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## FRAMING THE SCENES OF LINGUISTIC ACTIONS BY MEANS OF DIRECTIVE POLYILLOCUTIONARY VERBS IN THE EARLY MODERN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

*The paper is devoted to an outline analysis of the directive polyillocutionary verbs, namely how these verbs frame the linguistic actions. These verbs have been investigated in the discourse of the Early Modern English period. The attention is focused on the verb, as it becomes the central conception, around which different ideas in the perceiving of the world are gathered. Especially important is the role, that verb plays in process of understanding, reasoning and other cognitive processes.*

*The author examines the language phenomenon of polyillocutiveness which may be defined as an ability of certain illocutionary verbs to have in their deep structure alongside with locative some a certain illocutionary one which is the most suitable for the speaker's communicative intention. One and the same polyillocutionary verb can realize its various potential illocutive senses (meanings), which depend on the communicative situation.*

*Within the group of the polyillocutionary verbs there exists a subgroup of verbs with the common meaning of directiveness and the main point of them is to get the hearer to do something; the speaker expresses a wish and the proposition specifies a future act to be done by the hearer. Otherwise these verbs may denote other intentions, for example, assertive, commissive, declarative, etc.*

*The author examines basic directing polyillocutionary verbs, such as to advocate, command, to request, to beg, to ask, to advise, to order, to invite, to permit, to prohibit, to propose, to recommend, to suggest to threaten, and some others. The speaker expresses a wish and the proposition thus specifying a future act to be done by the hearer. This definition can be pertained to the dominant examples of directing, namely commands, propositions, requests, warnings, some pieces of advice.*

*It is postulated the idea that many cases of legal and religious situations with directive polyillocutionary verbs could be found in Early Modern English: One can suggest something to someone, as one can propose or recommend something to someone – all these directive speech act verbs, not mean only to influence the addressee directly or even semi-directly, but at same time they constitute the assertiveness of different situations in reality.*

**Key words:** *Early Modern English language, semantics, directives, intention, illocutionary force, proposition, social/institutionalized setting, communicative behavior.*

**Introduction.** Studies of social contexts are very popular among discourse analysis because they are seen in terms of the action and interaction of participating social members. One of the most important conditions for social interaction is that the communicating persons understand each other. The concepts that govern our thoughts are not just matter of intellect. They govern our everyday functioning. Verb becomes a key to understanding thinking principles and processes, i.e. verb affects the ways in which we perceive, think and act. Verbalizations of many aspects of social life have been investigated by cultural, especially linguistic, anthropologists.

**Recent research and publications.** There are many studies concerning the usage of the verbs in the performance and description of speech situations: the classification speech-act types (e.g. Austin John,

Copeland John, Nisa K., Manaf N., Rohmah E., Searle John, Wierzbicka Anna); the speech-act theory and how it influences the ideology that is not necessarily applicable to other speech communities [8, p. 133]. The different shades in force that present themselves depend on a large variety of factors that have to be dealt with in terms of different semantic dimensions. The overview of directive speech – act types could be regarded as an outline of the illocutionary dimension in question.

Many of them refer to larger configurations of linguistic acts such as text – level structures. These configurations of speech acts, however, can be said to possess a force similar to individual directive speech acts. We should remember that when we use ‘a directive act’, this phrase can frequently be replaced by ‘a set of directive acts’ or ‘a series of

acts with a directive force'. The permeating different levels of linguistic structure show how fundamental directing is as a function of language. There are two types of directives that are in fact mixtures between directives and some other type of linguistic action [8, p. 141–142].

The first of these mixed classes is represented by *to propose* and *to suggest*. Usually acts of advising and warning are partly – if not primarily – assertive. Its directive force does not necessarily derive from a wish on the part of the speaker but rather from the fact that a particular course of action is presented as preferable because it is to the hearer's benefit. On the other hand, warning is an indication of an event or course of action to be detrimental to the hearer [8, p. 147; 10, p. 112].

The purpose of the article is to analyze the semantic and pragmatic peculiarities of the directive polyillocutionary verbs in Early Modern English social and institutionalized surroundings.

The semantic analysis of the following verbs as indicators of speaker's intention has been realized on the basis of pragma-syntactic and pragma-semantic levels.

