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О ЧАСТЕРЕЧНОЙ ПРИНАДЛЕЖНОСТИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО СЛОВА (НА ПРИМЕРЕ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКОЙ СТАТЬИ)

В статье анализируется частеречная принадлежность слова в языке английской новостной интернет-периодике. Анализируется понятие слова. На примере статьи экономической направленности автор рассматривает соотношение знаменательных и служебных частей речи, а также распределение основных семиологических классов

слов – собственно-знаменательных, местоименных и служебных.

Ключевые слова: части речи, полидифференциальный принцип, знаменательные и служебные слова, семиологические классы слов.

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ON PART-OF-SPEECH REFERENCE OF ENGLISH WORD (ON THE EXAMPLE OF ECONOMIC ARTICLE)

The present research analyzes word's part-of-speech reference in the English internet periodical publications related to news. The notion of a word is analyzed. Taking as an example an article on economic subject the author examines correlation of content and function parts of speech as well as the distribution of semiological classes of words – proper content words, pronominal words and function words.

Key words: parts of speech, polydifferential approach, content and function words, semiological classes of words.

Introduction

Word is the main structural and semantic unit of the language that is used for naming subjects and their characteristics, facts, relations of the reality. Word takes in-between position between a morpheme (word is situated on a higher level because of its independence and free reproduction in the speech) and a sentence (in contradistinction from sentence, word does not deliver a message).

Forecited definition may seem a little bit tenuous and generic, but it is quite understandable for both scientists and students.

Nevertheless, until now it remains impossible to give to the word a complete and adequate identification. The history of linguistic studies witnessed more than seventy different criteria to define a word. There are different approaches – phonetic,

graphical, structural, grammatical, syntactical, semantic or systematic, that are at the heart of those criteria.

Theoretical background

Therefore, what is the problem with attempts to define and, first and foremost, to single out a word? First of all, we face a problem of delimitation – identification of the boundaries of the word in the text. For this process, you need both to distinguish the word from its parts – morphemes (the word can contain one or more morphemes) and to make the difference between the word and the conjunction of two words. Second is the word identity problem.

After identifying a word from the text one more equally debatable in General Linguistics problem arises. It is a question of dividing words into different categories. This problem has been a matter of great interest for scholars since the earliest times. The question has been studied in the theory of the English language as well. There is no consensus considering systematization of the vocabulary of the English language. Every year new criteria of distinguishing parts of speech appear, scientists submit new methodology and practices, make assumptions about adding new categories to existing systems or modifying the old ones, but linguists are still very far from accomplishing the agreement of opinions on the subject.

Linguistic Encyclopedic Dictionary (LED) contains the following definition of the parts of speech: «Parts of speech are the classes of the word in the speech that can be grouped due to their mutual syntactic, morphological and semantic characteristics» (LED, 2002). Such formulation can be found in the works of professor Lev Shcherba: he stated that the main principles of words dividing into categories are lexical meaning, morphological form and syntactic functioning. The mentioned approaches usually underlie different types of word division into categories, but their number and organization may not be the same, depending on the rules accepted in different linguistic

schools of thoughts.

On the ground of the three abovementioned fundamental criteria – semantic, formal and functional – in the soviet linguistics there has been formulated a polydifferential approach to distinguish parts of speech.

The subject matter of semantic criterion is a characterization of abstract semantics of a word that serves to integrate words into lexical complexes. Such complexes oppose to each other on the content plane. Such semantics is based on two aspects of comparison: extralinguistic (denotative) and intralingual (connotative). On semantics grounds words can be divided into content words (autonomous) and function words (grammatical). Content words are lexically independent constituents of the language system. Function words are used for expressing various syntactic relationships, analytical forms production. They function as specifying elements.

Through the use of formal criterion we can separate out typical, regular elements in the word that can be used for words distinction and serve as markers for word identification. For this process we need to take into account not only presence of certain flexions in the composition of a word, but also its word-formative parameter. However, such parameter is almost inapplicable towards English language, because characteristic feature of the English language is relatively small number of flexional forms.

Functional criterion helps to expose syntactical characteristics of the parts of speech in the sentence. Content words occupy anchored position in the sentence depending on the language and constitute an independent part of the sentence. Function words' role depends on content words, because they correlate with each other within the sentence.

The use of the three criteria described above helps to subdivide words onto content and function parts of speech and separate them into different categories according to present characteristics of subclass.

As it was already mentioned, content (autonomous, lexical) words are such words that straightforward define reality. Content words have independent nominative function. Content words can be separated into non-demonstrative and demonstrative (pronominal). Non-demonstrative words are nouns, adjectives, numerals, adverbs and verbs. Such words name objects, qualities and actions, while pronominal words (pronouns) define subjects indirectly, based on present speech situation and are used in the text as parts of speech with link function.

