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SYSTEMATIZATION OF HOLOPHRATIC CONSTRUCTIONS' PROPERTIES

The paper is focused on studying regularities of holophrastic constructions' functioning in the English literary prose by means of identifying and classifying the most significant features of their linguistic characteristics and expression. Holophrastic construction is regarded in the paper as a synthetically formed composite lexical unit that combines features of a word, a word-combination, or a sentence, and which figuratively but precisely represents in communication the integrative pictures of the individuals' thinking or behavior, fixed in their memory as a corresponding concept, for decoding of which the recipients use their communicative and cognitive experience. Having analyzed the interpretations of holophrastic constructions' characteristic features given in various scientific sources, the authors present a generalized classification of their linguistic properties as well as provide examples of their actualization in English literary texts. The carried out analysis allowed the authors to systematize English holophrastic constructions according to the following most significant features of their linguistic expression: communicative and pragmatic aim (inducing to actions, restraining form actions, and evaluation of the communicative situation), form of expressing meaning (transparent or opaque), degree of their emotional loading (emotionally neutral, emotionally coloured, and emotionally expressive constructions), their syntactic function in the sentence (subject, predicate, object, attribute, or adverbial modifier) and their structure (three-component, four-component, five-component, and poly-component, i.e. consisting of six or more components). The performed study advances the idea that the substantiated classification can serve as a methodological tool for structuring classes, subclasses and groups of the experimental material within the scope of similar linguistic research.

Key words: holophrastic constructions, linguistic properties, classification, pragmatic aim, meaning, structure, English literary text.

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СИСТЕМАТИЗАЦІЯ ОЗНАК ГОЛОФРАСТИЧНИХ КОНСТРУКЦІЙ

На основі аналізу викладених у наукових джерелах уявлень про голофрастичні конструкції у статті обґрунтовано узагальнену класифікацію їхніх лінгвістичних ознак. Представлена у графічному вигляді класифікація слугує основою для систематизації голофрастичних конструкцій за такими лінгвістичними параметрами: комунікативно-прагматична мета, форма вираження їхнього значення, ступінь емоційного навантаження, синтаксична функція в реченні та їхня структура. Шляхом аналізу прикладів актуалізації голофрастичних конструкцій у текстах англійської художньої літератури, згрупованих відповідно до зазначених критеріїв, автори акцентують увагу на тому, що обґрунтована класифікація здатна слугувати надійним методологічним інструментарієм для структурування класів, підкласів або груп експериментального матеріалу під час виконання подібних лінгвістичних досліджень на матеріалі інших мов.

Ключові слова: голофрастичні конструкції, лінгвістичні ознаки, класифікація, англійський художній текст.

Introduction. The contemporary development of the English word building system is characterized by the intensive formation of compound and composite words, regarded as the most economical means for denoting different notions and world phenomena. Therefore, one of the fields of studying the English word-formative means today is targeted at solving and revealing the features and mechanisms of composite words creation in general and holophrastic construction in particular.

The study of holophrastic construction's functioning in literary texts seems highly topical since its investigation will make it possible to reveal their functional specificity and role in realizing informational and emotional potential of literary texts.

Therefore, **the objective** of the present research is to reveal the regularities of holophrastic constructions' functioning in the English literary prose by means of identifying and classifying the most significant features of their linguistic expression.

Methodological background of the research. A comprehensive study of the composite linguistic units is treated in linguistics from various aspects, for instance, their *lexical and word-forming characteristics* [10, p. 8-9, 86-8; 11, p. 11-12, 44-7], *word-formation typology* [2, p. 142], *composite-forming potential criteria* [8, p. 41-43]; *diachronic dynamics of composite words nominative structure* [6, p. 15]; *composite lexemes functioning and their stylistic features* [12, p. 87-90], *their cognitive, pragmatic, and stylistic aspects* [9, p. 184-193], etc. Such a diversity of approaches to the study of composite linguistic units as well as the tendency to cram as much information as possible into one language unit naturally brought about the appearance of a great number of their definitions and has led to singling out new compositional models of composite lexemes.

The phenomenon of a complex idea expressed in a single word is known in linguistics as **holophrasis** (from Greek *holos* – whole, *phrases* – utterance), or holophrase (or incapsulation, agglomeration, incorporation) which is traditionally understood as a productive mode of forming words or special syntagmatic units built by means of coining roots of other words, the amount of which is arranged with the help of auxiliary elements [5].

