UDC 81'367.335

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SUPRA-SENTENCE UNITS FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE THEORY OF SPEECH ACTS

Анотація

Вирішення однієї з актуальних проблем сучасного мовознавства – виявлення засобів поєднання окремих речень і надречень у крупніші текстові одиниці – було б неповним без аналізу актомовленнєвої природи таких складних надреченнєвих одиниць (НО), як приєднувальні конструкції та парцельовані речення, у формальній організації яких відсутня повна кореляція з їхньою комунікативною організацією. Проаналізована можливість наявності між частинами НО відношень, характерних для сполучених, композитних і комплексних мовленнєвих актів.

Ключові слова: надреченнєва одиниця, приєднувальна конструкція, базове висловлення, приєднана частина, парцельоване речення, парцелят, мовленнєвий акт.

Summary

Resolving one of the topical issues of modern linguistics – the detection of means of joining separate sentences and supra-sentence entities to form larger text units – would not be satisfactory without the analysis of a functional aspect of so frequently used and so easily identifiable supra-sentence units (SSU) as syndetic adjoining constructions and parcelled sentences, in the formal organization of which there is no complete correlation with their communicative structure. The possibility of existence of relations characteristic of composite, compound and complex speech acts between the SSU parts was analysed.

Key words: supra-sentence unit, adjoining construction, base utterance, adjoined part, parcelled sentence, parcellate, speech act.

It has commonly been maintained that a "language in action" has long been of much more interest to scholars than a "language at rest" [16, 9], as any language and its units cannot be properly identified, analysed and, in the long run, described irrespective of their functional nature [4, 70]. Thus, functionalism is recognized as one of the major research fields in the modern linguistic concepts [9, 207; 14, 21].

The functional aspect of a sentence has been studied by many scholars. Nevertheless, the study of one of the topical issues of modern linguistics – the detection of means of joining separate sentences and supra-sentence entities [18] to form larger text units – would not be comprehensive without the analysis of a functional aspect of so frequently used and so easily identifiable composite syntactic units as syndetic adjoining constructions (AC) with adjoining connective words (CW, which are homonymous to coordinating and subordinating conjunctions as means of connection) and parcelled sentences (PS). The functional peculiarities of these text units have received scant attention in the research literature thus far [3; 6; 8], and many problems in this field still remain unsolved.

An AC is understood as a two-component text unit divided by an external punctuation mark (usually by a full stop) into two parts that have a strictly fixed

position – an autosemantic base utterance (BU) is followed by a synsemantic adjoined part (AP). The AP is formalized as a separate sentence that is joined with the BU by a CW that facilitates singling out an AC in a text [1, 6; 6; 12].

A PS has similar components – an autosemantic BU is followed by a synsemantic parcelled part (PP = a parcellate) [11, 7]. The fundamental difference between an AC and PS lies in relations between their components. In an AC its AP joins a BU, while in a PS its PP is separated (parcelled) from a BU but remains strongly connected to it both grammatically and semantically.

As we analyse an AC and a PS as utterances, then while making an assessment of communicative and pragmatic features of these supra-sentence units (SSU = composite syntactic units), it is necessary to examine both the peculiarities of their communicative organization and speech act nature. If the former aspect has already been investigated (though in a few papers [2; 5]), a search of the scientific literature has not revealed the studies of the latter one, which determines the *topicality* of this paper. Thus, the *object* of our research is SSUs and the *subject* – their peculiarities in the light of the theory of speech acts. The analysis of the illocutionary specificity of an SSU components in single (simple) and composite speech acts (SA) is the *purpose* of this research. The material of the research is English language works of fiction, journalistic and scientific publications of the second half of the 20th – beginning of the 21st century.

The notion of an SA occupies a central place in lingual pragmatics, in which it is construed as a minimal unit of speech communication [13]. Since an SA is an intention-specific action aimed at an addressee, then it harmoniously interacts with a particular socio-discursive situation and is characterized within the parameters of intentionality, conventionality, addressee/sender orientation, situation orientation, as well as illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect, and propositional meaning [15, 36–43].

Proceeding from a socio-discursive situation and the parameters specified, the adjoined and parcelled sentences should be considered in four main situations of communication – statement, question, inducement, and promise [10, 82], with which the four most widely used SAs – constative (CONST) quesitive (QUES) directive (DIR), and commissive (COM) – clearly correlate.

In terms of form, both an AC and a PS are based on an invariable model (BU + AP / PP), and in terms of communication, they correlate with single and composite SAs. As far as a formal structure of an SSU is concerned, there is no complete correlation with its communicative structure, although certain parallels can be drawn. As a rule, if an SSU consists of the components modelled on collocations or simple sentences, they usually correlate with single SAs. If an SSU includes parts that correspond to a composite sentence, then their compliance with composite SAs is more typical, however, it is not obligatory. Hence, an SSU can act both as a single and a composite discourse unit.

The selection of the former syntactic units does not pose considerable difficulties. But a considerable body of composite syntactic units is those, the components of which are composite SAs with different combinations of SAs in BUs and APs / PPs. For example:

(1) "The fault is mine: I left her unchaperoned.**BU**"

"**So** you were here alone, Miss Honeychurch?"**AP** (E. M. Forster). – CONST + QUES

(2) "Then one has to look for something very unusual in him**. BU** Since he's done something very unusual?" **AP** (J. Fowles) – DIR + QUES

(3) "Go!**BU** If you wish to." **AP** (W. King) – DIR relevant under the specified condition [19, 248].