**Presentation of the main material.** The directive polyillocutionary verbs may be defined as follows: *to advocate, to claim, to cross-examine, to cross interrogate, to legalize, to levy, to make mandatory, to make requisition to mandate, to negative, to read the riot act* (in the sense of ordering a mob to disperse), *to reclaim, to regulate, to requisition, to propose, to recommend, to suggest, to veto, to read the riot act* in its original sense of ordering (a mob) to disperse is only obliquely related to a legal frame of action. Its extended meaning of giving a strong warning, which is more prominent now, is not related to a legal setting [6, p. 65; 8, p. 151]. The directive verbs that are most explicitly related to a legal context: *to lay down the law*, (is more commonly used in its metaphorically extended sense of giving strict order (as a teacher, a parent, etc.)), *to catechize* (i.e. giving systematic religious instruction by means of asking questions, receiving answers and offering explanations or corrections), *to censure* (the meaning of which can easily be extended to nonreligious and no ethical settings), *to excommunicative* (i.e. to shut off by an ecclesiastical sentence from communion with the church), *to preconize, to put on the index, and to taboo* [7, p. 25; 8, p. 157]. Many verbs of directing focus on the legal setting of the act described. This would probably not be the case in languages spoken in societies that lack an elaborate legal system.

Apart from *to ordain, to catechize* and *to preconize*, all the verbs refer to acts that are or can be

prohibitive in nature. The predominance of negative directives is certainly not unrelated to the prohibitive nature of Christian ethics. After all, eight of the Ten Commandments are prohibitions.

Some relevant polyillocutionary verbs are *to make reservations, to order, to promote, to publicize, to put in an order for*, and *to reserve*. Civil law clearly dominates, which is no doubt in keeping with regular observations of the directing forces in our Western societies.

As far as English is concerned, we are aware of the existence of only one, namely *to order up* (which also has the nonmilitary meaning of ordering someone to go or come upstairs). The solution is probably to be found in the very fact that the situation is so prototypical: if a military command is a command, for example, there is no need to call it differently.

Some verbs focus on political acts of directing. It is not surprising that some examples share a member, namely *to canvass*, which means "*to solicit votes or seek political support in an election campaign*".

Recommend

/1/ *As a result, certain corrective action was recommended to the Council. There was also Mr. Clarkson, who had been recommended to Mrs. Goodman by the Parrotts as solicitor* [9, p. 607].

/2/ *They recommended her for a promotion after only two years* [9, p. 609]. In sentences 1–2 the directive polyillocutionary verb *recommend* demonstrates its *assertive meaning* that is it is used in the meaning to say that something or someone is good and deserves to be chosen. The assumption is that we assume that you would want to know what would be a good thing for you to do. We assume that you would want to know what we think would be good for you because we know much about these things.

/3/ *I recommend caution in dealing with this matter* [9, p. 608].

/4/ *The committee has recommended that the training programme should be improved* [9, p. 609].

/5/ *You may decide to pursue the matter in court, but I wouldn't recommend it* [9, p. 611].

In sentences 3–5 the directive polyillocutionary verb *recommend* demonstrates its *directive meaning* that is it is used in the meaning to suggest someone do something. We assume that one should do something, i.e. the speaker expresses his view concerning the addressee's future actions and exposes the speaker to perform this action.

First, recommendations imply superior knowledge (in the given area), whereas advice may or may not be based on knowledge. We may ask someone for advice because we trust their moral or aesthetic judgment,

their taste or their good sense, rather than knowledge. But if a friend, or a trusted person, recommends something to us, he implies that he knows a good deal about the area in question, probably more than we do.

Furthermore, *recommending* seems to aim at saying what would be good for the addressee. We may advise a friend to go and apologize to someone whom he has offended simply because we regard this action as something that he should do. We are less likely to recommend to a friend such an action – and if we do, we would be implying that an apology would be beneficial to the person who offers it. Perhaps partly for this reason, the idea of recommending a prayer, or an act of forgiveness, or any other inner act, is somewhat odd, whereas there is nothing odd about advising someone to pray, to forgive, or to try to understand another person [5, p. 145]. Usually, one recommends objects (dishes, restaurants, holiday places, etc.) which one views as reliable means of obtaining satisfaction or relief. This stress on an object (or an action) as a source of satisfaction is reflected in the syntax of *recommend*, i.e. in the fact that the direct object of this verb refers usually to a thing or action rather than to the addressee, whereas the direct object of *advise* usually refers to the addressee.

The further, related point concerning *recommend* is the speaker's confidence and forcefulness. When one advises a person one adopts the pose of someone who wants to cause another person to know what he should do; when one recommends something one adopts [1, p. 77; 3, p. 105]. The person who recommends something doesn't attempt to influence the addressee's behavior, and doesn't expect that his speech act will affect the addressee ("we don't know if you will do it"). The fact that one recommends something to someone, as one suggests something to someone, reflects this greater tentativeness of recommending. The fact that one advises (to) someone, as one orders or commands (to) someone, reflects the greater forcefulness of advice.

Suggest

/6/ We **suggest** to the committee that they review the case again [9, p. 613].

/7/ He **suggested** that we leave early [9, p. 615].

