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GRAMMATICAL DESIGN OF NEWSPAPER ESSAY

Tatiana Shapovalova (a)*

*Corresponding author

(a) Moscow Region State University, Moscow, Russian Federation, tshapovalova@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of the article is to study the grammatical form of the text related to the genre of newspaper essays. The procedure and research methods correspond to a comprehensive structural-semantic analysis of the sentence using a functional approach, which allowed us to describe the semantic uniqueness of the text, determined by the inclusion in the syntactic structure of analytical non-specialized forms, lexical and grammatical means of expressing the modal and temporal meaning of a sentence. The study showed that the author's intention and its implementation in the text are directly related to the model and semantic structure of the sentences used. The semantic uniqueness of texts is determined by the inclusion in the syntactic structure of analytical non-specialized forms, lexical and grammatical means of expressing the modal and temporal meaning of a sentence. It is proved that the text of "Fjords" is characterized by a diversion from the description of a particular situation. The author uses sentences of different structure and composition, which leads to grammatical uniqueness and peculiar complexity of an essay, when it is impossible to go with simple grammatical methods. The results of the study are essential for the further development of existing methods of studying grammar and prove its theoretical and practical significance. The proposed analysis of the grammatical organization of an essay can serve for continuing research both at the level of the elementary communicative structure – a sentence and at the level of the text of different functional orientations.

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Keywords: Essay, grammar, modality, predication, sentence, tense



1. Introduction

An essay is a genre in which the author interprets “literary, philosophical, social and other problems not in a systematic scientific form, but in a free form” (Dictionary of the Russian language, 1984, vol. 4, p. 767). They note that this genre “has great potential in shaping the world community and a person as a whole, has a unique ability to connect different people” (Mineeva, 2016, p. 12).

The purpose of this article is to study the grammatical form of the text related to the genre of newspaper essays. V. Peskov, one of the most successful and respected Soviet essayists, used those language tools that allowed the implementation of typical communicative requests from readers, guiding the “process of text perception” (as cited in Tokarev, 2017, p. 147). In the essays of the famous journalist who was on the same page with the reader, the personality of the author of the speech, his attitude to people and nature, his level of development and temperament were manifested. V. Peskov’s newspaper essays not only contained information about something, not only brought facts and ideas to the reader, but they also influenced the mood of the reader, who, following the author, was pondering something important for everyone (as cited in Konovalova, 2018).

2. Problem Statement

In the essays of V. Peskov grammatical structure of the utterance is manifested in its communicative impact, in how the semantics of linguistic units correlate with the meaning of the text. Talking about fjords, the author of the essay uses different language tools: intonational-syntactic, morphological-syntactic, lexical-semantic, lexico-syntactic, constructive-syntactic – as a result, specific information about this object of reality is formed in the reader’s mind, which you definitely need to see with your own eyes.

3. Research Questions

Elementary simple sentence; non-elementary simple sentence with elementary and second predication, Introductory and inserted components, not included in the sentence structure; complex sentence.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this article is to study the grammatical form of the text related to the genre of newspaper essays.

5. Research Methods

The material for the study was the essay “Fjords”, written by V. Peskov on the pages of one of the issues of the Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper, and then included in the book *Travels* published by the *Thought* Publishing House (Peskov, 1991), in which the author made his reader a participant in all the travels described. The analysis of this newspaper essay was carried out using a comprehensive structural and semantic analysis of a sentence using a functional approach.

6. Findings

6.1. Elementary simple sentence

The author selects the necessary lexemes, free phrases, and phraseological units, word forms, and syntaxes to describe the object of reality, arranges them in a particular order as part of predicative units of different structures and types; they are perceived by the reader with a specific author's rating.

Two short narrative two-part sentences with the primary specialized forms of a simple verb predicate are called to name a concrete, actually existing in the unmarked present tense and observed action of the subject: *Little river flows into the fjord by a waterfall; Water reflects two shores*. The intent of the author-observer is manifested both in the diminutive-subject and in the instructive comparison, drawing the way the action proceeds. In simple sentences with calm predicative intonation of a message, words of specific semantics coexist with image lexemes.

There are many more two-part simple sentences with a nominal predicate (Gerasimenko, 2014) in the essay – there are seven of them. However, they are also concise. Their task is to present a passive attribute of a grammatical subject in a variety of forms of the predicate's primary component in order to express the semantics of the model.

The ordinary meaning of the model “subject and its quantity” is expressed in a two-part sentence, in which the role of the main component of a compound nominal predicate is assigned to a quantitative-nominal combination: *Cliffs of rocks are more than one hundred meters high; The length from the mouth to the “head” is two hundred and four kilometers*.

In identity sentences

- with naming semantics: *The largest of the fjords – Sogne-fjord* – its noun represents the main component;
- with identification semantics: *Lakes themselves in these places are traces of glacier movement* - a collective concrete noun in the predicative form of the nominative case;
- with a local connotation – a non-predicative non-specialized form of the prepositional case of a specific noun with the pretext *on*: *Rare trees on stones*.

