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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS OF SPEECH VERBS
IN MODERN ENGLISH**

Speciality: 5708.01 – Germanic languages

Field of science: Philology

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK

The topicality of the research and the degree of its elaboration. The semantic aspect has long been studied by linguists as a central aspect of grammar, with the 21st century being regarded as the century of semantics. This focus on the materialistic approach to language has led to an increased interest in semantic studies. In addition to syntax, research in semantics also pays attention to areas such as intonation and phonetics.

Semantic studies contribute to the advancement of other fields. Semantics also forms the basis for natural language processing and fuzzy set theory. A natural language can be understood as a specific modifier that transforms a given value into corresponding texts and then converts these texts into meaningful representations. Artificial intelligence is also founded on semantic principles.

A verb is a word class that determines the semantic and syntactic structure of a sentence, and establishes the hierarchical structure of language. However, linguists have not always approached the classification of verbs in a consistent manner, failing to divide them into distinct lexical-semantic categories. This has led to concerns about the completeness of their research.

As is common in language, order and consistency are essential for effective communication.

Thanks to the consistency in the language, speakers can find the appropriate words in various situations and immediately convey their thoughts. If there was no systematicity in language, it would be difficult to immediately find and utilize words. In the brain, lexical items are organized in a specific order, each with its own position, based on semantic principles.

In linguistics, the verb is regarded as the “ruler” of a sentence, with other sentence elements following its lead and relying on it for meaning and function within the sentence.

The inclusion of phrasal combinations involving speech verbs in the modern English language further enhances the significance of this research.

Semantics and pragmatics of speech verbs in contemporary

English, as well as the unique characteristics of their lexical and semantic categorization, the identification of types of meaning they convey, their use in speech acts, and the determination of their pragmatic functions, have been the focus of numerous linguistic studies. Additionally, the structural and semantic analysis of these verbs has been a topic of interest among scholars.

The following linguists can be named: W.L.Cheif, W.Adams, W.Alston, J.Austin, J.Searle, W.Croft; A.I.Smirnitsky, I.P.Ivanova, V.N.Zhigadlo, L.L.Iofik, B.Ilish, L.S.Barkhudarov, L.S.Khaimovich, B.I.Rogovskaya and others. Many studies on this topic have been conducted and are being conducted in Azerbaijani linguistics: the scientific works of N.Ch.Valiyeva, G.G.Khanbabayeva, M.B.Surek, S.F.Gasimova can be distinguished. However, given that the semantic and pragmatic aspects of speech verbs used in specific contexts continue to be a subject of debate, the establishment of new criteria within the anthropocentric framework to clarify their meanings and the elucidation of the pragmatic functions of speech verbs in the Germanic languages in speech acts remain topical.

The object and subject of the research. The object of the study is speech verbs, which play an indispensable role in modern English. The subject of the study is the determination of the role of speech verbs in various situations, the meanings they express, that is, their semantics and pragmatics

The purpose and tasks of the research. The main purpose of the study is to identify, clarify and inventory the semantics and pragmatics of the speech verbs of the Germanic languages. To achieve this goal, the following tasks are planned:

- evaluation of speech verbs in modern English as a speech unit;
- identification of semantic and pragmatic features of speech verbs;
- study and definition of rich functional structural features of the verb;
- definition of the types of verb meaning in modern English;
- characterization of lexical and semantic features of verbs of the modern English language;

- identification of semantic classification of speech verbs in different contexts of the modern English language;
- definition of the structural and semantic analysis of speech verbs in modern English;
- characteristics of the pragmatics of speech verbs in speech acts.

Research methods. The research used methods of functional analysis, semantic and pragmatic interpretation.

The main provisions submitted for defense:

- speech verbs are identified as the most functional and structural element of the language;
- speech verbs are considered a complex communicative tool in an interactive social semiotic system within a specific context;
- different types of speech acts require different types of verbs;
- the lexical-semantic classification of verbs in modern English language can be explained by considering the way they interact with other lexical units in a text;
- in the semantic classification of verbs in contemporary English, the meaning of words is defined by the rules of the language system;
- in the structural-semantic analysis of verbs in contemporary English, context is crucial in determining meaning;
- the principle of equality in terms of meaning and pragmatic function is observed in the use of speech verbs in contemporary English pragmatics;
- when studying pragmatics, the specific language skills of native speakers are manifested in the realization of speech verbs;
- the semantic classification of contemporary English speech verbs and their structural and semantic analyses are integrated into speech acts.

The scientific novelty of the research. The analysis of the meanings conveyed by speech verbs in different contexts in modern English from both a semantic and pragmatic perspective, as well as the identification of the role played by context in altering meanings, and the systematic examination of how meaning changes with any

alteration in context, can be considered as a significant scientific novelty.

Another aspect of the scientific novelty lies in the provision of a comprehensive semantic classification of speech verbs in modern English, as well as their structural, semantic, and pragmatic analysis within the framework of speech acts. Additionally, the contribution includes the analysis of the informativeness of these verbs.

Due to the fact that pragmatics is a relatively new branch of linguistics and has not yet been fully explored, there is a lack of research in this area in Azerbaijan. Therefore, the investigation of speech verbs in contemporary English from both semantic and pragmatic perspectives can be considered an initial initiative in Azerbaijan.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research. Pragmatics, which examines how people use and interpret language within social contexts, focuses not on what is said, but on how ideas are conveyed and understood by others. In addition to the semantic analysis of speech verbs in current English, examining their pragmatic aspects in the dissertation contributes to research in other linguistic fields.

The practical significance of the study lies in the potential application of the findings in various educational settings. The results of this research can be utilized in lectures, practical classes, seminars on the pragmatics and semantics of speech verbs, at philological departments of different universities. Additionally, the findings can contribute to the development of educational and methodological materials.

