

Study of Concept and Conceptosphere in Texts

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ABSTRACT

The article pragmatically investigates the paradigm and its role in the development of science, as well as its gradual evolution, the pragmatic paradigm and its microsystem the pragmalinguistic paradigm, the conceptological paradigm, the conceptosphere as the macrosystem of concepts, communicative interaction and the role and significance of concepts in communicative interaction, and the conceptosphere of individual concepts belonging to certain social groups. The article also analyzes social dialects, professional social dialects, and their concepts and conceptospheres.

Keywords: Paradigm, paradigmatic system, pragmatic and pragmalinguistic paradigm, communicative interaction, concept, conceptosphere, social groups, criminolinguistics

INTRODUCTION

In science, the concept of “paradigm” was first used by G. Bergman in relation to the normativity of methodology. However, the widespread use of the term paradigm is associated with the name of the American scholar T. Kuhn. The scholar first used this term in his work *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in 1977: “Revolutions occur frequently in society. A revolution in science is connected with a change in the approach to the object. A system of theories, rules, methods, approaches, and scientific views accepted by the scientific community at a certain stage of the development of a particular science and serving as a

model for posing and solving problems is called a paradigm” [1: 213].

In the history of the philosophy of science, there are several terms corresponding to the concept of “paradigm,” but none of them became as popular as this notion. In particular, such concepts as “episteme” (M. Foucault), “style of thinking” (M. Born), and “scientific research program” (I. Lakatos) are close in essence to the concept of “paradigm,” yet they did not receive broad recognition from the scientific community.

Yu.V. Yakovets understood paradigm as a system of dominant views and theories describing the scientific picture of the world. According to V.S. Stepin, a paradigm is a form of rationality and a scientific strategy encompassing ideals, norms, a worldview, and philosophical interpretations [2. P. 3]. According to T. Kisel, a scientific paradigm may be understood in both broad and narrow senses [3: 87-110]:

1. in the broad sense, paradigms are a set of views, criteria, and norms used in research techniques;
2. in the narrow sense, paradigms are examples of solving specific problems, which later serve as research models in interpreting other problems.

Proceeding from the above, the following definition may be given to the linguistic paradigm: a “linguistic paradigm” is a model of rules and views universally recognized in linguistic practice and serving as a framework upon which scholars rely in the process of conducting research.

V. Fon Humboldt’s “antinomy” or F. de Saussure’s views on “language and speech” and “synchrony and diachrony” may serve as examples of linguistic paradigms.

In the historiography of linguistics, the application of the concept “paradigm” is interpreted differently. Some linguists believe that the notion of “paradigm” may be applied to all views and ideas in linguistics from ancient times to the present day, whereas others oppose this position. According to the latter group of scholars, it is appropriate to apply the term “paradigm” only to approaches that emerged after linguistics became an

independent science, that is, from the nineteenth century onward. However, in our opinion, although the term paradigm entered scientific circulation in later periods, its essence manifested itself as a methodological model serving to identify and consistently investigate the general and particular aspects of language and speech phenomena. Therefore, it may be applied to scientific views and ideas throughout the entire historical development of linguistics, from ancient times to the present.

At various stages of the development of linguistics, different paradigms emerged aimed at resolving particular scientific needs and problems. Each paradigm interpreted language phenomena in accordance with the scientific thinking, object of research, and methodological approaches of its period. From this perspective, the anthropocentric paradigm (communicative or nominative-pragmatic paradigm), which developed in later periods, regards language not merely as a set of structural units but as an open system centered on the human factor and based on living communication and interaction. Within this paradigm, language is studied in close connection with other systems such as society, culture, human cognition, and psychology, and is viewed as a set of ideas, concepts, and doctrines directed toward the comprehensive analysis of the “human – world – language” relationship.

This paradigm is subdivided into various sub-paradigms:

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|----|------------------|-----------|
| a) | cognitive | paradigm; |
| b) | ethnolinguistic | paradigm; |
| c) | sociolinguistic | paradigm; |
| d) | psycholinguistic | paradigm; |
| e) | neurolinguistic | paradigm; |
| f) | linguocultural | paradigm; |
| g) | pragmalinguistic | paradigm; |
| h) | semantic | paradigm. |

From the above, it follows that a paradigm is a macrosystem integrating various microsystems within itself. One such microsystem is the concept and conceptosphere of certain social groups. They differ from other forms of communication in

society. Therefore, sociopragmatic investigation of any text clarifies many ambiguities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The paradigm we intend to analyze belongs to the nominative-pragmatic paradigm and may appropriately be termed the social cognitive paradigm. This paradigm investigates language and speech phenomena on the basis of the “human – world – language” model. This model stimulated the emergence of anthropocentric theories. It is well known that in studies based on anthropocentric theories, the human factor occupies the central position. Since such studies examine the relationship between humans and language, primary attention is focused on communicative interaction.

