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TEMPORAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SIMPLE EXTENDED SENTENCES WITH ACTANT CONTENT IN ENGLISH

This article examines the temporal characteristics of simple sentences in English. It is noted that the study of words and sentences as the fundamental units of language is a crucial task in linguistics. Temporality theory plays a key role in this, as it has been a significant area of linguistics for several decades. It is established that nearly half a century ago, temporality theory emerged as one of the most important areas of modern syntax and, despite its long tradition, remains relevant today. It is argued that this is due to linguists' interest in studying sentences from a semantic perspective, and, consequently, in describing their structure and attempting to classify their individual parts (actants). It is determined that temporality theory's most important contribution lies in the study of the planes of content and expression, their interrelationships, and the study of the compatibility of words and sentence structure. Although the temporality of other parts of speech (nouns, adjectives, etc.) has recently come to be discussed, the concept of temporality was originally associated with verbal vocabulary and is still applied primarily to verbs.

This problem was chosen as the topic of this research because studying the temporal characteristics of simple broad sentences is one of the most relevant areas of research in modern linguistics. The aim of this study is to examine the work of local and international linguists, identify simple broad sentences with actantial content in English based on their temporal characteristics, and identify the most frequently used syntactic structures of English sentences (using examples from fiction). Our research is based on works on general semantics, semantic syntax and grammatical meaning (D. Kreissels, M. T. Chopin, V. S. Hrakovsky and others), relying on the well-known doctrine of the absolute and relative meaning of time, as well as on studies of temporality and its semantic features in the English language (B. Comrie, A. Fabregas and R. Marin).

Keywords: *temporality, simple sentence, extended sentence, actant, semantic features.*

Introduction. In modern linguistics, particular attention is paid to the study of the sentence as a complex semantic-syntactic unit reflecting the multi-level interaction of form and content. One of the key aspects of this analysis is the category of temporality, which serves as an important means of representing temporal relations in language and ensures the correlation of an utterance with an objective or subjective temporal plane. Studying the temporal characteristics of a sentence allows for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms by which linguistic meaning is organized and the patterns of functioning of grammatical categories in communication.

In this context, the analysis of simple, expanded sentences with actantial content is particularly relevant, as they most clearly demonstrate the interaction of verbal semantics, sentence structure, and temporal meanings. Actants, as obligatory and optional participants in the situation defined by the predicate, play an

important role in shaping the temporal interpretation of an utterance, determining its semantic completeness and communicative focus. Despite a significant amount of research devoted to the category of tense and the verbal system of the English language, the temporal characteristics of simple extended sentences with actantial structure remain insufficiently systematized.

The topicality of this study stems from the need for a comprehensive examination of temporality within the framework of semantic syntax, taking into account both the planes of expression and the planes of content. Relying on the concepts of absolute and relative tense, as well as the tenets of actantial theory, allows for a new interpretation of the syntactic structures of the English language and the identification of patterns of their functioning in literary texts. Thus, this article aims to provide an in-depth study of the temporal characteristics of simple extended sentences.



ces with actantial content in English and contributes to the further development of research in the field of temporal semantics and syntax.

As we know, the verb acts as an element that controls the entire verbal sentence and opens up positions that need to be filled. We assume that the number of positions depends on the meaning of the verb, on the situation reflected by the sentence, and each participant in the situation at the deep (semantic) level, i.e., each actant, corresponds to one position in the sentence. Based on the number of actants, we distinguish verbs as one-actant, two-actant and three-actant. Thus, we can say that the number of actants and their roles in the situation denoted by the sentence are “programmed” by the verb.

Task statement. The aim of this article is to analyze the temporal characteristics of simple extended sentences in English from a semantic-syntactic perspective, based on the concept of temporality. The study seeks to examine the theoretical foundations of temporality in the works of foreign linguists, to identify simple extended sentences with actant structure according to their temporal features, and to determine the most frequently used syntactic patterns in English fiction.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The problem of temporality has long occupied a central place in linguistic research, as the category of tense is a universal means of reflecting objective reality in language. Initially, temporality was considered primarily within the grammatical category of verb tense, but over time, research interest shifted toward a broader semantic and syntactic understanding of temporal meanings. Works on general semantics and grammar have shown that temporality is a multi-level category realized at the morphological, syntactic, and lexical levels of language.

Significant contributions to the development of temporality theory were made by foreign linguists, in particular B. Comrie [3], who proposed a distinction between absolute and relative tense and described in detail the ways they are expressed in the world’s languages. In his works, tense is considered a category closely linked to aspectuality and modality, allowing for the analysis of verb forms in their functional-semantic unity. A. Fabregas’s [4] research also focuses on the semantic features of temporal meanings, including their interaction with the syntactic structure of the sentence and the argument structure of the predicate. These approaches have become the theoretical basis for analyzing the temporal characteristics of a sentence within the framework of semantic syntax.

