

Short Reports

EXPLICATION OF THE ZONE OF HYBRID, ADJECTIVAL-MODAL STRUCTURES IN THE CONTEXT OF MODALATION

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The authors establish the point about the gradual nature of linguistic units' modalation in the Russian language. In the focus of consideration are hybrid structures expressing a complex mode of interaction between adjectives and parenthetical modal words, as well as a certain reduction of adjectival lexical semantics caused by desemantisation of hybrids, development of pragmatic aspects of their meaning. Syncretism of categorical semantics is identified as combination of the reduced adjectival meaning of the subject's attribute with subjective-modal meaning of varying evaluation (assessment) of information but without parenthetical function. There is decategorisation of word forms, reduction of morphological and syntactic attributes of adjectives. At the same time it is prematurely to talk about the diminishment of grammar categories in respect to fixed use of forms of neutral gender, singular, positive degree of comparison of adjectives. Morphemic structure is being transformed: flexion *-o*, *-e* transforms into a syncretic morpheme – flexion-suffix.

The research on modalation of short adjectives demonstrates that this type of transposition has a gradual character (on various aspects of transposition see also: [1–7]). Adjectival word forms in typical contexts may exhibit a different degree of resemblance to parenthetical (introductory) modal words, revealing the nuclear zones of the source adjective and a derived parenthetical (introductory) modal word, as well as the zone of transition (syncretism), expressed by peripheral and hybrid structures. In this paper we will focus only on the zone of intermediate, hybrid formations on the transitivity scale.

The stage of hybridity is presented by a few contexts where adjectival-modal formations such as *it is certain (no doubt, surely, definitely)*, *it seems (apparently, looks like)*, *by accident (incidentally)* are used. They are asyndetic compound sentences where predicative parts are separated by colon, or – fewer – by dash. Hybrid structures are used here propositively functioning as a predicate of incomplete two-member part of asyndetic constructions, notably always with elliptical subject or object component, i.e. without grammatical subject (cf.: *No doubt that...*) or a complement (object) (cf.: *Looks like that...*).

The syntactic position of elliptical subject or object (complement) in the first incomplete part of

the asyndetic compound sentence is compensated by a predicative unit that follows after it. This circumstance, namely, the use of hybrids of this kind in absolute position without formal markers of relation with subsequent predicative unit within complex structures causes their perception as more independent components of the utterance (compared to peripheral short word-forms in compound sentences), which is, relatively speaking, the next stage in moving towards parenthetical modal words and expressions. Cf. contexts of use of the peripheral short adjective *certain* (1) and the intermediate adjectival-modal formation *no doubt* (2): (1) *It is certain /No doubt* that this approach is the only right under the circumstances. (2) *There can be no doubt*: this approach is the only right under the circumstances.

The hybrid structures of this type manifest complex interactions between the original part of speech – adjective and inter-part-of-speech, semantic-syntactic category of parenthetical modal words and expressions, as well as some reduction of lexical semantics owing to desemantisation of hybrids, the development of pragmatic aspects of meaning. Syncretism on the level of categorical semantics reveals itself in such a way that the reduced adjectival meaning of the subject attribute combines itself with subjective modal meaning of evaluation (assessment) of the transferred information in terms of a categorical or problematic verification (authenticity) (*certainly, it seems*), as well as the degree of regularity / irregularity, predictability / unpredictability (randomness) (*accidentally*).

Along with that, the parenthetical function, which would be accompanied by detachment, i.e. a special prosodic-semantic highlighting of parenthetical modal component of the utterance, has nothing to do with the modalates such as *certainly (no doubt)*, *it seems, by accident* in a hybridity zone. The morphological characteristics that short adjectives have, the hybrids like *it seems (looks like)* at the stage of hybridity are almost void of.

There is decategorisation of the above word forms, followed by reduction of morphological and syntactic characteristics of the original (source) class of adjectives. However, it is still to premature to talk about the loss of such categories as gender, number, degrees of comparison with fixed use of word forms of the neuter gender, the singular, positive degree of comparison in the given syntactic conditions. It is possible, apparently, to take note of the absence of paradigm categories at a given position, the impossibility of categories' grammemes swop. Morphemic structure of the hybrids such as *It seems (looks like)* is also transformable: flexion *-o*, *-e* degenerates into a suffix, becoming a syncretic morpheme – flexion-suffix (2). The final change, i.e. its transformation into the suffix will be visible

in typical contexts where peripheral parenthetical modal units are used (3). Compare contexts of use of a hybrid, adjectival-modal word form *it looks like* and adjective-based parenthetical modal word *like* (3) **Look very much alike**: *a copy is almost indistinguishable from the original*; (4) **Looks like** *a copy is indistinguishable from the original without forensic tests*.

Modus framework and proposition are verbalised in different parts of the predicative asyndetic compound sentences with explanatory relations (3). Moreover the subjective modal meaning of the reported information, in terms of reliability, is expressed by a hybrid functioning as a predicate and used propositively in incomplete first predicative part of the asyndetic compound sentences (*Look very much alike*: ... – modus), and the evaluated state of affairs itself, proposition in the second, postpositive predicative part (...*the copy is almost indistinguishable from the original* – dictum).

The paper was prepared within the project "Comprehensive study of modalation as a type of gradual transposition of linguistic units into the semantic-syntactic category of parenthetical modal

words", performed with the financial support of the Russian Science Foundation for Humanities (grant No. 15-04-00039a).

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