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- 16 Isabelle E. Thormann, **Wirtschaftsenglisch. Kategorisierung wirtschafts-englischer Äusserungen. [Business English. Categorization of Utterances in Business English.]** Dissertation, Braunschweig (Prof. Ernst Burgschmidt). Unpublished typescript, 1993, 292 pp. (Forthcoming publication: Deutsche Hochschulschriften, 852.)

English is undoubtedly the language of business all over the world. Many business people whose native language is not English, who live and work in countries actively involved in international business, who have to communicate with foreign business partners, must achieve a certain degree of skill in this language called 'Business English'. There can be significant misunderstandings due to different assumptions and pragmatic analyses of utterances whose literal content is perfectly well understood. Thus, in order to recognize, learn, and master the factors that support or impede certain desired effects in communication, they need to be known. Based on such knowledge, other speakers' intentions will be understood and one's own will be successful.

It is desirable to find a time-saving and effective way of mastering the special-language skills needed for business purposes. For this, it is necessary to describe verbal utterances as representations of the realizations of intentions (such as informing, stating an opinion, asking for something, instructing, prohibiting something, etc.) by analysing how native speakers accomplish their communicative goals.

The findings of this study are based upon the observation, description, and analysis of speech acts, both oral and written, made by American speakers and writers. Thus, a corpus of several hundred sentences, most of them written, was collected, all taken from authentic materials such as letters, books, newspapers, magazines, filmscripts, etc., with special attention to books on business communication used at American universities (authors: K.O. Locker, W. Wells, C. Hamilton).

Then, with special respect to the literature of G. Leech and S. C. Levinson on 'pragmatics', criteria for characterization are discussed and determined, which are then used for the categorization of utterances (such as the true/false question, the use of illocutionary verbs and performatives in utterances, preconditions for the successful realization of the speaker's/writer's intention, the remarkably frequent use of conventional phrases, the targeted benefit (i) for the speaker, (ii) for the communication partner, (iii) general benefit, grammatical features such as subordination, tense, aspect, voice, use of gerund, participle, etc., the question whether the speech act is typically solicited or not, whether the speech act represents a reaction or answer, the speaker's objectivity, explicitness, and scale of indirectness, whether the speech act establishes new conditions or requirements for the communication partner, etc.).

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The empirical part of the study subdivides all 'Business English utterances' into three types of speech acts:

- informative-neutral,
- interactive-communicative,
- initiatory-appellative.

These types of speech act, the allocated speech acts and utterances, i.e. the variants of how a speech act can be realized, are then described. The aim is to get a pragmatic benefit from findings such as: "If a speaker A has an intention B and strives for an effect C in a business situation type D, he can realize this verbally in mode E by uttering a sentence (or sequence of sentences) F".

The study has shown that the majority of interactive-communicative speech acts are solicited and there is a frequent use of conventional phrases, certain grammatical features regularly appear with certain speech acts, e.g. in initiatory-appellative speech acts conditional clauses are used frequently as well as passive constructions, particularly in order to avoid stating an agent, i.e. the covert subject, especially if the utterance contains a negative message, and/or if the speaker/writer wants to avoid the use of the imperative. The subjunctive mode is seldom found in informative-neutral speech acts. However, it is found very frequently in the interactive-communicative speech acts (particularly when the propositional content of the utterance represents the speaker's wish, preference, or advice) and in initiatory-appellative speech acts that are meant to have a persuasive effect.