In the global linguistic tradition, temporality has been actively studied in the context of the relationship between the planes of content and expression. The works of D. Kreysseles, M. T. Chopin, and other researchers are devoted to the analysis of grammatical meaning as a result of the interaction of formal and semantic factors. Within the framework of these studies, the sentence is considered as a holistic structure in which temporal meanings are formed not only by the verb form but also by the entire set of syntactic and lexical resources, including actantial structure.

Particular attention in modern linguistics is given to actantial theory, which allows for the description of the semantic roles of situational participants and their syntactic realization. Actants are considered essential components of the predicative structure, influencing the interpretation of the temporal characteristics of an utterance. Despite the numerous studies of actantial structure in English, the interaction of actantial structure and temporality within simple extended sentences remains underexplored.

Thus, an analysis of the scientific literature shows that, despite the significant number of works devoted to temporality, verbal system, and semantic syntax, a comprehensive study of the temporal characteristics of simple extended sentences with actantial content in English remains a relevant and promising task. This study builds on existing theoretical frameworks and aims to fill the identified gaps in the study of this topic.

Explaining the system of actants presented above, M. Grepl admits that his list of valences is likely to be incomplete. Based on the analysis of all semantic actants and their possible production from each other, M. Grepl concludes that there are seven fundamental actants: subject, counterparty, object, content, place, time and quantity.

Outline of the main material of the study. Temporality is not only an important philosophical and linguistic category but also one of the leading indicators of any proposal. The English proposal, characterised by its variety in form and type, is also distinguished by its originality and diversity of temporal characteristics.

In this regard, a simple expanded sentence is of particular interest. It is important to note that despite the term “expanded” being generally accepted in educational practice and a sufficiently extensive and in-depth study, a cohesive understanding of this phenomenon has not yet been observed in the scientific community.

Temporality is one of the key parameters characterising the actant structure. However, it is still

unclear what governs the choice of time interpretation in specific examples. Discussing examples like *She said she was living just outside Moscow*, Grönn and von Stechow [7, p.313] show that the past continuous tense can be assigned relative to the time of the main event *said* (relative tense) in the English language. Time is then determined relative to the speech act (absolute time), an acceptable model for the English language as shown by O. Khomitsevich [6, p.27].

It should be noted that upon closer examination, it is worth distinguishing not two, but three types of marking in dependent clauses:

- 1) absolute;
- 2) relative;
- 3) with coordination of times.

In our example *She said she was living just outside London*, the first and third types are not distinguishable. The choice of the past continuous *was living* can be explained by both absolute interpretation (“the situation takes place before the speech act”) and tense agreement (“the past tense was chosen because the clause is subordinate to the main clause with the past tense form *said*”). However, constructions with the past perfect of the type *He said he had bought a car* do not fit well into strategy 1) since, in this case, the precedence of the speech act would be sufficient to indicate the choice of Past Simple *bought*. Therefore, it should be considered that English demonstrates precisely this strategy. 3) Past perfect is used because the situation precedes the main one and shifts to the past, since the past tense is used in the main clause.

Strategy 1) is used in English adverbial and relative clauses, for example, *He came when we had already had lunch / before we had lunch*. The form *had lunch* does here not depend on the location in relation to the main situation, but simply records the position of the event before the speech act.

Our analysis confirms and develops the achievements of previous research by A. Barentsen [2], O. Khomitsevich [6].

However, we were able to add some additional parameters and characteristics: for example, the person in the main clause turned out to be relevant; some matrix predicate modifiers; and the actual choice of union. In addition, we have identified some exceptions associated with time marking in sentential constants and definitions. As it turned out, absolute time marking is sometimes acceptable in them too.

It should be noted that the choice of time grammar is only one of the parameters included in a more general opposition, which can be called “choice of the deictic centre.” Its other elements include:

- 1) choice of interpretation of temporary modifiers
- 2) choice of aspect gramme
- 3) choice of modality gramme
- 4) description of subject-oriented elements of semantics (evaluative, emotional, etc.) in relation to either the speaker or the subject of the main clause.

A question about the actantial structure of verbs

The problem under discussion is related to semantic syntax or, to be more precise, syntactic semantics, since syntactic valency determines the features of the semantic functioning of verbs in texts of different genres. First of all, it should be noted that in the verbs of speech used in literary works, subject-object actants are highlighted as obligatory. Additional actants (tool, goal, time, place, etc.), which usually clarify communicative situations, are not always made explicit. In literary works, a verbal predicate with the meaning of speech “to speak” describes a situation that has a certain set of participants, which requires the corresponding actualisation of the subjective (left) and objective (right) actants.

