Міністерство освіти і науки України
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Кафедра германської та фіно-угорської філології

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Студентки групи Мла01-19
факультету германської філології і перекладу
денної форми здобуття освіти
спеціальності 035 Філологія
Галій Олександри Дмитрівни

Науковий керівник:
кандидат філологічних наук,
доцент кафедри германської та фіно-угорської філології
Пініч Ірина Петрівна

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Department of German and Finno-Ugric

Term Paper
"Expressive speech acts in conversational English"

HALII OLEKSANDRA
Group MLa01-19
Germanic Philology and Translation Faculty

Research Adviser
Associate Prof. Iryna P. Pinich
PhD (Linguistics)

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is a crucial part of everyday life therefore in this paper, the focus is on the usage of expressive speech acts in conversational English. It is fair to say, that one may not know that one's speech completely consists of various speech acts. In fact, in daily-basis conversations, people tend to express their opinions, likes and dislikes very emotionally using all kinds of expressive acts. John Austin made up a Speech Act Theory that deals with utterances being words and actions that come with consequences. Further, John Searle improved Austin's classification of speech acts hence this paper focuses on Searle's classification of expressive speech acts.

This study aims to describe the kinds and forms of expressive speech acts in the TV show "The Good Place" Session 1 episodes 1, 2 and 11. It belongs to the descriptive qualitative method.

The research object was an expressive speech act. The data source was utterances which contain expressive speech acts in the TV show "The Good Place".

CHAPTER 1

SPEECH ACT AS A COMMUNICATIVE UNIT

1. 1. speech act as a communicative unit; its role in conversational English.
People live to communicate with each other because without communication they would just simply exist. Speech acts help people express their feelings and beliefs in the best way possible meaning they not only utter different words to one another but convey various meanings, particularly: requests, apologies, warnings, predictions etc. Generally speaking, a speech act is an utterance that serves a function in communication.

Words hold a powerful force; they can hurt or heal or change lives. When people talk, they express their emotions and feelings, nevertheless, their words can be misunderstood. For instance, John Austin writes: "It has come to be commonly held that many utterances which look like statements are either not intended at all, or only intended in part, to record or impart straightforward information about the fact"(Austin 1962, pp. 1–2) This means that language is quite complex, besides by speaking people not only say things, they do things. Speech acts can be difficult to perform in a second language due to a big number of idiomatic expressions and cultural norms. For example, as an English teacher I see students encounter a problem of understanding the answer to the request- "Do you mind closing the window?" J. Austin mentions some utterances suggest actions, so in the request above the speaker asks to close the window. The answer can be confusing because the common positive reply to a general question, which starts with an auxiliary verb

"do", is – "I do" or "Yes". However, in this case, "I do" would mean a negative answer.

People may be blind to the acts that mostly all communication consists of speech acts, moreover, without them, it would be impossible to clearly understand one another. A speech act may contain only one word – "Sorry!" but how do we get to the core of its meaning? Speech acts include **real-life interactions** and require not only knowledge of the language but also appropriate use of that language within a given culture. Speech acts are quite essential in real life especially if a speaker is not a native. Only by understanding how a language works can a person understand its true meaning.

1.2.   Classification of speech acts by J. Austin

People are very complex creatures; one can perform different actions and fulfil the role of several people. Let's imagine there is a man called Mike. He is a lawyer, a son and a husband and for each person in his life he performs a different function, he is in different contexts and his role in different contexts has opposite meanings. The same can be said about the meanings of the utterances. They can the have same **referential** meaning but their **pragmatic** meaning is different, they are used in different contexts. Similarly, each utterance combines a **propositional base** (objective part) with the **pragmatic component** (subjective part). A British philosopher of language and leading proponent of ordinary language philosophy, John Austin, has pointed out that the words people say denote actions. He reached this conclusion through an analysis of what he termed **'performative verbs'**. The sentence "I pronounce you husband and wife" is not just words, after them the situation changes, and the action is happening, hence Austin named such utterances performative and opposed to them are statements or constatives.

On any occasion, the action performed by producing an utterance will consist of three related acts. The first one is a locutionary act with the help of which a meaningful utterance is made. In other words that is a fact, a literal meaning of something. To produce a locutionary act a correct word order in the sentence must be preserved.

The second one is an illocutionary act which can be explained as the speaker's intention in delivering an utterance. This act includes stating, promising, apologizing, threatening, ordering, predicting and requesting.

A perlocutionary act is an action or state of mind brought about by, or as a consequence of saying something and in this case, the result of the utterance on the hearer depends on specific circumstances. Simply stating it is persuading, embarrassing, intimidating or irritating the hearer.

