

## Functioning of Syntactic Phrase Models in the Space of a Detective Genre (Based on b. Akunin's Novels)

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### Abstract

The present paper aimed to investigate syntactic units of the idiomacy structure that express intensive-consecutive relations, which are classified as “expressive syntactic constructions” and differ from each other by semantic diversity, fusion of informative and connotative meanings, combination of real and surreal contents and combination of both variable and non-variable components. On the one hand, the present research focused on unresolved problems of syntactic phraseological models' semantic-functional status, and on the other hand, paid attention to the representation of intension in the information structure of phrasemes that differ by the correlation of qualitative-quantitative and relational meanings. Statements, which have *so/ such/ so/ before ... what; not so not so ... so; too ... to* conjunctures and are based on constant components and allow free lexical filling, are related to these phraseological models (hereinafter referred as phraseomodels). Phraseomodel, which concentrates on the verbalisation of intensity and behaves differently depending on the lexico-semantic origin of the “backbone” component and how functionally loaded its pro-form, prevails in the writing style of B. Akunin's detective fictions. Meanwhile, the semantic intensity is often amplified due to the metaphorization and embodiment, inversion, segregation of the pro-form or phrase as a whole, and the inclusion of informal speech and even jargon. Phraseomodels, which are analyzed in terms of the inter-model correlation, are correlated with those phraseomodels including the “too ... to” part indicating the redundancy in the quality or conditions, and with those including the *not so / not so / not so ... to* parts, in which the quality of subject, on the contrary, does not exceed the bare minimum for something to happen. Such stylistic modifications of the currently studied phraseomodel as parcellation, lexico-syntactic repetition and ellipsis enhance the expressive and emotional perception of B. Akunin's detective fictions.

**Keywords:** Writing style; Syntactic phraseomodel; Relational semantics; Intensity; Syncretism; Expressivity.



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### 1. Introduction

Linguistic science focuses on the relevance of anthropocentric approach to the research on language systems and speech activities, informative and connotative possibilities of languages. There are dominant problems of investigating the subjective side of speech, modality, and expressiveness on either spoken or written level. At all stages of linguistics evolution including the modern one, the problem of correlation of content and form, symmetry/asymmetry of denotation and connotation is a developing problem. The linguistics focus on semantic studies in the late XX to the early XXI centuries allowed the language reality to be only in its canonical, usual aspects, but also in non-canonical, syncretic, transitional peripheral and as those that stimulate differences between forms and contexts of either lexico-phraseological or syntactic units (Abisheva *et al.*, 2018), (Akunin, 2002), (Antúnez, 2001).

According to Antúnez (2001)'s research, there were approximately ten definitions of cause-effect relation throughout the history. There are a lot of Russian studies on the coverage of cause-effect relation in its broad meaning. However, some issue parts, which are related to problems of qualifications of syncretic sentences-utterances, are ignored by syntacticians including the micro field of finality with its invariant-variant structure that contributes to the search for new definitions and interpretations for unclear linguistic structures. Therefore, the research on phrase models, which express intensive-consecutive relations according to studies by Andramonova (2003) seems to be quite relevant and significant.

Recent investigations of language have made an important simplifying assumption: the primary subject for linguistic description is linguistic knowledge, as opposed to linguistic behavior. This heuristic strategy has facilitated progress in the formal description of the “abstract” structures of language, but has left open the question of how such structures are learned by children and utilized by adults. Previous attempts to integrate linguistic structure and speech behavior have been efforts to find direct mappings of abstract linguistic structures onto language learning,

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speech perception, and speech production. Although the details of these mappings differ, the basic postulate is the same: actual speech behavior is some regular function of the abstract linguistic structure originally isolated in linguistic investigations (Antúnez, 2001).

That is, grammar rests at the epicenter of all language behavior, with different functions of grammatical structure accounting for different kinds of behaviors (for example, talking, listening, memorizing, and the like). This paper begins an exploration of an alternative approach to the study of language: as a conceptual and communicative system which recruits various kinds of human behavior, but which is not exhaustively manifested in any particular form of language behavior. That is, the concept of “language” is like those of “species” or “organ” as they are used in biological science. Consider, for example, the problem of accounting for the concept “cow” by an exhaustive description of its physiological and behavioral structures (including genetic material).