The participants in the situation – the subject and the object – correspond to variables in the interpretation of the predicative word, reflecting the semantic valences of the given verbal predicate with the meaning of speech.

The communicative and functional significance of the verbal component depends on the number of realised actants in the actant structure of the verb of speech. Examples of the contextual use of speech verbs from literary works indicate this: *And I will deliberately say welcome to Mr. Darcy* [1].

In this example, in the actant structure of the verb “to say,” only the objective (right) valence is replaced by an animate noun with a person meaning in the dative form. The left valency appears in an implied form: from the previous context and the grammatical form of the verb in the 1st person singular (I will say) it becomes clear that we are talking about a subjective actant with the meaning of a person (I). However, it should be borne in mind that the implied subjective actant, nevertheless, has the obligatory nature of designation, just as the explicit objective actant. In this case, the subject actant is nuclear, and the object actant is peripheral.

And you can't say “nasty” about an elderly person. Elizabeth told the story to all her friends [Austen, 2008]. Semantic actants of verbs of speech such as *speak, shout, bawle, tell, talk*, etc. in the structure of literary works are characterised by certain features – not only semantic but also syntactic and stylistic. In most cases, verbs of speech implement subjective valences, since uncertainty (the unknown)

of the subject can lead to uncertainty in the communicative situation. In this case, the degree of significance of the subjective actant is quite high, or more precisely, the highest.

For example, the verb *to speak* in the sentence *Jane spoke and spoke and spoke to Miss. Bingley more and more quietly* [1] has three semantic actants: the first is the subject [who: Jane], the second is the object [to: Miss. Bingley] and the third is the characterizer of the action, which has a gradational meaning of weakening action [as: quieter and quieter]. In the linear structure of a sentence, the indicated actants are arranged according to the degree of significance.

In the case when the actant position is filled with an infinitive construction or a whole sentence, we speak of a sentential actant. This position can be filled with a subordinate clause with an objective meaning (i.e., a subordinate explanatory clause of a motivating nature): *Mrs. Abrams cried and said that a corner had collapsed in the room, the plaster from the ceiling had just collapsed, it scared her* [5].

In this sentence, the verb *said* has three participants in the action: the subject [who: Mrs. Abrams], the characterizer of the action [how: with crying], the object [what: *the corner collapsed*]. The object-sentential actant in this case is replaced by a subordinate explanatory part, which, due to the incompleteness of the main part with the verb of speech, is obligatory. The action characteriser has an adverbial-optional nature. Thus, the control model of the verb of speech in this sentence can be represented as follows: [who] [how] said [what].

There are verbs of speech that are interpreted (in the same structure) with one or other actant necessary for the implementation of the semantics of the verb indicated. So, for example, verbs denoting active speaking contain a subjective seme in the interpretation, as well as an indication of the addressee of the speech: *I am telling you; he told you a lie; we sang a song to the child*.

For the verb “sing” in the example *Mrs. Diver sang...* two actants can be distinguished: the first actant is the subject [who: Mrs. Diver], and the second internal object [what: *song*], which is a mandatory actant necessary to implement the semantics of the verb *to sing*.

Meanwhile, there are also communicative situations when it is impossible to definitely designate a specific number of people with a verb of speech, as evidenced by the following example: *Mrs. Diver blows her nose into a tiny handkerchief and tells us her story*. Here, with all modifications of the situation, the same active speaking person can direct his speech

to either one or an unlimited number of people (the addressable word to *us* does not contain an indication of a specific number of addressees).

For comparison, we can give other examples: *And they all bawled and fussed and shook blue diagonal cuts in front of daddy's face...* Firstly, it should be noted the connotative meaning of the verb *bawler* and the evaluative characteristics of the subject of speech (= *he bawled intelligently at the top of his lungs*). Such a positive characteristic of the subject of speech somewhat weakens the negative connotation of the verb *to bawl*, which indicates the mutual influence of the evaluative characteristics of the subject and the speech action he produces.

Interestingly, the verb *to scream*, similar to the verb of speech *to bawl*, in the connotative aspect manifests itself differently: the connotation of this verb in the context can become peripheral, not actualized for any semantic-stylistic purposes.

The object-address actant of a speech verb may not be indicated in the original structure of the sentence, but it can be made explicit within the discourse. *And they all shouted from the shore. because the noise of the river drowned out their words. – It is not at all necessary for you to shout at the child* [5].

Situations described using speaking verbs presuppose the presence of primarily three actants: a subject [who], a direct object [that] and an addressee [whom], and the remaining actants are of a peripheral (= optional) nature. For example, explaining a speaking situation does not necessarily require an indication of either the second object or the cause and time of this situation.