Function words are only used together with content words; they don't have nominative function and they do not possess any grammatical or phonetic independence. Most of function words constitute one part of the sentence with the content word – for instance, prepositions and articles; in the English language we can also emphasize particles and copula verbs. Conjunctions are another category of the function words; they are used to connect parts of the sentence or to connect different sentences with each other. Interjections are also classified as function words, but they never enter relations with any other parts of speech, because they name events of reality indivisibly.

Empiric material

The author of the present research has made it a point to analyze part-of-speech structure of the language of English internet news periodical publication using the example of an article on economic subject. Examination was based on the text from the bbc.com with an extent of 435 words (http://www.bbc.com/news/business-32524475)

Results and discussion

To start with, it is obvious to give classification characteristics to English. The most popular typological classification of languages is suggested by German linguist Wilhelm von Humboldt. According to it languages can be divided into 4 different categories:

1. Isolating (amorphous) languages; non-availability of inflection, grammatical dependency on word order of the sentence, low contradistinction of content and function words are all features of this class of languages;
2. Agglutinative (agglutinating) languages; for this category of languages distinguish features are extensive network of word-building and inflectional affixes, deficiency of allomorphism not determined by phonetics, single type of declension and conjugation, grammatical monosemy of affixes and non-presence of significant alternation.
3. Polysynthetic (incorporate) languages; integration of other parts of sentences (mostly direct objects) into the structure of the predicate verb, sometimes with following morphonologic change of the basis (consequently, verb can conform with several parts of speech at the same time) is common to this class of languages.
4. Fusional (inflectional) languages; for those languages multifunctionality of grammatical morphemes, presence of fusion, changes of roots not determined by phonetics, large number of types of declension and conjugation not determined by phonetics and semantics (definition of categories rest on information from Linguistic Encyclopedic dictionary).

Results of the analysis

The English language refers to analytical type of languages and the undertaken research proves this thesis. According to the research results, there is quite a definite division of the content (68%) and the function (32%) word classes. One third of the function words in the text states for high degree of analytical tendency in English. And due to the latter the proper content words constitute more than half of overall words – 62,7%. Among the proper content words the most frequent ones are nouns – 48,3% out of the proper content words and 21,6% out of the overall words. The second frequent part of speech is a verb,

84

its share 21,6% among the proper content words and 13,5% out of the total number of words. All other parts of speech – adjectives, adverbs, numerals – cover lesser share (see Table 1). In comparison, in English scientific text the share of nouns and verbs is as following – 21,3% and 12,7% relatively, while in the text of fairy tale – the share of nouns (17,3%) and verbs (18,4%) practically equals (Ivanova, 2008). As we see, the tendencies in distribution of the basic parts of speech – nouns and verbs – in both scientific and periodical text are alike and contrast the distribution of the mentioned parts of speech in the text of fairy tale.

As for pronominal words, they constitute only 5,3% in the whole text in contrast to the proper content words. Such a small number of the pronouns can be explained by economic subject of the article that is intended for more complete message delivery towards the readers with noun repetitions instead of pronouns usage.

As any analytical language, English expresses grammatical relationships with the help of function words. This tendency has been proved by high frequency of such words. And among them the most frequent function word is a preposition (37.4%). Second largest number of function words – 29.5% – form articles. As for other function words, conjunctions take 18% of the text, function verbs – 10% and the smallest number of presence is shown by particles – only 5% of the text.

Conclusions

Therefore, according to decrease of relative frequency separate parts of speech form the following order: nouns (30,3%), verbs (13,5%), prepositions (12,0%), adjectives (9,9%), articles (9,4%), conjunctions (5,7%), adverbs and pronouns (both 5,3%), numerals (3,7%), function verbs (3,3%), particles (1,6%).

Some Function words stand even higher than some proper content words. Particularly these are – prepositions and articles. The former fulfills important syntactic functions of connecting

85

words and sentences, the latter is a determiner to a noun, the most frequent part of speech in the examined text.

The analysis shows that the language of periodical articles – particularly in the internet publications – is a subject that needs to be observed and studied further in order to specify our knowledge about language structure.

Table 1

Distribution of parts of speech in the English article
(% out of the total number of words in the text)

Parts of Speech	F	P
Nouns	132	30,3
Verbs	59	13,5
Adjectives	43	9,9
Adverbs	23	5,3
Numerals	16	3,7
Pronouns	23	5,3
Prepositions	52	12,0
Articles	41	9,4
Conjunctions	25	5,7
Function verbs	14	3,3
Particles	7	1,6
Proper Content Words	273	**62,7**
Pronominal Words	23	**5,3**
Function Words	132	**32,0**
Content Words	296	68,0
Total Words	435	**100,0**

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