

PRAGMATIC PECULIARITIES OF THE LINGUISTIC EXPERTISE (BASED ON THE ARTICLE "SOLVE THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT BEFORE IT EXPLODES" BY THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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The article deals with the pragmatic peculiarities of Linguistic Expertise (LE) which is an important means of analysis in applied linguistics. We analyze the newspaper article "Solve the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict before it explodes" by the New York Times and try to reveal pragmatic features concerning Artsakh conflict. We also identify the types of information and the forms it is expressed: the statement about the facts that can be verified on the basis of reality, evaluative judgments, assumptions or questions.

From the common point of view, the communicative intention of the statement differs from the communicative intention of the supposition by the degree of the speaker's confidence in the proposition. When it comes to the statement or assumption, under the degree of certainty in the proposition, the probability of its verity is meant. If the speaker is not sure of the verity of the proposition, he uses a special set of syntactic and lexical means to express it. In conducting a linguistic expertise, there is a practice that assertions include such sentences (more precisely, speech acts) that do not have special lexical and / or syntactic indicators of the assumption or opinion, but are expressed (from the grammatical point of view) in the form of an indicative (indicative inclination) and describe some situation as part of the real world (reality). Meanwhile, the term "assertion" is logical and represents a special type of judgment. In its turn, "judgment" is defined as "a form of a thought in which something is asserted or denied in respect to objects and phenomena, their properties, and relations, and which has the property of expressing either truth or falsehood"². An assessment in logics is often depicted by the formula "S is (not) P", where S is an object or phenomenon, and P is

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/08/opinion/solve-the-nagorno-karabakh-conflict-before-it-explodes.html>

² <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com>

properties of objects or phenomena. Certainly, there are more complex judgments, in particular, consisting of several objects / phenomena and more complex predicates. 'Affirmation' as the term in the practice of linguistic expertise directly correlates with the so-called "assertive assessment", where the utterance is evaluated by the truth value – 'verity', 'falsity'. In this sense, the assertion is synonymous with another logical term 'statement'. The latter is understood as "a narrative sentence, considered together with its content (meaning) as true or false"³. In the theory of speech acts, according to J. Austin the statement refers to the constatives, which are generally opposed to performatives⁴.

Assertions are statements, the main function of which is the transferring of some relevant information or a message to the addressee about the actual state of the situation. Besides, the recipient must have a social and communicative experience to interpret and expand the information received. Assertive speech acts are widely used in newspaper articles both in a pure form, and with other speech acts. Almost every topic covered in printed mass media is revealed by using assertive statements.

Constatives are evaluated from the standpoint of truth-falsity and their utterance is not linked to the implementation of actions. According to Austin, assertions or constatives, unlike performatives present themselves as true or false⁵. In the performatives, the illocutionary aspect of semantics prevails, while in the assertions/constatives the locutionary one is predominant, formed by the meaning and reference. Juxtaposition of various sources, in which the concepts of assessments, statements, utterances and narrative sentences are interpreted, makes it possible to single out the essential features of the assertion category. First, the grammatical form of an expression of the assertion is a narrative sentence with its inherent grammatical characteristics (first of all, a predicate in the form of an indicator in the absence of indicators of the opinion and supposition). Secondly, the statement is verifiable; it can be assessed as true or false. This was criticized by J. Austin, from the standpoint of the fact that among the speech acts traditionally attributed to the statements, there are performatives that cannot be evaluated as true or false⁶. Thirdly, the statements can be parts of utterances (speech acts). In particular, using an explicit performative formula with verbs like 'to assert', 'to state', 'to conclude', the statement does not refer to all explicit

³ Философский энциклопедический словарь, Советская энциклопедия, 1983, с 98.

⁴ Austin J.L. *How to Do Things with Words*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962, pp. 120-125.

