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Term Paper

**A MULTI-PARTY INTERACTION IN ENGLISH DISCOURSE: A
PRAGMALINGUISTIC DIMENSION**

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Introduction

In modern society, where multi-party interactions in various spheres are an integral part of our lives, studying this phenomenon in the context of English discourse is becoming increasingly relevant. Multiparty interaction in English discourse has not only theoretical significance but also practical importance, as it is the foundation for successful communication and interaction in professional and personal spheres.

The **aim** of the research paper is to conduct a comprehensive study of multiparty interaction in English discourse from a pragmalinguistic perspective. To achieve this aim, the following objectives were set:

1. To make a literature review on multiparty interaction in English discourse.
2. Examine the main approaches to the study of multiparty interaction in English discourse.
3. Investigate the types and functions of utterances in multiparty interaction in English discourse.
4. Description of the pragmalinguistic aspects of multiparty interaction in English discourse.
5. Investigate the role of nonverbal communication in multiparty interaction in English discourse.
6. Discuss the research results of multi-party interaction in pragmalinguistic aspect in English discourse.

The object of the study is multiparty interaction in English discourse.

The subject of the study is the pragmalinguistic aspect of this phenomenon.

As material for the study, the audio recordings of native speakers of English in various contexts of multiparty interaction are used. The data are analyzed from the pragmalinguistic perspective and linguistic methods of contextual analysis, discourse analysis and conversational analysis alongside nonverbal communication in multiparty interaction.

The paper consists of introduction, two chapters, conclusion and references. Chapter One considers theoretical research of the background of multi-party interaction in English discourse. It encompasses the problem of the definition of multi-party interaction, approaches to its study and the literature review, types and functions of utterances in multi-party interaction, its pragmatic aspects as well as nonverbal communication.

Chapter Two considers strategies of speech behavior in multi-party interaction: strategy of establishment of speech contact, strategy of maintenance and role exchange.

Paper gives a perspective on further investigation of multi-party interaction.

The research results can be used to improve communicative skills in professional and personal spheres, as well as further research in the field of pragmalinguistics and multiparty interaction in English discourse.

Chapter One. Theoretical research of the background of multi-party interaction in English discourse

1.1 The problem of the definition of multi-party interaction.

Multi-party interaction is a complex communicative phenomenon that involves three or more participants engaging in verbal and nonverbal communication. Nevertheless, determining multi-party interaction is a difficult job to do, since it includes a variety of factors that impact the communication process and its results.

Determining the minimum number of people needed for a situation to be classed as multi-party is one of the issues when defining multi-party interaction. According to certain definitions, three or more people are required for a multi-party interaction, whereas others consider two people to be a kind of multi-party interaction when a third element, for example, a mediator or a problem, is included.

Another difficulty is establishing how involved everyone must be in order for an interaction to be considered multi-party. For instance, when the participants in a meeting are just being addressed by a speaker, it does not constitute multi-party interaction. As long as participants take part in conversations, debates, or working towards a solution, it could be seen as multi-party interaction.

Moreover, multi-party interaction can come in many different forms, and it can happen in a range of scenarios, such as face-to-face or virtual meetings, negotiation, dispute resolution, and cooperation between groups. Consequently, it is necessary to factor in both the context and purpose of multi-party interaction.

Altogether, taking into account the quantity of participants, level of participation, and context, among other things, is necessary for defining multi-party interaction. To create efficient communication and cooperation techniques for varied circumstances, it is crucial to have a clear grasp of what multi-party interaction entails.

The study of multi-party interaction is an important area of research in discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, and pragmatics. In recent years, there has been growing interest in the role of pragmatics in multi-party interaction in English discourse.

Numerous studies have examined the pragmatic aspects of multi-party interaction in English discourse, focusing on various aspects such as turn-taking, discourse markers, politeness, and speech acts. For instance, Stokoe (2013) analyzed the use of nonverbal communication in multi-party interaction in English, while Clift (2016) examined the role of discourse markers in multi-party talk.

Another important aspect of multi-party interaction in English discourse is the distribution of speech acts among participants. Several studies have investigated how participants use different types of speech acts, such as requests, offers, and apologies, in multi-party interaction (Bayraktaroğlu, Günay 2016; Muntigl, Turnbull 2015).

