



THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE STUDY OF SPEAKING VERBS

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Abstract

The present article explores the theoretical foundations of the study of speaking verbs within the framework of lexical semantics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis. Speaking verbs constitute an important lexical group that expresses various forms of verbal communication, including informing, questioning, commanding, and expressing emotional attitudes. The study examines the semantic characteristics, classification, and pragmatic functions of speaking verbs in English and Uzbek. Particular attention is devoted to the role of these verbs in representing communicative acts and conveying the speaker's intention, evaluation, and interpersonal relationships. The research demonstrates that speaking verbs form a complex lexical system that reflects the diversity of speech acts in human communication. A comparative analysis of English and Uzbek examples reveals both universal and language-specific features in the structure and usage of speaking verbs. The results show that these verbs play a significant role in organizing discourse, expressing attitudes, and enriching stylistic variation in language.

Keywords: Speaking verbs, lexical semantics, speech acts, verbal communication, discourse analysis, pragmatics, English language, Uzbek language.

Introduction

Language functions as the primary instrument of human interaction and communication. Through language, people exchange information, express emotions, convey intentions, and establish social relationships. Among the



various linguistic means used to describe communication processes, speaking verbs occupy a particularly important position. These verbs denote acts of speech and verbal interaction and therefore represent a significant lexical category in linguistic studies. Speaking verbs describe the process of producing spoken language and the interaction between speakers and listeners. They include such verbs as say, tell, ask, explain, reply, whisper, and argue. In Uzbek, similar communicative functions are expressed through verbs such as aytmq, so‘zlamq, so‘ramq, javob bermoq, and tushuntirmq. These verbs not only indicate the act of speaking but also reflect various communicative intentions and emotional attitudes.

The theoretical investigation of speaking verbs is closely connected with the study of speech act theory. According to John Langshaw Austin, language does not merely describe reality but also performs actions through speech [Austin, 1962]. This idea was further developed by John Searle, who classified speech acts into several categories such as representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations [Searle, 1969]. Within this theoretical framework, speaking verbs serve as linguistic indicators of communicative acts. They provide information about the type of speech activity being performed and often convey the speaker’s attitude toward the message. Consequently, the study of speaking verbs is essential for understanding how language represents communication processes.

The aim of this article is to analyze the theoretical foundations of the study of speaking verbs, explore their semantic and pragmatic characteristics, and examine their usage through examples from English and Uzbek.

Literature Review

The analysis of speaking verbs has been widely discussed in linguistic research, particularly within the fields of lexical semantics, pragmatics, and discourse studies. The theoretical basis for the study of speech-related lexical units was established by John Langshaw Austin in his work *How to Do Things with Words*. Austin emphasized that utterances often function as actions rather than mere statements, thereby introducing the concept of performative speech acts [Austin, 1962]. Building on this idea, John Searle developed a classification of speech acts and analyzed how linguistic expressions represent communicative intentions



[Searle, 1969]. According to Searle, verbs of communication frequently signal the type of speech act being performed. Another significant contribution to the study of lexical meaning was made by Geoffrey Leech, who examined the pragmatic aspects of language and emphasized that lexical units often carry additional meanings related to politeness, intention, and emotional evaluation [Leech, 1983]. In lexical semantics, scholars have emphasized that speaking verbs possess complex semantic structures. These verbs may include information about the manner of speaking, the emotional state of the speaker, and the relationship between participants in communication [Lyons, 1977]. In Uzbek linguistics, speaking verbs have also attracted scholarly attention as an important group of lexical units reflecting communicative actions. Researchers note that Uzbek verbs of speech often contain morphological and semantic indicators that specify the manner, purpose, or emotional tone of communication. Thus, the existing literature demonstrates that speaking verbs represent a multidimensional linguistic phenomenon requiring analysis from both semantic and pragmatic perspectives.

Methodology

This study is based on several linguistic methods commonly used in lexical and semantic analysis. The descriptive method is used to identify and categorize speaking verbs according to their semantic characteristics. The semantic analysis method allows the investigation of the lexical meaning and internal structure of speaking verbs. The comparative method is applied to examine similarities and differences between English and Uzbek speaking verbs. The contextual analysis method is used to analyze examples from texts and observe how speaking verbs function within discourse. These methods provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing the theoretical and functional properties of speaking verbs.

