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Статтю подано до редколегії
12.03.2012 р.

УДК 811.111'42

V. V. Mykhailenko – Doctor of Philology (Russia), prof.,
Chair of Modern European Languages Department Bukovyna
State University of Finance and Economics

Modus matrix in discourse

*The research is undertaken on the Department
of Modern European Languages Bukovyna State
University of Finance and Economics*

The present article is focused on the sentence and discourse correlation. The performative matrix is defined which is a sentence forming unit. Due to neutralizing the referred feature the performative matrix changes its status to the modus one. It also acquires the discourse forming status.

Key words: modus, performative, matrix, discourse, context, speech act.

Михайленко В. В. Модусна матриця в дискурсі. У статті розкрито взаємодію речення та дискурсу. Виділено перформативну матрицю, яка виступає реченневотвірною одиницею. При нейтралізації цієї ознаки перформативна матриця змінює свій статус на модусну та отримує дискурсотвірний статус.

Ключові слова: модус, перформатив, матриця, дискурс, контекст, мовленнєвий акт.

Михайленко В. В. Модусная матрица в дискурсе. В статье раскрывается взаимодействие предложения и дискурса. Выделена перформативная матрица, которая выступает единицей формирования предложения. При нейтрализации данного признака перформативная матрица меняет свой статус на модусную и получает статус единицы формирования дискурса.

Ключевые слова: модус, перформатив, матрица, дискурс, контекст, речевой акт.

The theory of sentence gives two classifications of sentence: structural (simple: composite) and functional (declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory). For the traditional grammar those classifications are quite logic, though it is a rather formal feature of the language system. Here we need new approaches to the sentence matrix – structural, semantic, pragmatic and discursive. The theory of speech acts helps to comprehend the sentence semantics, words encode information and people can convey more information with the sentence [9] like: The book. →

1. Give me the book.
2. Will you bring the book?

3. This is a book.
4. He wrote a book.
5. They are discussing the book.
6. The book will help you to enjoy your stay in the country, etc.

All the given sentences can be embedded in the deeper structure «I tell you» [8, 222–272] which is usually implicit. The explication is possible thanks to the context and its discourse. The referred structure needs an objective research of its semantics function, and pragmatics.

The number of interpretations depends on the situation, the speaker's intention and the recipient's comprehension. Although the focus of speech act theory has been on utterances, but it can refer to any sort of language use. The analysis of language use cannot be independent of the analysis of the purposes and functions of the language in human life. John R. Searle proposes five classes of speech acts [10]. Those are representative (e.g. *asserting*), directives (e.g. *requesting*), commissives (e.g. *promising*), expressive (e.g. *thanking*), and declarations (e.g. *appointing*). Communicative success is achieved if the speaker chooses his words in such a way that the hearer will under the circumstances of utterance, and recognize his/her communicative intention, e.g.:

Constatives: *affirming, alleging, announcing, answering, attributing, claiming, classifying, concurring, confirming, conjecturing, denying, disagreeing, disclosing, disputing, identifying, informing, insisting, predicting, ranking, reporting, stating, stipulating.*

Directives: *advising, admonishing, asking, begging, dismissing, excusing, forbidding, instructing, ordering, permitting, requesting, requiring, suggesting, urging, warning.*

Commissives: *agreeing, guaranteeing, inviting, offering, promising, swearing, volunteering.*

Acknowledgments: *apologizing, condoling, congratulating, greeting, thanking, accepting (acknowledging an acknowledgment)* [4, 93–110].

The essential insight of Speech Act Theory is that language performs communicative acts. There are a series of relationships between the notion of speech acts, what the speaker means, what the sentence (or other linguistic element) uttered means, what the speaker intends, what the hearer understands, and what the rules governing the linguistic elements are [10].

Under the performative theory, implicit performatives [1, 8–15] are either elliptical explicit performatives, or have as their highest clause in deep underlying syntactic structure a representation containing an explicit performative prefix, whether it is 'visible' or not [10, 24]. This way of accommodating performatives is called the performative analysis (See: Ross 1970, Sadock 1974 and Lakoff 1972, 1975).