The main distinction between the second and the third speech act is that the illocutionary act embraces the speaker's wish as the perlocutionary states the hearer's action.

1.3.   Speech Act theory by J, Austin

In the latter part of his book "How to Do Things with Words", Austin identified five basic types of performatives. The first type is called Commissives, which are "used to commit the speaker to a certain action" (Austin, 1989: 157), such as promising, undertaking, or proposing. The second type is Expositives, which are used to explain or clarify views and references, such as quoting, citing, or recapitulating. The third type is Exercitives, which involve "the giving of a decision in favour of or against a certain course of action, or advocacy of it" (Austin, 1989: 155). The fourth type is Behavabitives, which express reactions to other people's behaviour or attitudes, such as apologizing, thanking, or complimenting. They "include the notion of reaction to

other people's behaviour and fortunes and of attitudes and expressions of attitudes to someone else's past conduct or imminent conduct" (Austin, 1989: 160). The fifth and final type is Verdictives, which involve delivering a finding based on evidence or reasons, such as acquitting, convicting, or assessing.

CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER 1

In conclusion, speech acts are essential units of communication that enable individuals to convey different meanings, feelings, and beliefs. Despite the complexity of language, people use speech acts to perform various functions such as making requests, apologies, warnings, and predictions. However, speech acts can be challenging to perform in a second language due to cultural norms and idiomatic expressions. Therefore, to understand the core meaning of a speech act, one needs to have not only knowledge of the language but also an understanding of its cultural context.

Speech acts not only play a crucial role in communication, but they also allow individuals to express their intentions and convey their messages effectively. J. Austin's classification of speech acts falls into locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts highlighting the complexity of language and how the meaning of an utterance goes beyond its literal interpretation. Through the analysis of performative verbs, Austin showed how words can denote actions, and the speaker's intention in delivering an utterance can influence the hearer's response. Understanding the different types of speech acts can help individuals communicate more effectively and avoid misunderstandings in both first and second-language contexts.

CHAPTER 2

EXPRESSIVE SPEECH ACTS

2.1. John Searle's Classification of Speech Acts

John Searle examined and changed the classification a bit. In his book "Expression and Meaning" (Searle, 1979) he came up with his own 5 classifications.

- **Assertive** speech act commits the speaker to the truth of the preposition. It is mainly a statement, description, classification, explanation and clarification. The quality of voice is quite important when people assert something
- **Directive** act commits the speaker to do something in the future by ordering, commanding, requesting, pleading, begging or insisting.
- **Commissive** commits speaker to some future voluntary action and reveals speaker's intention. Commissive speech acts are vows, threats, guarantees, promises and oaths.
- **Expressive** act reveals the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards a particular preposition. This includes thanking, apologizing, welcoming and deploring
- **Declaration** brings a change in the external situation meaning that it is an utterance that changes the word by representing it as being so changed.

2.2. Expressive speech acts by John Searle

The focus of this paper is on speech acts that are classified as expressive. These types of speech acts involve expressing the speaker's emotions or feelings about themselves or the world, according to Searle (Searle, 1976: 12). Norrick further explains that expressive speech acts convey psychological states rather than beliefs

or intentions related to a particular situation. Taavitsainen and Jucker have also studied expressive speech acts in 18th-century English, particularly in the context of politeness and gratitude, defining them as conveying the speaker's attitudes, emotions, and mental states (Taavitsainen and Jucker 2010: 159).

According to Searle's classification, there are ten expressive speech acts: act of wishing, act of thanking, act of congratulation, act of apology, act of condole, act of greeting, act of lamentation, act of attitude, act of agreement and act of exclamation. Each of them is different from the other, nevertheless, they all have some features in common.

Taking into consideration the act of wishing, it can be said that one strongly desires something to happen or come true. Therefore, the speaker expresses this wish with words. As to the act of thanking, it expresses gratitude, most often with the words "Thank you!". Nevertheless, there are other means of conveying appreciation. This act is widely used in conversations on a daily basis. The third act is congratulation. To congratulate someone is to share in their happiness or joy by expressing pleasure or praise towards them for an achievement or fortunate event and to offer them good wishes. We express regret when apologizing, so in the act of apology, one is sorry for something that has been done wrong or has caused a problem. According to Moghaddam , Condolence is suffering together; it means that knowledge is a loss, showing sympathy, or empathizing with someone. An act of greeting is a courteous expression or gesture to acknowledge or welcome someone. It's a way of acknowledging someone's presence and wishing them well-being and happiness. Lamentation is the passionate expression of grief or sorrow; weeping. Laments can also be expressed in a verbal manner, where the participant would lament about something they regret or someone they have lost, usually accompanied by wailing, moaning and or crying. Attitude refers to a mental disposition or outlook that is

