

MEANS OF EXPRESSING INITIAL REMARKS OF DISAGREEMENT IN THE BRITISH CULTURE (BASED ON THE NOVEL "LITTLE WOMEN" BY L. M. ALCOTT)

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, there has been a noticeable development of such a direction as communicative linguistics. This is due to the fact that the study of English as a multi-level sign system has reached its apogee. For this reason, the investigated problems, such as speech act-disagreement, in the areas of pragmatics and semantics remain, undoubtedly, relevant to this day. In this article communicative acts of objection are contemplated in terms of pragmatics and semantics on the basis of the novel "Little Women" by Louisa May Alcott. The relevance of the study of speech units, especially communicative acts of objection, is preconditioned by the prevalence of dialogical speech in the sphere of modern communication. The attempts to define and arrange basic distinctive features of communicative acts in the English speech, to consider their semantics in a communicative situation and pragmatic forms of use were made in the given research. It was concluded that in most cases the type of objection depends upon numerous pragmatic factors that might influence the interlocutors' choice of means to express objection.

Keywords: pragmatics, semantics, communicative act, indirect communicative acts, direct communicative acts, objection remarks.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays a rapid development of communicative linguistics is observed. This tendency may be preconditioned by the fact that the study of the English language as a multilevel sign system has reached its peak. For this reason, problems under investigation, specifically, communicative acts of objection in the spheres of pragmatics and semantics remain relevant. The aim of this scientific work is to define and arrange the main characteristics of communicative acts of objection in the English speech, to consider their semantics in a communicative situation and pragmatic forms in use. The aim of the work determined the following objectives: selection and arrangement of utterances of communicative acts of objection on the basis of English author's oeuvre; definition of distinctive features of objection in terms of pragmatics.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data has been collected by using the following groups of research methods: component analysis, discourse analysis, content analysis, comparison, observation.

Theoretical and methodological background of this research is based on the works of Russian scientists in the field of the theory of linguistic signs, the theory and practice of translation of communicative linguistics, cognitive linguistics, theory of speech acts and discourse analysis [N.A. Slyusareva, I. A. Sternin, M. L. Makarov etc.] and works of foreign scientists [R. Jakobson, T.A. Van Dijk, J. Searle, J. Goldsmith, E.L. MacGeorge, G. H. Hofstede].

Materials of the research were various teaching AIDS, scientific articles on linguistics and the English text of the novel written by American writer Louisa May Alcott "Little women" (the examples of use of grammatical and lexical forms of objection), and its translation into the Russian language.

Any language is perceived as a nation's cultural phenomena [Shemshurenko 2015, 87]. In our research work we put forward the hypothesis about the influence of British traditions on the implementation of the initial objection remarks. We hypothesized that due to its national character the British are polite and considerate people who prefer to express any objection with the veiled sentence structures that help the tact to avoid collision of interests of the interlocutors. Thus the British in the course of live communication try more often to use indirect initial objection remarks, instead of direct ones. However, after analyzing the examples from the novel, we were faced with quite the opposite result. This means that depending on the situation context or purpose of the author in the initial objection remarks both direct and indirect acts of speech can be used.

RESULTS

Every person perceives the surrounding environment through the prism of notions. A complex of these notions forms the worldview, based on national culture. A person can think and present his outlook by means of national language units [Sattarova 2014, 657]. To consider in detail how the British use the initial objection remarks, we took the novel written by American writer Louisa May Alcott "Little women" to analyze this problem [Alcott 2014]. Through the whole context of the novel we were able to analyze how often the author uses objection remarks and which types and subtypes of it are largely used in the speech of characters.

J.Searle classifies the speech acts of objection as the direct and indirect [Searle 2009, 173]. Following this classification, we analyzed the remarks of the novel and found that despite the conclusions made earlier about the fact that the British are much more likely to use indirect speech acts, (as they carry an implicit expression of true communicative intent of the speaker due to the peculiarities of the national character of the English people) in this text much more often direct acts of objection are used. Consider some of them:

"It's so dreadful to be poor!" sighed Meg, looking down at her old dress.

