

Original Paper

ISSN: 2321-1520

Illocutionary Speech Acts in Gujarati Language.

JINY JOHN MACWAN

RESEARCH SCHOLAR
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS
SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES
GUJARAT UNIVERSITY

Introduction: -

We “the speakers of various languages” do much more while speaking sentences when we are communicating with other people. We express our thoughts, desires, plans, intentions when we speak but at the same time, we do make promises, ask for forgiveness, seek answers to our questions, bless people, ask for clarifications, answers, explanation and so on. And in doing this we do not necessarily use the explicit words in our sentences. Most of the time, sentences that we utter and our intentions in making those sentences to get an end result or an expected reply – which could be an answer, a polite nod, a self-imposed correction by a hearer, are totally different. We/ speakers get expected result from the hearer only when the hearer understands what is being said in the exact manner the speaker intended.

Thus it shows that language plays various functions and one of such functions is the existence of various Illocutionary Speech Acts. The following paragraphs will throw light on what is Speech Acts and their characteristics, at the same time on variety of Illocutionary Acts in Gujarati language.

So the question arises what is Speech Acts? They are acts performed in uttering expressions. The terminology comes from the work of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). John Searle also believed that the basic unit of a human linguistic communication is the Illocutionary Act.

In his book Pragmatics, Stephen C. Levinson writes that the issue of Speech Act theory has aroused the widest interest. It is interesting to see how he further writes about various fields and the way Speech Act theory has had an impact on them. Psychologists believe the knowledge of the theory of Speech Acts is the first step in acquiring language. To literary critics it provides an understanding of literary genres. For anthropologists Speech Acts theory seems to provide some amount of magical spells or rituals. For philosophers, it is the source of potential application to the status of ethical statements, whereas for linguists, this theory can be widely applied to problems in syntax, semantics and second language learning.

Although languages may differ as to how and when Speech Acts are to be performed, every language “makes available to the user the same basic set of Speech Acts... the same set of strategies – semantic formulas for performing a given Speech Act”. (Fraser, Rintell and Walters) Whereas according to Wierzbicka, Speech Acts are not comparable across languages and cultures.

Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) developed a theory according to which Speech Acts are divided into four categories.

1. Utterance Act.
2. Illocutionary Acts.
3. Perlocutionary Acts.
4. Propositional Acts.

UTTERANCE ACTS: -

Utterance Acts are acts of uttering sounds - it could be any sound, i.e. a syllable, word, phrase and sentence from a language. It is also murmuring, whispering and shouting. An Utterance Act is not communicative it is not performed by a human being. It can be performed by even a parrot. But while performing this act, either an Illocutionary Act or a Perlocutionary Act is performed.

ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS: -

“The Illocutionary Act is an act performed in saying something” – Austin. Examples of Illocutionary Acts are promising, reporting, stating, asking, telling, threatening, requesting.

To perform Illocutionary Acts successfully, there are three conditions that should be met: -

1. Exact/right performative sentences should be uttered.
2. The utterance should be with right intentions and beliefs.
3. Utterance should be made under the right circumstances.

Illocutionary Acts are “central to linguistic communication”. The most important thing about them is that they can be performed successfully by getting one’s/speaker’s Illocutionary intentions recognized.

Searle has divided this Illocutionary Acts in five different types. They are: -

1. Representatives or Assertive.
2. Directives.
3. Commissive.
4. Expressives.
5. Declarations.

Searle believes that the basic unit of human linguistic communication is the Illocutionary Act. According to him there is a difference between Illocutionary Verbs and Illocutionary Acts. Illocutions are part of a language as opposed to particular language. Illocutionary Verbs are always part of a particular language. Differences in Illocutionary Verbs are a good guide but by no means a sure guide to differences in Illocutionary Acts.

PERLOCUTIONARY ACTS: -

These acts are performed by saying something. – Austin. For example, inspiring, deceiving, irritating, embarrassing.

First Perlocutionary Acts cannot be performed by uttering crystal clear performative sentences. For example, to convince someone that “A gave money to B”, we do not say “I hereby convince you that “A gave money to B.” Second, Perlocutionary Acts create an effect of Utterance Acts and Illocutionary Acts on the thoughts, feelings and actions of the hearer, which is not done in producing Illocutionary Acts. Illocutionary Acts are means to Perlocutionary Acts and not the converse. Looking at Illocutionary Acts such as asserting, questioning, requesting and promising there can be an overlap in what is asserted, questioned, requested and promised. For example: -

A gave money to B – statement.

A gave money to B? – question.

A gave money to B! – request, demand.