Approbation and application. The main provisions and results of the dissertation were presented in the form of reports at the II Republican Scientific-Practical Conference of Young Researchers, the Conference on “Current Problems of Sustainable Development and the Humanities”, and the III International Scientific Conference on “Modern Problems of Applied Linguistics”. The results of the research were reflected in the articles and theses published in scientific journals of various universities of the Republic, as well as in collections published in foreign countries. The results of the

research can be used in the process of teaching English in various educational institutions, in the preparation of many textbooks, and in trainings organized for the development of pragmatic competencies for foreign language teachers and translators.

The name of the institution where the dissertation work was performed. The work was performed at the Department of English Lexicology at the Faculty of English and German Languages of Azerbaijan University of Languages.

The total volume of the dissertation with a sign indicating the volume of the structural sections of the dissertation separately. The dissertation work consists of an introduction, 3 chapters, a conclusion and a list of references. The introduction of the dissertation is 5 pages, 8000 characters, the first chapter is 30 pages, 54153 characters, the second chapter is 45 pages, 77826 characters, the third chapter is 50 pages, 91015 characters, the conclusion is 2 pages, 2429 characters. The total volume of the dissertation is 233423 characters, excluding the list of references used.

THE MAIN CONTENT OF THE WORK

In the “**Introductory**” part of the research the topicality and scientific novelty of the topic are substantiated, the object, subject, purpose and tasks of the study are determined, the provisions submitted for defense are interpreted, scientific, theoretical and practical recommendations are presented. The dissertation outlines the methods and sources employed in the research process, as well as providing information on the approval and structure of the work.

The first chapter of the dissertation is called “**The verb as the richest functional and structural element of the language system**” and consists of two paragraphs. In this paragraph, entitled “*Lexical-semantic classification of verbs in modern English*” an extensive place is devoted to the lexical-semantic classification of verbs in modern English. This is because the study of verbs with their rich grammatical categories and verb semantics is an essential aspect in finding more detailed solutions to various linguistic issues.

Words that make up a language's vocabulary cannot exist independently of each other, as they are grouped together based on internal consistency within the language, regardless of individual thought processes.

In semasiology, a “lexical-semantic group of words” refers to a collection of words that are used together due to their shared semantic relationship. This concept is distinct from lexicology, which focuses on groups of words unified by their lexical meaning.

Based on this distinction, it can be inferred that the lexical-semantic approach in semasiology emphasizes semantic connections among words, while lexicological analysis focuses on relationships between entities and events. Members of any given lexical-semantic grouping may share common grammatical categories and exhibit similar paradigmatic and syntagmatic properties.

By the paradigmatic feature mentioned here, we refer to a general categorial lexical component in the meanings of words that belong to a lexical-semantic category. This seme, which is refined through a differential seme within any word, acts as the semantic foundation for a lexical-semantic set of words.

Any lexical-semantic group of words has a similar seme, which repeats and links words within the category through specific oppositions. The internal paradigmatic structure of this kind of phrase, which has domain specificity, is composed of a combination of these oppositions. At the center of this field is the most commonly used word with the broadest meaning, and all other words within the category are optionally associated with this central word.

The classification of verbs according to their meaning has been a topic of interest for linguists for a long time. This diversity of semantic categories of verbs can be attributed to their rich lexical meanings. In English, a vast majority of verbs are employed as main verbs in a sentence due to their strong lexical content. R.A. Close, in his work “A Reference Grammar for Students of English”, proposed a classification of verbs into two categories: statal verbs and actional verbs¹.

¹ Close, R.A. A reference grammar for students of English. / R.A.Close. –Moscow: Prosvesheniye, – 1979. – 352 p.

B. Levin, who has studied the semantic features of approximately 3,200 English verbs, suggests that there is a correlation between the semantics and syntactic behaviour of verbs. He argues that certain aspects of verb semantics are closely linked to the way verbs behave syntactically and how they are interpreted in terms of their arguments. To begin with, B. Levin precisely defines various forms of verb behaviour. Each form is described using one or more combinations. Substitutability (or variability) refers to the *forms of passive voice, their inserts and forms of reflexive voice*. The author then offers an analysis of English verbs based on these forms: each verb is associated with a set of variations through which it can be expressed. Preliminary research has shown that there is a sufficient correlation between certain aspects of verb meaning and their syntactic behavior, which allows for the formation of classes. Based on these observations, Levin identified approximately 200 semantic classes of verbs, within which verbs share certain features. This significant work was the result of a synthesis of specific research on specific types of verb, specific syntactic behaviors, and various types of data².

The verbs subject to this alternation (change) can be roughly characterized as verbs of state or position change.

A number of prominent researchers presented various divisions of verbs, approaching this work from different angles when dividing verbs into types of meanings, and therefore it is somewhat difficult to distinguish semantic groups of verbs in the English language.

B.S. Khaimovich and B.I. Rogovskaya grouped verbs into two groups based on the semantic features of English verbs:

- 1) Terminative
- 2) Non terminative.

In addition to this division, they also divided verbs by semantics into main and semi-main ones³.

² Levin, B. English Verb Classes and Alternations: A Preliminary Investigation. / B. Levin. – Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, – 1993. – p.90

³ Khaimovich, B.S. A course in English grammar / B.S. Khaimovich, B.I. Rogovskaya. – Moscow, – 1967. – p.121

The English language is dominated by verbs that have an independent lexical meaning and act as the main verbs.

The semantic classification of verbs by N.A.Kobrina has certain similarities with the classification of R.A.Close. She also divides verbs into two parts:

- 1) Statal verbs;
- 2) Actional verbs.

She writes that verbs denoting situations are also divided into certain groups:

a) expressing thoughts and opinions. For example: /to agree/, /to believe/, /to doubt/, /to guess/, /to imagine/, /to know/, /to mean/, /to recognize/, /to remember/, /to suspect/, /to think/, /to understand/ and so on;

b) expressing feeling and excitement. For example: /to dislike/, /to hate/, /to like/, /to love/ /to prefer/, /to want/, /to wish/ and so on;

c) denoting feeling and perception. For example: /to appear/, /to be/, /to feel/, /to hear/, /to look/, /to see/, /to seem/, /to smell/, /to taste/ and so on;

d) denoting ownership and size. For example: /to belong/, /to have/, /to measure/, /to own/, /to possess/, /to weigh/ and so on.