Such an inventory would leave untouched the species concept itself; it would merely specify the interaction among the descriptively isolable components of the organism. The fact that there is a distinct and distinguishable bovine species that organizes these components is taken as a given before the descriptive science begins. No aspect of the cow’s physiology could be pinpointed as the “physical bovine essence.” This is true even for the genetic material, which at first might be taken as the essential physical manifestation of every species (Andramonova, 2003), (Cowie, 1998).

However, the genetic material in a fertilized cow egg “is” a cow only given the bovine processes of uterine nourishment, embryological maturation, postnatal behavioral development, and so on; these all assume various interactions which the genetic material itself would be called upon to explain without a prior concept of the species. Analogously, in the study of language, we cannot aspire to “explain” the presence and structure of language as a composite function of various descriptively isolable language behaviors, nor is there any aspect of language that can be specified as the uniquely central aspect. This is true even of linguistic grammars, which at first have been taken as the essential structure inherent in language behavior. Yet grammatical structure “is” the language only given the child’s intellectual environment provided by a society and the processes of physiological and cognitive development, which are the basis for language behavior. Language has various manifestations, each of which draws on and contributes to structural constraints on the language created by every other subsystem. During the first decade of his life a child simultaneously learns all these systems—primarily, how to talk in sentences, how to understand sentences, and how to predict new sentences in his language (Cowie, 1998).

These and other cognitive skills can mutually influence each other as the child acquires them and as they are integrated in adult language behavior. Consequently, our first task in the study of a particular structure implicit in adult language behavior is to ascertain its source rather than immediately assuming that it is grammatically relevant. Recent linguistic “grammars” are intended to describe our knowledge of a language (as revealed by our intuitions about potential sentences) rather than how we ordinarily use that knowledge (Kireeva-Karimova and Dubchak, 2017).

Accordingly, in recent considerations of language learning, attention has been focused on the acquisition of linguistic competence as isolated in linguistic investigations of grammar. This view of language “structure” and its development in children, isolated from the rest of cognitive development, has been too narrow. Many aspects of adult language derive from the interaction of grammar with the child’s processes of learning and using language. Certain ostensibly grammatical structures may develop out of other behavioral systems rather than being inherent in grammar. That is, linguistic structure is itself partially determined by the learning and behavioral processes that are involved in acquiring and implementing that structure (Langoltz, 2006).

## 2. Methods

In the present research, the previous experience of studies on semantic-functional features of linguistic units was investigated in spaces of literacy and publicistic texts (Cowie, 1998). The research on expressive possibilities of artistic word in its broad meaning is stimulated by the writer’s type of writing style, their worldview and creativity (Kireeva-Karimova and Dubchak, 2017). Juvenile plotline combined the witty paradoxically and brilliant knowledge of realities, rich cultural layer and magnificent stylistic manner, high quality verbalization and strong emotions which are qualities of Langoltz (2006)’s detective fictions. A catalog, consisting of more than 500 entities, which were randomly chosen from novels of “Fandorin’s arc”, was used as an empirical basis of this research (Langoltz, 2006). The relationship of the present research was, on the one hand, defined by the focus on the unresolved problem of syntactic phrase models’ semantic-functional status, and on the other hand, by paying attention to the representation of intension in the information structure of phrases that differ by the correlation of qualitative-quantitative and relational meanings. The earlier presented issue of this paper was solved in line with fundamental theoretical problems of references, nomination and communication, as well as an integral coverage of lexical and syntactic semantics. Such methods as linguistic description, observation, transformation and elements of both component and distributive analysis were used to solve theoretical and practical tasks.

## 3. Results and Discussion

Nacicsione (2001) masterfully combined and synthesized real and surreal, truth and fiction and reached the top of detective genre. If novels’ language specifics were analyzed in terms of syntax, then the phrase models, which differ from each other by semantic diversity, fusion of informative and connotative meanings, combination and intersection of both real and potential plans, could be pinpointed. Statements, which have the *so/ such/ so/ before ... what; not so/ not so ... that, too ... to* structure and are based on constant components allowing free lexical filling, are

examples of such phrase models: Poseredine, popiraya nogami rasstelennuyu tigrovuyu shkuru, stoyala hozyayka, naryazhennaya ispankoy, v alom plat'e s korsazhem i s puncovoy kameliey v volosah. Horosha byla tak, chto u Erasta Petrovicha perekhvatilo duh (Nurullina Guzel and Usmanova Liliya, 2016). Similarly, the relational means of phraseological schemes become more complex and sometimes are replaced by expressive meanings including the semantic intensity.