On the other hand, it is impossible to have a complete idea of the quality of the action of speaking unless the corresponding, for example adverbial, actants are identified in explicit or implied form. It is so difficult to get a complete idea of what it is *to shout* without designating an actant indicating the degree of manifestation of the action indicated (= the strength of screaming) by the verb *to shout*. Here the meaning of the object becomes less relevant: in this case, in the interpretation, information about the object, reason, time, etc. is redundant (not relevant) to implement the semantics and connotation of the situation denoted by the verb *to shout*.

At the same time, the question of the degree of obligation of the actant is not always indisputable. Thus, it is not entirely clear whether information about the addressee and his quantitative characteristics should be considered mandatory for such verbs as *singing, yelling, bawling, screaming*, since it is known that such *public* actions are usually intended for a

certain number of addressees, although situations are also possible that do not involve an audience or a plurality of addressees.

At the same time, examples indicate that for such verbs the addressee is not always associated with a semantically plural addressee; the addressee is not always indicated by plural forms: that is, not all verbs with the meaning of public activity require a plural addressee actant.

Conclusion. We can thereby conclude that the main actants in the actant structure of verbs of speech are the subject as the center of the predicative and semantic minimum of the sentence and the object, which forms the periphery in contrast to it. The subject is the central nuclear actant in the actant structure of verbs of speech, and the object is the peripheral nuclear actant, which is opposed by definition and circumstance, which most often act in the actant structure of verbs of speech as optional actants; the verbal predicate with the meaning of speech “to speak” as the nuclear verb of the studied lexical-semantic group describes a situation that has a certain set of participants. The valences of the second object,

instrument, purpose of speech, characterization of speech, etc. act as optional actants.

To characterise the actant structure, the opposition is important: “central (obligatory) – optional and potential actants.” In the actant structure of verbs of speech, the actant expressed by the nominative occupies a central position, and all the meanings that make up the plan of the content of the sentence are grouped around the nominative. A special place is occupied by cases of sentential valence, when the form of expression of a direct object is an explanatory clause, an infinitive, an adverbial phrase, direct speech, which occupies an obligatory position.

Verbs expressing an attitude towards the subject of speech, its assessment, are always realized as bivalent (sing).

Speaking about the semantic characteristics of the actant structure of verbs of speech in a work of art, it is necessary to emphasise that the actant structure is significant only if it performs a certain function as part of the general context and in connection with the peculiarities of the implementation of the author’s intention.

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Сардарова І. Н. ТИМЧАСОВІ ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКИ ПРОСТИХ РОЗВЕРНУТИХ ПРОПОЗИЦІЙ З АКТАНТНИМ ЗМІСТ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ

У статті розглядаються часові характеристики простих речень в англійській мові. Відзначено, що вивчення слів та речень як основних одиниць мови є найважливішим завданням лінгвістики. У цьому ключову роль грає теорія темпоральності, оскільки протягом кількох десятиліть є однією з важливих областей лінгвістики. Встановлено, що майже півстоліття тому теорія темпоральності перетворилася на одну з найважливіших областей сучасного синтаксису та, незважаючи на свою довгу традицію, залишається актуальною й у наш час. Доведено, що причина полягає в інтересі лінгвістів до вивчення пропозицій з семантичної точки зору, і, отже, до опису його структури та спроби класифікувати окремі частини (актанти). Визначено, що найважливіший внесок теорії темпоральності полягає у вивченні плану змісту та плану вираження, у дослідженні їх взаємозв'язку, а також у вивченні сумісності слів та структури речення. Незважаючи на те, що останнім часом стали говорити про темпоральність інших частин мови (іменників, прикметників і т. д.), поняття темпоральності спочатку було пов'язане з дієслівною лексикою і до цього часу застосовується в основному до дієслова.

Ця проблема обрана як тема дослідження, оскільки вивчення тимчасових характеристик простих широких пропозицій одна із найактуальніших досліджень, у сучасній лінгвістиці. Мета дослідження – вивчити роботи місцевих та зарубіжних лінгвістів, виділити прості широкі пропозиції з актантним змістом в англійській мові за їх тимчасовими характеристиками та визначити найчастіше використовувані синтаксичні структури англійських речень (на прикладах з художньої літератури). Наше дослідження засноване на роботах із загальної семантики, семантичного синтаксису та граматичного значення (Д. Крейссельс, М. Т. Шопен, В. С. Храковський та ін.), спираючись на відому доктрину абсолютного і відносного значення часу, а також на дослідження темпоральності та її семантичних особливостей в. Марін).

Ключові слова: темпоральність, проста пропозиція, розширена пропозиція, актант, семантичні особливості.

Дата першого надходження статті до видання: 09.01.2026

Дата прийняття статті до друку після рецензування: 10.01.2026

Дата публікації (оприлюднення) статті: 24.04.2026