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### **AN INNUENDO AS A COMMUNICATIVE PRAGMATIC OCCURRENCE**

*SUMMARY. In the article an innuendo is considered as an occurrence of oral spontaneous speech in interpersonal communication within the pragmatic aspect. A number of peculiarities characteristic for innuendoes is analyzed.*

*KEY WORDS. Innuendo, spontaneous speech, understatement, intention, speech events, pragmatic aspect*

Characterizing modern priorities of linguistics development, the majority of researchers consider that its main principle is anthropocentrism. A number of linguists regard anthropocentrism as a vector conception, including such important tendencies of development as cognition, ethnocentrism, communicativeness, functionality, etc. [1-5, etc.]. A Communicative vector means orientation of linguistic researches on language functioning, on language as a tool of communication, which, undoubtedly, led to involving new unconventional objects of study into research turnover, for instance, speaking and listening, speech acts, strategies and tactics, verbal manipulation and influence, etc. [6-7] In the light of all mentioned above, one of the objects, insufficiently explored in systemic-structural linguistics, is such a remarkable phenomenon in a communicative-pragmatic aspect as innuendos of a speaker.

An innuendo is a reticence, intentional omission of something. A dictionary edited by D.N. Ushakov defines an innuendo as "incomplete utterance, omission in speech of something essential. *Correct the style and nonsense, supplement innuendo. Pushkin* [8]. Attaching strictly terminological character to this notion, we should identify its essential features that would fall under certain phenomena, ontologically existing in speech. The first instance will be about feature of speaker's reticence and omission only of a part, rather than all the information. First, we discuss a criterion of innuendo, speaking only of the unsaid, and not the whole amount of information. We should mark that in the Russian language there is such a prefix in the words denoting omission, innuendo or reticence that brings the sense of limiting the volume or of incomplete process or actions in their semantic. Most often an unspoken part of information is quintessential from the perspective of the speaker for various pragmatic reasons.

The next feature of innuendo is a feature of intentional reticence, i.e. the presence of an explicit communicative intention of the speaker to conceal something. By this parameter an innuendo is opposed to a proviso, which bears an intentional random character. In other words, if reticence occurs because of the speaker's ignorance of information or its part, than this is not an innuendo proper. Some synonyms for the word "innuendo" can be offered: understatement, reticence, omission and a figure of innuendo. In the Russian language there is an obsolete word transliterated

as “obinyak”, which remained in some Russian idioms, having analogues in English as “beat about the bush” or “without beating about the bush” (discuss a matter without coming to the point). This word often appears in the works of classic writers such as, e.g. A. Pushkin or A. Chekhov.

By nature innuendos and reticence are actively used in fiction and poetry, creating various semantic effects and polyphony of a literary text. Stylistic usage of innuendo is called a figure of innuendo by philologists. By Ozhegov’s definition a figure of innuendo is a device of rhetorical speech — intentional reticence, hint; *fig.*: of something unspoken, unsaid; *lit.*, often ironical [9].

Stylistic features of the figure of innuendo or reticence have been widely discussed in literary works, which explore peculiarities of the use of these techniques generally in artistic texts and works of various writers and poets: Andrey Platonov, Anna Akhmatova, F.M. Dostoevsky and others [10-12, etc.].

Linguistic study of phenomena of innuendo is carried out from the standpoint of stylistics [13], in terms of formal means of expression: lexical, paralinguistic [14-15] and characteristic for the dialogues [16]. One should note that the linguistic study of this phenomenon is heavily influenced by literary tradition, in particular, the extrapolation of the term «figure of innuendo», «reticence» into linguistics.

We consider it necessary to distinguish the stylistic use of innuendo as a figure of reticence in fiction from an innuendo as a phenomenon of oral spontaneous speech that occurs in certain communicative conditions in interpersonal communication. One of these communicative conditions can be, for example, the unwillingness of the speaker to finish the phrase, due to the relationship of communicants, or the presence of third parties, or the emotional state of the speaker and other factors affecting the verbal behavior of communicants. See, for example: — *You know, — Sergei Pavlovich went on after a long silence, — that there is no such thing ... But what I’m talking about, when you know all* (Ivan Turgenev. Rudin). Sergei Pavlovich Volintsev in a conversation with Natalie, with whom he is in love, begins to talk that there is no such thing that he would not have done for her, but he keeps back the phrase, and in his subsequent remark explains why he didn’t finish that phrase: *But why I’m talking about, when you know all*.