shaped by personal or social factors and involves a level of positive or negative evaluation towards an object or idea. It influences the way one thinks, feels, and behaves towards something, and may involve assertive or non-conformist behaviour that reflects one's character and disregard for others' opinions while striving for independence and self-expression. When one agrees to something that is an act of agreement. Act of Exclamation Exclamation is an emphatic interjection that also shows a person's hailing. Based on (G. & C. Merriam,1913) Expression of sound or words indicative of emotions such as in surprise, pain, grief, joy, anger, hailing etc.

2.3. Direct and indirect expressive speech acts

The expressive speech act can be direct and indirect, literal and non-literal, implicit and explicit (Meyer, 2009: 50). Combining the literal non-literal and direct and indirect, there are four ways of performing an expressive speech act (Wijana, 1996: 33).

A direct literal speech act is a type of speech where the words used have their usual meaning and the intention of the speaker is conveyed explicitly. This means that the speaker expresses their intention directly without using any figurative or indirect language. For example, a declarative sentence is used to make a statement, an interrogative sentence is used to ask a question, an imperative sentence is used to give a command, and a request is expressed using the imperative form.

A direct non-literal speech act is when the speaker uses a sentence mode that suits the purpose of their speech, but the words used do not have their literal meaning. In other words, the speaker's intention is not conveyed by the words themselves. For example, the speaker might use a declarative sentence to criticize someone, but the literal meaning of the sentence does not convey that intention.

An indirect literal speech act refers to a statement where the meaning of the words used is in line with the speaker's intended purpose, but the sentence structure or mode is not suitable for the purpose. This creates a contradiction between the intended meaning and the expressed form of the speech act.

An indirect non-literal speech act is the speech act that when expressed in sentence mode the meaning of the sentence is incompatible with the intention of the speaker.

CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER 2

Speech acts play a crucial role in communication as they allow individuals to convey their intended meaning and achieve their communicative goals. John Searle's classification of speech acts provides a useful framework for understanding the different types of speech acts and their functions in communication. The five categories of speech acts, including assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration, each serve a unique purpose and have distinct features that distinguish them from one another. Understanding the different types of speech acts can help individuals communicate effectively and achieve their desired outcomes in various social and professional settings. John Searle's classification of ten expressive speech acts provides a framework for understanding these acts, including acts of wishing, thanking, congratulating, apologizing, condoling, greeting, lamenting, expressing an attitude, agreeing, and exclaiming. Expressive speech acts can be direct or indirect, literal or non-literal, implicit or explicit. Understanding the different types of expressive speech acts and how they are performed can help us communicate more effectively and avoid misunderstandings in our daily interactions with others.

CHAPTER 3
EXPRESSIVE SPEECH ACTS IN CONVERSATIONAL ENGLISH IN THE TV SHOW "THE GOOD PLACE"

3.1 Expressive speech acts in the TV show "The good place" episode 1

There are ten expressive speech acts according to Searle's classification. Further in this paper, there will be examples of several acts in a context.

Act of apology:

Example one: Eleanor and Chidi are talking about Eleanor's situation and they want to know what the Bad Place is like. They call Janet because she is the person, who knows everything. Unfortunately, as they are in the Good Place, they are not supposed to know anything about the Bad Place. That is why Janet is apologizing.

Chidi: What's the Bad Place like?

Janet: **Oh, I'm sorry!** That is the only topic I can't tell you about. (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Example two: Eleanor wants Chidi to help her being invisible, so nobody will find out that she does not belong to the Good Place. Chidi does not want to help her, so he politely tells her that.

Eleanor: Okay, we need a plan. I say we just lie low and hope that they don't notice me.

Chidi: **I'm sorry, I don't think I can help you**. I just don't like being dishonest and I can't advise you to be dishonest either. (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Example three:

Eleanor: Chidi, Chidi, Chidi… **I'm sorry that you had to deal with this.**

Chidi: it's okay (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Example four:

When Chidi meets Eleanor Michael is watching them greet each other and then he politely says that he has to go someplace else.

Michael: now, **excuse me.** I have other people to attend to. (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

In these examples, it is seen that the most common way of apologizing is saying "sorry". There are some other words like excuse me, pardon me, my bad, I owe you an apology etc.

