



Article

Functional-Cognitive Nature of Forms of Address

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Abstract: This article analyzes the multifunctional nature of forms of address on the basis of N. V. Bugakova's cognitive-pragmatic approach. The pragmatic, phatic, vocative, socio-regulatory, etiquette, identificational, evaluative, influential, performative, illocutionary, and perlocutionary functions of address units are explained with examples. As a result of the analysis, it is substantiated that a form of address is not merely a means of naming the addressee, but a functional-semantic unit that conceptualizes the addressee in social, emotional, and axiological terms.

Keywords: Form of Address, Vocativity, Connotation, Cognitive Pragmatics, Illocutionary Force, Perlocutionary Result, Socio-Regulativity

1. Introduction

In modern linguistics, the category of address is interpreted not merely as a syntactic phenomenon or a marker of etiquette, but as a complex functional-semantic field that integrates the social distance between interlocutors, status relations, emotional evaluation, and speech influence [1]. From this perspective, the meaning of a form of address is not limited to lexical nomination alone. It activates the internal purpose of the speech act, establishes the channel of communication, regulates social roles, brings evaluation to the surface, and produces a certain effect on the addressee [2]. Thus, the analysis of address units is of particular importance for illuminating the cognitive and pragmatic mechanisms of language associated with the human factor [3].

Analysis of Literature

For a long time in linguistics, forms of address were interpreted primarily as syntactic and communicative units. In the earliest studies, address was regarded as a means of expressing the orientation of speech toward the addressee, and greater attention was paid to its nominative and vocative properties. Within such approaches, the grammatical status of address, its position within sentence structure, and the structural features related to the vocative were treated as the central issues. At later stages, a functional approach to forms of address became more prominent. Studies in this direction emphasized that address units serve not only to call the addressee, but also to initiate communication, mark social distance, express respect or intimacy, convey evaluation, and exert influence. As a result, views on the multifunctional nature of forms of address began to take shape. Proceeding from the communicative function of language, N. I. Formanovskaya, in her observations, identifies several functions of forms of address. In

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Uzbek linguistics, M. Qodirova, relying on N. I. Formanovskaya's conclusions, divides the functions of address into six groups [4, 5].

Research conducted within the framework of cognitive linguistics has made it possible to interpret the phenomenon of address more deeply. In particular, N. V. Bugakova analyzes the category of address from the perspective of a cognitive-pragmatic approach and evaluates it as an independent linguistic category that identifies the addressee while at the same time differentiating social relations. According to the scholar, the concepts of "addressing" and "connotation" are embodied in the structure of forms of address, and the connotative layer, in particular, plays an important role in expressing the speaker's emotional, social, and axiological attitude toward the addressee. In this respect, address units appear as a functional-semantic system that verbalizes interpersonal and status relations [6, 7]. In the cognitive interpretation of forms of address, speech act theory, functional grammar, and linguocultural approaches are also of considerable importance. These approaches demonstrate the close connection of address with illocutionary force, perlocutionary result, socio-regulatory function, and evaluative semantics. They also support the view that forms of address are underlain by national culture, stereotypical representations, and systems of microworlds, thereby confirming that address is not merely a linguistic unit, but also a cognitive-cultural phenomenon. N.V.Bugakova's research, conducted on the basis of French-language material, serves to provide a consistent theoretical foundation for this approach: the author regards address not only as a means of identifying the addressee, but also as a cognitive unit that expresses the speaker's knowledge of the addressee, attitude toward the addressee, and communicative strategy, and distinguishes its vocative, pragmatic, etiquette, socio-regulatory, identificational, evaluative, influential, performative, illocutionary, and perlocutionary functions [8, 9].

2. Materials and Methods

Methodologically, the study employed descriptive analysis, functional-semantic analysis, cognitive-pragmatic interpretation, comparison with the elements of speech act theory, and the classification of examples into conceptual groups. In explaining the functions of forms of address, their communicative function, their effect on the addressee, their connotative load, and their socio-regulatory features were taken as the main criteria.

3. Results and Discussion

Within the modern approach, the functional nature of the category of address is revealed in connection with the concept of addressing. In this process, a single form of address often performs several functions simultaneously. Therefore, although the following functions are theoretically distinguished as separate, in actual speech they frequently appear in an integrated form [10].

Table 1. Generalized representation of the functions of forms of address

Function	Meaning	Example	Analytical conclusion
Vocative or appellative	Specifies exactly to whom the utterance is directed	"Qizim, bu yoqqa kel."	Calling the addressee is the nuclear feature of address, and the remaining functions arise on the basis of this foundation.

