

## THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN SPEECH ACT

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**Abstract:** This study examines the complex relationship between language and speech acts by focusing on theoretical, psychological and linguistic aspects. It explores the ways in which language functions as an ordered system that makes human communication easier by enabling people to carry out speech acts including instructions, declarations, promises, and requests. By providing insights from linguistics, psycholinguistics, pragmatics, and intercultural studies, it enriches our knowledge of language as a dynamic tool for interaction and communication.

**Keywords:** language, speech act, speech production and comprehension, speech act theory, pragmatics, cognitive functions.

**Аннотация:** Данное исследование рассматривает сложную взаимосвязь между языком и речевой деятельностью, уделяя особое внимание теоретическим, психологическим и лингвистическим аспектам. Оно исследует как язык функционирует как упорядоченная система, облегчающая человеческое взаимодействие, позволяя людям выполнять речевые акты, такие как инструкции, заявления, обещания и просьбы. Предоставляя знания из лингвистики, психолингвистики, прагматики и межкультурных исследований, оно углубляет наше понимание языка как динамичного инструмента взаимодействия и общения.

**Ключевые слова:** язык, речевой акт, производство и восприятие речи, теория речевых актов, прагматика, когнитивные функции.

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu tadqiqotda til va nutq faoliyati o'rtasidagi murakkab munosabatni nazariy, psixologik va lingvistik jihatlariga alohida e'tibor qaratgan holda o'rganilgan. Tilning insonlar o'rtasidagi o'zaro ta'sirni osonlashtiradigan, odamlarga ko'rsatmalar, bayonotlar, va'dalar va iltimoslar kabi nutqiy harakatlarni amalga oshirishga imkon beradigan tartibli tizim sifatida ishlash o'rganilgan. Tilshunoslik, psixolingvistika, pragmatika va madaniyatlararo tadqiqotlar orqali nutq faoliyati tilni o'zaro ta'sir va muloqotning dinamik vositasi sifatida tushunishimizni kengaytiradidi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** til, nutq harakati, nutqni ishlab chiqarish va idrok etish, nutq harakatlari nazariyasi, pragmatika, kognitiv funksiyalar.

## INTRODUCTION

Language is an important tool for human communication. It acts as the primary mechanism that allows thoughts, emotions, and ideas to be expressed. It helps people to carry out actions using speech which are also known as speech acts. Since language serves as a device for expressing orders and completing requests, the relationship between speech acts and language is fundamental to human interaction. Speech act theory proposed by philosophers J.L. Austin and

John Searle, highlights the importance of language as an action-oriented phenomena.[5] According to this theory, people can execute three types of acts through speech: perlocutionary act which influences the listener, illocutionary act which holds the intention behind the speech and locutionary act which expresses the literal statement.[3] The dynamic role that language plays in holding meaningful communication and attaining desired results in social interactions is highlighted by this theoretical model.[8] With an emphasis on how language structures and cognitive processes facilitate the performance of speech acts, this thesis seeks to investigate the theoretical underpinnings of this interaction. It will also discuss the linguistic and psychological processes that go into speech act, providing information on how language is the main instrument for efficient communication.

Defining the fundamental ideas of language and speech acts is crucial to analyze the function of language in speech acts by looking into speech act theory. Speech acts are language-based communicative behaviors. The theoretical foundation of this work is speech act theory that states that language is a tool for enacting reality as well as for explaining it. According to Jerrold Sadock, J. Austin's monograph, *How to Do Things with Words*, is considered to be the foundation of modern study of speech acts and was reprinted version of his William James Lectures given at Harvard in 1955. He highlights that Austin explains locutionary acts as acts of speaking that include the production of sounds or marks, the selection of specific words, their usage with regards to grammatical conventions of a language as well as the meanings and references outlined by linguistic rules of the chosen language. Sadock mentions that Austin's fundamental innovation, illocutionary acts, refers to acts performed while speaking, particularly those that seem to be the reason for using a performative sentence which requires the performance of a certain action. Additionally, he points out that Austin's third category of actions is the perlocutionary act which refers to the consequences or by-products of speech, regardless of intent and that they have an impact on feelings, thoughts or behaviors of the person giving the speech, the addressee or the audience.[9]

According to Richard Nordquist, Austin makes his case for the five most popular classes once more using "How to Do Things With Words":