Act of greeting:

Example one:

Michael: **Hi, Eleanor, I'm Michael. How are you today?** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Example two:

Michael: Ah, hello everyone, and welcome to your first day in the afterlife…. **Welcome to eternal happiness, welcome to the good life.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Example three:

Chidi: **I'm Chidi Anagonye** and you are my soulmate

Eleanor: **Cool! Bring it in man.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Examples of the expressive speech act of thanking:

There is a party and Michael is going to give a short speech. To grab people's attention he announces it by tapping a cup with a fork. After people have turned their attention and applauded, he said:

Michael: **thank you, thank you, thank you!** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Examples of the expressive speech act of exclamation:

Example one:

Eleanor: your English is amazing!

Chidi: **oh!** I'm actually speaking French. This place translates whatever you say into the language the other person can understand. So, **it's incredible!**

Eleanor: **Whoa!** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Example two:

Eleanor and Chidi come to the party in the enormous mansion. When Eleanor enters, she says:

*Eleanor***: no way.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

She is in a big shock because she has never seen such big rooms.

Act of agreement:

Eleanor: Chidi, you'll stand by my side no matter what, right?

Chidi: of course, I will.

Eleanor: **Promise me. Say, " I promise, I will never betray you for any reason"**

Chidi: Eleanor, **I swear that I will never say or do anything to cause you any harm.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Eleanor is asking Chidi to promise her something and he agrees.

Example two:

Michael is giving Eleanor a tour of her new home and as they are walking Eleanor mentions that there are a lot of frozen yoghurt places. Michael agrees with her.

Eleanor: There are a lot of frozen yoghurt places!

Michael: **Yeah! That's the one thing we put in all the neighbourhoods. People love frozen yoghurt. I don't know what to tell you.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Act of attitude:

Chidi and Eleanor want to know about life in the Bad Place but Janet refuses to tell them. She can only play short audio of what is going on there. After having listened to it Eleanor jumps to the conclusion that the place is horrible.

Eleanor: **well, it doesn't sound awesome.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

3.2. Expressive speech acts in the TV show "The good place" episode 2

The speech act of attitude:

Example one:

Chidi: **This is a mess – morally speaking! This is a putrid disgusting bowl of ethical soup.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Example two:

Michael: **There is obviously something very wrong with this neighbourhood.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Example three:

Chidi: **You are the most self-obsessed person I've ever met.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Examples of the speech act of greeting:

Michael: **Welcome to orientation day two.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Examples of thanking:

Example one:

Michael: what do we know, Janet?

Janet: We know where it happened – here.

Michael: Yes, **thank you, Janet.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Example two:

Tahani: Well, I have to say, this neighbourhood that you built is truly a masterpiece, the likes of which I've never seen. And I have been to Jonny Depp's private bird sanctuary.

Michael: **Well, thank you, that's very kind of you to say.** But it's also dead wrong. This neighbourhood is a disaster. See, I must have made a mistake somewhere and

it led to all this chaos. And now I'm just terrified it's going to happen again. I'm trying to put a good face on but the truth is, I'm just miserable. I have to go. **Thank you so much for your service.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Acts of exclamation:

Example one:

Chidi: It's a book on how to act good.

Eleanor: **oh! Great!** So, you've decided to help me? (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Example two:

Michael: well, Tahani, it's not really your job to clean up but I suppose it's no harm if you really want to.

Tahani: **Oh, well, hurray!**

Michael: **Oh!** (Notices so many volunteers) (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

Act of agreement:

Tahani: We will need about twelve volunteers.

Eleanor: I can't believe all these people are passing on flying to pick up garbage all day. Have fun, nerds.

Chidi: **Eleanor and I would like to help.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016) This example also shows the act of wishing.

Act of condole:

Michael: I don't know what's happening to me. I mean, it's my duty to be calm and in control but I'm falling apart.

Tahani: No, Michael**, you are a paragon of fortitude. You are a mountain of strength.**

Michael: I am not a mountain of strength. I am a canyon full of poo-poo.

Tahani: **Jianyu, the architect of this neighbourhood has just referred to himself as a canyon full of poo-poo. Surely now, you will say something. Grace us with your vocalized wisdom.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2016)

3.3. Expressive speech acts in the TV show "The good place" episode 11

Act of wishing:

Example one:

Shawn: **I just want to go back to my container of goo and go to sleep.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2017)

Example two:

Eleanor: We're going to Medium Place.

Jason: Is there a 7-Eleven on the way? **'cause Janet's powers aren't working and I want some gum and some football cards and some scratchy tickets.**

Eleanor: Go away from me!

Jason: **Okay.** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2017)

In this conversation there is another act, the act of agreement: "Okay". Eleanor asks Jason to go away and he agrees to do that for her.

