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The article looks into inversion, a feature of English syntax, its types and functions. It is generally believed that any change of the English word order can be viewed as an expressive means which intensifies the emotional appeal contained in the sentence, thus enhancing its persuasive effect. Two types of inversion are discussed: grammatical and stylistic, the latter being a reflection of the speaker's emotional state. The article focuses on the expressive inversion, its types and use in colloquial English.

Key words: *expressive syntax; expressiveness; inversion; full inversion; partial inversion; expressive inversion.*

Introduction

Means of expressive syntax have been of interest to linguists for the last few decades. Canonically, such transformations of word order are studied by stylistics which considers them to be an expressive means.

The importance of expressiveness for syntax was first mentioned by Ch. Bally in the previous century. He stated that syntactic means were capable of giving the utterance a special affective connotation. Expressiveness in syntax can be perceived as capability of syntactic forms to increase the pragmatic potential of an utterance beyond the degree achieved by the lexical values of the elements that fill these syntactic forms.

In English inversion is a complicated phenomenon presenting an interesting problem for discussion. Traditionally inversion refers to a reversal of the syntactically correct order of the subject, the predicate-verb, and the object in a sentence. This process is also known as anastrophe, from the Greek “to reverse”. Word order is an essential feature of syntax in many languages, and for English it is crucial as there is a fairly fixed pattern according to which sentences are constructed, normally the Subject-Verb- Object order, although many other languages permit looser arrangements of sentence members.

Discussion

Types of inversion in English

In the English language any change of traditional word order plays a role of great importance and has significant stylistic value. I. V. Arnold,

I. I. Pribytok and V. A. Kucharenko distinguish two types of inversion: grammatical and stylistic.

I. V. Arnold perceives the stylistic inversion as “a violation of the order of

sentence constituents during which one of them is emphasized and receives a special connotation of emotionality or expressiveness” [Arnold 2010, p. 219]. The stylistic inversion gives the utterance emotional colouring because in this case emphasis is laid on one of the sentence constituents. Inversion serves as an expressive means in literary discourse. According to B. B. Karashaeva “any violation of canonical word order results in additional connotations, emphasizes or weakens the semantics of a sentence constituent” [Karashaeva 2011, p. 58]. I. R. Galperin points out that “the stylistic inversion aims at attaching logical stress or additional emotional colouring to the surface meaning of the utterance” [Galperin 2018, p. 204]. He also adds that inversion is not to be considered a breach of the norm of standard English.

The grammatical inversion refers to a syntactic structure where two sentence members switch their canonical positions, that is they are inverted. Structurally two types of grammatical inversion are generally distinguished: full inversion (FI), for example: “All along one wall climbed a beautiful rambling rose” [Foley, Hall 2012, p. 327] and “subject-auxiliary inversion (SAI), which is also known as subject-operator inversion” [cf. Quirk et al. 1992, p. 1381], for example: “...deep blue sky arched high over the moorland. Never, never had Mary dreamed of a sky so blue. In India skies were hot and blazing <...>” (Burnett F. H. *The Secret Garden*)

V. A. Kochetova also singles out two major types of inversion: “full inversion where the predicate-verb is shifted before the subject and partial inversion where the auxiliary is found in the position preceding the subject” [Kochetova 2013, p. 18]. Compare the two examples below:

Just as important is the question of tolerance.

Never have I seen such a handsome man [Kochetova 2013, p. 18].

H. Dorgeloh argues that “full inversion is found in all those structures where the subject follows the whole of its verbal phrase, i. e. a full (lexical) verb or copular be” [Dorgeloh 1997, p 23].

Nevertheless, speaking of inverted sentences some linguists use the terms inversion and fronting [Kochetova 2013, p. 18]. For instance,

S. Chalker and M. Foley mention the syntactic transformation which they call “fronting” [Chalker 1997; Foley 2012]. They perceive fronting as “a way of changing the normal word order of a structure” [Foley 2012,

p. 326], in which part of a sentence (a single sentence constituent or an expression) is placed in the position preceding the subject for the purpose of emphasis, for example, “Wine I can’t drink it gives me a headache”. This could be an adverbial or adjectival expression, a noun phrase or a clause, or even a verb. It should be mentioned that when an adjective or an adverbial modifier is shifted to the initial position, the word order becomes inverted.