Actional verbs include /to run/, /to jump/, /to rush/, /to kick/, /to write/, /to eat/, /to catch/ and so on. In this classification, the author also included verbs that express a person's mental state and emotions.

Later, N.A.Kobrina divided verbs into two groups: transitive and non-transitive, terminative and non-terminative. N.A.Kobrina, E.A.Korneeva and others looked at the semantics of verbs from a different perspective and divided them into two categories: terminative and non terminative. Terminative verbs, according to the authors, are those that can be logically concluded at a specific point. They provide examples of such verbs, including: /to stop/, /to die/ and so on.

N.A.Kobrina, E.A.Korneeva and others, who include verbs such as /to suppose/, /to live/, in non-terminative verbs, emphasized

that they express logically completed, but not finished actions⁴.

Among scholars who attempt to categorize verbs into lexical-semantic groups, M.Swan identifies three subgroups:

1) verbs that have complete meaning from a semantic perspective (verbs that express a situation).

2) verbs that require completion, despite being semantically exhaustive.

3) semantically incomplete verbs (these verbs can only express meaning in a specific context or situation, acting in conjunction with immediate completion)⁵.

It is more appropriate, in our opinion, to group verbs in contemporary English according to both paradigmatic and syntagmatic criteria as follows:

1) case-condition verbs: /to exist/, /to remain/ and so on;

2) verbs of work and activity: /to run/, /to paint/ and so on;

3) speech verbs: /to say/, /to tell/ and so on;

4) verbs denoting natural phenomena: /to rain/, /to snow/ and so on;

5) verbs expressing mental activity and sensory perception: /to understand/, /to believe/ and so on;

6) verbs of suggestion and request: /to offer/, /to ask/, /to beg/ and so on;

7) verbs of dreams and desires: /to desire/, /to wish/, /to want/ and so on⁶.

Based on the aforementioned studies, it can be concluded that the lexical-semantic classification of verbs has long been a subject of research, with different scholars approaching the issue from various angles and proposing their own classifications. Therefore, this dissertation aims to investigate high-frequency speech verbs, which

⁴ Kobrina, N.A. An English Grammar. Syntax. / N.A.Kobrina, E.A.Korneyeva, M.I.Ossovskaya, K.A.Quzeyeva. – M.: Higher school publishing house, – 1986. –p.18

⁵ Swan, M. Practical English usage. / M.Swan. – Second ed. Oxford, Oxford University press, – 1980. – p.136

⁶ Qənbərova, N.E. Müasir ingilis dilində fəllərin leksik-semantik təsnifatı// – Bakı Slavyan Universiteti, Humanitar elmlərin öyrənilməsinin aktual problemləri. Bakı, Mütərcim nəşriyyatı –2016. №2, s.98-101.

constitute a distinct lexical-semantic category, with a focus on this specific problem.

The second paragraph of the research, titled *“Speech verbs in modern English as a separate lexical-semantic group”*, discusses speech verbs, which are verbs that describe the process of speaking and are grouped together under the umbrella term “speech verbs” in linguistic literature. These verbs are characterized by actions related to the mental process, and although they are relatively few in number compared to other verb groups, they stand out due to their unique features and range of meanings. Most importantly, they constitute the most expressive and versatile verb group in the language. Speech verbs play a significant role in this process, allowing us to convey our thoughts and feelings with precision and nuance.

Speaking, which is a part of the process of communication, is expressed through speech verbs. These verbs describe speech from various perspectives, with some describing the nature or style of the communication, and most indicating the form of communication and identifying the subject being spoken about.

A lexical-semantic category is a part of a language’s lexical-semantic system that consists of words belonging to the same part of speech with similar lexical meanings, based on shared semantic features⁷.

The speech process is a bidirectional phenomenon with internal and external aspects. The internal aspect refers to the “ideal, content-related” features of the process, while the external aspect refers to its material expression in speech. This plays an important role in enhancing the meaning of lexical-semantic groups of speech verbs.

Although the general semantic category of speech verbs includes “to speak” and “to say”, the range of meanings associated with speech acts in modern English can also be conveyed through other verbs.

H.K.Guliyev, who analyzed speech verbs from a semantic perspective using materials from various systematic languages,

⁷ Adilov, M.İ. İzahlı Dilçilik terminləri / M.İ.Adilov, Z.İ.Verdiyeva, F.M.Ağayeva. – Bakı: Azərneşr, – 1989. – s.301

categorized them into two subgroups: 1) verbs that express only the act of speaking, and 2) verbs that characterize speech in some way.

In modern English, he attributed the verbs /to speak/, /to tell/, /to talk/, /to inquire/ and etc. to speech verbs expressing only the act of speech, and the verbs /to repeat/, /to call/ – to the second subgroup⁸.

Although H.K.Guliyev's study on the semantic classification of verbs is a valuable contribution to the field, it does not fully capture the semantic diversity of speech verbs.

S.Gasimova, in her dissertation on "The mental verbs in Azerbaijani and English Languages", addressed the issue of the semantic classification of speech verbs and analyzed the semantics of these verbs in English, grouping them into five categories.

1. Speech verbs denoting the act of speaking in Azerbaijani and English.

2. Speech verbs denoting affirmation and negation in the Azerbaijani and English languages.

3. Speech verbs expressing questions and answers in Azerbaijani and English.

4. Speech verbs that differ in tone in the Azerbaijani and English languages.

5. Speech verbs expressing different emotions (order, request, advice, recommendation, empathy, gratitude, etc.) in Azerbaijani and English⁹.

