



SPEECH ACTS AND THEIR THEORY

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Abstract: *This article examines Speech Act Theory as one of the fundamental concepts in modern pragmatics and analyzes its theoretical and practical manifestations in literary discourse. The study is based on the theoretical framework developed by J. L. Austin and J. Searle, focusing on the classification of speech acts and their illocutionary and perlocutionary dimensions. The research also incorporates Stephen Levinson's pragmatic approach to contextual meaning and Deborah Schiffrin's discourse analysis to explore the communicative function of speech acts in shaping social interaction.*

Keywords: *Speech Act Theory; pragmatics; illocutionary force; perlocutionary effect; discourse analysis; performative utterance; indirect speech act; literary discourse; communication; context.*

Аннотация: *В данной статье рассматривается теория речевых актов как одна из фундаментальных концепций современной прагматики и анализируются её теоретические и практические проявления в литературном дискурсе. Исследование основано на теоретической концепции, разработанной Дж. Л. Остином и Дж. Сёрлом, и фокусируется на классификации речевых актов и их иллокутивных и перлокутивных измерениях. В исследовании также используется прагматический подход Стивена Левинсона к контекстуальному значению и дискурсивный анализ Деборы Шиффрин для изучения коммуникативной функции речевых актов в формировании социального взаимодействия.*

Ключевые слова: *теория речевых актов; прагматика; иллокутивная сила; перлокутивный эффект; дискурсивный анализ; перформативное высказывание; косвенный речевой акт; литературный дискурс; коммуникация; контекст.*

Annotatsiya: *Ushbu maqolada Nutq Akti Nazariyasi zamonaviy pragmatikadagi asosiy tushunchalardan biri sifatida ko'rib chiqiladi va uning adabiy nutqdagi nazariy va amaliy ko'rinishlari tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot J. L. Ostin va J. Searle tomonidan ishlab chiqilgan nazariy asosga asoslangan bo'lib, nutq aktlarini tasniflash va ularning illokutsion va perlokutsiya o'lchamlariga e'tibor qaratadi. Tadqiqot shuningdek, Stiven Levinsonning kontekstual ma'noga pragmatik yondashuvini va Debora Shiffrinning ijtimoiy o'zaro ta'sirni shakllantirishda nutq aktlarining kommunikativ funksiyasini o'rganish uchun diskurs tahlilini o'z ichiga oladi.*



Kalit so‘zlar: *Nutq Akti Nazariyasi; pragmatika; illokutsion kuch; perlokutsiya effekti; diskurs tahlili; ijro etuvchi nutq; bilvosita nutq akti; adabiy nutq; muloqot; kontekst.*

Speech Act Theory emerged in linguistics in the second half of the twentieth century and began with J. L. Austin’s work *How to Do Things with Words* [1,57]. Austin demonstrated that language is not merely a means of describing reality but also a tool for performing social actions. Later, J. Searle’s book *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* [2,85] further developed this theory by providing a detailed analysis of the illocutionary and perlocutionary aspects of speech acts.

Stephen Levinson’s *Pragmatics* [3,56] examines the contextual nature of speech acts, while Deborah Schiffrin’s studies in discourse analysis [4,48] highlight the role of speech acts in shaping communication and social relations. In Uzbek linguistics, the research conducted by Abduolimova, G‘aniyeva, and Shamuratova explores the national manifestations of speech acts and demonstrates the social importance of indirect speech acts.

Austin distinguishes between descriptive utterances, which describe events, and performative utterances, which perform actions [1,37].

For instance, the statement “I promise” performs the act of promising.

In *The Great Gatsby*, Gatsby’s promises to Daisy can be interpreted as performative speech acts. His statement “I have never forgotten you” not only conveys factual information but also performs an act of expressing love and loyalty [5,66].

Searle classifies speech acts into five main categories [2,87]:

Representative acts – describing reality or stating facts

Directive acts – encouraging the listener to act

Expressive acts – expressing emotions

Declarative acts – changing social situations

Commissive acts – making commitments or promises

For example:

Gatsby’s statement “I will make you happy again” represents a commissive act [5,52].

Tom’s statement “I must preserve our family” functions as a declarative act.

Nick’s narration of events represents a representative act.

Gatsby’s statement “I waited for you” expresses love at the illocutionary level and evokes emotional response at the perlocutionary level [2, 65].

According to Levinson, the meaning of an utterance depends not only on linguistic form but also on context, participants, and social relations [3,57]. Gatsby’s statement “We can repeat the past” may appear as a simple intention; however, within context it functions as a directive act aimed at restoring his relationship with Daisy [5,65].

Studies in Uzbek linguistics indicate that speech acts are often expressed indirectly. For instance, the utterance “It is hot” may implicitly function as a request to open a window.

Similarly, when Daisy states, “This is a beautiful house,” she indirectly acknowledges Gatsby’s wealth and expresses affection. This represents an indirect expressive act [5,78].





Schiffrin's discourse analysis demonstrates that speech acts shape communication and social interaction [4,32]. Nick's narration in the novel structures the discourse by conveying relationships between Gatsby and Daisy to the audience [5, 74].

References

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