/8/ He **suggested** several different ways of dealing with the problem [9, p. 616].

In sentences 6–8, the directive polyillocutionary verb *suggest* identifies its *directive meaning* that is it is used in the meaning to mention something as a possible and necessary thing to be done, used, thought about. Its semantic meaning is as follows: we think it would be a *good thing* if you do it. We say this because we want to cause you to think about it and do

it. In its pragmatic meaning the speaker imposes the hearer to perform the future action.

The speaker doesn't know decision the addressee is going to reach, and he doesn't assume that the course of action presented by him as a possibility for the addressee to consider will be followed. In fact, he shows explicitly his lack of certainty about it. For this reason, suggestions tend to use an interrogative form (in particular, the frames "how about" and "why don't you").

Usually, the reason for making a suggestion is a desire to be useful to the addressee: the speaker assumes that the addressee doesn't know what to do, or doesn't know what to think, and he offers his thoughts on the subject to help the addressee in his uncertainty. But though common enough, this is not always the case. For example, seeing a friend looking unusually pale and tired one might say "Joe, how about going to see a doctor", without assuming that Joe has been considering what he should do. One can also suggest, out of the blue, some joint activity (a walk, a visit to a cinema, etc.) [2, p. 91].

/9/ I **suggest** caution in a situation like this [9, p. 617].

/10/ There is nothing to **suggest** that the two events are connected [9, p. 621].

/11/ I think he's **suggesting** that we shouldn't have helped them [9, p. 625].

In the above sentences, the directive polyillocutionary verb *to suggest* clarifies its *assertive meaning* that is it is used to say that someone (something) is good or deserves to be chosen. Its pragmatic meaning shows that something is likely to be true and indicates something usually without showing it in a direct or certain way. The explication of *to suggest* proposed here refers to an action ('doing X') on the part of the addressee. We would claim, however, that he is invited to think something. The speaker invites the addressee to consider whether he would want to accept the idea that John is still at work. This interpretation allows us to postulate a unitary semantic formula for all the different uses of *to suggest*.

Propose

/12/ The mayor **proposed** a new plan for reconstructing the bridge [9, p. 627].

/13/ Several senators have **proposed** raising the tax [9, p. 629].

/14/ I **propose** that we revise the bylaws [9, p. 635].

In sentences 12–14, the directive polyillocutionary verb *to propose* identifies its *directive meaning* that is the speaker obliges the hearer to perform some actions. We say this because we want to cause other people to think about it and to do it if they want it to

happen. We assume that you will do if you want it to happen.

But in the case of *suggest* the speaker's support for the action is more tentative ("We think it might be good if..."); the action doesn't have to be a collective one.

/15/ The chairman **proposed** the young executive as a candidate for promotion [9, p. 641]; /16/ She **proposed** (=more commonly) nominated her teacher for the award [9, p. 645]; /17/ He is the original **proposer** of a new theory [9, p. 646].

In the above sentences, the directive polyillocutionary verb *to propose* clarifies its *assertive meaning* that is it is used in the meaning to inform something such as a plan, or theory to a person or group of people to consider. Like other 'pro-verbs', *propose* has a formal and public character. This 'stylistic' difference is no doubt due to the semantic one that is to the fact that proposes, unlike suggests, and has to involve 'other people' [2, p. 135]. We might add that when we speak about 'the proposed explications' we are appealing to the readers to think about these explications and to say whether or not they feel they would want to accept them. We indicate that these explications would be good if they were accepted, and we acknowledge that 'We cannot cause it to happen if other people don't want it to happen'.

Advocate

/18/ In view of the imminence of the Second Coming of Christ, they **advocated** strict asceticism, without any contact whatsoever with the surrounding world of collective fanners [9, p. 649].

We say: we think it will be good if people do things of a certain kind. We want other people to think the same. We know that some people will say that they don't want to think this. We say this because we want to cause people to think this, and to do X because of that. We assume that we will have to say this many times.

*Advocate* is similar to *praise*. But *praise* normally refers to something that is already there; by contrast, *advocate* always refers to things that are in the future, and, more specifically, to future human actions ("it will be good if people do X"). In this respect, *advocate* is very close to *recommend*, except that *recommend* is always directed at specific addressees ("it will be good, if you do X"). Moreover, *recommend* is concerned with the agent's own benefit ("it will be good for you if you do X") whereas *advocate* implies a more disinterested stand ("it will be good if people do X") [10, p. 75–76].