All of these Illocutionary Acts are concerned with “A giving money to B”, which is called the PROPOSITIONAL content of the Illocutionary Act. Different types of Illocutionary Acts can have the same Propositional content as above. Furthermore, each type of Illocutionary Act can have different Propositional content. For example, The Illocutionary Act of stating can have a wide variety of Propositional contents in that a wide variety of propositions can be stated: For example, the earth is flat, nobody is perfect.

A speaker’s intention in communicating may require the performance of any one or more of these types of acts, mostly communication seems centrally bound up with Illocutionary Acts and Propositional Acts.

Searle¹ in his work A Classification of Illocutionary Acts, writes about twelve significant dimensions of variation in which Illocutionary Acts differ from one another.

Gunter Senft¹ in his book called Understanding Pragmatics writes that: -

1. Differences in the point or purpose of the type of act.

2. Differences in the direction of fit between words and the world.

3. Differences in expressed psychological states. – are the three most important dimensions of variation out of twelve.

ILLOCUTIONARY SPEECH ACTS IN GUJARATI LANGUAGE.

As stated previously, to perform Illocutionary Speech Acts successfully three conditions should be met, via, 1 utterance of right/exact performative sentence, 2 uttering with right intentions and beliefs and 3 uttering under the right circumstances. Let’s study the following sentences to see how they fulfil all the three conditions

The first we would call here, SAY/TELL SPEECH ACTS: -

➤ અમંત્રણ આપવું.

aamantraN aapvu

to invite/to give invitation

Here while speaking this, Illocutionary Act of actually inviting is performed. While inviting someone, we perform the action of inviting people in making an utterance or a sentence.

- આશ્વાસન આપવું.
aashvaasan aapavu
to console

In the same way while consoling people, our utterances and the action that is carried out with those utterances is the same at the right/proper circumstance(s).

- બોલવું.
bolvu
to speak

Even “to speak” is also an Illocutionary Act, when people are part of any conversation, their utterances would be in line with the topic of conversation going on at a specific time, with certain people, so their act of speaking as a part of participating or contributing in the conversation is an Illocutionary Act.

- બુમ પાડવી.
Bum paadvi
to shout
- બરાડા પાડવા.
Baraadaa paadvaa
to scream
- સાદ પાડવો.
saaD paadvo
to call for

If someone shouts, he does not say now ‘I am shouting’, the act of shouting is performed in utterance itself.

- ભાષણ આપવું.
bhaashaN aapavu
to deliver a lecture, to give sermon

Like 4, the act is performed while uttering it. Other examples of SAY/TELL SPEECH ACTS ARE: -

- ભાષાંતર કરવું.
bhaashaanTar karavu
to translate
- ભણાવવું.
bhaNaavavu
to teach

- બડાઈ હાંકવી.
badaai haankavi
to boast
- ચાડી ખાવી.
chaadi khaavi
to tell on somebody
- ચાંપલાસ કરવી.
chaaplaas karavi
to smart mouth
- ચાળા પાડવા.
chaaLaa paadavaa
to mimic, to imitate
- ગણગણવું.
gaNgaNvu
to mumble, to mutter
- ગાવું.
gaavu
to sing
- ગુસપુસ કરવી.
guspus karavi
to whisper
- હા પાડવી.
haa paadavi
to say yes
- હા મીં હા મીલાવવી.
Haa-maa-haa milaavavi
to agree with
- ઇચ્છા વ્યક્ત કરવી.
icchaa vyakT karavi
to express a desire
- જવાબ આપવો.
javaab aapvo
to answer/ to give an answer

- જુઠું બોલવું.
juTHTHu bolavu
to lie/to tell a lie
- કહેવું.
kahevu
to tell/to say
- ખાતરી આપવી.
khaaTari aapavi
to assure
- લાલચ આપવી/લલચાવવું.
laalach aapavi/lalachaavavu
to tempt, to entice, to lure
- માગવું.
maangavu
to ask (for)
- મનાવવું.
manaavavu
to convince
- નામકરણ કરવું
naam karaN karavu
to name
- ના પાડવી.
naa paadavi
to say no
- પ્રસ્તાવ મૂકવો.
prasTaav mukavo
to propose
- પ્રસ્તાવ સ્વીકારવો.
prasTaav svikaarvo
to accept a proposal
- પ્રસ્તાવ અસ્વીકારવો.
prasTaav Asvikaarvo
to reject a proposal

