INTERPRETATION OF THE REPROACH SPEECH ACT IN MODERN LINGUO-PRAGMATIC APPROACHES

ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИЯ РЕЧЕВОГО АКТА УПРЁКА В СОВРЕМЕННЫХ ЛИНГВОПРАГМАТИЧЕСКИХ ПОДХОДАХ

TANBEH NUTQIY AKTINING ZAMONAVIY LINGVOPRAGMATIK YONDASHUVLARDA TALQINI

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Annotation. *The topic "Interpretation of the Reproach Speech Act in Modern Linguo-Pragmatic Approaches" investigates the communicative functions and pragmatic aspects of reproach as a form of criticism in communication. The reproach speech act is characterized by the speaker's expression of disapproval or condemnation of the listener's behavior. The study applies key pragmatic theories such as Speech Act Theory, Politeness Theory, and Relevance Theory to examine the structure, role, and social significance of reproach in various communicative contexts. It looks at how reproach is shaped by social roles, cultural contexts, and other linguistic elements, providing a deeper understanding of its function in linguistic and pragmatic analysis.*

Key words: *Reproach Speech Act, Linguo-Pragmatics, Speech Act Theory, Illocutionary Act, Face-Threatening Act (FTA), Politeness Theory, Relevance Theory, Cultural Context, Social Identity, Interpersonal Communication, Behavioral Regulation, Criticism and Correction, Power Dynamics, Social Norms, Emotional Influence, Language and Power.*

Аннотация. *Исследование речевого акта упрёка в современных лингвопрагматических подходах направлено на анализ функций упрёка как формы критики в различных коммуникативных ситуациях. Упрёк*

рассматривается как акт, в котором говорящий выражает недовольство по отношению к поведению собеседника. В работе используются основные теории лингвопрагматики, такие как теория речевых актов, теория вежливости и теория релевантности, чтобы проанализировать структуру и роль упрёка в общении. Внимание уделяется тому, как упрёк зависит от социальных ролей, культурных особенностей и других лингвистических факторов, а также как он воспринимается в разных коммуникативных контекстах.

Ключевые слова: Акт упрёка, Лингвопрагматика, Теория речевых актов, Иллокуторный акт, Угроза потери лица (FTA), Теория вежливости, Теория релевантности, Культурный контекст, Социальная идентичность, Межличностная коммуникация, Регуляция поведения, Критика и исправление, Динамика власти, Социальные нормы, Эмоциональное влияние, Язык и власть.

Annotatsiya. Tanbeh nutqiy aktining zamonaviy lingvopragmatik yondashuvlarda talqini mavzusi, nutqiy aktlarning kommunikativ vazifalari va pragmatik jihatlari bo'yicha chuqur tahlil olib boradi. Tanbeh — bu tinglovchining xatti-harakatini tanqid qilish, uni noto'g'ri ish qilganlikda ayblash yoki unga maslahatlarga asoslangan ogohlantirishdir. Tadqiqotda, nutqiy aktlar nazariyasi, xushmuomalalik nazariyasi va relevansiya nazariyasi kabi zamonaviy lingvopragmatik yondashuvlar orqali tanbehning kommunikativ roli, strukturalari va ijtimoiy ahamiyati o'rganiladi. Tanbehning ijtimoiy muhitda qanday paydo bo'lishi va qabul qilinishini tahlil qilish, uning tilshunoslik va pragmatika sohasidagi o'rni haqida kengroq tasavvur beradi.

Kalit so'zlar: Tanbeh Nutqiy Akti, Lingvopragmatika, Nutqiy Aktlar Nazariyasi, Illokutsion Akt, Yuzga Tahdidli Akt (FTA), Xushmuomalalik Nazariyasi, Relevansiya Nazariyasi, Madaniy Kontekst, Ijtimoiy Shaxsiyat, O'zaro Muloqot, Xulq-atvorni Nazorat Qilish, Tanqid va To'g'rilash, Quvvat Dinamikasi, Ijtimoiy Nizomlar, Emotsional Ta'sir, Til va Quvvat.