⁵ Ibid, pp. 80-85

⁶ Ibid, pp. 42-45

performatives, but only to the subordinate sentence introduced by the corresponding verb. The point is that the assertion in the text is opposed to suppositions, opinions, beliefs and assessments. The indication of the link to the information transmitted to the model of the world is the way to include the proposition into the system of the speaker's beliefs, suppositions, and assessments. In fact, saying *in my opinion / as it seems to me / seems / apparently*, we refer to our own system of ideas about reality. Thus, the linguistic expression of suppositions, opinions, beliefs and similar phenomena is related to the indication of the information expressed in the proposition to the corresponding cognitive sphere of the speaker. The supposition can be introduced by special syntactic and lexical means. These include the following methods⁷:

- Syntactic constructions with verbs such as 'to seem', 'to think', as well as a variety of introductory words and constructions related to the assessment of the utterance authenticity. For instance, *probably, perhaps, likely, evidently, in all probability, maybe, all appearances*
- Suppositions can be introduced indirectly as well, without special lexical indicators, in particular, using indirect methods of introducing the assumption and opinion. The indirect introduction of an assumption can be implemented with *the rhetorical question*.

One attempt of the modal component formal description of a speech utterance is *performative analysis*, proceeding from the assumption that each sentence is introduced into discourse by a *performative prefix* fixing the modality of the utterance. Sometimes this performative prefix is expressed by the visible form of the supposition and corresponds to an explicit performative formula. Phrases like "*I consider...*", "*I demand...*", "*I ask...*" explicitly introduce the modality of the utterance. The issue is that the absence of a performative prefix in the explicit form of a statement leads to the polysemy in the interpretation of the utterance modal component. In fact, in the logical-semantic representation, phrases without modal components can be interpreted in both forms as "*I affirm*" or "*I suppose*". The linguistic expert practice in the media texts has shown that statements with missing lexical and lexical-syntactic indicators expressing assumption refer to the affirmation. That is, the absence of an explicit performative prefix indicating the assumption is interpreted as the presence in the speech statement of the affirmative modality. The statement is usually expressed with declarative

⁷ Баранов А. Н. Лингвистическая экспертиза текста: теория и практика: учеб. Пособие. — М., 2007, с 33-35.

sentences. Declarative sentences, related to the communicative function of the statement, allow an indirect expression of other communicative functions. The grammatical form of the declarative sentence can be an expression of a number of modalities: descriptions, assessments, requests, and, of course, assumptions. In this sense, performative analysis postulating the polysemy of speech acts communicative intention without an explicit performative prefix is proved. In each specific case, the context of the speech acts usage in the grammatical form of a declarative sentence specifies, clarifies its communicative orientation.

The article of The New York Times entitled "***Solve the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict before it Explodes***" from April 7, 2016 is studied. The title "***Solve the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict before it Explodes***" indicates to the implicitness⁸ of presupposition that *a conflict* exists. From the first line of the article "***For almost three decades, the most dangerous unresolved conflict in wider Europe has lain in the mountains of the South Caucasus, in a small territory known as Nagorno-Karabakh.***" we have noticed that it is a representative, because the author takes the responsibility for the authenticity of the expressed statement. He also gives an assessment to the conflict, as the attributes "***dangerous, unresolved***" indicate to it. The Cambridge dictionary gives us the following definition for "***unresolved***"- "***a phenomenon which is not solved or ended***". Another dictionary Collins defines it as "***a problem or dispute not having been solved or concluded***". "***Dangerous***" is defined as "***able to hurt or harm***" according to the Collins dictionary and "***able or likely to cause harm or death, or unpleasant problems***" according to the Cambridge dictionary. The author points out the unsettled status in the sense that the issue of the status of Artsakh can become a topic for the serious discord which can cause significant harm. The sentence "***In the early 1990s, the conflict there created more than a million refugees and killed around 20,000 people***" is an assertion because the author states about an existing past fact. By the nature of the pragmatic component, the utterance "***two countries signed a truce — but no peace agreement***" is performative. The recipient forms an opinion that these two states committed only a temporary cessation of hostilities, because "***truce***" is defined as "***a short interruption in a war or argument, or an agreement to stop fighting or arguing for a period of time***" in the Cambridge dictionary which also evaluates the status of Artsakh from an unstable side. And the perlocutive effect is achieved

⁸ Имплицитность в языке и речи / Под ред. Е.Г. Борисовой, Ю.С. Мартемьянова. М., 1999.