Phatic	Initiating, maintaining, and sustaining contact	“Do’stim, eshityapsanmi?”	Restores contact between the addresser and the addressee.
Socio-regulatory	Indicating status, role and distance	“Janob bosh vazir, ...” “Hurmatli prezidentim, ...” “Ustoz, ...”	Address explicitly displays and regulates social hierarchy and institutional distance.
Imperative	Exerting influence on the addressee	“Bolajonim, tinchlan.”	Forms of address exert a psychological influence on the addressee.
Conative	Showing courtesy to the addressee	“Kechirasiz, xolajon, bir daqiqa vaqtigingizni olsam maylimi?”	Respect, politeness, and social etiquette are standardized through linguistic means.
Emotive or evaluative	Expressing a subjective evaluation of the addressee and emotional coloring	“Arslonim, ...”, “Jannatim, ...”, “Asalim, ...”	On the basis of metaphor and connotation, the addressee is categorized as a particular type.
Identificational	Distinguishing the addressee from others	“Zarina, savolimga javob bering.” “Siz, oq ko’ylakdagi bola, darsni eshityapsizmi?”	Ensures referential clarity in a multi-participant situation.

The results showed that while the vocative and identificational functions constitute the central core of address, the evaluative, etiquette, and socio-regulatory functions form its connotative and social layer (Table 1) [11].

1. Vocative (appellative) function

The vocative function is the nuclear feature of the category of address, in which the principal task is to specify clearly to whom the utterance is directed. In such examples as “Bolalar, darsni boshlaymiz” and “Zarina, bu yoqqa kel,” it is precisely the address component that clarifies the communicative orientation. This function is especially important in situations involving multiple participants, where it ensures referential precision. Vocativity is the most stable feature of the form of address; other functions are often built precisely upon this core [12].

2. Phatic (contact-establishing) function

The phatic function is associated with opening the channel of communication, maintaining it, or restoring a broken contact. In such examples as “Hoy, qizim!” and “Akmal, eshityapsanmi?” the informative part of the utterance recedes into the background; first and foremost, the addressee’s attention is mobilized. Here, the form of address functions as a signal initiating communication. Thus, the phatic function confirms that address is a means of securing the initial contact necessary for communication [13].

3. Socio-regulatory function

Through the socio-regulatory function, address units express the status relations, social distance, and distribution of roles among participants in communication. Such expressions as “Direktor janoblari, hujjat tayyor,” “Domla, bir savolim bor edi,” and “Akajon, bir qarab yuboring” indicate different degrees of formality and closeness. Hence, the choice of address appears as a linguistic model of social structure. This function makes it possible to interpret address as a linguistic means that regulates status and role relations in society [14].

4. Imperative function

In its influential function, address serves as a means of directly affecting the addressee’s behavior or psychological state. In such utterances as “Jonim bolam, bir tinchlan” and “O’g’lim, yaxshilab o’qi,” the address softens the harshness of the command or advice and facilitates its acceptance. As a result, address performs the function of an emotional regulator of verbal influence. Therefore, the influential function reveals the persuasive potential of address [15].

5. Conative function

The conative function manifests itself in the use of address in accordance with the norms of speech culture, politeness, and socially accepted rules of interaction. Such forms as “Kechirasiz, doktor” and “Marhamat, ustoz” foreground politeness and respect regardless of the degree of familiarity between speaker and addressee. Here, the principal semantic weight of the address is directed toward maintaining the norm of courteous interaction. This function illuminates the cultural-semiotic dimension of address, in which social etiquette is embodied in a linguistic unit.

6. Emotive (evaluative) function

In the evaluative function, the form of address shows how the addressee is perceived as a person. “Arslonim” expresses courage and strength, while “qo’zichog’im” conveys affection and vulnerability requiring protection. In some cases, the evaluation may also be ironic: in the example “Professor, shuni ham bilmaysizmi?” a positively marked status title is used with a negative pragmatic background. This function reveals the connotative potential of address; through metaphor, metonymy, and stereotypical imagery, the addressee is categorized as a certain type.

7. Identificational function

The identificational function is connected with clearly distinguishing the addressee from others. In situations such as “Rustam aka, siz qolasiz” and “Siz, oq ko’ylakdagi yigit, meni eshityapsizmi?” the form of address eliminates communicative ambiguity. This is especially important in settings where many individuals are involved. Thus, the identificational function expresses the role of address in creating referential precision.

4. Conclusion

The analysis shows that forms of address possess a multilayered functional-cognitive nature. First, they serve as vocative and identificational mechanisms that identify the addressee. Second, through their socio-regulatory and conative functions, they govern the status-related and cultural parameters of communication. Third, the emotive and imperative functions bring out the connotative and pragmatic force of address. For this reason, it is not sufficient to explain the form of address as a simple nominative unit. It is a complex linguistic phenomenon that conceptualizes the addressee in social, emotional, and axiological terms, while also determining the purpose and outcome of the speech act.

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