Introduction. The speech act of reproach plays a crucial role in everyday communication, acting as a direct means by which speakers express disapproval, criticism, or moral correction toward the behavior of others. As one of the more emotionally charged speech acts, reproach goes beyond mere informational transfer—it seeks to influence the listener's future behavior, challenge existing social norms, or reaffirm a moral or ethical standard. While reproach is common in all cultures, the way it is delivered, understood, and its impact on interpersonal dynamics can vary significantly based on contextual, cultural, and linguistic factors. In the field of linguistics, particularly pragmatics, reproach is often analyzed within the framework of speech act theory, which investigates how utterances perform actions in communication. According to this theory, speech acts can be categorized into various types, and reproach is typically classified as an illocutionary act with an underlying illocutionary force—such as expressing criticism or reprimanding a behavior. Through these acts, speakers convey their intentions to influence the listener's behavior, and the success of such acts relies heavily on the appropriate use of language and contextual understanding. Politeness theory, another key aspect of pragmatics, further illuminates the complexity of reproach. According to Brown and Levinson's framework, reproach is considered a face-threatening act—one that directly challenges or diminishes the social identity (or "face") of the listener. As such, reproach is often a delicate balancing act in communication. Speakers may employ strategies to mitigate the intensity of their reproach, using indirect language or hedging to soften the criticism. For example, using phrases like "I understand your perspective, but…" or "Maybe next time, you could consider…" helps to maintain the social harmony between the speaker and listener, reducing the risk of confrontation or resentment. The Relevance Theory by Sperber and Wilson also provides valuable insights into how reproach operates pragmatically. This theory suggests that communication is governed by the principle of relevance, where the speaker aims to make their message as relevant and easily interpretable as possible for the listener. In the case of reproach, the speaker's criticism must be framed in a way that maximizes its relevance to the listener's current situation, while also being

sensitive to their cognitive environment. A reproach that is too direct or poorly timed may fail to achieve its intended impact, as it could be perceived as irrelevant or inappropriate. Cultural factors also play a significant role in the pragmatics of reproach.[5] In some cultures, direct criticism is seen as a necessary form of communication, while in others, it is avoided to maintain social harmony. Additionally, age, gender, and social status can influence how reproach is delivered and received. For example, younger individuals may feel more comfortable giving reproach in informal settings, whereas older individuals or those in authority may rely on more indirect forms of reproach to maintain their social standing. This paper aims to explore the intricate dynamics of the reproach speech act by examining its structure, communicative function, and social implications through the lens of modern linguistic pragmatics. By analyzing reproach in terms of illocutionary force, politeness strategies, and relevance, we gain a deeper understanding of how language reflects social power, emotional expression, and interpersonal negotiation. Through this exploration, we will not only highlight the theoretical foundations of reproach but also provide practical insights into how this speech act operates in real-world communication, influencing everything from familial relationships to professional interactions.

Literature review. The reproach speech act plays a crucial role in everyday communication, acting as a direct means by which speakers express disapproval, criticism, or moral correction toward the behavior of others. As one of the more emotionally charged speech acts, reproach goes beyond mere informational transfer—it seeks to influence the listener's future behavior, challenge existing social norms, or reaffirm a moral or ethical standard. While reproach is common in all cultures, the way it is delivered, understood, and its impact on interpersonal dynamics can vary significantly based on contextual, cultural, and linguistic factors. One of the foundational approaches to understanding reproach is Speech Act Theory (SAT), pioneered by philosophers like J.L. Austin and John Searle. SAT focuses on the way in which utterances function not only to convey information but to perform actions. According to Austin, every speech act involves three components: the

locutionary act (the actual utterance), the illocutionary act (the function of the utterance), and the perlocutionary act (the effect of the utterance on the listener). In this framework, reproach can be classified as an illocutionary act with a clear illocutionary force — criticism or moral correction. [1] For example, when someone says, *"You should have known better than to act like that,"* the illocutionary intent is to correct the listener's behavior. The importance of reproach in SAT lies in its illocutionary force; it emphasizes how language is not passive but actively shapes social realities. In this regard, reproach becomes a vital mechanism for social control and the regulation of behavior, two central concerns in pragmatics. According to Politeness Theory of Brown and Levinson, reproach is considered a face-threatening act (FTA). [2] The theory emphasizes that people maintain their social identity (their "face") in communication, and this identity must be managed in interactions to avoid conflicts and maintain social harmony. When reproach is made, it typically challenges the listener's social face, leading to a potential loss of face. For example, in a situation where a superior says to a subordinate, *"I can't believe you made that mistake again,"* the reproach challenges the subordinate's professional competence, which can be perceived as a loss of face. To mitigate the negative effects of this, speakers often use strategies such as hedging or indirectness: *"I'm not sure if you meant to, but I think there was an issue with your work."* By employing these strategies, the speaker helps to protect the listener's face while still achieving the goal of issuing a reproach. The face-threatening nature of reproach makes it an essential feature of social interactions, particularly in hierarchical or formal relationships, where maintaining one's social standing is paramount. Brown and Levinson argue that understanding FTAs, especially in reproach, helps explain why people modify their language in such contexts—politeness strategies serve to soften the impact of face-threatening statements. The Relevance Theory from Sperber and Wilson, offers another insightful framework for understanding the pragmatics of reproach. According to this theory, human communication is governed by the principle of relevance, which states that speakers aim to provide information that is most relevant and useful to their listeners, while listeners seek to process information