- प्रार्थना करवी.
prarthanaa karavi
to pray
- कष्टसवुं.
kaNasavu
groan in pain, moan
- शीखववुं.
shikhavavu
to teach
- मंत्रोच्चार करवा.
manTrochchaar karavaa
to chant
- नामस्मरण करवुं.
naamsmaraN karavu
remembering, uttering the name of especially god
- वचन आपवुं.
vachan aapvu
to promise
- विनंती करवी.
veenanTi karavi
to request
- वार्ता कडेवी.
vaarTaa kahevi
to tell/narrate a story
- वખाण करवा.
vakhaaN karavaa
to appreciate/praise
- आवकार आपवो/सत्कारवुं
aavkaar aapvo/saTkaarvu
to welcome
- होंकारो आपवो.
honkaaroo aapavo
to give/say consent, loud cry

- માફી/ક્ષમા આપવી.
maafi/kshamaa aapavi
to forgive

Then there is another category called, INFORMATIVE SPEECH ACTS: -

- આગાહી કરવી.
aagahi karavi
to forecast

In here, the act of 'forecast' is being performed in uttering it and same goes with the following examples in Informative Speech Acts where either one is being informed or/and one is performing the act of providing the information.

- ભાવ પૂછવો.
bhaav puchavo
to ask for price/rate
- ભવિષ્ય કહેવું.
bhavishya kahevu
to predict, to profess
- ચેતવવું.
cheTavavu
to warn
- દિશા બતાવવી.
dishaa baTaavavi
to show direction, to guide
- માહિતી આપવી.
maahiTi aapvi
to give information, to inform
- માહિતી માંગવી.
maahiTi maangavi
to ask for information
- સૂચન કરવું.
suchan karavu
to inform
- સવાલ પૂછવા.
savaal puchhvaa
to ask questions

- સલાહ આપવી.
salaah aapavi
to suggest/to advice
- શિક્ષામણ આપવી.
shikhamaN aapavi
to advice, to counsel

The third one is ABUSIVE OR INSULTING SPEECH ACTS, where the act of ‘abusing or insulting’ is performed while performing the utterance.

- આરોપ મૂકવો.
aarop mukavaa
to blame
- ધમકાવવું
dhamakaavavu
to scold
- ધમકી આપવી.
dhamaki aapavi
to threaten
- ગાળો આપવી.
gaaLo aapavi
to abuse/to make abusive remarks
- નિંદા/ખોદણી કરવી.
nindaa/khoDani karavi
to malign/to slander
- શ્રાપ આપવો.
shraap aapvo
to curse
- ઝગડવું
Zaghadavu
to quarrel
- ખખડાવવું/તતડાવવું.
khakhadaavavu/TaTadaavavu
to scold

- ઠપકો આપવો.
THapko aapvo
to rebuke
- ધૂત્કારી કાઢવું.
dhuTkaari kaaDHvu
rudely, in a hateful manner/way to ask someone to leave
- જાકારો આપવો.
jaakaaro aapvo
(normally) to ask someone to leave

The forth category is COMPLAINING (MOAN, WHINE) SPEECH ACTS, where it is clearly seen how the act of complaining is performed while the actual complaint is being made.

- અફસોસ વ્યક્ત કરવો.
afsos vyakt karavo
to regret
- આરોપ મૂકવા.
aarop mukavaa
to blame
- બબડવું.
babadavu
to murmur / to grumble
- ફરિયાદ કરવી.
fariyaad karavi
to complain

Then we have MANDS SPEECH ACTS which are uttered to get the work done.

- આજ્ઞા આપવી.
aagna aapavi
to command / to give command
- કામ ચિંધવું.
kaam chindhvu
to appoint work

Conclusion

It is evident that we are unaware of the specific “Speech Act” while making use of a language(s). Though it is Illocutionary Act that catches the attention of researchers, in my opinion, whether for a linguist or a layman, for effective communication and day to day conversation or even to get a simple response on calling on someone’s name, all the three above mentioned Speech Acts have

more or less an equally important role to play.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ‘aa’ indicates /a:/
- ‘u’ as in the English word ‘book’
- ‘ch’ as in the English word ‘cheat’
- ‘dh’ as in the Gujarati word ‘dhoti’
- ‘N’ as in the Gujarati word ‘paaNi’, ‘vaaNi’
- ‘L’ as in the Gujarati word ‘vaaL’, ‘naL’
- ‘D’ as in the Gujarati word ‘Dikari’, ‘DaDa’
- ‘TH’ as in the Gujarati word ‘THandi’
- ‘THTH’ as in the Gujarati word ‘juTHTHu’
- ‘chch’ as in the Gujarati word ‘sachchaai’
- ‘DH’ as in the Gujarati word ‘DHaglo’, ‘DHaaL’
- ‘T’ as in the Gujarati word ‘Talvaar’, ‘Tapeli’

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