*I turned around. Christ, it was Wads! And Mrs Wads, who was a **too-much-money-meets-too-much-Librium train wreck**. Wads was fat and smiley – you could tell he prided himself on his bonhomie and his **hail-fellow-well-met personal style** (Keyes 2005, p. 367) – meaning: the holophrastic construction is used for a greeting on a most intimate footing or for a description of someone whose behavior is hearty, friendly and congenial;*

***Fair-to-middling insane**, as I was, I'd experienced a window of sanity and realized that Owen was my boyfriend (Keyes 2005, p. 512) – idiomatic phrase, meaning: slightly above average.*

It should be mentioned here that **semantically opaque** holophrastic constructions, which originated from the phraseological units may be further classified into:

- 1) phraseological collocations;
- 2) phraseological unities;
- 3) phraseological fusions.

The third hierarchical level of the holophrastic constructions' classification was based on the criterion of their *emotional loading*. According to this criterion, as shown in Fig. 1, the holophrastic constructions are classified into *emotionally-neutral*, *emotionally-coloured* and *emotionally-expressive*. Let us consider here the most frequent examples of holophrastic constructions used in highly emotional texts. It should be mentioned that this subgroup represents holophrastic constructions which are mostly *occasionalisms* coined uniquely by the author to strike the addressee with their unusualness and singularity, e.g.:

*"So we're friends?" he asked **oh-so-appealingly** (Keyes 2006, p. 302);*

*"And guess what age she is." "Thirteen," I hazarded. "No!", she shouted. "**Thirty-bloody-seven!**" "Good God!" I said. I was shocked (Keyes 2006, p. 341).*

*"It wasn't like that. I **honest-to-God** think the jacket was just a coincidence (Keyes 2005, p. 421).*

Considering the *syntactic function* as one of the important means of expressing the text semantics we take it for the criterion of the fourth classification level. Within this criterion we have used traditional linguistic classification of syntactic functions performed by holophrastic constructions in the quality of a *subject*, *predicate/predicative*, *object*, *attribute* and *adverbial modifier*.

To illustrate the essence of such a classification consider the following examples:

1. that of a **subject**, e.g.:

***Traveling-to-a-place energy and living-in-a-place energy** are two fundamentally different energies, and something about meeting this Australian girl on her way to Slovenia just gave me such a jones to hit the road (Gilbert 2010, p. 81-82);*

*This **not-entirely-unpleasant thought** somehow screeches me, however, into a horrible skid about how I just don't want to go through any heartache again (Gilbert 2010, p. 282).*

2. that of a **predicate/predicative**, e.g.:

*"She's not really your **take-time-out-to-smell-the-roses girl** (O'Flanagan 2010, p. 300);*

*"She's not a **stay-at-home person** (O'Flanagan 2009, p. 373);*

*Tom was a **nuts-and-bolts sort of person** and that was what Kathryn had inherited from him – a **nuts-and-bolts mentality** (O'Flanagan 2009, p. 379) – here we have one and the same holophrastic construction which performs even two different syntactic functions within one and the same complex sentence: 1) **nuts-and-bolts sort of person** – predicative, and 2) a **nuts-and-bolts mentality** – object.*

3. that of an **object**, e.g.:

*She was really hurt by the **marriage-we're-not-allowed-to-mention** (O'Flanagan 2010, p. 15);*

*I drank enough of that damn **Saint-John's-wort-tea** to cheer up whole a Russian gulag, to no noticeable effect (Gilbert 2010, p. 52);*

4. that of an **attribute**, e.g.:

*The year I turned twenty Mum married a **dull-but-worthy Irishman** and moved to live with him in Dublin. (Keyes 2005, p. 223) – **dull-but-worthy** is an attribute to the object Irishman;*

***Out-doorsy-loving-style clothing**: jeans and big, tick navy fleece suitable for North Pole. Footwear, however, cause for interest: trainers in anthracite colour – in fashionista circles **anthracite** known as "**Black for risk-takers**" (Keyes 2009, p. 74);*

*When Smashie and Nicey opened their mouths, their language was, typically of you, right on the button: **rib-tickle-tabulous** (Kelly 2008, 104);*

5. that of an **adverbial modifier** of manner, e.g.:

*Suddenly Becky was **toe-to-toe** in front of Jojo. (Keyes 2005, p. 141);*

*They jerked awake simultaneously, looked at the clock and stared at each other, **wild-eyed and sticky-up-haired with fear**. (Keyes 2005, p. 199).*

Regarding the fifth, or the lowest hierarchical level of the holophrastic constructions' actualization features, classified by their *structure* criterion, we should pay attention to the following.