S. Chalker and M. Foley do not refer these shifts of sentence constituents to cases of inversion, they refer them to fronting [Kochetova 2013, p. 18]. Compare the examples:

“The actors were a mixed bunch. Pacino was the least inspiring of the lot.”
(fronting, no inversion) and

“The actors were a mixed bunch. Least inspiring of the lot was Pacino.” (fronting + inversion) [Foley, Hall 2012].

Thus, in the structure of the grammatical inversion the predicate- verb precedes the subject. In the English language two major types of the grammatical inversion can be distinguished: subject-auxiliary inversion (partial) and subject-verb inversion (full). The distinction between the two lies in the nature of the verb involved whether it is a full or an auxiliary verb.

The subject-auxiliary (partial) inversion (SAI) is a frequently occurring type of inversion, where a finite auxiliary verb, including the finite forms of the link-verb be, changes positions with the subject. Therefore, the word order is auxiliary-subject, which is opposed to the canonical subject-verb order of declarative sentences in English. This type of inversion in English is commonly found in the process of question formation:

e.g. Mary will stay with us.

Will Mary stay with us? (SAI in a yes / no question)

e.g. Isaac has written it.

What has he done? (SAI in a special question)

2012, p. 12]. Moreover, “being the reversal of the subject and the verb

<...> inversion represents a deviation from the norm and, therefore, is a

«norm-breaking» word order alternation» [Dorgeloh 1997, p. 1].

However, there are other cases as well, including the formation of conditional clauses, for example:

e.g. If we were to help her ...

Were we to help her ... (SAI in a conditional clause)

and in the structure of sentences with negative expressions in the initial position (i. e. negative inversion), for example:

e. g. Michelle has helped at no point.

At no point has Michelle helped. (SAI with a fronted negative expression).

In the English language the normal word order is subject-verb, any change of the order of the constituents leads to change of meaning, as a result, auxiliary-subject order is formed.

e. g. Bessie stayed.

Stayed Bessie? (no inversion is possible here as the verb is NOT an auxiliary verb).

The subject-verb (full) inversion (SVI) in English is the type of inversion where the subject and the verb switch their traditional order, so that the subject comes after the verb(s), e. g. “A lamp stood beside the bed.” > “Beside the bed stood a lamp.” The SVI is distinct from the SAI because the verb involved is not an auxiliary verb. The following sentences illustrate the use of the subject-verb inversion, e.g. “A boy will come into the room. Into the room will come a boy.”

This type of inversion focuses on the subject which is usually expressed by a full noun or a noun phrase rather than a pronoun. Third- person pronouns cannot be the subject of this structural pattern. For instance, e.g. “Down the stairs came the cat”. In this sentence the subject is expressed by a noun. The sentence “Down the stairs came it” where the subject is a third-person personal pronoun is unlikely unless the subject it has importance and is stressed.

In English there occurs other types of inversion that are rather common and are part of its grammatical structure:

- shifting an adjective after the noun it modifies: the soldier strong;
- shifting a verb before its subject: shouts the policeman;
- shifting a noun before its preposition: worlds between.

Inversion always occurs in interrogative sentences where verbs or auxiliaries are put before their subjects. In a similar way, inversion can

occur in an exclamatory sentence where the object precedes the predicate and subject and is preceded by a wh- word, for example:

e. g. What a beautiful room is it!

Inversion performs several functions in the language: logical, grammatical, expressive, communicative, pragmatic, and structural- semantic [Davydova 2011, p. 89].

Conclusion

The expressive inversion is an emphatic syntactic structure giving logical stress to the sentence constituents found in unusual syntactic positions without changing the meaning of the utterance. It can be regarded as a stylistic device which is used for the purpose of emphasis and should not be confused with the grammatical inversion which is a sentence structure where two sentence constituents switch their canonical order of appearance, i.e. they invert. Two major types of the grammatical inversion are usually distinguished: full inversion (subject-predicate) and partial inversion (subject-auxiliary).

The expressive inversion focuses the listener’s attention on the prominent sentence constituent. This is achieved by placing a word in an odd or most noticeable position in the sentence – initial or final. Thus, the expressive inversion makes the utterance sound more emotional and allows the speaker to express a variety of attitudes. The expressive inversion can also be regarded as an efficient tool in persuading.

The expressive inversion can be found in literary discourse – prose and poetry. The present analysis shows that this type of inversion is more typical of colloquial speech. In the majority of the analyzed cases the inversion was partial and contained expressions of negative or restrictive meaning (usually an adverb or adverbial phrase). The most common of them were never (used alone or coupled with *once* or *again*), *no longer*, *seldom* and *not only*.

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