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КОГНИТИВНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ СЛОВСОЧЕТАНИЙ В АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ*Аннотация*

Словосочетание – назывная единица языка, которая представляет собой группу слов, включающую по крайней мере два знаменательных слова, образующих семантическое и грамматическое целое на основе синтаксической связи гипотаксиса, или подчинения. Наряду со структурным анализом, представляющим традиционный подход, в свете развития современной лингвистики необходимым и своевременным представляется также проведение когнитивного анализа словосочетаний, в чем и состоит задача настоящей статьи. В статье также выявляются принципы когнитивного анализа словосочетаний в современном английском языке.

Ключевые слова: когнитивный анализ синтаксических единиц, конструирование гипотаксисных отношений, словосочетание в английском языке.

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COGNITIVE ANALYSIS OF PHRASES IN ENGLISH*Abstract*

A phrase is a nominative syntactic unit that consists of at least two notional words forming semantic and grammatical whole. The type of syntactic connection a phrase is based on is hypotaxis, or subordination. Taking into account the fact of modern linguistics development, traditional structural analysis of phrases should be supplemented with cognitive analysis, the latter being this article's objective. The article also focuses on the principles of cognitive analysis of phrases in modern English.

Keywords: cognitive analysis of syntactic units, modelling of hypotactic relations, phrases in the English language.

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Introduction

A phrase is a nominative syntactic unit. The term 'phrase' can be used only referring to such groups of words that contain at least two notional words forming semantic and grammatical whole. Two and more notional words can form a phrase by means of hypotaxis, or subordination. According to the structural approach, hypotaxis links elements of different ranks that could be called the main and dependent elements, or the head and the adjunct respectively, e.g.: *wonderful weather*. One of the components dominates over the other(s) and subordinates it (them) what concerns both form and arrangement. In spite of the fact that traditional structural approach is still popular, it needs enhancement as cognitive aspect of phrase analysis can provide deeper understanding of phrase formation principles.

The purpose of this article is to consider phrases in English from the point of view of their conceptual contents, i.e. reflection of grammatical concepts in a phrase. Grammatical concepts are considered as cognitive meanings that are formed in consciousness of a person making non-discrete units, which is determined by language experience to show connections and various characteristics of different objects [2].

Method

In order to conduct the research we use semantic-cognitive method aimed at determining the main and dependent elements of the phrase and their characteristics, their compatibility as well as cognitive interpretation and modelling. Through continuous sampling approach, 1000 examples of phrases from spontaneous colloquial speech [6] were selected.

Discussion

Concept modelling is rather essential nowadays not only what concerns lexical units that were deeply investigated by numerous researchers but grammar units as well. Although phrase components keep their lexical meaning there is no unambiguous compliance between syntactic and semantic levels, which makes us conclude that not individual components but the whole word combination as well as interrelation of the elements included and their ability to

reflect extralinguistic notions should be subject to cognitive analysis.

A syntactically represented concept serves as a conceptual substrate indirectly displaying the relationship between extralinguistic entities and linguistic signs. This connection is possible due to the fact that such a concept includes the most generalized information about relationship between the objective entities in the scheme "subject - action - object of an action", and each component of the conceptual scheme, in its turn, is projected over the structure of the sentence [3, P. 69]. A propositional structure, or a proposition, is a model of conceptual organization for our knowledge, a mental structure that reflects the typical situation and the nature of its participants' connections [1]. Proposition configuration determines choice of syntactic structures. A phrase is a proposition in its compressed form, as one of the main arguments of the proposition: either a subject or a predicate is absent. Cf.: *the girl standing at the window* and *The girl is standing at the window*. I'm more comfortable with Dad *because of his good driving* and I'm more comfortable with Dad *because he drives smoothly*.

Considering another criterion, semantic content of the word, we could distinguish between two types of word meanings: absolute and relative [4, p. 12]. Words with absolute (non-relative) meaning do not need their meaning to be completed. They can be distributed in a sentence with the help of other words, but not necessarily: *a new dress*, *a table made of wood*, etc. Relative words need to have their meaning completed: *An uncle came in*. Logically arises the question: *Whose uncle?* Relative / non-relative type of a word is considered to be a fundamental constitutive feature to characterize different words in terms of their projections in information flow organization [9, P. 214 – 217], [10, P. 205]. Nevertheless, some words could express either relative or absolute meaning, depending on the context. Cf.: *wooden walls*, i.e. walls made of wood; *wooden smile*, i.e. an inexpressive smile.

