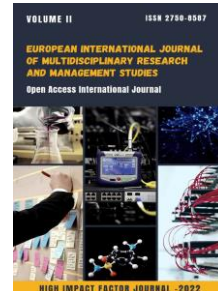


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THE SEMANTIC CLASSIFICATION OF TRIVALENT VERBS OF ACTION

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: The present article investigates the cognitive aspect of trivalent actional verbs, to reveal the role of grammar in forming the lingual picture of the world. Various points of view of scientists in the aspect of grammar are analyzed.

INTRODUCTION

Trivalent verbs open positions of three elements, one of which is the subject and two others are – direct object and indirect object:

Mike told me a story.

Bill gave Jane an apple.

Mike said nothing.

Miss Marple asked me a question.

Mary passed the saltcellar to me.

She showed me her car.

They sell cars.

In traditional grammar trivalent verbs don't differ from bivalent verbs and are called transitive verbs [1, p. 248]. However, trivalent verbs have special peculiarities which should be studied separately.

The difficulty of differentiating of bivalent verbs from trivalent verbs is explained by the following:

1) in explanatory dictionaries there is no information about monovalent, bivalent and trivalent verbs, i.e. there are no special markers of valence but there are markers of transitive and intransitive verbs;

2) the space that is designed for the third element of trivalent verbs (indirect object) is often left empty because a reader (listener) can understand what is written or said in exact context or situation:

«I am sorry», he said (Flora Kidd, 14).

«Yes. Thank you», Sara answered. (Flora Kidd, 120).

3) there is no exact difference between similar categories.

The quantity of trivalent verbs of action is much more than the quantity of bivalent verbs. This is explained by earlier formation of bivalent verbs.

In the research the cognitive features of bivalent and trivalent actional verbs have been illustrated on the examples of the verbs to cut, to buy and to sell. The sentence has three layers: 1) syntactic structure (subject, predicate, object, attribute, adverbial modifier); 2) semantic structure (sets of semantic roles); 3) communicative structure (theme and rheme). The semantic structure reflects outer world and it may be called “frame” which reflects some event in the objective world, whereas subject, predicate, object, theme and rheme do not reflect outer world. Syntactic bond and syntactic relation are quite different syntactic phenomena. The former has nothing to do with meaning and does not reflect outer world, the latter is an abstract syntactic meaning and most of the syntactic relations do reflect the real relations between substances, events and their properties (attributes).

Bivalent verbs, which express results of actions, are designed for objects with the following meaning:

1. The meaning of creating: to weave, to knit, to build, to construct, to make, to write, to dig, to organize, to create, to engender, to produce, to generate, to invent, to design, to device, to form, , to shape, to hatch, to found, to institute, to pronounce, to utter , to articulate, to sound, to enunciate, to verbalize, etc.

2. The meaning of connection: to connect, to join, to tie, to secure, to strap, to truss, to unite, to fix, to rope, to chain, to fetter, to yoke, to solder, to fuse, to weld, to combine, to unify, to affix, to attach, to couple, to bind, to knot, to bandage, to fasten, to glue, to paste, to stick, to pin, to nail, etc.

Trivalent verbs have three objects of action: one of them is the subject, other two – are objects (direct and indirect) [2, p. 45]:

Miss Marple asked me a question.

Mary passed the saltcellar to me.

She showed me her car.

They sell cars.

In the process of analyzing trivalent verbs of action we found out that they can divide into the following types due to their semantics:

1. Verbs, which denote the action of transfer: to give, to hand, to bestow, to accord, to return, to bequeath, to assign, to present, to award, to confer, to leave, to offer, to lend, to offer, to pass, to deliver, to distribute, to grant, to allocate, to sacrifice, to allot, to supply, to provide, to furnish, to transfer, to surrender, to lend, to pay, to convey, to donate, to sentence, to betray, to throw, to transmit, to deprive, etc.

Last year he donated \$1000 to cancer research (LDCE, 303).

2. Verbs that refer to speech activity :to say, to tell, to ask, to speak, to order, to answer, to cry, to emphasize, to conclude, to report, to declare, to demand, to invite, to promise, to recommend, to call, to add, to beg, to request, to interrupt, to repeat, to congratulate, to thank, to murmur, to lie, to whisper, to remind, to joke, to jeer, to sigh, to explain, to declare, to proclaim, to confirm, to affirm, to assign, to mention, to prompt, to confess, etc.

Most of verbs of this type fulfill the function of connection of direct speech with author's speech [3, p. 89]. The verbs to say, to ask, to reply, to whisper, to retort, to mutter, to explain are the most frequently used. We'll give examples:

"I am sorry", he said (p.14).

"What comes next?" Sara whispered to Glen (p.6).

"She is not here", she repeated (p.11).

"No, I won't hang on, love", her aunt replied (p.10).

“Drive carefully”, warned her aunt (p.14).

“What do you want?”, she demanded sharply (p.11).

“So here I am”, he added, spreading his hands out in a foreign gesture (p.12).

“... it would save you money, ...”she argued (p.30).

“I was hoping you would say that,” he drawled (p.31).

“Yes. It looks fine,” Sara turned to James. “I hope you haven’t been bored while you have been waiting?” (p.35).

“I’d feel better if you were going alone,” he murmured (p.36).

“All right,” he sighed heavily (p.36).

As the given examples show, most of the verbs of speech activity differ by semantics and this is explained by the fact, when the speaker passes somebody’s speech, he can also transfer acoustic features as well (to snap, to growl, to hiss), intention of the speaker (to ask, to query), his emotional state (to groan, to surprise), personal attitude (to jeer, to exclaim, to lie). Of course, this is not the full list of verbs.

Due to lexical semantics of English verbs we can make out six types of verbs of speech activity:

- 1) verbs of speaking: to say, to tell, to speak, to complain, etc;
- 2) verbs of massaging: to inform, to declare, to announce, etc;
- 3) verbs which express sounds in pronunciation: to whisper, to murmur, to babble, etc.;
- 4) verbs of symmetric speech: to talk, to argue, to chat, etc.;
- 5) verbs of speech intention: to affirm, to assert, to ask, to order, etc.;
- 6) verbs of speech value: to lie, to jeer, to mock, to agree, etc.

Very interesting fact is that above mentioned verbs of speech activity in the constructions with direct speech, as a rule, are used in past tenses.

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