In addition, the study of multi-party interaction has also focused on the role of context and culture in shaping communicative practices. For example, several studies have examined the differences in multi-party interaction across cultures, such as the differences between Western and Asian cultures (Chen, Sun 2017; Kim and Chen, 2017).

1.2 Approaches to the study of multi-party interaction

There are several approaches to analyzing multi-party interaction in English discourse, each emphasizing different aspects of communication. In this section, some of the main approaches to analyzing multi-party interaction are reviewed.

Conversation Analysis (CA) is a widely used approach to analyzing multi-party interaction in English discourse. CA focuses on the sequential organization of

talk, examining how participants take turns, respond to each other, and produce coherent conversational sequences. CA also pays attention to the use of discourse markers and other conversational devices that help structure talk (Schegloff, 2007).

Another approach to analyzing multi-party interaction is Discourse Analysis (DA), which examines how language is used to construct social identities and power relations in communication. DA also pays attention to the broader context of communication, including the social and cultural factors that shape communicative practices. DA is particularly useful for analyzing how participants use language to negotiate social roles and power relations in multi-party interaction (Fairclough, 2003).

Pragmatics is also an important approach to analyzing multi-party interaction, focusing on the ways in which speakers use language to achieve communicative goals and convey social meaning. Pragmatic analysis of multi-party interaction examines how participants use speech acts, such as requests, offers, and apologies, to negotiate social roles and maintain social relationships. Pragmatic analysis also pays attention to the use of nonverbal communication, such as facial expressions and body language, in multi-party interaction (Sperber, Wilson 1986).

In addition, Sociolinguistics is another approach that can be used to analyze multi-party interaction. Sociolinguistics examines how language is used in social contexts, paying attention to the social factors that influence communicative practices, such as gender, ethnicity, and social class. Sociolinguistic analysis of multi-party interaction can shed light on how these social factors influence the ways in which participants communicate with each other (Eckert, McConnell-Ginet, 2013).

1.3 Types and functions of utterances in multi-party interaction

In multi-party interaction, participants produce different types of utterances to achieve various communicative goals. In this section, some of the main types and functions of utterances in multi-party interaction are reviewed.

One important type of utterance in multi-party interaction is the question. Questions can be used to elicit information, clarify meaning, or initiate a new topic. There are several types of questions, including yes-no questions: *Did you go to the store?*, wh-questions: *What did you buy at the store?* and tag questions *You went to the store, didn't you?* Questions can also vary in their level of directness, from more polite or indirect forms *Could you possibly pass the salt?* to more blunt or direct forms *Pass me the salt!*

Another important type of utterance in multi-party interaction is the response. Responses can be used to provide information, acknowledge a previous utterance, or indicate agreement or disagreement. Responses can take many forms, including verbal responses: *Yes, I did go to the store*, nonverbal responses (*nodding or shaking the head*), or combinations of both.

Assertions are another important type of utterance in multi-party interaction. Assertions are statements that assert a fact or make a claim, and they can be used to provide information, offer opinions, or initiate a new topic. Assertions can vary in their level of certainty, from more tentative forms: *I think that maybe we should go to the store* to more confident or assertive forms *We need to go to the store now*.

Finally, requests and directives are also important types of utterances in multi-party interaction. Requests and directives are used to get someone else to do something or to modify their behavior in some way. Requests can be more polite or indirect *Could you please pass the salt* or more direct *Pass the salt!*. Directives can take the form of commands *Do this now!* or suggestions *Maybe you should try doing it this way?*.

1.4 Pragmatic aspects of multi-party interaction in English discourse

Pragmatics is the study of how context contributes to meaning in language use. In multi-party interaction, pragmatic aspects play a crucial role in understanding how meaning is constructed and negotiated. In this section, we will review some of the key pragmatic aspects of multi-party interaction in English discourse.

One important pragmatic aspect of multi-party interaction is context. Context refers to the situational and cultural factors that influence the interpretation of language use. In multi-party interaction, context can include factors such as the physical setting, the participants' relationships, and the purpose of the conversation. For example, the language used in a casual conversation among friends may be quite different from the language used in a formal business meeting.