A two-part interrogative sentence with the reverse order of the principal members of the sentence: *What is this phenomenon all about – the fjord?* – is a rhetorical figure in which objective expression is manifested and subjective expression, due to the use of inversion, unique intonation, particles performing the “linguo-pragmatic load” (Oshanova, 2017, p. 114-117). The consistent form of the main component of the predicate in sentences with the meaning of the property inherent in the grammatical subject is expressed by the predicative form of the nominative case of the adjective: *There are many Fjords, almost all of them are navigable*.

The grammatical analytical way of designing the predicative attribute inherent in the subject is to use the zero form of the link *to be*, which is characterized by the neutral meaning of possessing the attribute, named in the main component of the predicate, correlates it with reality, actually placing it on the time axis, “separating the time of the event and the time of its image” (Geimbukh, 2017, p. 55). The author predicts a

predictive attribute in terms of temporal definiteness – the unmarked present syntactic time, distinguished by the flexibility of semantics, appears in almost every sentence, revealing “folded meanings in the mental reflection <...> of the present as a fragment of real reality” (Oorzhak, 2016, p. 150). At the same time, the predictive characteristic of an active or passive attribute about the objectively existing world, the moment of speech, and the participants in communication appears quite clearly. Nevertheless, the main text of the essay is based on complex constructions, semantically, and syntactically.

6.2. Non-elementary simple sentence with cohesive and second predication

The author of the essay, first of all, uses non-elementary simple sentences – sentences with cohesive and second predication (Lekant, 2002), in which the asymmetry of the grammatical and semantic structure of the sentence is observed. In the understanding of Lekant (2002), in a simple sentence with a consolidated predication, “two predications are connected on the basis of the commonality of the subject” (p. 150): *Sailors know this secret and store freshwater at the mouths of the fjords*. The predicative characteristic of the nominative subject is made out by the nominative case of the noun, the categories of the type, time and aspect of the verbs *know*, *store* in simple verbal predicates, which enter the connection with the grammatical subject in a structural unity formed by an enumerative intonation and a conjunctive conjunction *and*.

Simple non-elementary sentences with the second predication contain the so-called participial phrases, fulfilling the role of an agreed separate definition in the sentence: *It is a rather long lake connects by a glacier with the sea*; participle, acting as a separate circumstance: *Looking at the map, you immediately notice the kinship of lakes and fjords*; comparative, reinforcing the meaning and emotional content of the statement: *Banks at times mirror each other, like twins, – one turns, and the other does too*. These isolated members carry a double attributive-predicative or circumstantially-predicative load, contain an additional message correlated with the predicative core; they are similar in semantics to complex sentences, compare: the glacier connects to the sea, you look at the map, the banks are twins (Peshkovski, 1956).

6.3. Introductory and inserted components, not included in the sentence structure

V. Peskov uses sentences with an introductory component of the semantic group ‘degree of certainty – uncertainty’: *To call a fjord the “sea bay” is inaccurate, perhaps, even false; The motor on the boat is intentionally turned off and it seems, you feel unusual silence with your skin*. Introductory words *perhaps*, *it seems*, acting as criteria for persuasiveness, introduce a shade of doubt into the sentence, become a grammatical indicator of the subjective modality of the sentence, and show that the author evaluates the message as possible, supposed.

The author places inserted constructions without the help of conjunctions in the middle: *At the sea, which remains behind the stern, waves are raging at this time (even a storm is possible), but in this narrow canyon you can hear drops falling from the paddle; But in the lakes, the water is always fresh, in the fjords the waters are layered: below – sea, salty and dense, and above it – about a meter thick – a layer of melt, spring, and river water* or at the end of the sentence, presenting an explanation of its *быыыфпу* *Times they come so close to each other that for a long time people started dragging (“eiders” in Norwegian)*. V. Peskov uses punctuation marks to show the importance/unimportance of additional remarks and with what

intonation one should pronounce sentences containing an inserted component. The connecting nature and the colloquial tone of the inserted sentence given in brackets are felt due to the use of connecting particles (*even and*), the subjective word order. Such components are pronounced fluently and in a muffled tone. The inserted construction highlighted with a dash is not inferior to the principal sentence in the importance of information; it is pronounced in the same tone and pace as the rest of the sentence and is marked by significant pauses at the beginning and the end of the utterance.