Ultimately, the speaker's goal consists in causing people to do the things that he presents as good. The immediate goal is not to influence people's actions, but to influence their thinking: the speaker wants

to cause people to come to share his view, and to take the suggested course of action as a result of their new convictions. This desire to influence first other people's thinking, and then their actions, links *advocate* with *persuades*. But in the use of *persuade*, the speaker has in mind a particular addressee, and not 'people in general'. Moreover, in the case of *persuade* the speaker is trying to change an existing view; by contrast, in the case of *advocate*, he is trying to induce a new point of view, rather than to change an old one.

This is not to say that *advocate* doesn't envisage any conflict or clash of views. It does, but not in the same sense as *persuade* does. In the case of *advocate*, the speaker expects to find opponents, people who will try to oppose his point of view. But the set of potential opponents is by no means coextensive with the set of people whose views and behavior the speaker is trying to influence (the former set being of course much narrower than the latter). The idea of opposition links *advocates* with *defend*: one defends one point of view against the opposite point of view, and one advocates a point of view against a – real or expected – opposition to that point of view. But defense represents a reaction, a response to an earlier act; by contrast, advocacy is spontaneous, and it anticipates possible opposition rather than tries to combat it [4, p. 135].

Furthermore, in defending someone or something one can make several points but one can also use a single argument; but *advocating* always involves a good deal of talking. More specifically, it involves a chain of arguments, i.e. of things which, the speaker thinks, should cause other people to accept his point of view. In this respect, *advocate* is related to *argue*. But *arguing* may well be restricted to a single (if protracted) occasion; by contrast, *advocating* is something that one normally does on many separate occasions – and that one expects to go on doing again and again, trying to spread one's favoured way of thinking, to account for this aspect of *advocating*.

Finally, it should be mentioned that one normally *advocates* a 'course of action' rather than a single action. In fact, one *advocates* a certain way of life, based on a certain way of thinking. For example, one cannot *advocate* red wine, as one would recommend red wine, not even if one envisages the drinking of red wine as a healthy, lifelong habit. One can, on the other hand, *advocate* asceticism, celibacy, free love, euthanasia, or a semantic approach to grammar.

**Conclusions.** Thus, we have singled out a number of areas of social and legal interaction in Early Modern English in which directive behavior

is prominent: legal, religious, military, political, diplomatic, educational and criminal ones. We use language to communicate with each other, to exchange our knowledge, to explain our behavior, to express our feelings, to enrich our worldview and to reflect everyday events and environment around us.

This paper may be regarded as an attempt in verb investigation. The whole phenomenon of the nature of verb needs much more further investigation, as it plays an important role in public social communication during the historical evolution of the English language.

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#### Матковська М. В. ЛІНГВІСТИЧНІ ДІЇ ДИРЕКТИВНИХ ПОЛІЛОКУТИВНИХ ДІЄСЛІВ В ІСТОРІЇ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ РАНЬООНОВАНГЛІЙСЬКОГО ПЕРІОДУ

Стаття присвячена аналізу семантичних та прагматичних особливостей директивних дієслів в соціальній сфері спілкування ранньоновоанглійського періоду англійської мови. Знання їх семантики та прагматики дає можливість адекватно спілкуватися. Учасники сфери спілкування безумовно дотримуються певних ролей, функцій, законів комунікації.

Зокрема, увагу зосереджено на вивченні ранньоновоанглійських дієслів директивної полілокутивності на рівні текстових ситуацій. Вважається, що у системі сучасної англійської мови дієслово є однією з основних частин мови, яке характеризується потенційним набором певних семантичних значень. У мовленні відповідне дієслово визначає тип мовленнєвого акту.

Автор досліджує функціонування директивних полілокутивних дієслів, таких як *to advocate, to assign, to claim, to command, to demand, to propose, to plead, to recommend, to tell, to suggest, etc.* на основі певних семантичних компонентів змісту ілокутивних дієслів у прагматичному контексті, що сприяє можливості формулювати правила розуміння певного типу дискурсу та прогнозувати дії в різних предметних ситуаціях. До таких мовних одиниць ми відносимо директивні полілокутивні дієслова актів мовлення в інституційному дискурсі. В результаті висвітлено групу директивних дієслів із прагматичним значенням спонукання, що характеризують відповідне прагматичне значення поєднуючи в собі інші ілокутивні семи, наприклад, асертивну, комісивну, декларативну тощо.

Постулюється ідея, що концептуальні моделі інституційного дискурсу ранньоновоанглійського періоду формуються внаслідок вивчення ситуацій дійсності як онтологічного плану, так і відповідних аксіологічних, оцінних фокусів, що обумовлюють характер прагматичної спрямованості соціальної взаємодії між комунікантами.

**Ключові слова:** ранньоновоанглійська мова, семантика, прагматика, директиви, інтенціональність, ілокутивна сила, пропозиція, соціальний/інституційний дискурс, комунікативна поведінка.