

SYNTACTIC CONSTRUCTION OF COMPLEX OBJECT AS MEANS OF REPRESENTATION OF EVIDENTIAL STRATEGY

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the analysis of syntactic constructions of a Complex Object. It is argued for the approach to consider the English language as a language characterized by evidential strategy. Every language has some way of referencing to the source of information, but a grammatical category of evidentiality doesn't exist in every language. The importance of providing means of marking information source as a separate category has gradually become an integral part of the grammars of the North American languages. These languages are characterized by the presence of evidential system with regulated means of expression; in the European languages this phenomenon is not observed. The paper proves the presence of a visible evidential strategy in the English language on the basis of the facts of differentiating the situation of perception according to level of coverage which is grammaticalized by the forms of Infinitive Indefinite and Participle I in the Complex Object construction, and also on the base of changing the meanings of the verbs of perception out of the Complex Object constructions.

Key words: language, grammar, sentence, evidentiality, strategy, perception, Complex Object.

1. INTRODUCTION

Lexical means of the specification of the knowledge source are likely to be universal, e.g. the English phrases *I guess, they say, I hear that*, and verbs, such as *to allege*. Extensive discussion of introductory expressions in the English language that are commonly used to indicate the information source can be found in the works of many linguists. Lexical means can be varied and include: 1) adverbial expressions such as *reportedly*; 2) introductory sentences with additional markers, such as *it seems to me that*. The semantic range (Brett, 2012, p. 257) of such expressions spreads from the representation of the information source to identification of the degree of speaker confidence in the veracity of the statement. We cannot claim that English introductory expressions are "evidential". These expressions are not obligatory and do not form a grammatical category. To say that the English language has evidentiality system is to mislead and not to distinguish between grammatical and lexical in the language (Abdrakhmanova, 2015). Lexical ways of indicating the information source complete the grammatical means of expressing evidentiality. Adding lexical explanations of evident content is often necessary to resolve ambiguities (Aikhenvald, 2003, p. 135).

2. METHODS

The evidential system is not observed in the European languages. We can only speak about the *evidential strategy*. What is the *evidential strategy*? Any epistemic meaning of modal verbs can be "stretched" to expressing conclusions or assumptions. Past tenses are often associated with hypothetical or inaccurate information. Every language has some ways of expression that the speaker says is true. One of the interpretations of the term *evidential strategy* includes grammatical ways of expression that in addition to its main meaning can get one or more semantic features which are typical for evidentiality. For example, resultative nominalization often implies additional meaning of *inference*. Presumption (indirect personal way of access to information by inference) is a statement about the situation on the basis of knowledge of specific causality: *Floors are washed – the cleaner must have come*. However, not every resultative nominalization involves the realization of evidential meaning of presumption. Resultative nominalization can be linked to information derived from some observed evidence. To express someone's speech can be considered as a universal strategy of evidentiality.

In the research we used the following set of methods: theoretical (study and analysis of the scientific literature on the issue of research, system analysis of the phenomena under study); distributional, component, mental-logical analysis and descriptive method, presupposing compilation and classification of the analyzed material; continuous sampling method for the collection of empirical data; a statistical method to provide quantitative data. In the research, we adhered to the typological studies in the field of evidentiality developed by Aikhenvald A.Y. and Dixon R.M. (Aikhenvald, 2003).

3. RESULTS

Complex Object constructions (*Complex Object, The Objective Infinitive Construction, The Objective-with-the-Infinitive Construction*) serve to express the process of perception.

(1) *Then suddenly I saw him riding towards me* (Buerley, 1987, p.10);

(2) *He watched her making her way through the crowds on the pavement* (Harris, p. 73);

(3) *I heard him leaving because I hadn't been in bed very long, and I heard him coming back because I had a bit of indigestion and I couldn't sleep* (Cole, 2005, p. 27).