by the fact that "**no peace agreement**" is the actual cause of a dangerous conflict. The writer refers to his own system of the idea about reality. The indication of this are such expressions as "it seems, likely, it could be" e.g. "**It seems one of the players — most likely Azerbaijan — decided to change the facts on the ground**", "**cease-fire could fall apart at any moment... and the conflict could escalate further...**" or "**tens of thousands of young men would most likely lose their lives**". "**Nagorno-Karabakh erupted again last weekend**" is a proposition which has the communicative intentional content, due to a suddenly intensified conflict, the situation in Karabakh may change and reach such an extent that the deplorable aftermath is inevitable. The word "**erupt**" has the lexical meaning of "**to break out of a pent-up state, usually in a sudden and violent manner**" in the American Heritage dictionary⁹. In the sentences "**The situation is volatile... A new all-out Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is the stuff of nightmares**" we find such evaluative definitions as "**a new all-out**", "**volatile situation**", and also a comparison of the situation with the "**nightmare**". These expressions form a negative opinion about the status of Artsakh in the mind of the recipient. The sentence "**Russia and Turkey, already at loggerheads and with military obligations to Armenia and Azerbaijan, respectively, could be sucked into a proxy war**" is performative where it is assumed that Russia and Turkey can be unwittingly involved in a "**proxy war**". The Oxford dictionary gives the following definition to "**proxy war**"- it is "**a war instigated by a major power which does not itself become involved**". That is, the addressee understands from the context that "**major powers**" are Russia and Turkey. The statement "**Fighting in the area would also destabilize Georgia, Iran and the Russian North Caucasus**" has a negative connotative meaning. The verb "**destabilize**" according to the Cambridge dictionary has definitions "**to make a government, area, or political group lose power or control**" and "**to make a political or economic situation less strong and safe by causing change and problems**". It means some phenomenon that disturbs the stability of something. This phenomenon has a negative coloring, but does not reveal the negative attitude of the author to the status of Artsakh. Also such word-phrases with attributes as "**a full-scale war**" and "**protracted conflict**" indicate the assessment of judgments about the conflict from the author's point of view. By "**a full-scale war**" we understand a full mobility of the military forces. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary "full scale" has the definition of "**involving full use of available resources**". By "**protracted conflict**" we understand a conflict lengthened for a long time or

⁹ <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/erupt>

extended in duration. The Collins dictionary¹⁰ gives another explanation to this word—**“Something, usually something unpleasant, that is protracted lasts a long time, especially longer than usual or longer than you hoped”**. So according to the Collins dictionary, this word is usually used in a negative sense. In the proposition **“Nagorno-Karabakh is intractable but not especially dangerous, like Cyprus”** the author notes the harmlessness and innocuity of the state, but he also represents Nagorno-Karabakh as a state that does not recognize someone's power over it and *it is very difficult, even impossible to control it*¹¹. The question arises: *whose authority should Nagorno-Karabakh recognize?* Namely, this statement contains an obvious implicit presupposition that Nagorno Karabakh still submits to some other state, thereby excluding the option of the state independence. In accordance with the established ethical norms, such words violate the norms that concern independence, including basic personal liberties, and, therefore, such words violate the established norms of social morality. The assertion **“More than 20 years on, nationalist hatreds have not abated. In fact, they’ve been fed over the years by official propaganda on both sides”** forms in the mind of an addressee the understanding that Nagorno Karabakh expresses an intensive negatively colored destructive feeling, reflecting rejection, aversion and hostility to the subject that is specific to this nation. The adverb **“in fact”** intensifies the affirmative nature of this proposition, that, *actually*, this destructive feeling did not reduce, but rather spread throughout all these years. This expression indicates a violation of the dignity norms, including the concept of honor, which also breaks the norms of social morality. An excerpt *“The bitter truth is that leaders in Armenia and Azerbaijan have become trapped by their own rhetoric, promising their publics total victory that can never be achieved. They have employed the status quo as a weapon to shirk hard questions about their own legitimacy or to divert people’s attention from socioeconomic problems”* is a constative, the communicatively intentional content of which concludes the affirmation that Armenia has become a victim of its own word. In the proposition *“They have employed the status quo as a weapon to shirk hard questions about their own legitimacy or to divert people’s attention from socioeconomic problems”* the author points out that the state took advantage of the existing situation as a means of manipulating the people and not to focus the people's attention on the financial and social situation. The author discredits Armenia in the international arena thereby damaging the image of the state, which is immoral on the part of moral norms concerning ethical virtues. Such metaphors as **“frozen conflict”**,