Results

Considering the elements composing the phrase it is necessary to note that most heads of word combinations are

expressed by a verb (or its non-finite forms) or a noun. Background concepts typical for verbs or their non-finite forms could denote action: *to go* to the institute*; process: *to dry* swiftly*; some state: *to be* dry*; both action and process: *to dry* the wood*, where the object is transformed, and some agent performing this action could be mentioned, e.g.: *Somebody dried the wood* (* marks the head).

Adding the second dependent element to the basic verb-component introduces new conceptual meanings as follows:

a) localization, referring to the direct subject location: *to be at the university*; the place the subject approaches: *to go to the university*; the place the subject approaches having no specific purpose to stay there: *to go towards the theatre*, or having special purpose in mind like staying nearby: *to go to the window*, *to run to the child*, movements in space: *to walk along the road*. Localization of static subjects or objects is determined relating to their spacial location: *to be in the table*, *to be on the table*;

b) orientation for a person or an object: *gave my brother a book*;

c) temporal orientation: *come at 5 o'clock*;

d) focus on the means or the way to take an action: *is written with a pen*;

e) action characteristics: *to run quickly*, where specific characteristics of an action are mentioned; *to discuss with the teacher*, where joint character of an action is emphasized.

Background concepts typical for nouns could denote subjectivity: a clever person*; objectivity: *a big table**; or objected action: *John's surprise**. Adding the second dependent element to the basic noun-component introduces new conceptual meanings as follows: a) classification: *key to the door*; b) individualization: *souvenir shop*; c) characterization with focus on some properties of the subject or the object: *an intelligent person*, *an interesting book*; d) specification: *two hours' work*; *a mile's distance*.

Many linguists take the opinion that some words are more acceptable as dependent components, so some principles and factors influencing the formation of English phrases should be mentioned.

First, the informative principle [8] demands that phrases both existing, and newly created, should eliminate ambiguous interpretation, i.e. wrong interpretation of the sender's message by the addressee. As English is an analytical language poor in inflections, only relative positioning of words in certain cases, for example, in a phrase consisting of two nouns, determines the whole meaning of the phrase. For instance, the phrase *a fruit salad* describes some food made of fruit, whereas in the word combination *a fruit knife* we

mean that the knife should be used for peeling and cutting fruit.

Secondly, valence [5, P. 117] of this or that part of speech may determine the number and types of its arguments. Almost all verbs and only some adjectives and nouns possess obvious valence. So, the adjective *anxious* demands designation of an experiencer and the reason of this state, e.g.: *anxious about his son's future*. Valence of a noun is shown less brightly. Such nouns as *part*, *sort*, *kind* have clearly expressed valence: *It's got a sort of greenish blue roof*. However, other adjectives and nouns, as well as other substantive parts of speech like adverbs and pronouns, have no obvious valence. In cognitive grammar the term "valence" defines a ratio of meanings of the main and dependent phrase components [7, P. 583]. Thus, the use of an adjective denoting color as a dependent word in a phrase where the main word is a noun predetermines the meaning of thingness, for example: *a green apple*. Here acts the principle of selectivity or correlation that shows interrelation of the phrase components.

Thirdly, the principle of profiling [9] assumes prominence of any characteristic in the main concept. So, *the garden window* is not any window, but the window viewing the garden. Some phrases could have double interpretation. Thus, *my key* may mean the key belonging to me or the key I use to open the door. Syntactic and semantic characteristics of the phrase depend on logical relations that should be shown. Concrete nouns highly tend to combine with other concrete nouns: *father's book*. The main element expressed by a noun meaning process predicts the necessity to mention some object: *patient's treatment*.

According to the research conducted, the type of a phrase and characteristics of its components depend on several criteria: first, the intention of a speaker, background knowledge, relevance of the information rendered, second, language constructions available for expressing cognitive relations. Any change in the direction of conceptual relations is reflected in typical meaning of this construction and the choice of lexical units that constitute the sentence.

Conclusion

To sum up, cognitive analysis of a phrase could help to determine its specific meaning and to find out how the language reflects extralinguistic reality and connections, or relations between its objects. The revealed cognitive principles as well as their deeper influence over phrase formation should be researched further using samples from various types of speech in modern English.

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