

**THE SOCIAL AND PRAGMATIC SIGNIFICANCE OF SPEECH ACTS****Raxmonova Dilnavoz Shavqiddinovna**

Email: rakhmonova1989@gmail.com

Renessans university

**Abstract**

This paper explores the role of speech act theory in academic discourse from a linguistic-pragmatic and sociocognitive perspective. It highlights how academic speech acts not only serve to transmit information but also reflect social hierarchies and communicative intentions. The research emphasizes the performative and illocutionary functions of utterances in scholarly interactions and discusses how speech acts contribute to the shaping of communicative strategies, argumentation, and audience engagement. Furthermore, the application of speech act theory in educational contexts reveals its relevance in understanding the socialization of children through language and its potential in reducing impersonal bureaucratic communication practices in early education institutions.

**Keywords**

speech act theory, academic discourse, pragmatics, performativity, illocutionary force, communicative strategy, socialization, education

**Introduction:** At the close of the 20th century, linguistics saw paradigm upheavals that significantly altered the course of linguistic research. Methodologies that were anthropocentric, functional, cognitive, and dynamic rapidly supplanted the structuralist and static approaches that were once prevalent. The human element was put at the forefront of linguistic research by these new paradigms, which highlighted the relationship between language, human experience, and creative potential.

It is essential to examine scholarly discourse from the standpoint of the anthropocentric paradigm in order to comprehend the ways in which language affects human communication and thought. It is evident from research that academic speech is largely reliant on human interaction; therefore, it is vital to examine its pragmatic elements from both a linguistic and communication theory perspective.

In global linguistics, the study of the language system in connection to the individual has gained popularity. In disciplines like language semantics, cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, pragmatics, and linguistic cultural studies, this inclination is most noticeable. Notable researchers who have focused heavily on examining the language system in relation to the human factor include Wilhelm von Humboldt, Leo Weisgerber, Edward Sapir, Benjamin Whorf, Alexander Potebnya, George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Noam Chomsky, Yuri Karaulov, Lev Shcherba, and Konstantin Sedov.

It is important to note that academic discourse is an essential means of communication for conveying scientific ideas, exchanging knowledge, and coordinating scholarly interactions. Maslova analyzes its pragmatic features and highlights the connection between academic discourse, human cognition, cultural variables, and the social environment. According to this viewpoint, academic communication serves as a tool for building connection with the audience and fostering comprehension in addition to being a way to convey information.

The theory of speech acts is important in scholarly discussions. The performative nature of language was proposed by British linguist J. L. Austin, who also developed this theory (Austin, J. 1999. — 332 p.). Performative verbs, such "I recommend," "I appoint," and "I declare," are verbs that describe activities in addition to conveying information. J. Searle later discovered other categories of speech acts, which made it possible to examine the pragmatic aspects of academic communication in greater detail.

Although studies in linguistic semantics, pragmatics, and cognitive linguistics in Uzbek linguistics mirror anthropocentric approach tendencies, these fields of study are still lacking in depth. This suggests the need to broaden the scope of linguistic research and conduct a more thorough analysis of the language system in light of the complexity of human cognition.

Furthermore, the anthropocentric paradigm supports the idea that language is seen through its speaker and sees language as an integral component of human action. Khudoyberganova claims that this paradigm highlights how human speaking action, rather than linguistic structures, shapes language (Khudoyberganova, D. 2013, p. 3). According to this perspective, communicative and subject-oriented research have replaced structural approaches.

In terms of the speaker's intention and the illocutionary force applied to the listener, speech actions are one of the fundamental ideas of linguistic pragmatics. Speech acts can be divided into various categories, as Searle highlights:

Representatives (e.g., stating, describing, forecasting, classifying, acknowledging, and concluding), instructions (e.g., asking, forbidding, counseling, teaching, and pressuring), Promises, vows, and guarantees are examples of commissives. Expressives (such as expressing gratitude or regret) (V. A. Zvegintsev et al., 1999, 266 p.)

Searle, J. "What is a Speech Act? "Both explicit (direct) and implicit (indirect) manifestations are possible for these speaking acts. Accordingly, a speaker may use an urgent or interrogative construction in place of a representative act to convey their intention in a more subtle way. Speech acts become more dynamic due to this flexibility, which enables them to take on several shapes based on the speaker's intended message.

The communicative function of speech actions is largely dependent on the illocutionary force, or the speaker's intentional purpose behind a statement. This idea captures the speaker's intent as well as the utterance's communication objective. Crucially, even when the dialogue deviates from Grice's cooperative maxims, this illocutionary force permits productive contact (Grice, H. P. 1985. pp. 217–237).

The impact that the speaker's words have on the listener—that is, the emotional or behavioral reaction that the utterance elicits—is also known as the perlocutionary effect. Speech act theory is especially pertinent when analyzing academic discourse because it offers a framework for scientifically interpreting and categorizing the speaker's verbal behavior during the communicative process and enables the identification of functionally significant segments within the discourse flow.

The way that communicants' social standing are expressed through certain relational structures inside interactions is one of the distinguishing characteristics of academic discourse. The speech act hypothesis is essential to scholarly discourse because of this. Requests, demands, commands, prohibitions, instructions, and specific kinds of questions are examples of manipulative communicative tactics that are frequently used to accomplish such speech acts (Syntax and Semantics, 1975, p. 168).

The social and pragmatic aspects of academic discourse are thus illuminated by speech act theory, in addition to the way language structures work. In scientific conversations, its use in discourse analysis is essential for effectively stating points and creating tactics for engaging the audience.

One important area of linguistic pragmatics with many uses is speech act theory. According to this viewpoint, its use extends beyond the analysis of adult verbal exchanges; it also provides a fundamental framework for understanding how toddlers pick up language through socialization. Adult-child interaction is crucial in helping children build a system of social relations and determine their place within it, according to research by A. Cicourel, J. Sinclair, and M. Coulthard (Sinclair, J. and Coulthard, M. T.1978, pp. 1–9). Through speech acts, the kid is able to establish their own function within stratified communication practices and comprehend the asymmetry of social situations. This means that by encouraging more balanced and responsive communicative techniques, examining the use of particular speech actions may help prevent impersonal and bureaucratic behaviors in preschools and schools.

Thus, methods like conversation analysis, sociolinguistics, sociopragmatics, and politeness theory must be included in addition to discourse analysis. These frameworks add to a more thorough comprehension of language phenomena and broaden the analytical reach of Speech Act Theory.

A significant drawback of Speech Act Theory is its propensity to overlook the interactive aspect of communication in favor of concentrating mostly on the speaker's objectives. Because of this restriction, the theory is unable to adequately explain how communication occurs in actual situations. In every communication scenario, the listener's responses are just as important as the speaker's objectives in determining the interaction's overall meaning.

In turn, frame theory aids in the identification of communication's explicit and implicit structural elements. Scholarly argumentation's logical structure and communication mechanisms are made clear by this theoretical approach, which makes it especially helpful for examining academic conversation. Furthermore, the theory of politeness is important for making sure that academic speech is organized effectively and for promoting information sharing in academic settings.

In conclusion, speech act theory provides a powerful framework for analyzing the functional, pragmatic, and social dimensions of academic discourse. By uncovering the communicative intentions behind utterances, it helps scholars better understand how language operates in scientific contexts—not just as a tool for conveying information, but as a mechanism for shaping relationships, constructing arguments, and influencing audiences. Its application in both academic and educational settings highlights the broader social role of language in communication and learning.

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