6.4. Complex sentence

A complex sentence in V. Peskov's essays expresses connecting, comparative and opposing relations: *The engine of the boat is intentionally turned off, **and**, it seems that you feel unusual silence with your skin; A short road by land – **and** the boat is in another fjord; But the waterfall is behind, **and** silence again; But in the lakes the water is always fresh, **while** in the fjords the waters are layered; One may know little about Norway, **but** everyone will say something about the fjords; You can completely forget geography, **but** the word fjord for some reason is engrained in everyone's memory.* The active binomial connective sentence of the closed structure reflects the real correlation of events, and the semantics of the consequence is determined structurally-syntactically and intonationally. The comparison is associated with the establishment of differences between the coexisting phenomena of reality and is represented by the conjunction analog – the particle *zhe* (*while*). Oppositiveness is expressed by the union *no* (*but*), which indicates the incompatibility of the content of the first and second parts.

Complex sentence combines predicative units that are correlated with simple sentences in which the modal-temporal meaning is expressed analytically:

- the zero form of the link *to be*: *In the lakes the water is always fresh; In the fjords of the waters are layered; The motor on the boat is intentionally turned off; A little road by land; the boat is in another fjord; One may know little about Norway; You can completely forget geography.* The specialized link *to be* in zero forms comes into syntagmatic connection with the main component of the predicate – in a two-part construction – and with the status word and mental semantics infinitive – in a connected-modal-infinitive structural subtype of an impersonal sentence with a modal possibility meaning – and carries only a grammatical meaning. The semantics of real modality in the objective aspect and the unmarked present syntactic tense are presented – the event covers a more extended period than the moment of speech; – the meaningful absence of the verb: *silence again*. In the nominative sentence with the temporal determinant *again*, the abstract meaning of existentiality is refined: the semantics of the unmarked present syntactic tense of the imperfect aspect approaches the meaning of temporal uncertainty, timelessness. A second predicative unit supports the shade of inclusiveness in opposing complex sentences: *everyone will say something about the fjords; for some reason is engrained in everyone's memory.* The same muffled meaning of a concrete real syntactic tense is observed in a complex subordinate sentence of an undifferentiated structure with comparative object relations: *A bell in a church that cleaves with a handful of houses under a cliff **sounds** different here **than** on the plain or in the mountains.* Loosely attached locative syntaxemes *in a church, on the plain, in mountains* extend the time range of action *sound*. The semantics of the present syntactic tense becomes dependent on the degree of the ordinariness of the transmitted fact, is subject to rethinking – as a result, the meaning of temporal uncertainty, timelessness is emphasized.

The complex sentence of an open structure without conjunctions and with enumerative relations: *There are many Fjords, almost all of them are navigable* – demonstrates the simultaneity of facts throughout their existence in objective reality in terms of unmarked present syntactic tense approaching the semantics of timelessness. In a particular group, we single out complex sentences of a complicated structure, which are “a multifaceted metacognitive process of human interpretation of the world” (Boldyrev & Vinogradova, 2016, p. 69; Vinogradova, 2019, p. 5-11). In such complex constructions, one or several predicative units are correlated with generalized-personal sentences of the lowest degree of generalization: *When you sail along the fjord, you see two banks, the impression is: you move along a wide and very quiet river; When you look from the plane, you see that this is a sea tongue that has sunk into the land; At the sea, which remains behind the stern, waves are raging at this time (even a storm is possible), but in this narrow canyon you can hear drops falling from the paddle.* The forms of the 2nd-person imperfective verbs are singular in the present actions distracted from the actual producer of the action (this is not the speaker, but the author himself), from a specific time (this action, repeated many times in the past) and serve as indicators of the grammatical semantics of sentences. In such generalized-personal sentences, using the constructive-syntactic method, a generalized syntactic person, a temporary generalization, and a modal shade of obligation are presented in the aspect of the predicate modality (Shapovalova, 2013).

The semantics of a generalized person: interlocutor *you* and other participants in the event, including the author, and temporary generalization can also be expressed in the structure of a two-part sentence: *Depth under the keel is very reliable – it could be deeper than in the sea from which you came into this narrow gap in the rocks.* The predicative feature of the grammatical subject is thought of as generalized-temporal, not explicitly correlated with the moment of speech and the actual performer of the action, which is supported by the previous context – the form and semantics of the compound nominal predicate *could be deeper.*

7. Conclusion

The text of the newspaper essay V. Peskov’s «Fjords» is characterized by diversion from the description of a particular situation. The time frames of perceptual events expand due to the nature of everyday actions that qualify the author’s behavior and suggest the prospect of such repetitions. The predominance of imperfective verbs in the present tense form emphasizes the cyclic nature of the time that repeats endlessly.

The study showed that the author’s intention and its implementation in the text are directly related to the model and semantic structure of the sentences used. The semantic uniqueness of texts is determined by the inclusion in the syntactic structure of analytical non-specialized forms, lexical and grammatical means of expressing the modal and temporal meaning of a sentence. These syntactic structures created what Vinokur (2006) called “grammatical richness” and “grammatical harmony” (p. 132). In the essay “Fjords,” all the best qualities of Russian writing were merged (Golovin, 1988): truthfulness and accuracy, logic and purity, wealth and expressiveness, relevance and expression.

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