In our view, a missing aspect of the current classification is the lack of analysis of verbs that express positive and negative emotions within the same group. We believe it would be more appropriate to analyze these verbs separately and examine their semantics.

Considering the aforementioned factors and the diverse meanings conveyed through speech verbs, it would be advisable in

⁸ Quliyev, H.K. Müxtəlif sistemli dillərdə feilin semantik təsnifatı (Azərbaycan, rus, ingilis və alman dillərinin materialları əsasında) / H.K.Quliyev. – Bakı: Nurlan, – 2001. – s.35-36

⁹ Qasimova, S.F. Azərbaycan və ingilis dillərində təfəkkür feilləri: /filologiya üzrə fəlsəfə doktoru dis. avtoreferatı/ – Bakı, 2018. – s.15

this research to classify speech verbs in contemporary English based on their tense and semantic context:

1. Speech verbs expressing an act of speech serving one-way communication.

2. Speech verbs denoting the manner of speech.

3. Speech verbs used in the question-answer process.

4. Speech verbs confirming the thought.

5. Speech verbs that negate thought.

6. Speech verbs expressing positive emotions.

7. Speech verbs expressing negative emotions¹⁰.

Using this example, we can demonstrate the main speech verbs that have a broad range of applications in modern English. These include to accuse, to advise, to announce, to answer, to apologize, to articulate, to ask, to ban, to complain, to cry, to discuss, to greet, to inform, to lie, to mention, to order, to pray, to promise, to question, to say, to scream, to shout, to speak to suggest, to talk, to tell, to thank, to threaten, to warn and etc. Although all these verbs share a common semantic component in that they all involve the use of voice and the pronunciation of words, they also have specific features that differentiate them from one another in meaning and lead to their classification into distinct semantic subgroups.

The second chapter of the research is entitled **“Structural-semantic analysis of speech verbs in modern English and their pragmatics”**, and it consists of two paragraphs. The first paragraph is called **“Pragmatics and speech acts”**, and it examines the history, definitions, and analysis of speech acts within the context of pragmatics.

Pragmatics can be defined as the study of how language is used in communication between speakers and listeners. It focuses on the meaning behind the words, phrases, utterances, and sentences that are used in a specific context. This approach considers the intentions and goals of the speaker, as well as the expectations and interpretations of the listener.

¹⁰ Qənbərova, N.E. Müasir ingilis dilində nitq feillərinin semantik təsnifatı// – Bakı: Azərbaycan Dillər Universiteti, Elmi Xəbərlər, – 2019. №1, – s.40-45

In other words, pragmatics examines the ways in which speakers intend to convey their meaning through the use of language, and how listeners interpret and understand this meaning based on their own context and experience. Speakers do not express their thoughts using broken or incomplete sentences. Instead, they use words, phrases, and sentences that are appropriate for the given context or situation and are consistent with the rules of grammar and syntax.

F.Veysalli states that pragmatics investigates how the listener interprets the conveyed meaning and the rules that ensure effective communication between the speaker and listener. In other words, pragmatics is a branch of linguistics concerned with the rules of linguistic processing.

Semiotics, on the other hand, is a field that examines the relationship between what has been explicitly communicated and what has not been communicated in a given communication context, taking into account factors such as context, time, distance, and social factors¹¹.

People in any society do not belong to the same social group. Instead, they represent different groups, and their ways of communicating are fundamentally different. This feature manifests itself in various social groups and contexts.

Although the study of meaning is conducted in both semantics and pragmatics, these fields do not approach it from the same perspective. In semantic analysis, if the meaning of a sentence is considered in isolation from its context, that is, outside of the context, and if the interaction between language and its referents is analyzed, then in pragmatic analysis, the meaning associated with a given context is examined. Therefore, pragmatics can be said to study the contextual meaning that semantic analysis does not address, and to correlate the linguistic form with its referent in relation to the situation in which the form is used.

Taking this into account, pragmatics can be described as the study of contextual meaning that semantics does not cover. It also

¹¹ Veysalli, F.Y. Dilçiliyin əsasları. / F.Y.Veysalli. – Bakı: Mütərcim, – 2013. – s.303

correlates the linguistic forms and their referents with the situations in which these forms are used.

According to G.Gazdar, pragmatics primarily refers to the study of the contextual implications of linguistic forms. He argues that the primary goal of pragmatics should be to explain the pragmatic implications of utterances, such as their illocutionary force and presuppositions. These implications can sometimes be encoded in language, but they can also remain implicit. Pragmatics encompasses a range of aspects related to language use, including the study of rules and conventions governing communication¹².

The pragmatic meaning reflects the interaction between the information carrier and its intended purpose. Therefore, the functions of language correspond to specific types of pragmatic meaning.

G.Yule provides the following classification of pragmatic meanings:

- 1) informative or descriptive;
- 2) controlling (guiding)
- 3) sensual.

The indicative, affective, and volitional aspects of meaning correspond to this classification¹³.

Unlike the above division, pragmatic meaning refers to the interpretive meaning of interaction and reference, which demonstrates the influence of an idea. The interactive aspect of meaning includes verb forms, word order, modal verbs, intonation, and modes of address. Examples of linguistic forms that express interpretive meaning can illustrate the number and designation of lexical units, case markers, and influence relations.

Speech acts are an important aspect of pragmatics, and they are defined as actions accompanied by verbal expression.

Speech acts are verbal interactions between speakers and listeners (addressee), with the aim of achieving a specific goal in a given context. Successful implementation of a speech act allows the speaker to exert influence on the addressee, leading to a change in

¹² Gazdar, G. *Pragmatics: Implicature, Presupposition, Logical Form* / G.Gazdar. – New-York: Academic Press, – 1979. – p.101

¹³ Yule, G. *Pragmatics*. / G.Yule. – Oxford: Oxford university press, – 1996. – p.90

the addressee's opinion or psychological state. Therefore, we can view the speech act as a means of communication between the speaker and their goal.

