



ANALYSIS OF SCIENTIFIC APPROACHES TO ILLOCUTIONARY SPEECH ACT

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Language serves not only to transmit information but also to perform actions within social interaction. This article investigates illocutionary acts as a central concept in pragmatics, emphasizing the relationship between linguistic form and communicative intention. The study aims to analyze the main categories of illocutionary acts - assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives - and their functions in authentic communicative situations. The results demonstrate that recognizing illocutionary force is fundamental to interpreting meaning in discourse. Understanding these acts enhances the analysis of language use and contributes significantly to the development of pragmatic competence in social communication.

Language is not only a means of conveying information but also a tool for performing actions. Within the framework of pragmatics, speech act theory explains how utterances function as actions in communication. One of the central components of this theory is the concept of the illocutionary act, which refers to the speaker's intended function in producing an utterance. Understanding illocutionary acts and their types is essential for analyzing how meaning is constructed and interpreted in social interaction.

In Uzbek linguistics, a number of scholars have explored speech act theory and its various dimensions, including Sh. Safarov, M. Hakimov, M. Kurbanova, and M. Gazieva. Among them, Sh. Safarov addresses the issue in detail in his book *Pragmalinguistics*. While he offers a critical evaluation of the theory, he also emphasizes its significant role in the development of pragmalinguistic studies. Safarov reviews different linguistic perspectives on speech acts and expands the theoretical framework by adding his own insights. In his interpretation, a speech act is understood as a speaker's purposeful verbal interaction directed at a listener within a particular context.

In her doctoral research entitled "*Linguopragmatic Properties of Prosodic Means in the Process of Communication*," M.M. Gaziyeva addresses the issue of speech acts from a pragmatic perspective. Her work places strong emphasis on speech act theory, particularly on the role of intonation in shaping meaning during interaction. She investigates how prosodic features contribute to expressing the speaker's intention and communicative purpose. Through an analysis of acoustic indicators such as tone, pitch variation, and stress patterns, Gaziyeva aims to differentiate and categorize various types of speech acts.

American linguist J.Searle [2000] emphasizes that speech acts emerge through actual language use in real communicative contexts. From this perspective, speech act theory is grounded in the assumption that human communication is fundamentally composed of the performance of various types of acts. Similarly, L.Bachman [1990] argues that these communicative acts are closely tied to the functional dimensions of language. While morphological, syntactic, and rhetorical dimensions relate to the structural organization of language, the pragmatic dimension is concerned with the production and interpretation of



speech acts. In communicative interaction, these dimensions operate in a mutually dependent manner.

An illocutionary act refers to the function or intention behind a speaker's utterance, rather than merely the literal meaning of the words used. This concept emphasizes that communication is shaped by contextual factors and social conventions, demonstrating that utterances can perform actions such as making requests, issuing promises, or offering apologies, rather than simply conveying information. As a result, the analysis of illocutionary acts plays a crucial role in understanding how meaning is negotiated in human interaction.

J.L.Austin defines illocutionary acts as the performance of an action through an utterance, emphasizing the communicative force conveyed when an utterance is produced. Thus, the illocutionary dimension concerns what action is accomplished in saying something, rather than the propositional content alone.

Various linguists have attempted to classify illocutionary acts into distinct categories. Following J.Searle's classification, David Crystal identifies five main types of speech acts: assertives, commissives, expressives, directives, and declaratives.

In assertive speech acts, the speaker commits to the truth of a proposition by employing verbs such as *affirm*, *believe*, *conclude*, *report*, or *deny*. This category also encompasses acts such as stating, suggesting, criticizing, responding, concluding, predicting, disagreeing, and rejecting claims. Assertives are most commonly realized through declarative sentence structures; however, they are not limited to this form and may also be conveyed through imperative or interrogative constructions. The primary function of assertive speech acts is to represent states of affairs in the real world. In academic disciplines such as history, assertive speech acts are commonly used to present factual accounts, describe past events, and convey established knowledge.

Commissive speech acts fundamentally involve commitments or promises made either to oneself or to others, which are reflected through one's actions. Such commitments represent a genuine acknowledgment rooted in an individual's character and inner disposition. Commissive acts often arise in response to triggering actions such as requests, offers, apologies, advice, reminders, warnings, and similar communicative moves [Brown & Levinson, 2008]. As a result, the strategies used to convey commissive utterances vary according to the social norms governing the community in which the interaction occurs, and they also influence the level of formality between the speaker and the hearer. Consequently, social factors play a significant role in shaping the realization of commissive speech acts.

Expressive speech acts constitute one of the major categories in speech act theory and are primarily concerned with conveying the speaker's psychological state or emotional attitude toward a particular situation. Through expressive acts, speakers articulate feelings such as gratitude, apology, regret, approval, disapproval, joy, or sorrow, rather than describing external states of affairs or committing themselves to future actions. Research on expressive speech acts remains relatively limited [P.Guiraud et al., 2011, p. 1031]. To date, corpus-based studies have primarily focused on specific subcategories of expressive acts, particularly expressions of gratitude and general politeness [I.Taavitsainen & Andreas.H.Jucker, 2010], as well as compliments [Jucker et al., 2008; Jucker, 2009]. Earlier, Neal.R.Norrick [1978, pp. 282–290] proposed a classification of expressive illocutionary acts grounded in the emotions they convey. More recently, P.Guiraud et al. [2011] employed a framework combining emotion theory and



formal logic to organize expressive speech acts according to underlying psychological attitudes, identifying joy, sadness, approval, and disapproval as primary dimensions. Nevertheless, formal theoretical approaches to expressive acts have yet to be systematically applied to and tested with corpus data.

Directive speech acts are utterances produced by speakers with the purpose of influencing the behavior of the hearer. Through directives, speakers express their intentions such as wishes, hopes, or desires in a way that provides the hearer with a reason to act. As A.S.Ibrahim [2004, p. 27] explains, directive speech acts convey the speaker's attitude toward an intended action and are designed to encourage the addressee to carry out that action in accordance with the speaker's expectations. Consequently, the primary goal of directive speech acts is to prompt the hearer to perform an action desired by the speaker. G.Yule [1996, p. 55] describes directive speech acts as utterances employed by speakers to prompt hearers to perform particular actions. Such speech acts function as communicative activities between speakers and their interlocutors, with the intention of eliciting a response or behavior from the hearer. Similarly, A.S.Ibrahim [2004, p. 27] states that directive speech acts reflect the speaker's attitude toward the actions expected to be carried out by the addressee. The findings revealed that the directive speech acts identified in the study included commands, requests, suggestions, prohibitions, questions, and notifications.

Declarative speech acts are utterances used by speakers to present propositions that are intended to be accepted as statements of fact or expressions of belief. Within speech act theory, declaratives function to convey information, assert claims, and describe states of affairs. By producing a declarative speech act, the speaker aims to transmit a message that informs the hearer or shapes the hearer's understanding of a particular situation. As such, declaratives play an essential role in knowledge exchange and information sharing in communicative interaction.

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