The construction is the combination of noun in the common case or personal pronoun in the objective case with the infinitive or participle *riding* (1), *making her way* (2), *leaving* (3), which express situation of perception or observed situation. The subject and the predicate in the active voice represent the situation of perception *I saw* (1), *he watched* (2), *I heard* (3). The pronoun in the objective case or a noun in the common case name the person or thing performing the action of the situation of perception *him* (1), (3), *her* (2). The formation of this construction is permissible only with verbs of sense perception: *to see, to hear, to watch, etc.* In English, the use of syntactic constructions of the complex object is determined by the representation of the category of perception (1)-(3).

The changing in the meanings of verbs of sense perception out of the Complex Object construction indicates a rigid determination of the representation of the process of perception by these structures.

(4) *He was born around the Darlington area and I heard that his family once had money, but lost it in some way* [15, p. 18];

(5) *I heard you had a very good doorman* [9, p. 3];

(6) «*Now that you point it out, I see that I may have acted rashly*» (Mubarakshina, 2017).

Modification of the meanings of verbs of sense perception *to hear* and *to see* leads to the fact that in compound sentences, with the usual subordinate clause, they begin to express thinking process: *to hear* – to know (new information about something) (4), (5); *to see* – to understand (6).

The changing in the meanings of verbs of sense perception out of the Complex Object construction indicates that realization of category of perception is determined by these syntactic structures (4)-(6).

The rule of selection of *'-ing' form and Infinitive forms of Verbs of sense perception* in the constructions of *Complex Object* is based on differentiation of meaning of perception – **completeness or incompleteness of the perception process** (Harris, 2004, pp. 80-81).

1. The *Infinitive Indefinite* is used in the *Complex Object constructions* with verbs of sense perception *see / hear / watch / notice + somebody do something*, when we want to indicate that we observe the action (and we know how it will end) is the complete process of perception. It indicates the fact of completion of the observed situation (7)-(9):

(7) *I saw her cross the street* [14];

(8) *I watched him play basketball last week!* (Harris, 2013)

(9) *We heard John sing our national anthem* (Harris, 2013)

2. *Participle I* is used in the construction *see / hear / watch / notice + somebody doing something*, when the speaker wants to highlight that the action which is expressed by participle is not completed, it takes place at the speaking moment and is observed – it is incomplete process of perception. If we replace the infinitive by the participle in the following sentence *I saw her crossing the street*, the observed situation ceases to be completed and reviewed in the process (10)-(14).

(10) *I watched his silhouette moving about inside the games room* [11];

(11) (...) *I heard them laughing* (Macdonald, 2010, p. 200);

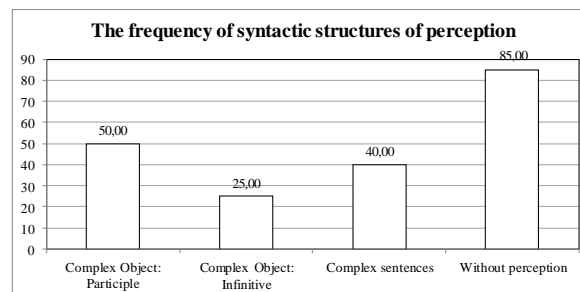
(12) *She saw him beginning to walk towards her* [9, p. 143];

(13) *She saw the hotel porter preparing to carry her bags from the post chaise* (Mubarakshina, 2017, p. 187);

(14) (...) *I saw him walking down Romney Road as I came here* (Cole, 2015 p.50).

The total number of analyzed examples is 200.

Table 1: The frequency of syntactic structures of perception



Although, this differentiation is not clearly recognized by all linguists, but it exists. *Infinitive Indefinite Active* is used after the verbs of sense perception. Fully observed situation or the situation observed in particular moment is grammaticalized by forms of *Infinitive Indefinite* and *Participle I* in the *Complex Object construction*.

Differentiation of the processes of perception peculiar to the English language. Verbs of smell and of finding *to smell* eliminate *Participle II*, functioning only in the following constructions *someone / something + Participle I* (15).

The relevance / irrelevance of the process of perception is shown in the constructions of the *Complex Object* by the presence of *Infinitive Indefinite* and *Perfect*. Construction *see / hear / watch / notice + somebody have done something* is expressed completed process of perception. Complex form of *Infinitive Perfect* (active) *to have + III form (-ed)* represents the meaning of precedence of perceived situation. Perceived situation which is expressed by the *Infinitive*

occurred simultaneously with the situation of perception which is presented by the predicate. The precedence of the perceived situation logically implies the precedence of the situation of perception (16). The relevance / irrelevance of the process of perception is realized under the condition of simultaneity of the perceived situation and the situation of perception.

