

THE COMMUNICATIVE-PRAGMATIC NATURE OF THE SPEECH GENRE OF “INVITATION/OFFER” AND ITS PLACE WITHIN THE SYSTEM OF SPEECH ACTS

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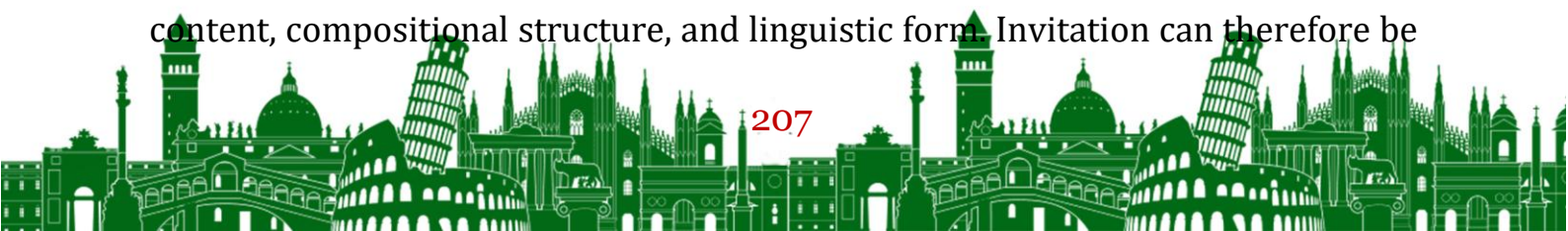
Abstract. This thesis examines the communicative-pragmatic nature of the speech genre of *invitation/offer* and determines its position within the system of speech acts. Drawing on speech act theory, pragmalinguistics, and the theory of speech genres, the study analyzes the illocutionary and perlocutionary characteristics of invitation utterances. The research demonstrates that invitation functions as a complex communicative phenomenon combining directive and commissive features. It is characterized by a specific communicative purpose, participant roles, contextual conditions, and culturally conditioned linguistic realizations. The study argues that invitation constitutes an independent speech genre with stable pragmatic parameters while occupying an intermediate position within the broader system of speech acts.

Keywords: speech genre, invitation, offer, speech act, pragmatics, illocution, communication, directive, commissive, discourse.

The anthropocentric orientation of modern linguistics has increased scholarly interest in language use within real communicative situations. Contemporary pragmalinguistic studies focus not only on linguistic structures but also on the intentions of speakers, communicative goals, and the effects of utterances on interlocutors. Within this framework, speech genres represent stable forms of communication that emerge in recurring social situations. According to M. Bakhtin, every sphere of human activity develops relatively stable types of utterances, which he termed speech genres.

Among the numerous speech genres employed in everyday communication, the genre of *invitation/offer* occupies a special place. It serves as an important means of establishing social interaction, expressing politeness, maintaining interpersonal relations, and encouraging cooperative action. Despite its frequency and significance, the communicative-pragmatic status of invitation remains a subject of ongoing linguistic discussion.

The concept of speech genre is closely associated with communicative situations and social interaction. Speech genres possess relatively stable thematic content, compositional structure, and linguistic form. Invitation can therefore be



regarded as a conventionalized communicative act performed in predictable social contexts.

From the perspective of speech act theory, developed by J. Austin and J. Searle, every utterance performs an action. Austin distinguished between locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, while Searle classified speech acts into representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations.

The speech genre of invitation demonstrates characteristics of several speech act categories. On the one hand, it functions as a directive because the speaker attempts to influence the addressee's future behavior. On the other hand, it exhibits commissive features because the speaker often undertakes certain obligations regarding the proposed event or activity.

For example:

- *Would you like to join us for dinner tonight?*
- *I invite you to attend the conference next week.*
- *Please come and visit us whenever you have time.*

These utterances not only encourage participation but also imply the speaker's willingness to host, organize, or facilitate the proposed activity.