This view emphasizes the role of language in 'practical action' and as a 'link in concerted human activity, as a piece of human behaviour' [7].

There are two rival theories: the discourse analysis approach and the conversational analysis approach. Discourse analysis is broadly sympathetic to speech act theory, whereas, conversational analysis is not. The claims of conversational analysis are examined and are found to be wanting in several respects. Speech Act Theory is then discussed with a particular emphasis on the problem of relating speech acts to each other within a larger unit of discourse [6, 907–922].

In order to get the concept of discourse, as stated above, the writer will clarify about the definition of discourse [2, 136–144]. The classic definition of discourse as derived from formalist assumptions is that discourse is «language above the sentence or above the clause». While Van Dijk states that discourse is a part of language. In many structural approaches, discourse is viewed as a level of structure higher than the sentence, or higher than another unit of text [3]. Harris viewed discourse analysis procedurally as a formal methodology, derived from structural methods of linguistic analysis. A definition of discourse as language is consistent with the functionalism in general: discourse is viewed as a system (a socially and culturally organized way of speaking) through which particular functions are realized [10, 32].

Evidently, the correct «reading» of the original sentence requires the situation, the speaker's clear-cut expression of his/her intention, the interlocutors sharing common background knowledge.

The objective of the present investigation is the structural, functional, semantic and discourse features of the «I + VERB (mental activity)» in the discourse represented by text fragments registered in the British National Corpus (100.000 mln. words). The unit under analysis consists of «I + VERB (mental activity)» with their frequency of use from 41286 to 288.

Let me express some hypothesis:

Hypothesis #1: all the verbs used in the position of the PERFORMATIVE VERB constitute the LSP «mental activities» – the can be paraphrased with the help of the verb *think* which is the dominant lexeme of the field.

Hypothesis #2: all the verbs used in the position of the PERFORMATIVE VERB between «I» (the ADDRESSOR) and «YOU» (the ADDRESSEE) implicitly actualize the verb of UTTERANCE.

Hypothesis #3: all the verbs used in the position of the PERFORMATIVE VERB have a triactant valency: ADDRESSOR, ADDRESSEE, and MESSAGE which is expressed by either a verbal phrase, or a (without conjunction) clause, or that-clause. In this case a performative clause and a subordinate clause form a complex sentence which can be developed into a discourse.

Hypothesis #4: the units «I + VERB (mental activity)» marked with coma, have a movable position in the sentence structure.

For the experiment we have selected structures with 11 verbs of mental activity together with the 1st person sg. pronoun «I» with their frequency from 41286 to 288 with the aim to differentiate their semantics, function and pragmatics.

1. Think (Middle English **thenken**, from Old English **thencan**; see **tong-** in Indo-European roots): to have or formulate in the mind; to reason about or reflect on; ponder; to judge or regard; look upon; to believe; suppose; to call to mind; remember; to visualize; imagine; to devise or evolve; invent; to bring into a given condition by mental preoccupation; to concentrate one's thoughts on; to weigh or consider an idea; to bring a thought to mind by imagination or invention; to have a conscious mind, to some extent of reasoning, remembering experiences, making rational decisions; to employ one's mind rationally and objectively in evaluating or dealing with a given situation; to have a certain thing as the subject of one's thoughts; to call something to one's conscious mind; to consider something as a possible action, choice, etc.; to have or form in the mind as an idea, conception, etc.; to have or form in the mind in order to understand, know, or remember something else; to consider for evaluation or for possible action upon; to regard as specified. The structure *I think* is registered 305 times in 41286 times BNC, e.g.:

1.1. I think Andy offered to let Howie hole up in the hotel while the cops were looking for him, and everybody else up there just assumes Howie's offshore at the moment. BNC.

1.2. But now, I think he's come into a great second flowering. BNC.

1.3. We sold to new clients from Portugal, Italy, Spain, Belgium, France, Switzerland and Germany a very healthy sign, I think. BNC.