Materials and Discussion

Speaking verbs represent lexical units that denote acts of verbal communication. These verbs describe various types of speech activities such as stating information, asking questions, expressing opinions, or giving instructions. In English, common speaking verbs include: say, tell, speak, ask, reply, whisper, argue. In Uzbek, similar communicative functions are expressed through verbs



such as: aytmoq, so‘zlamog, so‘ramog, javob bermoq, gapirmog, tushuntirmog. Example in English: She said that the meeting would start at noon. Example in Uzbek: U yig‘ilish tushda boshlanishini aytdi. These examples illustrate how speaking verbs introduce reported speech and indicate the source of information. Semantic Classification of Speaking Verbs. Speaking verbs can be classified into several semantic groups according to their communicative function.

Informative speaking verbs. These verbs indicate the act of conveying information. English examples: say, tell, explain, inform. Uzbek examples: aytmoq, tushuntirmog, bayon qilmoq. Example: The teacher explained the new rule. O‘qituvchi yangi qoidani tushuntirdi.

Interrogative speaking verbs. These verbs express the act of asking or seeking information. English examples: ask, inquire, question. Uzbek examples: so‘ramog, surishtirmog. Example: He asked about the schedule. U jadval haqida so‘radi.

Directive speaking verbs. Directive verbs express commands, requests, or instructions. English examples: order, command, request. Uzbek examples: buyurmoq, iltimos qilmoq. Example: The manager ordered the workers to finish the task. Rahbar ishchilarga vazifani tugatishni buyurdi.

Expressive speaking verbs. These verbs convey emotional attitudes or reactions. English examples: complain, praise, apologize. Uzbek examples: shikoyat qilmoq, maqtamoq, uzr so‘ramog. Example: She apologized for the mistake. U xatosi uchun uzr so‘radi.

From a pragmatic perspective, speaking verbs play an important role in structuring discourse and indicating the speaker’s communicative intention. These verbs help identify the type of speech act being performed and clarify the relationship between participants in communication. For example, the verbs whisper, shout, and murmur describe the manner of speaking. Each verb conveys additional information about how the message is delivered. Example in English: He whispered the secret to his friend. Example in Uzbek: U sirni do‘stiga pichirlab aytdi. In literary discourse, speaking verbs are frequently used to convey emotional nuance and characterize the personalities of fictional characters. Authors often choose specific speaking verbs to indicate the mood or attitude of a speaker. For instance, a character who insists or argues may appear determined or confrontational, whereas one who suggests or admits may appear cautious or



reflective. Similarly, Uzbek literary texts employ a wide range of speaking verbs to convey subtle shades of meaning and emotional states. Example: U jahli chiqib gapirdi. He spoke angrily. These examples demonstrate that speaking verbs often interact with adverbs and contextual elements to produce complex communicative meanings.

Results

The analysis conducted in this study reveals several important findings regarding the theoretical foundations of speaking verbs. First, speaking verbs represent a significant lexical category that reflects various forms of verbal communication. Second, these verbs can be classified into semantic groups based on the type of communicative act they denote. Third, speaking verbs possess both lexical and pragmatic meanings, which allows them to convey information about the speaker's intention, emotional state, and interpersonal relationships. Finally, the comparative analysis of English and Uzbek examples demonstrates that although the two languages belong to different linguistic families, they share similar principles in the semantic organization of speaking verbs.

Conclusion

The theoretical study of speaking verbs demonstrates that this lexical category plays a fundamental role in representing communication processes in language. Speaking verbs serve as linguistic indicators of speech acts and provide essential information about the structure and purpose of verbal interaction. The analysis shows that speaking verbs possess complex semantic structures that include components related to communicative intention, emotional expression, and social relationships between participants in discourse. Their classification into different semantic groups reflects the diversity of communicative functions performed by language.

The comparative examination of English and Uzbek examples reveals that both languages employ a wide range of speaking verbs to describe various forms of verbal interaction. Despite structural differences between the two languages, the fundamental semantic principles underlying speaking verbs remain largely universal. In addition, speaking verbs play an important role in discourse organization and literary narration. They allow speakers and writers to represent



dialogue, convey attitudes, and create vivid descriptions of communication processes. Therefore, the theoretical analysis of speaking verbs contributes significantly to the fields of lexical semantics, pragmatics, and discourse studies. Further research may explore the stylistic and cultural aspects of speaking verbs in different languages and investigate their role in cross-cultural communication.

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