

COMMUNICATIVE SITUATIONS AND THEIR ROLE IN SPEECH ACT FUNCTIONING.

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The aim of this study is to investigate the role of communicative situations in shaping the functioning of speech acts in English discourse. Specifically, the research seeks to identify how different social, cultural, and contextual factors influence the choice, interpretation, and pragmatic realization of speech acts such as requests, apologies, compliments, and refusals. By analyzing authentic conversational data, the study aims to reveal patterns of interaction that demonstrate the interdependence between situational context and speech act performance. Ultimately, the research aspires to contribute to a deeper understanding of the pragmatic mechanisms that govern effective communication, offering insights applicable to language teaching, intercultural communication, and the development of pragmatic competence in learners of English. The study uses a qualitative-pragmatic approach to examine how communicative situations affect the functioning of speech acts in English. It focuses on understanding the role of social and contextual factors in shaping the choice and interpretation of speech acts such as requests, refusals, apologies, and compliments. Spoken corpora: Selected passages from the British National Corpus (BNC) and the London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English. Recorded interactions: Informal and semi-formal conversations among native English speakers in workplace, academic, and social contexts. Written communicative texts: Emails, online forums, and chat messages representing natural discourse. Observation and extraction: Identification of speech acts within different communicative situations. Contextual analysis: Classification of speech acts based on formality, social distance, and situational context. Pragmatic analysis: Examination of politeness strategies, indirectness, and mitigating expressions used in speech acts. The recorded data involve 20–30 native English speakers, aged 20–50, with diverse professional, academic, and social backgrounds. All participants gave informed consent. Data were anonymized and used

solely for research purposes. The analysis of the collected data revealed that communicative situations significantly influence the realization of speech acts in English. The following patterns were observed: Effect of formality: In formal contexts, speakers preferred indirect strategies, such as hedging, modal verbs, and polite expressions, when performing requests, refusals, or disagreements. In contrast, informal settings encouraged more direct and straightforward speech act realization. Social distance: The degree of familiarity between interlocutors affected speech act choice. Close relationships allowed more direct expressions of agreement or disagreement, whereas distant or hierarchical relationships prompted indirect forms to maintain politeness and social harmony. Medium of communication: Spoken interactions showed more frequent use of intonation, pauses, and hedging devices to convey subtle meanings, whereas written texts relied more on explicit politeness markers, hedging phrases, and context-dependent formulations. Speech act type: Requests and refusals were most sensitive to contextual variation, with speakers frequently adjusting indirectness according to social norms. Compliments and apologies also varied, but hedging and mitigating strategies were consistently employed to soften face-threatening acts. Overall pattern: The findings indicate a clear interplay between context and pragmatic realization: communicative situation, social distance, and medium collectively shape how speech acts are performed and interpreted in English.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that communicative situations play a crucial role in shaping the performance and interpretation of speech acts in English. Formality, social distance, and the medium of communication significantly influence whether speakers choose direct or indirect strategies. Requests, refusals, apologies, and compliments are all realized differently depending on contextual factors, highlighting the importance of pragmatics in everyday communication. These findings emphasize that understanding and adapting to communicative situations is essential for effective interaction and for developing pragmatic competence. For language learners and practitioners, awareness of context-sensitive strategies can enhance communication skills and facilitate socially appropriate responses in English discourse.

References:

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