2. Hope (late Old English *hopa* (noun), *hopian* (verb), of Germanic origin; related to Dutch *hoop* (noun), *hopen* (verb), and German *hoffen* (verb)): [no object] want something to happen or be the case; [with clause]; [with infinitive] intend if possible to do something; we're hoping to address all these issues. The structure *I hope* is registered 5400 times in BNC, e.g.:

2.1. Like you, I hope our journey won't take long, but, however long it takes – hours or days or weeks – we're going to cover every centimetre of this island until we find them! BNC.

2.2. No I hope he didn't. BNC.

2.3. I hope not that I'm choosy. BNC.

3. Believe (Middle English *beleven*, from Old English *belēfan*, from *be-* + *lyyfan*, *lefan* to allow, believe; akin to Old High German *gilouben* to believe, Old English *leof* dear – more at *love*; first known use: before 12th century): to have confidence in the truth of something; intransitive verb: to have a firm religious faith; to accept something as true, genuine, or real; to have a firm conviction as to the goodness, efficacy, or ability of something; to hold an opinion: think; transitive verb: to consider; to be true or honest; to accept the word or evidence of; to hold as an opinion; suppose; to be astounded at. The structure *I believe* is registered 4150 times in BNC, e.g.:

3.1. I believe that for some of us there's the need to possess for ourselves that inner conviction and excitement that is a mark of New Testament Christianity. BNC.

3.2. A third son did, I believe, run a branch at Trowbridge. BNC.

3.3. The curator is an old friend of his, a fellow-student, I believe. BNC.

4. Reckon (before 1000; Middle English *rekenen*, Old English *gerecenian*): (attested once; to report, pay; cognate with German *rechnen* to compute): to count, compute, or calculate, as in number or amount.): to count, compute, or calculate, as in number or amount; to esteem or consider; regard as; to be reckoned an

authority in the field; [intransitive/transitive] [not usually progressive] spoken to believe that something is true; reckon (that); be reckoned to be something; to have a particular opinion about someone or something; [transitive] to calculate something; [intransitive] British informal if you reckon to do something, you expect to do it. The structure *I reckon* is registered 973 times in BNC, e.g.:

- 4.1. I reckon Peter'll look after him OK. BNC.
- 4.2. That accident's turned her brain, I reckon. BNC.
- 4.3. I reckon Philip will be capable don't you? BNC.

5. Guess (Middle English: origin uncertain; perhaps from Dutch *gissen*, and probably related to *get*): to try and give an answer or make a judgement about something without being sure of all the facts; estimate or conclude (something) without sufficient information to be sure of being correct; form a correct conclusion about (something) by guessing; *informal* used to indicate that although one thinks or supposes something, it is without any great conviction or strength of feeling. The structure *I guess* is registered 932 times in BNC, e.g.:

- 5.1. It's the same with 90 per cent of adolescents, I guess. BNC.
- 5.2. I guess we'll know, by early March when it's out, what it's really about. BNC.
- 5.3. I guess that about wraps it up then. BNC.

6. Assume (1400–50; late Middle English (< Anglo-French *assumer*) < Latin *assumere* to take to, adopt, equivalent to *as-* *as-* + *sumere* to take up; see *consume*): to think that something is true, although you do not have definite proof; to take for granted or without proof; suppose; postulate; posit; to assume that ...; to take upon oneself; to take over the duties or responsibilities of; to take on (a particular character, quality, mode of life, etc.); adopt; to take on; be invested or endowed with. The structure *I assume* is registered 312 times in BNC, e.g.:

- 6.1. Judging by the food, I assume it overflowed into the kitchens below. BNC.
- 6.2. I assume that we thought that these dependants would wish to accompany their soldiers and that the soldiers would wish to have them with them. BNC.
- 6.3. At the top, just off to the left, is a hut, placed there, I assume, to help struggling people like me. BNC.