At first glance, many people understand communicative interaction simply as communication between speaker and listener. In reality, communicative interaction is a process composed of highly complex and multifaceted elements. Since it is a process, it necessarily possesses a particular algorithm. An algorithm is a sequence of activities carried out during communicative interaction, for which communicants are specially prepared. The interrelation of human consciousness and thinking with linguistic competence ensures the successful completion of the algorithm and mutual understanding in communication (that is, in the process between speaker and listener, poet and reader, writer and reader). Therefore, communicative interaction should be understood as a set of relations among the elements of the communicative paradigm. Otherwise, we perceive language merely as a dry structural scheme. Such an understanding overlooks other elements of the process.

In contemporary linguistics, increasing attention is being paid to such notions as communicative interaction, the process of communicative interaction, etiquette of communicative interaction, and culture of communicative interaction, on the basis of reevaluation criteria. The study of relations among communicants and the algorithm of communication within the

framework of the cognitive paradigm is becoming increasingly relevant. In this regard, attention should be focused on the algorithm of communicative interaction and on investigating the processes within the sequence of activities. Since these processes are highly complex and multifaceted, the linguistic paradigm alone proves insufficient for their investigation.

The algorithm of communicative interaction includes such elements as human consciousness, thinking, the scope of general knowledge, gender, age, profession, national customs, social way of life (membership in a particular social group), space and time, and speech situation. Their investigation necessitates recourse to psychological, sociological, neurolinguistic, genderological, locutionary, illocutionary, perlocutionary, cognitive, and pragmatic paradigms.

At present, research based on the interrelation of all paradigms has intensified. Consequently, there arose a need for a paradigm encompassing the integration of all paradigms. In our opinion, the conceptological paradigm reflects the totality of the paradigms mentioned above and constitutes a paradigm embodying a model for investigating the elements of the communicative interaction algorithm. This paradigm studies speech acts and their three stages – locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary activities [4: 27] – within communicative interaction and thereby resolves certain ambiguities.

RESULT

Certain social groups, for example individuals belonging to the mafia social group, possess a chain of various concepts in their communicative interaction. During the speech act, these concepts can be understood and interpreted only by members of that group or by professionals dealing with the activities of that group (employees of internal affairs bodies, investigators, prosecutors, judges, lawyers, etc.). Their speech contains words, sentences, and phraseological expressions incomprehensible to other social strata, and these form specific concepts [5] constituting the conceptosphere [6] of that group.

It is known that the ordinary communication of information about a fact, event, or process between speaker and listener constitutes a speech act. Performing speech activity is locutionary activity; if speech emerges for a specific purpose (the purpose of communicative interaction), it becomes illocutionary activity; and influencing the listener as a result of the above activities constitutes perlocutionary activity (perlocution is the activity of influencing the listener's consciousness, emotions, and behavior) [4: 28]. Consequently, the speech act is realized on the basis of the model "message + purpose + influence" and forms various concepts.

In addition, it is highly important to take into account the speech situation. Since speech situations may differ (in an office, library, museum, bus, street, classroom, wedding, funeral, scientific conference, academic council, birthday celebration, family circle, etc.), they may influence the realization of speech acts and concepts. Depending on the speech situation, locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary activities emerge. This constitutes the speech algorithm, which may be expressed through the model "speech situation + speech message + speech purpose + speech influence."

We propose modeling this situation as follows:

$K = (SS + SM + SP + SI) / SA$ where:

SS	–	speech	situation,
SM	–	speech	message,
SP	–	speech	purpose,
SI	–	speech	influence,
SA	–	speech	act.

We propose such an equation as the mathematical representation of a concept. It is evident that the denominator of the equation is the "speech act," whereas the numerator is the sum of "speech situation + speech message + speech purpose + speech influence." The totality of their division constitutes the concept. A concept is an integrity composed of highly complex and multifaceted elements. Each of these elements requires separate investigation.

DISCUSSION

A concept [6] may belong to a particular people or nation, social stratum, or group. Accordingly, concepts differ in scope and type, and their verbalizers also vary. Below, we shall consider the system of speech acts and concepts characteristic of individuals belonging to the mafia social group, thereby analyzing concepts and conceptospheres specific to certain social groups.