(15) «*Can I smell something burning?* » (Butler, 2014);

(16) *He saw Frances had bought a dishwasher* (Burley, 1987).

4. DISCUSSION

A separate aspect of the means of expression of evidentiality are *modal verbs*. In many languages they are closed subclass. Should they be treated on a par with lexical means, or separate from them, as a special means of realization of the evidential strategy? Evidentiality is not a part of their core meanings. Is their functioning in this sense the basis for identifying the evidential strategy? The answer to this question depends on the status of modal verbs in the language: if they are indeed a closed class? Do they form a special grammatical construction in which they acquire additional meanings related to information source? Modal verbs are in the marginal position between the lexical means of representation of evidential systems and strategies. The objective of this article is to justify the presence of visible evidential strategy in the English language associated with regulated expression of the category of perception at the level of syntax. English has no evidential system, it realizes evidential meanings by lexical means.

According to the classification of V. P. Durst-Andersen, English refers to «hearer-based languages» and «different mental archives». Mental archive includes archives of past and present, i.e. impression. "The state is stored in the form of *pictures* and activity is stored in the form of a *film*, independently of the type of mental archive" (Evans, 2011, p. 35). An interesting example about the theft of watches is shown by V. P. Durst-Andersen. If the thief uses the verb in Present Perfect, the event is presented as news-flash. He shows the «photo» and sums up the day. If the thief verbalizes the event in Past Continuous in the mental archive of the present, it scrolls the event, and gives a short story about it. According to P. V. Durst-Andersen, the perfect and the imperfect differ in two

plans: 1) *photo* or *film* depending on the way of representation of the event; 2) the stability / instability of the picture with the same visual way of presentation.

The grammatical system of languages which is based on the level of "mental files" requires choosing between the parameters of relevance / irrelevance of contextual information in the system of time categories. Such languages have an internal reference, i.e., correlated with the inner world of the hearer. The statement is interpreted as a reflection of information intended for the hearer («hearer-based languages»). The parameters of relevance / irrelevance are expressed: 1) in the time system with categories of the perfect and the imperfect; 2) in the system of names with the definite article, indicating a substance whose file is already stored in the mental archive of the hearer, and indefinite article, representing an unknown substance; 3) in the syntax by it-cleft-sentences: *It was a Russian book that I borrowed from the library*; by representative suggestions: *There were many people sitting at the table*; 4) by the form with *-ing*, describing the situation from a pragmatic point of view: *He is always smoking*. In this sentence a man is characterized from a pragmatic point of view, i.e. a situation emerges as its quality. The parameter relevance / irrelevance correlates with the meaning of perception. Special syntactic constructions with the structure which is determined by the representation of category of perception are the evidence.

5. SUMMARY

Summing up the analysis of syntactic constructions of a Complex Object, we can draw the following conclusions:

- 1) the use of syntactic constructions of the complex object is determined by the representation of the category of perception;
- 2) the situation of perception is differentiated according to level of coverage which is grammaticalized by the forms of infinitive Indefinite and Participle I in the Complex Object construction;
- 3) changing the meanings of the verbs of sense perception out of the Complex Object constructions reflects the hard determination of representation of the process of perception by these structures;

4) realization of the relevance / irrelevance of the process of perception occurs under the condition of simultaneity of the perceived situation and the situation of perception.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the English language does not have the evidential system, realizing the meanings of evidentiality by lexical means, it can be argued about the presence of visible evidential strategy in the English language. A broad concept of evidential strategy includes all means of linguistic expressions, which can be interpreted as "relevant to the source". Such approaches as "all-inclusive" have their advantages. For example, they focus on some universal features of linguistic expressions. The alternative variant is a narrower interpretation of the term evidential strategy, including grammatical ways of expression that in addition to its main meaning can get one or more semantic features which are typical for evidentiality.

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