¹⁰ <https://dictionary.reverso.net/english-cobuild/a+protracted+war>

¹¹ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/ru/словарь/английский/intractable>

“shuttle diplomacy” are used in the article to give expressiveness to it. In case of the frozen conflict, the conflict ceases, but a peace treaty is not concluded between the parties, thus, the conflict can begin legally at any time, creating conditions for unreliability and instability. This term is applicable to partially recognized states with disputed territories whose situation is not resolved *de jure*. The Collins dictionary gives the following definition to **“shuttle diplomacy” – “negotiations in which a mediator travels between two warring parties who are unwilling to negotiate directly”** or **“diplomacy between hostile countries or groups conducted by a mediator who travels back and forth between the parties involved”**. In diplomacy and international relations, *shuttle diplomacy* is the action of an outside party in serving as an intermediary between (or among) principals in a dispute, without direct principal-to-principal contact. Originally and usually, the process entails successive travel (“shuttling”) by the intermediary.

Thus, we tried to identify the types of information used in the article “Solve the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict before It Explodes” by the New York Times and revealed the forms it is expressed.

**ԳԱՅԱՆԵ ԵՂԻԱԶԱՐՅԱՆ, ԹԱՄԱՐԱ ԴԱՆԻԵԼՅԱՆ -
ԼԵԶԱԲԱՆԱԿԱՆ ՓՈՐՁԱՔՆՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԳՈՐԾԱԲԱՆԱԿԱՆ
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ԿԱՐԳԱՎՈՐՎԻ՝ ՄԻՆՉԵՎ ԱՅՆ ՉԻ ՊԱՅԹԵԼ» ՀՈԴԿԱԾԻ ՀԻՄԱՆ
ՎՐԱ)**

Հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվում են լեզվաբանական փորձաքննության առանձնահատկությունները, որոնք վերլուծության կարևոր գործիք են կիրառական լեզվաբանության վերլուծական ապարատում: Ներկայացվում է Նյու Յորք Թայմս թերթում տպված «Լեռնային Ղարաբաղի հակամարտությունը պետք է կարգավորվի՝ մինչև այն չի պայթել» հոդվածը, և փորձ է արվում բացահայտել Արցախի հակամարտության վերաբերյալ նյութի գործաբանական ներուժը: Նաև սահմանում ենք հոդվածում ներկայացված տեղեկատվության տեսակները և ձևերը, այն է՝ փաստերի վերաբերյալ պնդումները ստուգվում են՝ հաշվի առնելով իրականությանը համապատասխանող և գնահատական պարունակող դատողությունները, ենթադրությունները և հարցերը:

ГАЯНЕ ЕГИАЗАРЯН, ТАМАРА ДАНИЕЛЯН- ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКОЙ ЭКСПЕРТИЗЫ (НА ОСНОВЕ СТАТЬИ НЬЮ-ЙОРК ТАЙМС «НАГОРНО-КАРАБАХСКИЙ КОНФЛИКТ НУЖНО РЕШИТЬ, ПОКА ОН НЕ ВЗОРВАЛСЯ»)

В статье рассматривается прагматический аспект лингвистической экспертизы, которая является важным средством анализа в рамках прикладной лингвистики. Мы анализируем газетную статью *“Нагорно-Карабахский конфликт нужно решить, пока он не взорвался”* “Нью-Йорк Таймс” и пытаемся выявить прагматические особенности данной статьи. Мы также определяем типы информации и форму, в которой она выражается. В частности, рассматриваются заявления о фактах, которые могут быть верифицированы, ссылаясь на реальные и оценочные суждения, предположения или вопросы.