Pragmatics is the study of how language users interpret and produce speech acts in various communication situations. This field emphasizes the meanings conveyed through oral communication. The two primary aspects of meaning in spoken language are the informative content of a sentence and the communicative intention expressed by the speaker.

There are three main types of speech acts: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary¹⁴.

An action involving the correction of correct language structures is called a locative act. A locative speech act can be explained as follows: "This can be called an act that carries a meaningful sentence about an object". For example, let's give an example: /The sky is blue/. In this example, we are presenting a fact, which is an act known as a *locutionary act*.

Through an *illocutionary act*, we aim to convey our thoughts to the listener and express our intention to communicate something to them. For instance:

/I have just cooked dinner. It is still on the gas stove//

The following meanings are evidently expressed in the text: a) the possibility of eating later, i.e., cooking; b) encouragement to be patient; c) provision of preliminary information about any activity (warning).

A *perlocutionary act* is an act in which the result of any work is demonstrated. F.Veysalli states that any communication should have an illocutionary force (effect)¹⁵.

The following example can be used to illustrate a *perlocutionary act*. For instance, if someone suddenly shouts "Fire!", this will cause people to evacuate the building in order to avoid the danger posed by fire.

¹⁴ Veysəlli, F.Y. Struktur dilçiliyin əsasları. III hissə. / F.Y.Veysəlli. – Bakı: Mütərcim, – 2009. – s.214.

¹⁵ Veysəlli, F.Y. Dilçiliyin əsasları. / F.Y.Veysəlli. – Bakı: Mütərcim, – 2013. – s.328

The semantic, syntactic, and lexical meanings of the verbs employed in these instances are crucial. The outcome of each action is contingent upon the contextual implications of these verbs. For example: /I warn you that...// /I promise that...// /I declare that...//

An illocutionary act is carried out in these constructions, as they contain meanings such as notification, declaration, and promise.

According to J.Searle, speech acts arise during the use of language and we can give examples of them as expressing a certain idea, asking a question, swearing, giving a promise, ordering or requesting, answering, etc.

J.Searle groups the functions of speech acts as follows:

- representative: explanation, classification, confirmation, rejection, objection, response; in this case, the speaker expresses his opinion using speech verbs that express the denial or affirmation of the idea that indicates whether the proposition is true or not.

- directive: order, request, permission, advice; in this case, the speaker forces the listener to perform some action using speech verbs that express orders and requests.

- commissive: oath, promise, proposal; in this case, the speaker uses speech verbs that express the meaning of “promising, swearing” to create confidence that any event or process will occur.

- expressive: congratulations, thanks, apology; at this time the speaker expresses his feelings about certain events, and in this process the role of speech verbs expressing gratitude, sympathy, etc. is indispensable.

- declarative: declaring, naming, refusing – at this time the speaker expresses his opinion on any issue, and here speech verbs expressing the speech act come to the rescue¹⁶.

The second paragraph of the second chapter of the dissertation, titled ***“Structural-semantic analysis of speech verbs denoting a speech act in modern English”***, focuses on speech verbs that denote a speech act. These verbs were selected based on their semantic load and frequency of use, as well as their structural elements.

¹⁶ Searle, J.R. Speech acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language. / J.R.Searle. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, – 1969. – p.16

Although the semantics of speech verbs is primarily reflected in the verbs “to speak” and “to say”, shades of meaning related to the process of speaking can also be expressed through other verbs.

Verbs that refer to the act of speaking include */to speak, to tell, to say, to talk, to utter, to narrate, to pronounce, to announce, to proclaim, to enunciate, to declare, to communicate, to articulate, to explain, to express/*, etc.

Although all these verbs share a common semantic component in that they all convey the meaning of “to use voice, to pronounce words”, they have specific characteristics that differentiate them from one another in meaning and determine their classification into semantic subgroups.

These verbs constitute the essence of speech acts and are closely related to areas such as illocutionary function, communicative intention, and dialogue dynamics.

In modern English, speech verbs denoting speech acts are usually loaded with illocutionary purpose in context. The context of use of speech verbs determines their purpose (illocutive force). The same verb can be a different illocutionary act in different contexts:

/She told me about your plan./ – in this sentence, the verb */to tell/* has a declarative, i.e., informational function, expressing the meaning of saying.

/She told me to leave the room. / – in this context, the verb */to tell/* has a directive function, i.e., expressing an order.

From a semantic point of view, speech verbs express the type of information, and from a pragmatic point of view, they express the communicative intention and social attitude of the speaker. These verbs are the main illocutionary markers of the speech act, and their choice, form, and emphasis directly affect the interpretation of speech in a specific context.

These verbs form discrete relationships with various immaterial objects, such as objects, authors, symbols, and so on, and their pragmatic orientation includes so-called syntagmatic features. What does this mean? Pragmatics and syntagmatics reveal the intricacy of the semantic structure of any part of speech as two parallel and consequently distinct lines in which grammatical and

lexical meaning are closely intertwined. Indeed, a verb's semantic structure does not represent a single act (this is quite rare), but rather a broader concept. Pragmatics centers on the actions associated with speech verbs, which relate to a wide range of phenomena in human cognition.

Thus, verbs such as “to say”, “to speak”, “to tell”, “to talk” and other verbs that express the act of communication are not only related to other parts of a sentence, but also to spatial and temporal relations, agents of action, and the transmission of information. These verbs are associated with internal paradigmatic relationships with various objects and subjects.

Verbs that express the act of communicating actually include different categories of communicative activity. In pragmatic analysis, not only the semantic meaning of words such as “to say”, “to tell”, “to talk”, “to speak”, “to ask”, but also the content and manner of presentation of information, as well as the emotions associated with it, are important. The differences can be seen in the semantic content inherent in verbs such as “to say”, “to talk”, “to tell”, “to speak”, “to ask” and etc.