7. Presume (1300–50; Middle English *presumen* (< Old French *presumer*) < Latin *praesumere* to take beforehand (Late Latin: take for granted, assume, dare), equivalent to *prae-* *pre-* + *sūmere* to take up, suppose (see *consume*): to think that something is true, although you are not certain [= assume]; presume somebody/something to be somebody/something; be presumed to do something; [transitive] to accept something as true until it is shown to not be true, especially in law [= assume]; be presumed dead/innocent etc.; [intransitive] formal to behave without respect or politeness by doing something that you have no right to do; presume to do something; [transitive usually in present tense] formal to accept something as being true and base something else on it [= presuppose]; presume on/upon somebody's friendship/generosity etc. The structure *I presume* is registered 305 times in BNC, e.g.:

- 7.1. I presume all our seed boxes are on board, but, as it is customary, all letters were thrown overboard, so shall be at a great loss to find things. BNC.
- 7.2. I presume that we mean a supreme personal being – distinct from the world and creator of the world. BNC.
- 7.3. Without hesitation he approached me, held out a hand, smiled and said with a touch of humour, 'Doctor Masters, I presume?' BNC.

8. Consider (Middle English, from Anglo-French *considerer*, from Latin *considerare* to observe, think about, from *com-* + *sider-*, *sidus* heavenly body; first known use: 14th century): transitive verb: to think about carefully; to think of especially with regard to taking some action; to take into account; to regard or treat in an attentive or kindly way; to gaze on steadily or reflectively; to come to judge or classify; regard; suppose; intransitive verb: reflect, deliberate. The structure *I consider* is registered 288 times in BNC, e.g.:

- 8.1. LET us look at the process and, where appropriate, what I consider our approach should be. BNC.
- 8.2. I consider four moles are too dense. BNC.
- 8.3. In all the circumstances I consider that the proper course is not to find if there's any windfall element of the plaintiff's parents and therefore to ignore such arguments. BNC.

9. Admit (Middle English *admitten*, from Latin *admittere*, from *ad-* + *mittere* to send; first known use: 15th century) declare to be true or admit the existence or reality or truth of; transitive verb: to allow scope

for; permit; to concede as true or valid; to allow entry (as to a place, fellowship, or privilege; to accept into a hospital as an inpatient; intransitive verb: to give entrance or access; allow, permit; to make acknowledgment – used with *to*. The structure *I admit* is registered 241 times in BNC, e.g.:

9.1. I admit I was worried. BNC.

9.2. I admit that I have been known to curse on occasion and I often talk to my machine. BNC.

9.3. 'He can be violent, I admit,' Mr Browning said. BNC.

10. Judge (Middle English *jugen*, from Anglo-Norman *juger*, from Latin *iudicare*, from *iudex*, *iudic-*, *judge*; see : *deik-* in Indo-European roots) to form an opinion or estimation of after careful consideration; to permit to enter; to provide the right or a means of entrance to; to permit to exercise the rights, functions, or privileges of; to have room for; accommodate; to afford opportunity for; permit; to grant to be real, valid, or true; acknowledge; to grant as true or valid, as for the sake of argument; concede; intransitive: to afford possibility: a problem that admits of no solution; to allow entrance; afford access; to make acknowledgment. The structure *I judge* is registered 288 times in BNC, e.g.:

10.1. I judge you to be a born city person. BNC.

10.2. Until more is known concerning his death, I judge that you must be held in confinement within my custody. BNC.

10.3. And the longer we wait, the stronger Balliol will get, I judge. BNC.

The hypothesis according to which all the referred verbs are of the Romance origin failed to be true: etymology of the verbs of the LSP «Mental activities». However, *think*, *hope*, *believe*, *reckon*, *guess* are of the Germanic origin, though *assume*, *presume*, *consider*, *admit*, *judge* are really Romance.

The examples given under «3», wherein there is a MODUS MATRIX consisting of the «I» (ADDRESSOR) and the VERB separated by comma. It underlines the fact that this clause is not closely connected with the preceding/following clause. The node of the first step (periphrasis) can be re presented by the verb «*express (one's attitude)*»; the verb «*tell*» must be the second node: «I express my opinion...» → «I tell you...». Therefore, on the surface all these verbs primarily actualize the Speaker's modus components of *doubt*, *hesitation*, *belief*, *estimation*, *truth*, *deliberation*, *reflection*, *anticipation*, *uncertainty*, *supposition*, *intention*, etc. The movable position of the modus underlines its discourse forming function. The illustrations marked as «2» and «3» denote the structural unity of the performative matrix and the clause.

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Статтю подано до редколегії
12.03.2012 р.