that maximizes cognitive relevance.[3] In the case of reproach, the relevance of the criticism to the listener's cognitive environment is crucial. The speaker must frame the reproach in a way that is relevant to the listener's current situation and beliefs. For instance, in a workplace context, a manager might say, "I expected a higher quality of work from you," but this reproach is only relevant if it aligns with the listener's existing understanding of their role and responsibilities. If the criticism is seen as irrelevant or misplaced, it will fail to have the intended effect. Relevance Theory also emphasizes that the success of reproach depends on the speaker's ability to make their message cognitively accessible to the listener, ensuring that it is understood within the appropriate context. If reproach is framed without consideration for the listener's cognitive environment, it may be ignored, misunderstood, or even rejected. Therefore, the concept of relevance is crucial in explaining why some reproaches succeed in motivating behavior change while others fail. Another essential dimension of reproach is its cultural variability. Different cultures have distinct norms and expectations regarding the expression and reception of reproach. [4] For example, in some collectivist cultures, direct reproach is often avoided to preserve harmony and social cohesion, while in more individualistic cultures, direct reproach may be considered a valid form of communication. This cultural variation highlights why reproach is a critical subject of study in pragmatics, as it underscores how social norms shape the way speech acts are formulated and received. Research by Scollon and Scollon suggests that hierarchical relationships and age also influence the form of reproach. In cultures where respect for elders is paramount, reproach from a younger person to an elder may be phrased very differently, often through indirect language or euphemisms, to avoid confrontation. For instance, in some Asian cultures, younger individuals may use expressions like, *"I'm not sure, but maybe you could try..."* to soften the reproach, whereas in Western contexts, direct criticism might be more socially acceptable. Thus, social hierarchies, power relations, and cultural values play a pivotal role in shaping the form and perception of reproach. Understanding these variables helps explain the dynamics of power and social structure in

communication. Finally, the impact of reproach on interpersonal relationships cannot be overlooked. While reproach can sometimes repair relationships by addressing behavioral issues, it can also create tension or distance between individuals if not managed carefully. Studies show that effective communication involves not just the content of reproach, but also the delivery method, including tone, timing, and choice of words of Holmes.[3] For example, a well-delivered reproach can strengthen relationships by demonstrating care and concern, while a poorly delivered reproach can lead to feelings of alienation and resentment. This highlights the importance of reproach as a tool for relationship maintenance. The ability to issue reproach effectively is crucial in many domains, from family dynamics to professional settings, where maintaining trust and respect is key.[6]

Conclusion. The reproach speech act is an essential component of human communication, offering valuable insights into how language functions in social contexts. It is not merely an expression of disapproval or criticism but a complex act with emotional, social, and pragmatic dimensions. As explored in this review, reproach can be analyzed through multiple theoretical lenses, including Speech Act Theory, Politeness Theory, and Relevance Theory, each of which highlights different facets of its communicative function. From a speech act perspective, reproach is a form of illocutionary act with a clear intention to challenge or correct the listener's behavior. This highlights the power of language to influence and regulate actions within a social framework. However, reproach is also recognized as a face-threatening act, which challenges the social identity or "face" of the listener, requiring careful consideration of politeness strategies to maintain social harmony. The Relevance Theory provides additional depth by showing how reproach must be contextually relevant to be effective, taking into account the listener's cognitive environment and current understanding. The role of reproach in interpersonal dynamics cannot be underestimated. It serves not only as a tool for maintaining social order but also as a mechanism for strengthening relationships, provided it is employed tactfully. Cultural and social norms deeply influence the form and reception of reproach, with significant variations across different societies,

hierarchical structures, and social contexts. This demonstrates how reproach reflects underlying power dynamics, authority, and respect within human interactions. Ultimately, reproach is a multifaceted speech act that is indispensable for understanding how language functions beyond the mere exchange of information. It serves as a reflection of cultural values, social norms, and the intricate web of interpersonal relationships. By studying reproach through the lens of linguo-pragmatics, we gain deeper insights into the emotional and social forces that shape communication, providing a fuller understanding of how language governs human interactions and relationships.

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