N.Valiyeva writes that the verb /to talk/ participates in the formation of many idioms: /to talk sense/ (to speak coherently and logically); /talk sense into/ (to make someone wise). For example, /If you think you're going to find a highlypaid job rightaway without any experience, then you need someone to talk some sense into you//. /Then talk to him, for God's sake, cried Rattray, "and I shall be only too glad if you can talk some sense into him//; /to talk the talk/ (informal) speak fluently and skillfully (influence others); 4) /to talk the talk walk the walk/ (the expression used about a self-sufficient and also a workaholic person). For example: /She talks a big game, but she can back it up too - she definitely talks the talk and walks the walk// /To speak with a forked tongue/ (to deceive): /It's obvious that the candidate spoke with a forked tongue during the meeting//. /To speak so/ (almost, probable)¹⁷/I had, so to speak, pronounced my own sentence of banishment//.

¹⁷ Vəliyeva, N.Ç. Azərbaycanca - ingiliscə - rusca frazeoloji lüğət. / N.Ç.Vəliyeva. – Bakı: Nurlan, – II hissə. – 2010. – 987 s.

The third chapter of the dissertation, titled **“Speech verbs and dialogic speech”**, consists of five paragraphs. The first paragraph, **“Semantic classification of speech verbs in dialogic speech”**, examines the various shades of meaning conveyed by speech verbs commonly used in dialogue.

Dialogic speech is defined by its dialogic nature. The word “dialogue” is derived from the Greek and refers to communication between two or more people

Speech is realized through dialogue with others, and through this means, we can obtain information by inquiring about events or individuals, or convey information we possess to another party.

In other words, dialogue consists of the reciprocal act of questioning and responding between two individuals. The act of inquiry precedes and receives information, while the act of responding follows the act of inquiry and provides the necessary information. As such, the more frequently we engage in dialogues for the purpose of obtaining information, the broader the range of verbs used in the questioning-and-answering process becomes. We can illustrate some examples of verbs that are employed in the process of questioning and answering, which have a wide range of usage in modern English: */to ask/*, */to enquire/*, */to inquire/*, */to wonder/*, */to interrogate/*, */to query/*, */to pose/*, etc.

In J.Searle's classification, the question act is a directive type that aims to obtain information from the listener. Locative form: Question sentence; illocutionary force: asking for information; perlocutionary result: getting an answer¹⁸.

Let's look through a few examples with the verb */to ask/*:

/She asked me where I lived./ – Illocutionary act type: directive, and the pragmatic purpose is to obtain information.

/He asked for help. / – in this sentence, the pragmatic purpose is a polite request.

The process of asking precedes that of answering, and serves to elicit information, while the process of answering follows that of asking, and provides the necessary information to the speaker. As

¹⁸ Searle, J.R. Speech acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language. / J.R.Searle. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, – 1969. – p.67

examples of speech verbs utilized in the responding act, which exhibit the broadest range of functionality in contemporary English, we may cite the following: /to answer/, to respond/, /to reply/, /to retort/, /to rejoin/, /to react/, /to riposte/, etc.

Although these verbs seem simply to mean “to answer a question”, they are extremely rich in illocutionary force, politeness strategies, interactive dynamics and social relations. These verbs are the reactive counterpart of the directive, that is, the act of responding, because they occur on the basis of a given question, request, criticism, or request for information. Their main functions are to provide information or express an attitude, to create a relationship by acting as an interactive bridge between the speaker and the listener.

The specific way of expression, intonation, the fact of giving or not giving these verbs changes their pragmatic power. If the answer is expressed openly and directly, the pragmatic result is cooperation; a late answer indicates indifference; a evasive answer indicates avoidance and manipulation; and not answering indicates information withholding.

These verbs are also widely used in dialogues in fiction. For example: *Elinor asked Marianne:*

"Do you think Edward Ferrars a sensible man?"

Marianne responded:

*"Yes, I do; but I think him very reserved"*¹⁹.

If we look at the pragmatics of the verb /to ask/ used in the recorded dialogue, we can see that the speaker here uses this verb to clarify a certain idea. The answer is not only about transmitting information, but also about the expectations, attitudes and social framework of the listener.

In the paragraph of the third chapter, titled ***“Speech verbs expressing positive emotions”***, speech verbs are employed to convey a positive tone to the listener, indicating that the speaker is satisfied during the communication process. Due to the inherent connection between speech and thought, people’s emotional responses to events around them are appropriately reflected in their communication, such

¹⁹ Austen, J. *Sense and sensibility*. / J.Austen. – CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, – 2020. – p.56

that the speech act not only conveys sympathy, joy, or gratitude, but also expresses discontent or dissatisfaction. For instance, */to praise/*, */to thank/*, */to congratulate/*, */to glorify/*, */to applaud/*, */to acknowledge/*, */to exalt/* – these verbs express the positive aspect of speech.

P.Aceves argues that the semantic and pragmatic aspects of speech verbs used to express positive emotions are difficult to define. There are specific conditions for the use of these verbs, such as knowing *in what context, with whom, and when they should be used*. At this point, it is crucial for both the speaker and listener to have a mutual understanding²⁰.

H.Chung-Hye discusses speech verbs that express positive emotion: “*These verbs include speech acts that explicitly or implicitly evaluate the addressee in a “positive manner” (expressions of kindness, positive personality traits, skills, and abilities, etc.) as assessed by the speaker and listener*”²¹.

J.Holmes identifies three functions of speech verbs that express positive emotion:

1. Speech verbs reflecting approval: Verbs that express positive emotions in certain situations serve to strengthen solidarity between individuals. For example, *How nice you looked that day!*

2. Verbs expressing a positive strategy of politeness prior to a potentially threatening interaction: These verbs, commonly referred to as compliment verbs, are used to gain favor in tense circumstances. A compliment is offered prior to requesting something. For instance, *Doesn't my hair look wonderful!? By the way, could I borrow your French book?*

- 3) The situations in which these verbs may be used are potentially threatening, as they indicate the speaker's intent to influence the listener's viewpoint. As a result, a compliment may

²⁰ Aceves, P. A Comparative Study of the Use of “Compliments” by Native Speakers of American English and Native Speakers of Mexican Spanish. / P.Aceves. – Puebla: Universidad de las Americas, – 1996. – p.11.