"I don't think it's fair for some girls to have plenty of pretty things, and other girls nothing at all," added little Amy [Alcott 2014, 22].

This example demonstrates the use of the expression "I don't think it's fair..." which shows the attitude of the speaker to the previous remark.

"It's naughty to fret, but I do think washing dishes and keeping things tidy is the worst work in the world. It makes me cross, and my hands get so stiff, I can't practice well at all." And Beth looked at her rough hands with a sigh that anyone could hear that time.

"I *don't believe* any of you suffer as I do," cried Amy, "for you don't have to go to school with impertinent girls, who plague you if you don't know your lessons, and laugh at your dresses, and label your father if he isn't rich, and insult you when your nose isn't nice" [Alcott 2014, 112].

In this example we see the use of the expression "I don't believe" in the sense "I don't think so", which directly transmits the disagreement of the speaker.

"Is that a dagger that I see before me?" muttered Jo, rolling her eyes and clutching at the air, as she had seen a famous tragedian do.

"No, it's the toasting fork, with Mother's shoe on it instead of the bread. Beth's stage-struck!" cried Meg, and the rehearsal ended in a general burst of laughter [Alcott 2014, 43].

Direct means of expressing disagreement, "No, it's the toasting fork..." was used in the response sentence. The particle "No" helps to strengthen the speaker's objection.

"Yes, Jo, your little friend is very welcome, and I hope Meg will remember that children should be children as long as they can."

"I *don't call* myself a child, and I'm *not* in my teens yet," observed Amy [Alcott 2014, 186].

Analyzing this example it is necessary to take into consideration the usage of such expression as “I don’t call myself a child”. Out the context it is impossible to mark this sentence as an act of objection, but the semantic field of the dialogue helps us to attribute this expression to direct initial objective remarks.

“You’d be angry in five minutes.”

“I’m *never* angry with you” [Alcott 2014, 179].

In this case the phrase “I’m never...” is used by the speaker as the form of disagreement. The negation is delivered by the word “never”. Therefore, it is obvious that the speaker not only denies the words of the interlocutor but also does not agree with them.

Considering direct speech acts on the example of the novel we can draw a conclusion that during the plot the writer uses them (direct speech acts) for more coherent and accurate meaning which he wants to convey to the reader.

The next type of classification that was found in the novel in the process of the analysis is indirect speech acts. They are observed as the statements with no definite meaning, thus, their illocutionary force is not a part of semantics. The meaning of these statements is defined according to the situation of the utterance. Consider following examples of indirect initial remarks:

“Let Marmee think we are getting things for ourselves, and then surprise her. We must go shopping tomorrow afternoon, Meg. There is so much to do about the play for Christmas night,” said Jo, marching up and down, with her hands behind her back, and her nose in the air.

“I *don’t mean* to act any more after this time. I’m getting too old for such things,” observed Meg, who was as much a child as ever about ‘dressing-up’ frolics [Alcott 2014, 67].

This example demonstrates the use of the phrase “I don’t mean” which implies the disagreement with the interlocutor’s words. The translation of this expression outside the context sounds “I don’t mean”, but the contextual feature of the text gives us the opportunity to understand what the author had in mind. Thus, we see that the speaker responds with his disagreement on the offer of the interlocutor to do something.

“Aunt March had a good fit and sent the supper,” cried Jo, with a sudden inspiration.

“*All wrong*. Old Mr. Laurence sent it,” replied Mrs. March [Alcott 2014, 92].

In this utterance-reaction the author uses contextually-situational indirect speech act of objection: All wrong. This expression in isolation from the contextual form does not carry the meaning which is implied in the dialogue. Apart from the context the expression conveys the meaning of “all wrong, all lies”, but in the novel it clearly depicts a situation of disagreement.

“You have done a great deal for your country, sir” I said, feeling respect now, instead of pity.

“*Not a mite more than I ought*, ma’am. I’d go myself, if I was any use. As I ain’t, I give my boys, and give ‘em free” [Alcott 2014, 158].

The British, as was mentioned above, have such distinctive features of their characters as tolerance and courtesy. This example demonstrates the case of using expression “*Not a mite more than I ought*”, as a polite form of disagreement. Based on the context, we see that the speaker is talking to his mother, and he just cannot use a direct form of refusal in his utterance.