Another important pragmatic aspect of multi-party interaction is the use of implicature. Implicature refers to the meanings that are implied or suggested, rather than explicitly stated, in language use. In multi-party interaction, implicature can play a crucial role in negotiating meaning and managing social relationships. For example, a speaker may use sarcasm or irony to convey a meaning that is opposite to the literal meaning of their words, or a speaker may use indirect language to make a suggestion or request in a more polite way.

Politeness is also a key pragmatic aspect of multi-party interaction. Politeness refers to the use of language to show respect and consideration for others. In multi-party interaction, politeness can be used to maintain social relationships and avoid conflict. For example, speakers may use indirect language or euphemisms to avoid offending or embarrassing others, or they may use hedging or mitigation to soften the impact of their words.

Finally, the use of nonverbal communication is another important pragmatic aspect of multi-party interaction. Nonverbal communication includes facial expressions, gestures, and body language, and it can play a crucial role in conveying

meaning and managing social relationships. For example, a speaker may use eye contact and facial expressions to signal agreement or disagreement, or they may use gestures and body language to convey emphasis or emotion.

1.5 Nonverbal communication in multi-party interaction

Nonverbal communication is an important aspect of multi-party interaction in English discourse, as it can convey meaning and express emotions that are not always expressed through words alone. In this section, some of the key roles that nonverbal communication plays in multi-party interaction are reviewed.

One important role of nonverbal communication in multi-party interaction is to regulate the flow of conversation. Speakers use nonverbal cues such as head nods, eye contact, and body posture to signal when it is their turn to speak, when they have finished speaking, and when they are ready to listen. These cues help to maintain the turn-taking system and prevent interruptions and overlaps in conversation.

Another important role of nonverbal communication in multi-party interaction is to convey emotions and attitudes. Nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, tone of voice, and gestures can convey a speaker's emotional state and attitude toward the topic or other participants. For example, a speaker may use a sarcastic tone of voice and a raised eyebrow to indicate that they are not serious, or they may use a smile and a nod to indicate agreement or approval.

Nonverbal communication also plays a crucial role in managing social relationships in multi-party interaction. Speakers use nonverbal cues to convey their social status, their level of intimacy with other participants, and their degree of respect or deference towards others. For example, a speaker may use a formal tone of voice and maintain a greater physical distance from someone they perceive as being of higher social status, or they may use more informal language and physical touch with someone they perceive as being closer to them.

Finally, nonverbal communication can be used to signal intention and emphasis in multi-party interaction. Speakers use nonverbal cues such as hand gestures, facial expressions, and body posture to emphasize important points or to signal their intention to do something. For example, a speaker may use a hand gesture to emphasize a particular word, or they may lean forward and make eye contact to signal their intention to make a request or to express a strong opinion.

Chapter Two. Strategies of speech behavior in multi-party interaction in English discourse.

2.1 Strategy of establishment of speech contact in multi-party interaction

The aim of this research study was to investigate the dynamics of multi-party interaction in English discourse. To achieve this, a qualitative research design was used, and a sample of six participants was selected. The participants were English speakers of varying proficiency levels and were recruited from a language school. The study was conducted in a classroom setting and involved a group discussion on a topic related to current events. The discussion was recorded and transcribed for analysis.

The study has shown that it can be difficult to establish speech contact in a multi-party interaction, but the participants of the research used a number of strategies for facilitating effective communication. Mainly the usage of pragmatic devices and non-verbal cues.

The analysis of the data involved a detailed examination of strategies of establishing speech contact, the strategies of its maintenance and role exchange in multi-party interaction.

The establishment of speech contact involved different types of utterances used by the participants, including questions, responses, agreements, disagreements, clarifications, and summaries. The analysis also focused on the nonverbal cues used by the participants, including facial expressions, gestures, and body posture. The aim of the analysis was to identify the pragmatic functions of these different types of utterances and nonverbal cues and to explore their role in regulating the flow of conversation and conveying attitudes and emotions.

The analysis of the data revealed that the participants used a variety of different types of utterances to engage in multi-party interaction. Questions were used to elicit information, responses were used to provide answers or opinions,

agreements and disagreements were used to express approval or dissent, clarifications were used to ensure understanding, and summaries were used to recapitulate key points. The use of these different types of utterances helped to structure the conversation and facilitate communication among the participants.

