

A PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO THE DESCRIPTION OF MEDICAL SPEECH

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Abstract

This article analyzes the pragmalinguistic features of medical speech, its communicative nature, as well as the linguistic and extralinguistic factors arising in the process of communication between a doctor and a patient. The institutional and personal forms of medical speech, its functional characteristics, as well as speech strategies and tactics are scientifically explained. In addition, the importance of mitigating linguistic means in medical speech and their relationship with ethical and deontological principles are considered.

Keywords: medical speech, pragmalinguistics, communication, doctor–patient interaction, institutional speech, linguotherapy, speech culture, deontology, discourse, cognitive features.

Language and speech are an integral part of human activity, especially significant in the field of medicine. Medical speech is not only a means of transmitting information but also a factor that directly influences the patient's psychological state. Therefore, studying medical speech from a pragmatic perspective is one of the urgent issues.

Medical speech is a multi-factor system in which linguistic units interact with social, psychological, and cultural factors . This necessitates its comprehensive study.

It is known that speech communication is a dynamic system formed by the interaction of numerous national, ethnographic, social, philosophical-cultural, moral-aesthetic, historical, бытовые (everyday), and psychological factors with linguistic units. Thus, pragmatics studies human beings as both subjective and objective entities. It is impossible to separate subjectivity and objectivity in speech since it possesses systemic integrity. Therefore, the essence of speech activity can only be revealed when studied in connection with psychological, physiological, social, spiritual, and cultural systems.

Pragmalinguistic Nature of Medical Speech

In modern linguistics, increasing attention is being paid to the classification and study of the pragmalinguistic features of medical speech. Medical speech is studied from pragmalinguistic, psycholinguistic, and sociolinguistic perspectives.

L. S. Beylinson defines medical speech as a “multifaceted communicative formation characterized by system-forming features, its purpose, participants (doctor and patient), and socio-cultural conditions of communication” .



S. I. Madjayeva describes medical speech as “a set of verbal and non-verbal structures in communication possessing specific pragmatic features aimed at implementing treatment and preventive functions” and classifies its functions as:

- transmission of social experience
- informational
- cognitive
- creative
- communicative
- regulatory
- focusing on objectivity or reducing asymmetry

According to her, medical speech has universal characteristics such as dynamism, sociality, integration, dialogicity, integrity, contextuality, consistency, intentionality, and regulation of situations.

V. V. Jura emphasizes that the specificity of spoken medical speech lies in its dialogicity, structure, accuracy, intertextuality, intellectuality, and psychological aspects.

N. B. Goncharenko identifies communicative and social status of participants, specialized terminology, linguotherapeutic orientation, and key features of speech as defining characteristics.

V. B. Kurilenko highlights that the structure and content of medical speech, its ethics, and spiritual values are determined by professional culture.

Characteristics of Medical Speech

Based on the above definitions, the main characteristics of medical speech include:

1. Use of mitigating linguistic means

Medical speech directed at patients is characterized by the active use of softening expressions.

2. Means of softening communication

These include politeness, diminutives, emotional coloring, euphemisms, and paraphrases.

3. Interconnection of function and content

The use of softening strategies is common and forms the basis of successful communication. It helps reveal the patient's psychological state, motivation, and individual characteristics.

4. Multifunctionality

Softening devices in medical speech combine linguistic and extralinguistic factors and can perform several functions simultaneously.

The effective use of such means is one of the professional responsibilities of healthcare workers and is based on medical ethics and deontology. Medical deontology refers to the system of legal, professional, and ethical obligations of medical staff toward patients .

Incorrect use of medical language may worsen the patient's condition, prolong illness, or even lead to psychological consequences such as suicidal tendencies.



Types of Medical Speech

Medical speech can be classified into:

1. Scientific medical speech

Used in professional communication such as conferences, reports, and academic discussions.

2. Everyday medical speech

Used in informal communication among medical staff and interactions with patients in daily settings.

Institutional Nature of Medical Speech

According to V. I. Karasik, medical speech has institutional and personal forms. Institutional medical speech is communication between individuals who may not know each other but follow the norms of a social institution.

1. M. Y. Oleshkov identifies the following parameters of institutional medical speech:
2. Main participants: doctor and patient
3. Specific context: medical examinations, consultations, procedures
4. Defined goal: providing medical care
5. Structured communication process
6. Use of standard speech strategies

1. Limited range of actions (complaints, diagnosis, recommendations)
2. Presence of institutional attributes (uniforms, documents, tools)

Doctor–Patient Communication

Doctor–patient communication is a structured process that includes:

- greeting
- collecting complaints
- taking medical history
- examination
- diagnosis
- treatment recommendations
- farewell

Each stage plays an important communicative role.

The communicative process should be simple, clear, and understandable, avoiding complex or harsh expressions.

Pragmatic Goals of Medical Speech



Based on cognitive and pragmatic research, the goals of medical communication include:

- influencing the patient's cognitive processes
- diagnosing and treating diseases
- obtaining and providing information
- giving explanations and recommendations
- psychological impact and support

Medical speech is characterized by inequality in knowledge between doctor and patient, where the doctor acts as the leading communicator.

Medical speech is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon closely connected with linguistic, social, psychological, and cultural factors. A pragmalinguistic approach allows for a deeper understanding of its nature. Effective organization of doctor-patient communication significantly increases treatment efficiency. The use of mitigating linguistic means, adherence to ethical norms, and individualized approach are essential. Therefore, studying and improving medical speech remains one of the important directions of modern linguistics

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