The communicative interaction of such social groups constitutes a situational cognitive-pragmatic system realized in various speech acts. They possess specially coded words which, in the realization of speech acts, function as guides (routers) to the common cognitive treasury shared by speaker and listener and ensure the comprehensibility of speech. At first glance, the words, sentences, phraseological expressions, and metaphors in their speech resemble those of ordinary colloquial style and form homonymous relations. However, within the process of speech situation and speech influence, they express entirely different meanings and purposes.

For example, the sentence: "He has put all our burden into a sack, hung it around his neck, and is sitting there with talqon in his mouth" (from the screenplay of the film *Baron*) is taken from the speech of a character named Izzat. If this utterance is analyzed on the basis of the mathematical equation proposed above, it clarifies certain ambiguities in studies of this field.

$$K = (SS + SM + SP + SI) / SA$$

In this case, the speech situation is understood from the speech itself: it is the meeting of the speaker with certain individuals in a circle of people who know both the speaker and the seated person. The speech message is information concerning the qualities of the seated individual; the speech purpose is to emphasize that the person acted courageously; the speech influence is to change attitudes toward this courageous individual and awaken a desire to help him. The concept is the totality of notions formed in the minds of participants in communicative interaction under the influence of the verbalizers of the speech act. In our opinion, these may be designated as follows:

1. Under the influence of the phrase “all our burden,” members of this social group understand “the sins and crimes of others,” and notions such as crime, illegal activity, current law, punishment according to the law, type of crime, criminal activity of the group, and possibilities of escaping it arise in their consciousness.
2. Under the influence of the phrase “put into a sack and hung around his neck,” a set of notions emerges concerning taking responsibility for all crimes, sincere confession, receiving corresponding punishment, imprisonment, and deprivation of liberty.
3. Under the influence of the phraseological expression “sitting there with talqon in his mouth,” notions arise that he alone committed all the crimes, did not betray others, that others are obliged to help him, and that if his patience is exhausted, he may “burst out.”

In the communicative interaction of such social groups as the mafia or criminals, the smallest element constituting the concept is the word. The meanings of the words they use are understood by members of the same group. There are also organizations responsible for uncovering and punishing their crimes, and they too are obliged to study the meanings of these words. The discipline dealing with this sphere is called criminology. It includes chemical, physical, biological, virological, physiological, medical, and linguistic branches, each possessing its own scope, object, and units of investigation. The branch relevant to our research is criminolinguistic pragmatics, whose scope is connected with pragmatic elements.

Although criminolinguistics and criminolinguistic pragmatics belong to one system of study, they differ in scope and object of investigation, just as lexicology differs from lexicopragmatics. Criminolinguistics emerged at the intersection of jurisprudence and linguistics and studies the terms used in legal processes, their meanings and relations to the process, legal contracts, documents used in internal affairs and prosecutorial proceedings, and factors identifying criminal features in judicial-investigative materials [8: 6-9]. Criminolinguistic pragmatics, in turn, studies

pragmatically the consequences, purposes, and influences of the content of such documents.

Within criminolinguistic pragmatics, the following should be scientifically and practically analyzed:

1. **speech aggression:** the linguistic nature of threats, insults, and blackmail texts. Here, the pragmatic methods employed by the speaker to achieve their goal are studied;
2. **manipulation:** the linguistic units used to influence the victim's consciousness in cases of fraud.

In criminolinguistics, pragmatic speech manipulation is the act of compelling an interlocutor to make a desired decision while concealing the speaker's true intentions. In such cases, the victim appears to act voluntarily, while in fact falling into a "linguistic trap." One of the most widespread pragmatic methods of manipulation used for criminal purposes is the strategy of illusion (deception through choice). Here, the manipulator offers the interlocutor two options, both beneficial to the manipulator. For example, a fraudster may ask over the phone: "Should I cash out your money or return it to your card?" Regardless of the chosen option, the person has already agreed to the operation (that is, to the fraud).

Another method is the use of social status and authority (presupposition). Here, the manipulator introduces himself as a person of high status (employee of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, bank manager, tax inspector) and employs presuppositions in speech. Presupposition is information not explicitly stated but implicitly accepted as true. For example: "Your criminal accomplice has already testified; when will you begin?" Here, the idea that "you have a criminal accomplice" is introduced as an unquestionable fact.

Another type appears in the form of emotional blackmail and "time pressure," where pragmatically the aim is to deprive a person of logical reasoning. The manipulator speaks in a strict and urgent tone: "If you do not make a decision immediately, your account will be frozen!" Here, fear and lack of time weaken the individual's capacity for linguistic analysis.