Sometimes the omission acts as an element of pun in speech, such as playing on sayings, proverbs, idioms or famous aphorisms. The basis of such omissions includes the background of communicators, being media of the same culture or subculture. The general store of knowledge allows the participants of communication to recover the missing piece of information easily: Arkadina. *Let him write, as he wants and how he can, only let him leave me alone*.

Dorn. *Jupiter, you’re angry ...* (Anton Chekhov. Chaika).

Dorn sticks to the famous aphorism, «Jupiter, you are angry, therefore you are wrong,» because, first, he believes that the innuendo will be readily finished by the addressee — Arkadina, and, secondly, the innuendo does not aggravate the already difficult psychological and emotional atmosphere of the communicative situation. A common reason for reticence is a communicant’s desire not to complicate the psychological atmosphere of the communicative situation with negative emotions, what appears to be the desire for harmonization of interpersonal communication, in other words, the principle of cooperation, by J. Leach. Another example:

Shamraev (teases). *Horse... home... (strictly). You’ve seen yourself: they’ve sent to the station now. Why should I race it.*

Masha. *But there are other horses...* (Seeing that her father is silent she gives up). **Getting mixed up with you...** (A. Chekhov. *The Seagull*.)

Masha preserves the phrase **Getting mixed up with you...** that one could finish is *useless* as she doesn't want to strain her relations with her father, thus guided by speech strategy of cooperation.

An innuendo in interpersonal communication is often accompanied by different non-verbal means — gestures, facial expressions and so on. This allows communication partners to restore the reticence of the information more accurately. In the following example, the cause of reticence is an excess of strong emotions of the character — anxiety and resentment, and innuendo is accompanied by a gesture (waving a hand), meaning the hopelessness of further discussion:

TREPLIEFF. *Excuse me, I forgot that only a chosen few might write plays or act them. I have infringed the monopoly. [He would like to say more, but waves his hand instead, and goes out to the left].*

ARKADINA. *What is the matter with him?*

SORIN. *You should not handle youthful egoism so roughly, sister.*

ARKADINA. *What did I say to him?*

SORIN. *You hurt his feelings.* (A. Chekhov. *The Seagull*.)

Note also the following situation in which innuendo is similarly accompanied by a gesture (covering the face with hands), conveying a strong fear. Note, that this reticence is rather emotional in its nature than informative: a case that the character recalls, is important not in event-denotative terms, but in terms of similarity of emotions experienced by the character.

ARKADINA. *[Sitting down at the table] Heavens! I was really frightened. That noise reminded me of-- [She covers her face with her hands] Everything is black before my eyes.* (A. Chekhov. *The Seagull*.)

Sometimes non-verbal means replace the unspoken information almost completely. See, for example, a situation where the gesture replaces the part of information: a friendly handshake means goodbye:

NINA. *[Listening] Hush! I must go. Good-bye. When I have become a famous actress you must come and see me. Will you promise to come? **But now--** [She takes his hand] it is late. I can hardly stand. I am fainting. I am hungry.* (A. Chekhov. *The Seagull*.)

Innuendo may be motivated by reluctance to give a direct definite refusal to a request as not to offend the communication partner:

Shabelsky. *Pasha, give me money. There on the other side we will be quits. I'll go to Paris and look at my wife's grave. I've seen a lot in my life, distributed half of my fortune, that's why I have a right to ask. Over and above I'm asking my friend...*

Lebedev (in embarrassment). *Dearest, I am penniless! But, well, well! That is, **I do not promise, and you know...** well, perfect! (Aside). Wore me out.* (A. Chekhov. *Ivanov*.)

In terms of formal means of expression, innuendo is marked by intonation of incompleteness, or rather a sudden interruption of the flow of speech — rupture of intonation, and a long pause. In the written transmission of oral speech an innuendo is indicated by dots. A typical method of reticence for the Russian speech culture

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is formally transmitted with the words: it's nothing; it doesn't matter, just, do not worry, everything is fine, etc., in which the denotative semantics is close to zero:

Lebedev. *Why are you crying?*

Shabelsky. *It's nothing...* (A. Chekhov. Ivanov.)

See also:

Kosyh. *Doctor, why are you so pale today? You don't look yourself.*

Lvov. *It's nothing. Everything is fine. Yesterday I had a drink too many.* (A. Chekhov. Ivanov.)

Thus, innuendo seems extremely interesting to us in respect of a communicative phenomenon, actively operating in the oral spontaneous speech in interpersonal communication. It is characterized by a number of features that reflect its communicative nature.

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