²¹ Chung-Hye, H. A comparative study of compliment responses: Korean females in Korea interactions and in English interactions // Working Papers in Educational Linguistics, – 1992. No8(2), –p.18.

take the form of a request. For instance: *Can I borrow your wonderful English book?*²²

The third paragraph of the third chapter, entitled **“Speech verbs expressing negative emotions”**, examines speech verbs expressing the negative sides of a speech act, i.e. discontent, complaint, condemnation, swearing, etc.

People process the world around them through cognitive processes and express their attitudes towards it through feelings and emotions. As a result, a person's emotions are related to their attitude, which is a mental state associated with consciousness.

N.Wolfson et al. argue that emotions are a mental process that expresses a person's attitude towards perceived objects, events, other people, their own behavior, thoughts, and desires. Emotions manifest themselves through facial expressions, voice, and speech, serving as a source of information for others. This function is typically expressed through speech verbs, as they allow a person to express their attitude towards the world. Both positive and negative emotions can be reflected in human communication. When we refer to “negative emotions”, we mean feelings of discontent, dissatisfaction, or disapproval, as well as expressions such as complaints, curses, and other forms of verbal communication that convey negative emotions²³.

Using this example, we can demonstrate the range of verbal expressions used to convey negative emotions, which are commonly employed in modern English: */to complain/*, */to condemn/*, */to criticize/*, */to scold/*, */to swear/*, */to denounce/*, */to reprimand/*, */to reproach/*, */to lie/*, */to deceive/* and etc.

The common semantic features of these verbs are: they express an emotional reaction; they express a subjective attitude; they are usually used in the context of "negative evaluation".

²² Holmes, J. Paying compliments: Positive politeness strategy // Journal of Pragmatics, – 1988. No 12 (3), – p.445

²³ Wolfson, N. The bulge: a theory of speech behavior and social distance. /In Fine, J. (ed) Second Language Discourse: A Textbook of Current Research/ – Norwood, NJ: Ablex, – 1988. – p.17-34

Pragmatically, these verbs can act as expressive or directive illocutionary acts.

For example: / *She criticized my report*/ - in this example, the semantic load of the verb /*to criticize*/ is "negative evaluation", and its pragmatic function is to demand change or a response.

In order to more accurately analyze the semantics and pragmatics of each speech verb expressing negative emotions, it would be advisable to consider these verbs separately and demonstrate all the meanings they can convey.

The fourth paragraph of third chapter, titled ***“Speech verbs confirming an opinion”***, includes a range of speech verbs commonly used when expressing agreement with an idea in dialogue. Their ambiguity and subtle shades of meaning are extensively demonstrated.

While there are relatively few affirmative verbs in modern English, they are significant due to the meanings they convey. Examples of such verbs include: /to agree, to consent, to conform, to verify, to assent, to affirm, to allege, to admit, to accord, to accede, to concur, to acknowledge/.

From a pragmatic point of view, these verbs have the expressive, commissive, and representative purposes of the illocutionary act. That is, the speaker uses these verbs to confirm information, defend an idea, convince the other party, and agree with an idea and promise something about the future. The use of this verb aims to create harmony, cooperation, and a positive attitude in communication.

Although speech verbs that confirm an opinion are often used performatively, we also encounter their anaphoric use. Let's look at the following example from fiction:

*"I confirm that I will attend the ball."*²⁴

In this example, in performative use, the speaker performs the action while saying the verb. In this example, /to confirm/ means to confirm the verb, if we open its pragmatics, the speaker wants to reassure the listener, to remove any doubts that he will not come.

²⁴ Austen, J. *Sense and sensibility*. / J.Austen. – CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, – 2020. – p.122

"*She had promised to help, and he acknowledged her commitment.*" In this example, we encounter the anaphoric use of the verb /to acknowledge/.

The fifth paragraph of third chapter, entitled "***Speech verbs that express denial***", examines modern English verbs that express the denial of ideas. These verbs are selected based on their semantic and pragmatic features, structural characteristics, usage patterns, and variety. Due to the connection between speech and human thought, our attitudes towards events that occur around us are reflected in our speech. When we accept events that take place in the outside world, we may also reject them. During the speech process, verbs that express denial are used when we disagree with an idea or object to it. Some of the most commonly used verbs that convey denial in modern English include /to deny/, /to denounce/, /to contradict/, /to mind/, /to object/, /to oppose/, /to refuse/, /to reject/, /to renounce/ and other similar words.

These verbs are both semantically and pragmatically powerful illocutionary act carriers, expressing different positions, denial attitudes, and often emotional or social conflict in dialogue, and indicating that the speaker does not agree with the idea, claim, or position expressed by the other party, and considers it wrong or inaccurate.

In short, speech verbs that express denial are an explicit or implicit expression of communicative intention and social attitude. Semantically, they denote the meanings of denial, contradiction, rejection, and refutation. Pragmatically, they display the speaker's position, react to the other party's opinion, defend themselves, and increase illocutionary force in controversial dialogues.

For example, the main function of the verb /to refuse/ is to reject an offer, invitation, order, request, or expectation from the other party, that is, to express the intention not to do it. This rejection is usually direct. For example: */I refused to do what he ordered./*

Speech verbs that express denial can change the structure of discourse, heighten the emotional tone, or shape the atmosphere of debate.

The above mentioned scientific findings are summarized in the **conclusion** section of the dissertation:

1. The verb possesses a wide range of lexical-grammatical meanings. It forms the foundation of the communicative basis of an utterance and is capable of generating entire sentences. The verb serves as the organizational center of a sentence, combining encoded information within its internal structure to create a specific syntactic structure, and plays a role in facilitating communication. The verb is essential in expressing ideas through linguistic forms and, consequently, in transforming language into a medium for communication.