In such cases, the manipulation process requires linguistic modeling. Mechanisms are activated such as establishing contact (using the pronoun “we” to gain trust or adapting to the interlocutor’s style), adapting to the etiquette characteristic of communicative culture (regardless of nationality), and creating a problem (arousing anxiety or need in the interlocutor). For example: “If you do not replace your car quickly, you will lose out,” followed by offering a solution (the manipulator presents himself as a “savior”): “We can exchange your car for another one.” The final result (perlocution) is that the victim performs the action proposed by the manipulator, sometimes without even realizing the manipulation. From this perspective, pragmatic research remains important even in studying adjacent directions of contemporary pragmalinguistics.

The pragmatics of lying – identifying lies through pragmatic contradictions in a person’s speech during interrogation or testimony (for example, avoidance of questions, excessive detailing, or logical disruptions).

Research in criminolinguistics has demonstrated that when a person lies, involuntary “pragmatic traces” remain in speech. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the linguistic indicators of deception. According to studies, the following phenomena are observed in the speech of individuals who committed crimes or conceal the truth:

1. excessive abundance or absence of details (if a person has fabricated a story in advance, they use many minor details unrelated to the main event – persuasion strategy);
2. conversely, when suddenly questioned, they avoid details – avoidance of responsibility strategy;
3. errors in the use of the pronouns “we” and “I” (criminals often distance themselves from criminal acts by using impersonal constructions or expressions such as “we,” “they,” or “it happened” instead of “I did it”). In linguistics, this is called depersonalization;
4. contradictions of time and space emerge (a lying person confuses verb tenses, for example using present tense while

speaking about past events). This indicates the struggle in the brain between real memory and fabricated events.

In addition, in the communicative situations mentioned above, the paraprismatic manifestations and body movements of the criminal also carry important information.

Authorship portrait – determining the age, gender, social origin, and psychological condition of a criminal on the basis of anonymous letters or electronic correspondence.

One of the most interesting and practically significant directions in this regard is the “pragmatics of lying” and the creation of a speech portrait of the criminal through it.

The study of the stages of creating a criminolinguistic portrait is also of great importance. Specialists work according to the following scheme on the basis of letters or audio recordings produced by an unknown individual:

1. **socio-demographic analysis:** determining the person’s education and profession through vocabulary, terms used, and speech gestures. For example, the words used by drivers differ greatly from those used by shoemakers;
2. **regional analysis:** determining the speaker’s place of origin through dialectisms and local speech forms;
3. **psychopragmatic analysis:** examining the degree of aggression, fear, or self-confidence in the text.

For example, if someone receives a blackmail or threat letter, the criminolinguist does not merely read it but measures the illocutionary force (hidden pressure) of the text. In a genuine threat, the conditions are clearly formulated – “if the task is not completed, what the consequences will be” is specified.

In false (intimidating) letters, by contrast, the pragmatic purpose is only emotional pressure, while the mechanism of implementation is not described.

Furthermore, there are also elements monitoring communicative interaction, including body movements, posture, image, and paraprismatic states. These are elements present in all four types of analysis above and indicate pragmatic meaning.

In criminolinguistic pragmatics, linguist-experts usually rely on the following “triad” when analyzing criminal texts:

1. **locution**: determining the direct meaning of the utterance (“What was said?”);
2. **illocution**: determining the hidden purpose of the utterance (“What was intended?”). For example, pragmatically analyzing the sentence “Come on foot, not by taxi” (advice or threat?);
3. **perlocution**: determining the result (“What fear or action did this statement evoke in the listener?”) and drawing conclusions.

Research conducted in criminolinguistic pragmatics serves as the foundation for forensic linguistic expertise. Experts are tasked with the following:

1. identifying extremist texts (detecting hidden appeals and propaganda in texts);
2. distinguishing defamation from insult (determining, based on the pragmatic meaning of a word in context, whether it was used to humiliate a person’s dignity or merely as an emotional expression);
3. identifying corruptive proposals (deciphering and pragmatically analyzing hidden communication concerning bribery).

For example, if a criminal says: “If you complete our task, we will make you happy,” pragmatic analysis demonstrates through context that the expression “make you happy” implies material benefit (a bribe). Similarly, in the statement “After our work is completed, we will present you with five or six books,” the phrase “five or six books” may be analyzed as implying a bribe.

There is also a field known as cyber-criminolinguistic pragmatics. Here, analysis is mainly conducted on online correspondence, trolling, and cyberbullying on social networks. Research investigates how the pragmatics of words in the digital

environment makes it possible to identify criminals even without IP addresses, solely through “speech style.”