Within compounding Th. Biermeier distinguishes *multiple word combinations: a fly-on-the-wall documentary; it seemed dog-in-the-mangerish; four-words-and-laugh* [1, p. 72-74], which we define as holophrastic constructions. As an example Th. Biermeier takes the combinations (holophrastic constructions) containing at least two hyphens (i.e. starting from three constituents) which speaks in favour of the classification on the number of components criterion that we also suggest in the present study. Th. Biermeier shares Leisi and Mair's opinion [4, p. 94-95] as to the high productivity pattern of this type of word-formation being very characteristic of the English language.

It should be noted that the analysis of the holophrastic constructions' structural aspect allows us to distinguish the units *on the basis of the number of their components*, leading component and the components correlation. We believe that in order to distinguish compound words from holophrastic constructions and to avoid any misinterpretation, a minimal component number criterion should be singled out. Considering the fact that some linguists argue that it takes only two units to coin a compound word, the component criterion is regarded by many linguists as marginal and even is not included into the classification of compound words. It seems quite logical that the holophrastic construction should combine at least three components to be termed as the holophrastic construction proper.

Proceeding from all mentioned above, the holophrastic constructions were classed in this paper into *3-component*, *4-component*, *5-component* and *poly-component* (i.e. consisting of 6 or more components) ones.

Consider the following examples of their actualization:

1. **three-component** holophrastic constructions:

like once-a-week Cinderella (Keyes 2009, p. 585);

in speed-limit-breaking silence (Keyes 2009, p. 641);

Helicopter wack-wack-wacked; rawl-rawl-rawl men (Keyes 2009, p. 711).

2. **four-component** holophrastic constructions:

the thought of middle-of-the-night feeds (Keyes 2009, p. 184);

woman in a skirt-and-flowing-top combo (Keyes 2009, p. 270);

He gave a what's-the-big-deal shrug (Keyes 2009, p. 436);

kiss-and-make-up sex. (Keyes 2009, p. 465).

3. **five-component** holophrastic constructions:

poor-me-and-poor-Edward version (Kelly 2008, p. 216);

blink-and-you'd-miss-it review (Keyes 2005, p. 268);

4. **poly-component** holophrastic constructions:

the same boy-meets-girl-and-get-married rules (Kelly 2008, p. 31) – 6-component holophrastic construction structure;

"this-is-what-all-these-people-are-like" argument (Gilbert 2010, p. 335) – 8-component holophrastic construction structure;

this you-may-not-need-it-but-do-you-want-it sensibility (Keyes 2005, p. 467) – 10-component holophrastic construction structure; sentence + question structure;

in a might-as-well-be-hung-for-a-sheep-as-for-a-lamb moment (Kelly 2008, p. 68) – 12-component structure, etc.

Apparently, there are no limitations as to the number of constituents within the holophrastic construction. The longest holophrastic units under study include 25 and 29 components, e.g.:

Hat tried to work out whether this was an (1) oh-fuck-she's-rung-what-am-I-going-to-say-wish-I-hadn't-answered-the-phone hello or an (2) oh-hi-thank-God-you've-rung-because-I-haven't-had-the-nerve-to-ring-you-but-I've-wanted-to-so-much-can-we-make-up hello (Weird 2002, p. 82) – in this case we have two holophrastic constructions in one sentence (the 1st holophrastic construction consists of 16 components, the 2nd holophrastic construction has 25 components);

Instead, let us move straight on to the much more fascinating subject of your-beard-is-clearly-in-love-with-you-and-it-looks-like-you-might-be-feeling-the-same-way-what-the-hell-are-you-going-to-do-about-that? (Weird 2002, p. 262-263) – a 29-component holophrastic construction structure.

Conclusions. Thus, the carried out analysis allowed us to systematize holophrastic constructions according to the following most significant features of their linguistic expression: communicative-and-pragmatic aim, form of expressing meaning, degree of emotional loading, syntactic function and structure.

However, in current linguistics the essence of a holophrastic construction as well as its functional, semantic, grammatical and other aspects have not been exhaustively described yet. We assume that the study of holophrastic constructions should comprise the contexts and situations in which they occur. Besides, the researcher is recommended to get acquainted with some national and ethnic background of a certain language, characteristics of a definite language community, its traditions and customs. Besides, the individual's communicative and cognitive experience should also be taken into account, which will be of great use in understanding and interpreting the meanings of holophrastic constructions.

We believe that the classification advanced in the paper can serve as a methodological instrument for structuring classes, subclasses and groups of the experimental material within the scope of similar linguistic research.

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