Communicative-Pragmatic Characteristics of Invitation

The communicative purpose of invitation is to encourage the addressee to participate voluntarily in an event, action, or interaction that is desirable to the speaker. Unlike commands or requests, invitations typically benefit both participants and emphasize social solidarity.

The pragmatic structure of invitation includes several components:

Speaker (Inviter).

The initiator of communication who expresses a desire for the addressee's participation.

Addressee (Invitee).

The recipient who is expected to evaluate and respond to the invitation.

Communicative Intention.

The intention to establish, strengthen, or maintain social relations through shared participation.

Expected Response.

Acceptance, rejection, postponement, or negotiation of the proposed activity.

The success of an invitation depends on a number of pragmatic factors, including social status, interpersonal distance, cultural norms, situational appropriateness, and communicative context. Pragmalinguistic research



emphasizes that meaning emerges not only from linguistic forms but also from contextual interpretation.

Invitation within the System of Speech Acts

The place of invitation within speech act taxonomy is not entirely straightforward. Researchers have proposed different classifications because invitation combines several communicative functions.

Directive Features - Invitation belongs to the directive category because it attempts to influence the future actions of the addressee. The speaker seeks to obtain a behavioral response, namely participation in a proposed activity.

Example: *Join us for lunch tomorrow.* The speaker expects the addressee to perform a future action.

Commissive Features - At the same time, invitation often contains an implicit commitment by the speaker. By inviting someone, the speaker assumes responsibility for organizing, hosting, or facilitating the event.

Example: *Let me take you out for dinner.* The speaker commits to providing hospitality.

Consequently, invitation occupies an intermediate position between directives and commissives. Its hybrid nature distinguishes it from pure requests, commands, promises, or offers.

Direct and Indirect Realizations of Invitation

One of the most important pragmatic characteristics of invitation is its ability to be expressed directly or indirectly.

Direct Invitations

- *I invite you to our wedding.*
- *Please come to the meeting tomorrow.*

The communicative intention is explicitly stated.

Indirect Invitations

- *We are having a small party this evening.*
- *There will be a seminar next week if you are interested.*

Here the invitation is implied rather than openly expressed. The addressee must infer the speaker's intention from contextual cues.

Indirect invitations are particularly common in cultures that value politeness, interpersonal harmony, and respect for individual autonomy. Such strategies reduce communicative pressure and allow the addressee greater freedom in responding.

Cultural and Social Dimensions of Invitation



Invitation is strongly influenced by cultural conventions and social norms. Different linguistic communities employ distinct pragmatic strategies for expressing hospitality and solidarity.

In English-speaking cultures, invitations frequently emphasize individual choice and personal autonomy through modal verbs and mitigators:

- *Would you like to come?*
- *If you are free, we'd be delighted to see you.*

In Uzbek communicative culture, invitations often reflect collectivist values, hospitality traditions, and stronger interpersonal involvement. Expressions such as *Marhamat qiling*, *Mehmonga keling*, and *Albatta tashrif buyuring* demonstrate the cultural significance attached to welcoming guests and maintaining social bonds.

These differences illustrate the close relationship between language, culture, and communicative behavior.

Conclusion

The speech genre of invitation represents a complex communicative-pragmatic phenomenon situated at the intersection of speech act theory and discourse studies. It functions as a relatively stable communicative form characterized by specific intentions, participant roles, contextual conditions, and expected responses.

Analysis shows that invitation possesses both directive and commissive properties. It encourages the addressee to perform a future action while simultaneously implying commitments on the part of the speaker. This dual nature explains its distinctive position within the system of speech acts.

Furthermore, the realization of invitation is influenced by sociocultural norms, interpersonal relations, and pragmatic context. Direct and indirect strategies serve different communicative purposes and reflect varying degrees of politeness and social distance.

Therefore, invitation should be regarded as an independent speech genre whose communicative-pragmatic characteristics reveal the intricate relationship between language, action, and social interaction.

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