CONCLUSION

The totality of the above-mentioned notions constitutes the concept of the participants in the speech act. The totality of concepts, in turn, forms the conceptosphere of that social group. Today, the number of scientific studies devoted to analyzing the conceptospheres of poets and writers has increased. In these studies, the conceptosphere is investigated within the framework of artistic concepts, and the creator’s social, political, and artistic concepts are analyzed as elements of the conceptosphere. However, the analysis of concepts and conceptospheres specific to certain social groups has not been sufficiently illuminated. Therefore, there is currently a great need for research in this direction. This constitutes an urgent task facing scientific researchers. Through accomplishing these tasks, the concepts and conceptospheres of certain social groups may be identified and modeled.

By certain social groups, we mean thieves, mafia members, bribe-takers, drug addicts, gamblers, as well as artists, drivers, and others. They may also be referred to as social dialects, since representatives of every profession in society possess their own hidden communication channels. Sociopragmatic investigation of these channels is a demand of the times. In particular, sociopragmatic analysis of the speech of such groups in literary works constitutes an objective means of revealing the sociopragmatic characteristics of artistic texts.

Today, many modern fraudsters use elements of “neurolinguistic programming” (NLP), which has become one of the most relevant objects of study in criminolinguistics. Psychological and intellectual attacks are directed at the pragmatic neurons of human consciousness.

In the communicative interactions mentioned above, the primary factor exerting pragmatic influence is the word and its implications. That is, communication adapts under the influence of the semantic and contextual content of words. Understanding

the semantic and contextual content of words varies. Some linguists advance the view that words possess meaning, while sentences possess content.

From the perspective of linguistics and pragmatics, a word is not merely a collection of sounds but a multilayered structure. The “content hierarchy” of a word truly exists, and we may observe it through distinguishing the concepts of “meaning” and “content” in language.

In our opinion, the internal “content hierarchy” of a word consists of the following three principal layers:

1. **The meaning of the word (objective layer):** This is the dictionary meaning of the word, identical for everyone. It does not depend on human emotions or situation. For example, by “bread,” everyone understands food baked from wheat flour. This layer is the denotative (direct) meaning of the word.
2. **The content of the word (subjective, psychological, pragmatic layer):** Content consists of the associations evoked by the word in human consciousness. Here, the “hierarchy” expands. For one person, bread may symbolize sustenance, blessing, and sacredness; for a hungry person, it may simply be a means of survival. In this layer, human experience, culture, and emotions are added to the word (connotation).
3. **The pragmatic content of the word (contextual layer):** This is the highest and most variable part of the “hierarchy.” Here, in a particular situation, the word acquires an entirely unexpected meaning. For example, if a mother says to her child in the market: “Yes, bread!” the word no longer signifies food, but rather carries the meaning of an order or reminder such as “Do not forget to buy bread” or “You are about to step on the bread.”

In our opinion, the “content hierarchy” of a word is not static (fixed); it is dynamic. In communicative interaction, business, or verbal wit, we constantly shift the “pages” of this hierarchy.

In verbal wit (*askiya*), we preserve the meaning of the word (the first layer) while radically changing its content (the second layer). In business communication, while preserving the meaning, we influence the interlocutor through pragmatic content (the third layer).

Such a process is based on one of the most subtle points of linguistics – the opposition between language and speech (*langue et parole*). In communication, people rely not on the lexical mold (invariant) of the word but on its “living” meaning (variant) in that particular moment [7: 108-124]. This process may be represented as follows:

1. **Invariant and variant (the “revival” of the word):** Within the language system (in memory), a word exists as an invariant – a general, abstract, and unchanging form. However, in the process of communication (speech), it becomes a variant. For example:
 - **Invariant:** “Snow” (frozen drops of water).
 - **Variant** (associative content): in one situation it may signify “celebration and joy,” in another “cold and suffering,” and in a third “purity and whiteness.”
2. **We trust content more than meaning:** This is because our brain functions as a “decoder of words.” During communication, while hearing sounds, we simultaneously seek the pragmatic purpose of our interlocutor. Associative content activates “hidden networks” in human consciousness. For example, if a business partner says, “We should think about this project,” the associative content (variant) may be understood as a polite form of saying “No” or as an expectation of additional benefits.
3. **Context as an operational field:** The word provides meaning, while context creates content. Both meaning and content exist within the word.

In our opinion, the reason for the predominance of content in human communication is that language is used not only for exchanging information but also for establishing relationships.

Relationships are always constructed upon variants and associations.

Thus, when “a word enters speech, it points toward associative content,” which constitutes the foundation of cognitive pragmatics. We perceive not the words themselves, but the “picture” drawn in our consciousness by the interlocutor through those words. Imagination is formed through this picture. Imagination is processed in the laboratory of pragmatic consciousness, and the pragmatics of influence emerges. Consequently, words contain both meaning and content.

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