The meaning of a high-level degree of both procedural and nonprocedural features paired with categories of emotively, imagery and appraisal forms the functional-semantic field of expressiveness. Semantic components of intensively category, such as "in the highest manner" and "highly" express the derogation from the norm, from expectations of feature's quantity parameters: Events developed so rapidly and the rationality behind them did not keep up; and it required the intervention of deep soul forces (Rakhimova *et al.*, 2016). Depending on the lexico-semantic origin of the "backbone" component and how the functionally loads its pro-form, we can highlight two variations. First, the semantic intensity is sent through pro-form that points out the high-level degree of quality or action, while the reference word is concentrated on showing the static or dynamic feature without mentioning its quantity parameters: Litso na portrete bylo nastol'ko primechatel'nym, chto Erast Petrovich i byuvare zi zy: vpoloborota smotrela na nego pyshnovolosaya tstepane zakyla rye saintra-matovo-chernymi glazami, gordym izyibliosaya tstepane zakyla rye saintra-matovo-chernymi glazami, gordym izibyolosaya tstepane (Safin *et al.*, 2017). Second, the semantic intensity is sent through the whole phrase consisting of the reference lexeme that has with the intensity index in its meaning and correlation that reinforces this meaning: Nakonets on ostanovilsya, obrnulsya k svoemu sputniku i prishel v istinnoe neistovstvo - zamahal rukami (Safonova, 2013). In this phrase model, the paradoxical situation arises due to an action from its maker, who is not expected to do so. The event absurdity, which results due to the high-level degree of feature, can be created through the contact and reversal of components' meaning; in other words, a positive situation is considered as a negative phenomenon by the speaker.

The currently-analyzed phrase models is organized by qualitative-quantitative semantic, which is marked as a phrase and plays a dominant role, and also the relational means, which are stimulated by the correlation between contexts of phrase model parts and are marked as subordinating conjunctions chto / chtoby / budto: I tut rastyazhenie vremeni zakonchilos', vremena szhalos' pruzhinoy i, raspyamivshis', obzhigayusche udarilo Erasta Petrovicha v pravyy bok, da tak sil'no, chto on upal navznich' i bol'no udarilsya zatytkom o kray krylechnogo parapeta (Stepanov, 1995). The semantic intensity is often amplified in the currently studied phrase models due to the metaphorization and embodiment, inversion, segregation of the pro-form or phrase as a whole as well as the inclusion of informal speech and even jargon: The boothman barked, so that dust fell from the ceiling. Similarly, the postpositive part can express speakers' emotional and expressive reactions to the high-level degree of feature and basically does not have any event-to-effect relations: Uncle Zot Laryonych straight from the doorway, so starnul that sparks from the eyes... (Usmanova and Nurullina, 2017). This phenomenon is related to aspects of phraseologisation of studied syntactic units one of which include phraseological units (hereinafter referred to PU) for both main and subordinate parts of sentence. On the one hand, PU is able to amplify the semantic intensity and the negative assessment of current events: Hotel ya im uzhe ustroit 'yavlenie Hrista narodu, razognat' vsyu ehtu shatiyu-bratiyu, potrebovat 'Amaliyu k otvetu, no vdrug dvertsa karety raspahnulas', i ya uvidel takoe, chto ne privedi karety raspahnulas', i ya uvidel takoe, chto ne privedi karety raspahnulas' (Wierzbicka). On the other hand, if the semantic intensity is implied in the main part of sentence, it can be explicated assuming that PU takes place in the subordinate part: Pozhaluy, on seychas byl zhalok, ehtot geroicheskiy gospodin. Vo vsyakom sluchae, po sravneniyu s ee vysochestvom, gotovoy brosit 'radi chuvstva vsyo, a v dannom sluchae slovo "vsyo" oboznachalo stol' mnogoe, chto duh zahvatyvalo (Wierzbicka, 1990).