In few studies that have investigated the speech act nature of Germanic parcelled utterances, some linguists (e.g. Pustovar, 2006) perceive their illocutionary specificity in the fact that they can be a form of implementation of both single and composite (compound or complex) speech acts that are implemented within the framework of the four main situations of communication (statement, question, inducement, and promise) and determine the use of appropriate speech units – constative, quesitive, directive, and commissive [11, 15]. Based on Karaban's classification of composite SAs [7, 13], the author provides examples of such SAs: 1) a composite SA, the communicative relations between the illocutions of which are those of specific assistance and addition. At the same time, there is no hierarchical relation between the two illocutions, but they complement each other organically; 2) a compound SA, in which both illocutions have equal importance (coordinate semantic and pragmatic link); 3) a complex SA – with the subordinate semantic and pragmatic link of illocutions (correlation between the main and subordinate illocutions) [11, 15].

This viewpoint on the semantic and pragmatic specificity of PSs is very interesting for our research because ACs and PSs have a lot in common in their formal arrangement: (1) the two-component structure and a fixed position of their parts (an autosemantic BU is the first and is always followed by a synsemantic part (adjoined or parcelled), (2) an intonation break (because of a punctuation mark (., !, or ?) that marks the end of a sentence, (3) a meaningful pause (for the same reason as in (2)), and, as a result of all that, (4) an expressive emphasis on the second (synsemantic) part:

(4) Samantha listened with fascination as they discussed the last few names on the list.**BU** One woman's brother worked at a strip mine.**PP1** One woman's father had been a deep miner.**PP2** One man lost his adult son in a construction accident, but it wasn't related to coal.**PP3** (J. Grisham).

(5) It was of the many skills he wouldn't have acquired had he been a better shot at a sixteen. **BU** If his shaft hadn't missed the deer and pierced

Wolf's shoulder... **AP1** If Cicatrice's band hadn't chosen to lay waste the von Mecklenberg estate... **AP2** <u>If</u> old Baron had employed more men like Vukotish, and less like Schunzel, his then-steward... **AP3** If... **AP4** (J. Yeovil).

While describing an AC / a PS, linguists note that adjoining relationship is dominant between a BU and an AP (it is unidirectional from a BU to an AP), and all the other possible ones can only 'overlap' it. [1, 57; 6; 12].

Given the fact that none of the researchers denies that the first part of an SSU (a BU) is practically fully independent in formal and semantic terms, and it is a BU that provides a base for an adjoined / a parcelled semantically dependent) part, doubts are raised about the possibility of existence of coordinate relations between these components that clearly have different syntactic status.

On balance, from the viewpoint of the theory of speech acts, the relationship between the illocutions of the components of an AC or a PS cannot have an equal status. On the contrary, they are always in a subordinate relationship. Accordingly, only a complex type of an SA can correspond to an SSU.

It should be noted that coordinate relationship can exist between an SSU components. However, this relationship can only exist not between a BU and an adjoined / a parcelled part but among the synsemantic parts themselves if there are several of them in the structure of a PS / an AC as in examples (4) – PP1, PP2, PP3; (5) – AP1, AP2, AP3, AP4, and (6) – AP1, AP2, AP3:

(6) That's why at Bayer, we've made our commitment to health care research a crusade.**BU** Why we have over 2,000 our research scientists worldwide striving for breakthroughs in areas where effective therapies are lacking.**AP1** Why we'll spend a billion dollars this year in a range of areas such as pharmaceuticals, medical imaging, diagnostics and genetic engineering.**AP2** And why through our research and collaborations, we'll work on treatments for medical challenges ranging from the common cold to cancer, Alzheimer's and SADS **AP3** (Forbes).

If the illocution of an AP does not semantically correlate with the illocution of a BU, they often exist in parallel with each other without mutual assisting / strengthening:

(7) A million lives, Pol had said.**BU** And mine.**AP** A million and one.**BU** Because I was going to survive**AP** (A. Hall).

In the example given here, the two ACs are in the close contact position. The parts of the second AC (A million and one. Because I was going to survive) semantically do not correlate with each other – the BU is followed by the non-correlating AP (– a signal of a sudden switch to a different thought).

It is not the case with parcelling because parcellates (due to their nature) always have great semantic coherence and fit each other perfectly. It is a distinctive feature of any PS. The fact of semantic coherence of PS

constituents can be shown by transforming a PS into a usual sentence:

(8) Flowers! For me! How kind of you! (Headway Pre-Intermediate) – (PS).

→ Flowers for me … how kind of you!

It should be noted that, in principle, adjoining is widely open to reproducing diffuse pragmatic values, which facilitates the realization of several communicative purposes in one syntactic structure by way of combination of different illocutionary forces that often do not fit into a common semantic content, giving addressants an opportunity to briefly and clearly express their thoughts and clearly emphasizes the belonging of adjoining / parcelling in general and an AC / a PS in particular to expressive syntactic units.

Further research should be undertaken to investigate the peculiarities of the relationship of SAs in the components of ACs and PSs in different functional styles, as well as to carry out the analysis of ACs / PSs and SA from the standpoint of status and role relationship of communicants.

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Стаття надійшла до редакції 18 вересня 2017 року