“Please forgive my rudeness, and come and dance with me.”

“I’m *afraid it will be too disagreeable* to you,” said Meg, trying to look offended and failing entirely [Alcott 2014, 69].

In this example, we see the use of indirect speech act in a response utterance. Objection is transmitted through the expression of regret "I am afraid but ..." Usually, the British use this form in order not to offend the interlocutor, expressing at the same time their opinion. Thus, the possibility of conflict between chatting people is avoided.

"Where?"

"In your face."

"Nonsense, that's of no use" [Alcott 2014, 117].

To understand why, in this example, the expression "*Nonsense*, that's of no use", is used it is necessary to consider the lexical aspect of the word "Nonsense". Nonsense (eng. nonsense from lat. non – no and sensus – meaning) is the statement without any sense or the lack of sense. The term "nonsense" is quite close in meaning to the term absurd (absurdity, incongruity). In the classification by J. Searle this expression refers to the words of the evaluation semantics, that is, the expression shows that the speaker disagrees with the interlocutor.

During the research different grammatical and lexical ways of formation of the objection remarks were considered. After analyzing the use of these structures in the context of communication, we summed up that the grammar and vocabulary that can be expressed in various forms, undoubtedly, is an important part of the construction of the speech act of objection. These structures, merging together, can convey a certain mood of the communicant, so the incorrectly constructed grammatical and lexical remarks can be wrongly interpreted. That is, grammar and vocabulary, as well as the other areas of lexicology should be taken into consideration during the communication. In order to avoid conflicts during the conversation it is important to realize the connotation meaning, which is carried by different grammatical and lexical structures.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of our study was to identify and systematize the main features of acts of disagreement in English speech, as well as to consider their semantic significance in the situation of communication and pragmatic forms in use. Having examined in detail the main means and forms of expression of speech acts of disagreement during the conversation and the example of a work of art, we made conclusions about the use of initial remarks of objection in English speech behavior. Firstly, we analyzed the theoretical material and defined the concept of the term "speech act-disagreement", which is interpreted as a purposeful communicative action performed according to the rules of linguistic behavior. That is, we found that the speaker can convey the disagreement through a variety of linguistic and verbal means of the illocutionary goal. Secondly, relying on the classification of speech acts based on the illocutionary goal proposed by J. Searle, the following classes were studied: representations, directives, commissions, expressions and declarations. Thus, we summed up that, depending on the illocutionary goal of the utterance, disagreement can refer to any of the above classes. Moreover, in our research work we considered the problem of the influence of English traditions on the implementation of initial remarks of disagreement. As a result, we concluded that, by their national character, the English are polite and delicate people who prefer to express any disagreement with the help of veiled designs that help tactfully avoid the collision of the interlocutors interests. So, the English in the communication use more often indirect initial replicas of disagreement than direct ones. However, having analyzed the work of art, we were presented with quite the opposite result. This means that depending on the situation, the context or the purpose of the author, both direct and indirect speech acts can be used in the initial remarks of disagreement. Having considered the examples taken from the novel "Little women", we compared the use of all the expressions of objection in the work. It was found that there are more facts of using direct speech acts than indirect.

CONCLUSIONS

It's a well-known fact that British people use indirect speech acts in their communication much more than direct because of their character features and national etiquette. It also can be explained by the following peculiar properties:

First of all, indirection “unties hands” of the author, giving her a chance, (if it is necessary), to emphasize that she keeps in mind only the literal meaning of the saying; secondly, the indirect form of expression, as usual, increases the politeness of the act of communication, because one of the significant principals of courtesy is considered to give freedom of reaction to your partner. However, the author of the given novel “Little women”, Louisa May Alcott, as we had already pointed out, used mostly direct speech acts of objection in her book. Thus, we can come to the conclusion that the author used them for a purpose. Perhaps, she had the aim to reveal the character of a hero using vivid expression of the illocutionary force of the utterance.

Research materials and results may be used by the teachers of foreign languages to develop and improve the speaking skills with understanding of the main content of the dialogues at the lessons.

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