2. The examination of linguistic resources indicates that the examination of speech verbs constitutes a fundamental concept in contemporary linguistics. Throughout the analysis of the lexical-semantic categorization of verbs, it has been determined that, although numerous studies have been conducted with regard to differentiating them from a lingual-philosophical perspective, certain aspects related to the nature of this phenomenon have yet to be thoroughly explored. These aspects include investigating the lexical-semantic classification of verb types, identifying types of verb meanings, and so on.

3. It is crucial to categorize verbs into lexical groups based on their semantic characteristics. When creating translation dictionaries or other systematic dictionaries based on the notion of semantic meaning, words are arranged according to the principle of semantic similarity. This similarity manifests itself in the capacity of verbs belonging to a particular group to syntactically co-occur.

4. All verbs that belong to the group of “speech verbs” describe speech in some way, and the general meaning of all these verbs is used as a basis for comparison. This common meaning allows them to be compared and contrasted with verbs from other verb groups. These verbs share certain grammatical characteristics when grouped together.

5. Based on the semantic characteristics of verbs in English, verbs can be divided into two categories: main verbs and semi-main verbs. English is dominated by verbs with an independent lexical meaning that act as main verbs.

6. The speech verbs in modern English have a rich semantic range, which makes them a prominent, leading word in a sentence. Additionally, speech verbs have a complex structure. They have an active role in the creation of idioms.

7. Pragmatics is the branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between linguistic signs and the speakers and listeners who use them to communicate. It focuses on the meanings that speakers want to convey through their choice of words, phrases, and sentences in a given context.. By successfully executing a speech act, the speaker can influence the listener and potentially change their opinion or psychological state. Speech verbs take an important role in this process.

8. The pragmatics of speech verbs analyzes how these verbs are used in real communication situations, the speaker's intention, the effect on the listener, and their role in context, and is related to the rules of language use in society, the current style of communication, and the opaque natural structures of language.

The main findings of the research are published in the following articles and conference proceedings authored by the researcher:

1. Müasir ingilis dilində feillərin leksik-semantik təsnifatı // – Bakı: Bakı Slavyan Universiteti, Humanitar elmlərin öyrənilməsinin aktual problemləri, – 2016. №2, – s.98-101.
2. Müasir ingilis dilində nitq və təfəkkür feilləri müxtəlif leksik-semantik qruplar kimi // “Tətbiqi dilçiliyin müasir problemləri” mövzusunda III Beynəlxalq elmi konfransın tezisləri. – Bakı: Azərbaycan Dillər Universiteti, – 25-26 oktyabr, – 2018, – s.44.
3. Müasir ingilis dilinin tədrisində innovativ metodların əhəmiyyəti // “Xarici dillərin tədrisinin aktual problemləri” mövzusunda Respublika elmi konfransının tezisləri. – Bakı: Azərbaycan Dillər Universiteti, – 06-07 dekabr, – 2018, – s.100-101.
4. Müasir ingilis dilində nitq feillərinin semantik təsnifatı // – Bakı: Azərbaycan Dillər Universiteti, Elmi Xəbərləri, – 2019. №1, – s.40-45.

5. Danışiq aktı ifadə edən “to speak” nitq feilinin semantikasi // Gənc tədqiqatçıların II Respublika elmi-praktik konfransı. – Bakı: Azərbaycan Universiteti, – 15 mart, – 2019, – s.329-330.
6. Dilçilikdə pragmatikanın tədqiqi məsələsi // Ümummilli lider Heydər Əliyevin Azərbaycanda hakimiyyətə gəlməsinin 50 illiyinə həsr olunmuş “Davamlı inkişaf və humanitar elmlərin aktual problemləri” Respublika konfransı. – Bakı: Azərbaycan Universiteti, – 24 oktyabr, – 2019, – s.114-115.
7. Прагматическая составляющая английских глаголов речи // Вчені Записки Таврійського Національного Університету імені В.І.Вернадського Серія: Філологія. Соціальні комунікації. – Київ: – 2020. – Том 31(70), №4, Частина 2, – с.16-21.
8. Семантический аспект глаголов речи в современном английском языке // – Москва: Научно-практический журнал: «Современная наука: Актуальные проблемы теории и практики». Серия “Гуманитарные науки”, – 2021. №02/2, – с.124-129. **ERIH PLUS**
9. Экспрессивно-эмоциональный потенциал английских речевых глаголов // Education and science of today: intersectoral issues and development of sciences: Collection of scientific papers “ΛΟΓΟΣ” with Proceedings of the I International Scientific and Practical Conference, – Cambridge: Cambridge-Vinnitsia: P.C.Publishing House&European Scientific Platform. – March 19, – 2021, Vol.2, – p.187-190.
10. Основные синонимические ряды английских речевых глаголов (на примере глагола “to speak”) // Культурология, искусствоведение и филология: современные взгляды и научные исследования: сб. ст. по материалам XLVII международной научно-практической конференции. – Москва: Изд. “Интернаука”, – 2021, №4(41), – с.61-65.
11. Müasir ingilis dilində cavab aktında işlənən nitq feillərinin semantik xüsusiyyətləri // – Bakı: ELMİ İŞ Beynəlxalq elmi jurnal, – 2023. Cild 17, Sayı 7, – s.30-35.

12. Müasir ingilis dilində müsbət emosiyaları ifadə edən nitq feilləri // – Bakı: Bakı Dövlət Universiteti, Dil və ədəbiyyat. Beynəlxalq elmi-nəzəri jurnal, – 2023. №2(122), – s.94-96.
13. Dialoji nitqdə sual ifadə edən nitq feillərinin semantikasi // – Bakı: AMEA, M.Füzuli adına Əlyazmalar İnstitutu, Filologiya məsələləri, – 2023. №9, – s.148-156.

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