However, the highest level of expression in the language of B. Akunin's detective fictions is found in phraseomodels with the *hot* element in the postpositive part of sentence (even die, even though the dog has wolf.). In those phraseomodels, the described action plays the role of metaphorical image of the highest level and is painted as a "border point" of such condition: *Ot ehtogo pohoronnogo boya, gulko razdavavshegosya v pustoy kvartire, u Skorika perekhvatilo dyhanie i stalo tak strashno, tak bespriyatno, chto hot' sobakoy voy.* A. Wierzbicka notices similarities between superlative forms and sentences with gradation-to-effect relations (e.g. "So thin..., that the clothes fit him as if he was a hanger") and points out that "they seem similar to the linguistic factors which are usually related to the hyperbole". Hyperbolicity is also realized through the lexical filling of postpositive part when the result is shown as unreal, fantastic or absurd: *She (Amalia) screamed so much and cursed at servants and walls trembled;* and through conjunctions of an uncertain comparison, *budto, slovno etc.*, when the imaginary paradoxical situation is described in the consequent: *... When I, already at night, burning with a thirst for revenge, reappeared to Diana, she stared at me as if I had risen from hell.* Semantic intensity in B. Akunin's novels can be seen in phraseological models in which main parts of static and dynamic features do not have any relevant valency parameters. According to N.A. Andramonova, "The semantics of high-level degree of feature, which defines and covers the whole text, could be applied to the cases, where lexeme that identifies the predicative or attributive feature, does not differ from quantitative means by the semantic solidarity and does not stimulate them": *It was a shame, it was not good that the conversation they had turned out so wooden, as if about a stranger.*

In the aspect of an inter-model correlation, the studied phrase models could be first correlated with phrase models that have the *too ... to* conjunction in which semantic utterance, redundancy, conditionality or processing block the action from postpositive part and stimulate the exact opposite: *Columbine - being too frivolous and reckless to be afraid of something.* Secondly, it could be correlated with phraseomodels that have *not so / not so / not so ... to* conjunctions in which the subject's quality does not exceed the bare minimum for the described action in the consequent happening: *I'm not so self-confident to know that she fell in love with me at first sight.* These phrase

models are used to deny the cause itself in the space of B. Akunin's detective fictions with its clean and masterful usage of Russian language and high usage of emotional expressions.

Such stylistic modifications as the complication or simplification of phraseomodels enhance the emotional perception of novels from "Fandorin's arc". Parcellation is one of these methods and causes effects on the naturalness of a speech process: *The needle said the unexpected. Such that Green flinched*. Similarly, B. Akunin uses lexico-syntactic repeat combined with parcellation to create a strong effect of amplification and gradation: ... *Here's the main thing: There is a tremendous power in it. Such a force that she plays with everyone ...*. Tension, swiftness and dynamism of narration are also created as effects of initial phraseomodel's ellipsis that is mostly in characteristic manner of character's informal language: *The Lord created this world, created people and left them to themselves, but people are so weak and blind, they turned the world of God into the hell*. Functional-stylistic modifications are less of an expressive move to recipient's "fixate the attention" and more of emphasizing on the semantics of quantity that implies the graduation of saying, up to the exaggeration or hyperbolization.

#### 4. Summary

In conclusion, the analyzed phrase models are different in terms of the semantic diversity, fusion of informative and connotative meanings, and combination and intersection of both real and potential plans. First of all, phrase model, which concentrates on the verbalization of intensity and behaves differently depending on the lexico-semantic origin of the "backbone" component and how functionally loads its pro-form, is highly common in the language of novels from "Fandorin's arc".

Secondly, the semantic intensity is often amplified in the currently researched phrase models due to the metaphorization and embodiment, inversion, segregation of the pro-form or phrase as a whole as well as the inclusion of informal speech and even jargon.

Furthermore, phrase models, which represent intensive-consecutive relations, are correlated with phrase models with "too ... so that the and not so / not so / not so ... so that" conjunctions in both the intra- and inter-model correlation.

#### 5. Conclusion

B. Akunin used complex expressive syntactic units, which were transmitted by the integration of lexico-phraseological and grammatical means of language, in order to create a tense, dynamic and emotional plotline for detective fictions of "Fandorin's arc". In B. Akunin's artistic discourse, syntactic phrase models were on the one hand made unique by the structure reproducibility, and on the other hand, by its artistic beginning at the lexical filling level. All of this becomes a main method of showcasing both authors and characters' values due to present phrase models in both digressions and dialogs.

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