Act of apology:

Example one:

Eleanor: **Excuse me?** Why am I like this? (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2017)

Example two:

Eleanor: Janet, please we have to go.

Janet: I won't start the train until my husband says it's okay. **I'm sorry, Eleanor**, but I engaged in a ride-or-die protocol, so I'm loyal to Jason forever. (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2017)

Act of greeting:

Example one:

Bad Janet: **What's up ding-dongs?** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2017)

Example two:

Beadie: **Hello, Mindy.** My name is Beadie. I am from the Good Place **and welcome to your first day in the afterlife.**

Man: **What's up, idiot?** *Sorry*, I am late, babe. Hey, are you pregnant?

Beadie: No, that's not possible.

Man: **<u>Congrats!</u>** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2017)

There are examples of acts of apology and the act of congratulation in this short dialogue.

Act of exclamation:

Example one:

Mindy: I followed through. Yeah, I woke up the next morning, went straight to the bank, I withdrew my life savings and I was gonna start that charity.

Eleanor: **Good for you!** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2017)

Example two:

Shawn: However, I've just received word that Eleanor is not currently in the Bad Place. We have no idea where she is.

Everyone: **What?!** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2017)

Example three:

Eleanor's mum: Whose birthday is this?

Eleanor: **Mine!**

Eleanor's dad: **Are you serious? No way!** (Hyman, Mande, Amram & Schur, 2017)

CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER 3

In episodes 1,2 and 11, there is a big range of emotions. Usually, people express their attitude towards something not only with their facial expressions but also with words. Through analyzing episodes of the show, it is seen that thanking, apologizing and greeting are the most common speech acts in daily conversations. People are always being polite, so they use various kinds of expression to assure their communicative goal. These examples can also include only one person, as also wishing, congratulating and showing attitude. However, the example of agreement demands two people: the one – who offers, and the other – who agrees. Several dialogues may include more than one speech act, which is absolutely normal as people speak and show their emotions non-stop.

RESUME

Тема курсової роботи "Експресивні мовленнєві акти у розмовній англійські мові"

Об'єктом дослідження є висловлювання взяті з серіалу "The Good Place".

Мета дослідження:

1. Дослідити важливість мовленнєвих актів у повсякденному житті.

2. Дослідити важливість експресивів у розмовному мовленні
3. Дослідити вживання експресивів у трьох епізодах серіалу "The Good Place"

Тема "Експресивні мовленнєві акти у розмовній англійській мові" є актуальною з кількох причин. По-перше, вивчення експресивної мовленнєвої поведінки є важливим для розуміння мовної комунікації взагалі і способів впливу на співрозмовника зокрема. По-друге, розмовна англійська мова містить велику кількість експресивних висловлювань, які можуть включати в себе високу емоційність і сильну впливовість. Тому, дослідження експресивних мовленнєвих актів у розмовній англійській мові може допомогти краще зрозуміти їх роль і функції в комунікативному процесі. Нарешті, існує потреба у глибокому та всебічному дослідженні даної теми, оскільки на сьогоднішній день вона не є достатньо вивченою і відкрита для подальших досліджень.

У першому розділі курсової роботи пояснюється поняття мовленнєвих актів та їх значення в комунікації. Мовленнєві дії допомагають людям виражати свої почуття та переконання, передаючи різні значення через прохання, вибачення, попередження, передбачення та інші висловлювання. У розділі також розглядається класифікація мовленнєвих актів Дж. Остіном і те, як вони

позначають дії. Теорія мовленнєвого акту Остіна виділяє п'ять основних типів перформативів: комісійні, експозитивні, ексерцитивні, поведінкові та вердиктивні. Розуміння мовленнєвих дій має вирішальне значення в реальних взаємодіях і вимагає не лише знання мови, але й відповідного використання цієї мови в певній культурі.

У другому розділі йдеться про класифікацію, яку запропонував Сьорль. Класифікація мовленнєвих актів Джона Сьорля визначає п'ять категорій мовленнєвих актів, включаючи наполегливі, директивні, комісійні, експресивні та декларативні. Експресивні мовленнєві дії, згідно з Сьорльом, це ті, які передають емоції або ставлення мовця до пропозиції, а не переконання чи наміри, пов'язані з конкретною ситуацією. Він виділяє десять типів експресивних мовленнєвих актів, включаючи акти побажання, подяки, поздоровлення, вибачення, співчуття, вітання, нарікання, ставлення, згоди та вигуку.

У практичній частині курсової роботи розглядаються приклади з серіалу "The Good Place", де аналізується вживання перформативів у діалогічному контексті.

Курсова робота складається з 24 сторінок та 17 джерел.

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