



SENTENCE AS A COMMUNICATIVE UNIT IS THE OBJECT OF RESEARCH IN PRAGMATIC AND COMMUNICATIVE APPROACHES TO LINGUISTICS

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Abstract

It is known that while the meaning expressed by the sentence structure is studied within the semantic layer of language, pragmatics examines what the speaker intends to communicate through this structure. Pragmatics interprets meaning in relation to the speech situation [Leech 1983:6], or in other words, its subject is the communicative realization of a sentence under specific conditions and for particular purposes.

Keywords: Language and speech phenomena, pragmalinguistics, communicative purpose and sentence structure, speech acts.

In world linguistics, several approaches have developed for studying the semantic structure of sentences and the categories of this structure. The main task in this case is to determine the object of semantic analysis and the relationships between these objects.

The content of a sentence is, on the one hand, described directly based on a specific situation (this is especially evident when studying sentences based on presuppositions), while on the other hand, there is a practice of elucidating the semantic structure of a sentence from the perspective of purely linguistic indicators, relying solely on linguistic factors.

In some cases, the meaning of a sentence is elucidated from a logical perspective, examining the relationship between logical and linguistic structures. Several approaches are observed in this regard. In particular, N.D. Arutyunova suggests that the content of a sentence can be determined based on the concept of proposition. The scholar, who attempted to reveal the patterns that form the semantic structure of a sentence, classifies sentences according to types of logical-syntactic relations [Arutyunova 1976].

The tradition of studying linguistic units from a pragmatic perspective actually stems from the idea of the dialectical unity of language and speech phenomena, which has prevailed since the time of Ferdinand de Saussure. In linguistics of the past century, researchers were primarily engaged in studying phenomena of the language system and their systemic-structural relations. However, for the complete formation of theoretical linguistics, it became necessary to encompass speech activity as well. Indeed, it is through this activity that the functions performed by language are fully manifested, and its nature and existence are fully revealed in the speech process. Psycholinguists define speech activity as purposeful activity carried out using linguistic means [see: Pishchalnikova 2017: 122-127]. It is known that V. Humboldt, one of the founders of theoretical linguistics, was among the first to introduce the concept of "activity" into linguistics. Elaborating on the idea that "language is not a product of activity (Ergon), but activity itself (Energia)," the German scholar wrote: "In this sense, this definition applies to any speech activity, but strictly speaking, the totality of all speech acts constitutes language" [Humboldt 1984: 70]. Indeed, communicators perform various



purposeful actions in the process of speech activity. At the core of a speech act performed for a specific purpose lies the sentence, the basic unit of the syntactic level, through which thought is formed, expressed, and communicated [Sayfullayeva et al. 2010: 313; Yusupov 2011: 213].

As mentioned above, the sentence as a communicative unit constitutes the object of research in the pragmatic and communicative directions of linguistics. These areas describe the intended use and purpose of language units and grammatical forms, as well as their activation in specific communicative situations, the structure of speech acts, and communicative intentions in interconnected ways.

The development of pragmalinguistics as a separate field necessitated a different interpretation of the category of meaning (content). The phenomenon of content has now begun to be described in connection with the concepts of purposefulness and pragmatic intent. The semantics of speech structures encompasses not only the denotative meaning of the sentence but also its communicative-pragmatic content. While proponents of speech act theory associate content with the speaker's actions and desires [Kobozeva 1986: 7-21; Bach 2003], for others, the impact of the structure on the listener or addressee is important in distinguishing pragmatic content [Grice 2004: 75-98; Bogdanov 1996]. In our view, it seems more appropriate to interpret pragmatic content in connection with the speaker's purpose.

When determining the pragmatic content of speech units, it has become customary to refer to the concept of "illocutionary force," which indicates the speaker's purpose. Proponents of speech act theory associate content with the speaker's influence on the listener and their perception and response to the intended goal [Searle 1986: 160].

The English linguist H. Grice was among the first to propose connecting the category of meaning with the speaker. Grice, who introduced the concepts of "subjective meaning" or "speaker's meaning" into pragmatic theory, described the formula "A means something by X," explaining that "someone (A) implies a certain meaning when using a linguistic unit (X)." According to the scholar, the subjective meaning of a speech structure is the speaker's desire to achieve a specific result by influencing the listener [Searle 1986].

One of the common approaches in the study of pragmatic meaning is the identification of its classificatory features. Linguists have made several proposals for the pragmatic classification of sentences [see, for example: Ivanova, Burlakova, Pocheptsov 1981; Chakhoyan 1979; Bogdanov 1989; Bach 2003; Demyankov 1995]. The diversity of such classifications testifies to the lack of clear boundaries between the distinguished pragmatic meanings. They often overlap, showing that a single sentence can express various meanings.

Despite the variations in classifications, researchers usually prefer to distinguish three main categories of pragmatic content. For instance, O.G. Pocheptsov links such categorical content with the origin of the communicative goal and proposes to differentiate three types of intention: a) description; b) inducement; c) inquiry [Pocheptsov O.G. 1986: 75]. This classification is in some ways consistent with the tradition of categorizing sentences into communicative types.

The difference in the unconditional communicative purpose and the formal structure of a sentence leads to its diverse pragmatic content. As a result of expressing one illocutionary act through another illocutionary act, a group of indirect or secondary speech acts is formed [Safarov 2008: 91]. According to J. Searle, for the interpretation of indirect speech acts, it is important not only for the speaker to express content specific to them through a sentence but



also to explain how the listener comprehends this content. However, the approach or task proposed by the scholar is much more complex. In his interpretation, the speaker, while uttering an indirect speech act, conveys to the listener information with more meaning than what is explicitly said, and the listener should possess the ability to understand this [Searle 1986: 196-197].great opportunities in the implementation of great tasks.

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