In addition to verbal communication, the analysis also revealed that the participants used a range of nonverbal cues to signal their intention to speak, indicate agreement or disagreement, express emotions, and manage social relationships. For example, participants used head nods and eye contact to signal that they were listening or that they wanted to speak, they used facial expressions such as smiles or frowns to express approval or disapproval, and they used physical touch and body posture to convey social status and intimacy.

2.2 Strategy of maintenance of contact in multi-party interaction

The analysis of the data from the study revealed that multi-party interaction in English discourse is a complex and dynamic process that involves the use of a variety of pragmatic devices and nonverbal cues. The participants used a range of different types of utterances to elicit information, express opinions, and manage social relationships, and these utterances were often accompanied by nonverbal cues that conveyed attitudes and emotions.

One of the key findings of the study was that questions played a crucial role in maintaining multi-party interaction. The participants used questions to elicit information and to encourage others to contribute to the conversation. Questions were also used to establish common ground and to signal the beginning of a new topic or sub-topic. Responses to questions were often used to provide information or opinions, and they were typically accompanied by nonverbal cues such as head nods and eye contact to signal agreement or disagreement.

The study also revealed that disagreements were an important part of multi-party interaction. Disagreements were expressed through a variety of utterances,

including direct contradictions, qualifications, and hedging. Nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and body posture were also used to signal disagreement and to convey the intensity of emotions associated with the disagreement. The participants used a range of pragmatic devices, such as mitigation and politeness strategies, to manage disagreements and to maintain social relationships.

2.3 Strategies of role exchange in multi-party interaction

The results of the study have important implications for our understanding of multi-party interaction in English discourse. One of the key findings of the study is that role exchange in multi-party interactions was found to play a crucial part in facilitating a greater understanding of each other's viewpoints and fostering empathy among the participants. The following strategies for role exchange were depicted during the study: role-playing, rotating facilitation, using open-ended questions and encouraging active listening.

In role-playing, individuals assume the roles of other conversational participants. This strategy has been shown to encourage empathy and respect for one another's viewpoints and not jump to conclusions straight away. The study conductor also encouraged participants to take turns playing a number of different roles in order to better grasp the topics being addressed. This may encourage a shift in attitude and foster a more cooperative environment.

Another strategy employed is the rotation of taking turns as the facilitator during the conversation. This has proven to be a sort of equalizer in role exchange. The participants feel evenly heard and are a valuable contribution to the multi-party interaction. Those who are less prone to taking initiative during an interaction felt safe taking on a new role and showed the results of the communication being more productive rather than without rotation facilitation.

The usage of open-ended questions has been shown to be an important strategy for eliciting information and managing social relationships in multi-party interaction. It prompts speakers to give extended, more backed-up, and more developed thoughts and answers. Thus, leaving less room for interpreting it differently from the intended meaning and therefore reducing the chances of a conflict between the other participants. Open-ended questions can be posed in turn by participants to stimulate further investigation of the topics under discussion.

In multi-party interactions, encouraging active listening is crucial to role exchange. The study conductor encouraged the participants to actively listen to one another and to ask questions to ensure their understanding. It showed the results of mitigation and politeness in managing disagreements and maintaining social relationships, particularly in contexts where face-threatening acts may be involved.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study have implications for language teaching and learning, particularly in the area of pragmatic competence. The development of pragmatic skills is essential for successful communication in multi-party settings, and language learners need to be explicitly taught how to use pragmatic devices and nonverbal cues to achieve their communicative goals.

Furthermore, the findings of this study have implications for the development of communication skills in professional and academic settings. The ability to successfully communicate in multi-party settings is essential for success in a range of professional and academic contexts, and the development of pragmatic competence is an important aspect of this.

Nonverbal communication played a significant role in regulating the flow of conversation and conveying attitudes and emotions. The participants used a range of nonverbal cues, including facial expressions, gestures, and body posture, to signal their intentions to speak, indicate agreement or disagreement, and express emotions. These nonverbal cues helped to establish rapport among the participants and to maintain social relationships.

In conclusion, the analysis of the data from the study revealed that multi-party interaction in English discourse is a complex and dynamic process that requires the use of a range of pragmatic devices and nonverbal cues. The study highlights the importance of pragmatic competence in language learning and suggests that the development of pragmatic skills is essential for successful communication in multi-party settings. The findings of this study have implications for language teaching and learning, as well as for the development of communication skills in professional and academic settings.

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