative and illocutionary acts and proposed an alternative classification based on the concept of **illocutionary point**. By illocutionary point, Searle referred to a component of illocutionary force that differs for each type of act. For example, the purpose of a request is to attempt to persuade the listener to perform an action. Searle distinguished five primary types of illocutionary acts:

- **Representatives**, whose aim is to “commit the speaker, to varying degrees, to the truth of the expressed proposition or to the accuracy of a statement about a particular state of affairs”;
- **Directives**, whose illocutionary point consists in the fact that “they represent attempts, to varying degrees, by the speaker to get the listener to do something”;
- **Commissives**, whose aim is to “commit the speaker, to a certain degree, to performing some future action or following a particular course of behavior”;
- **Expressives**, whose illocutionary goal is “to express a psychological state, conditioned by sincerity concerning a state of affairs, as defined within the propositional content”;
- **Declaratives**, whose illocutionary point presupposes that “performing an act of this class brings about a correspondence between the propositional content and reality; successful performance of the act guarantees that the propositional content truly matches reality.”

Despite this more detailed classification, its limitation lies in the neglect of overlapping classes. Speech act theory repeatedly emphasizes that the same utterance — or, more precisely, the same proposition — can perform multiple linguistic acts. For example, the sentence “*I will come tomorrow*” can function as a statement, a threat, or a promise. Similarly, an invitation may act as a directive when urging the addressee to come to a specified location. It may also be considered a commissive if the speaker promises to ensure a proper reception.

A complaint, for instance, can simultaneously function as a representative, reflecting a certain state of affairs; an expressive, conveying the speaker's dissatisfaction with that state; and a directive, aiming not only to inform the addressee but also to prompt them to take appropriate action.

Ultimately, the classification depends on the speech situation and communicative context, which determine how a particular expression may influence the state of affairs and how the illocutionary point — a component of illocutionary force — is interpreted. This allows speech acts to be grouped into classes and identifies which illocutionary force is manifested in the act, representing a transition from potential function to realized function, and so on. Consequently, speech acts are complex to classify due to their multidimensional nature. Mixed speech acts exist, possessing characteristics of multiple illocutionary classes.

Conclusion

The analysis of speech acts in this study demonstrates the intricate and multifaceted nature of human communication. Drawing on the frameworks of J. L. Austin and J. R. Searle, it becomes clear that speech acts are not merely utterances but purposeful actions that convey speaker intentions, shape social interactions, and influence listener responses. The classification into representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives highlights the diversity of communicative functions and the ways in which context, cultural norms, and nonverbal cues contribute to meaning.

Moreover, the study confirms that a single utterance can perform multiple illocutionary functions, depending on the communicative situation, demonstrating the flexible and dynamic character of language in real-life interactions. Understanding the internal structure of speech acts and their pragmatic potential is essential for linguists, educators, and psychologists seeking to analyze, teach, or support effective communication. Ultimately, the integration of anthropocentric and pragmatic perspectives allows for a holistic understanding of language as both a cognitive and social phenomenon, emphasizing that human communication is guided by intention, context, and shared social norms.

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