**Verdictives** that provide results or findings;

**Exercitives** that demonstrate authority or influence;

**Commissives** are statements that involve making a commitment or promise to accomplish something;

**Expositives** which describe how a language engages with itself;

**Behabitives** which deal with social activities and attitudes such as celebrating and promising.

Nordquist also mentions that these categories are also supported by David Crystal in his work, "Dictionary of Linguistics" where he suggests a number of categories, such as "directives (speakers try to get their listeners to do something, e.g. begging, commanding, requesting), commissives (speakers commit themselves to a future course of action, e.g. promising, guaranteeing), expressives (speakers express their feelings, e.g. apologizing, welcoming, sympathizing), declarations (the speaker's utterance brings about a new external situation, e.g. christening, marrying, resigning)."

Nordquist emphasizes that these categories of speech acts are neither optimal nor unique and mentions how Kirsten Malmkjaer notes in "Speech-Act Theory", "There are many marginal cases, and many instances of overlap, and a very large body of research exists as a result of people's efforts to arrive at more precise classifications." [7] Moreover, the further study of pragmatics, or language in context, provides additional evidence of how listener's perception and speaker's intention influence meaning.

A range of linguistic systems and psychological processes support the efficient delivery of speech acts. Licea-Haquet G.L., et al. highlight that according to psychological research, people use online speech act information to recognize and understand speech acts. In 2008, Holtgraves investigated whether understanding a sentence such as "Don't forget to go to your dentist" (an "implicit speech act") implies automatic activation of the speech act performed (reminding) using a recognition probing test and lexical evaluation test. By measuring accuracy and reaction times, he found that speech acts are automatically recognized in both written and spoken utterances. He came to the conclusion that speech acts effectively process conversation turns by conveying the action a speaker is performing with an utterance (intention) in a single word (a verb). These systems enable listeners to understand and react correctly while speakers are able to create and convey their intended messages. Speech acts are cognitive processes that demand the active involvement of the brain in addition to being linguistic utterances. [6] For example, memory, attention and conceptualization are the fundamental psychological processes that support cognition of the utterances. Also, long-term and short-term memory are both essential: while long-term memory keeps language and linguistic rules, short-term memory preserves the current context of conversation. [2] Focused attention to the context, the speaker's aims, and the listener's reactions is necessary for both effective speech production and comprehension. Furthermore, it is supported by conceptualization which is the process of coming up with an idea or a purpose behind a speech act, like a request or a promise. The structural and functional components of language, which include syntax, phonology, semantics, and pragmatics, are also essential to speech acts. Language's sound system is governed by phonology, which makes speech acts understandable and communication efficacy is influenced by intonation, stress, and pronunciation. For example, a query may be indicated by a rising intonation in English, which is consistent with the illocutionary effect of a request or inquiry. [4] Additionally, while expressing certain intentions, speech acts highly rely on the semantics of words and phrases. For instance, "I promise" clearly conveys a commitment through its semantic content. The usage of pragmatics examines how context determines meaning. Speakers with pragmatic knowledge are able to recognize that "Can you pass the salad?" is a courteous request rather than a direct question concerning someone's ability.

Language plays an immense part in speech acts in a variety of real-world contexts. According to Bauler C., the subject of pragmatics has expanded to examine speech acts from the viewpoint of language users by paying attention to societal and cultural issues, as a result of an increase in cross-cultural studies. Cultural comparisons of speech acts have shed light on the causes of misunderstandings. Research has also shown that cultural attitudes, values, and beliefs influence and inspire our language use. Understanding the subtleties of speech acts in cross-cultural communication might help to avoid misunderstandings and promote productive exchanges. She makes an example to point out how other languages' expressions of the connection between indirectness and politeness differ from English's: "When asked whether they would like some juice, children in other languages, such Portuguese or Spanish, are more likely to respond with the more straightforward "no," whereas in English, they are required to say "no,

thank you."".[1] Teaching the basics of speech acts to language learners improves their pragmatic ability, enabling them to employ the target language in a variety of settings. This is especially important in contexts where students are learning English as a foreign language (EFL), as they frequently have trouble comprehending and executing speech acts.

## CONCLUSION

In summary, the expression of speech acts is a complex process that initiates the smooth fusion of linguistic and psychological factors. Successful communication in a variety of circumstances is ensured by these systems which allow people to accurately produce, comprehend, and respond to speech acts. This analysis may have important future applications for domains such as language learning, intercultural communication and artificial intelligence.

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