

## **ON SOME PECULIARITIES OF SUPRAPHRASAL REPORTED SPEECH**

Social life is permeated by language at every level. As members of society, we use language to describe, question or explain what is going on around us, as well as to perform actions that others may then describe, question or explain. In fact, we enter into the net of social communication not with the help of single, isolated utterances, but with the help of tied stretches of talk - texts.

The shift<sup>1</sup> from a *sentential* perspective (as expressed primarily by Chomsky and his many followers) to a more *textual* or *discoursal* approach /Van Dijk, 1972; De Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981; Tannen, 1988/ represents a picture of logical progress in linguistics.

It is important to note that the necessity to go beyond the boundaries of the sentence and to study the linguistic material on the level of the text is conditioned by the fact that the comprehensive picture of many linguistic facts can be given only on this level; considered from the view of speech and thought activity it is the text but not an isolated sentence that best reflects the process of thinking and verbal representation of our thoughts.

Thus, the theory that a sentence is a self-contained unit has outlived its era, and in modern linguistics the text is considered to be the highest syntactic unit.

Since our speech is not limited to individual words, fragments of sentences or a single sentence, this is true for all types of speech including indirect speech or reported speech.

Reported speech, which is considered to be a communicative and linguistic universal, has been thoroughly analyzed by different researchers. However, it must be mentioned that the numerous analyses devoted to reported speech analyze it only on an isolated sentence level.

The aim of the present article is to present reported speech as a supraphrasal unity - as a comparatively independent semantic and syntactic unit, and to reveal the factors which are used to demarcate the

chunks of supraphrasal reported speech within a larger text unit. To present reported speech on the supraphrasal level we take into account the fact that in reality direct speech more often than not consists of two and more sentences and, furthermore, the analysis of the linguistic material on the sentence level is considered to be a combatted tendency today.

V. Voloshinov states that reported speech is speech within speech, utterance within utterance, and, at the same time, also speech about speech, utterance about utterance /Voloshinov, 1986 (1929): 115/. It is also stated that in reported speech we give the exact meaning of a speech without necessarily using the speaker's exact words /Thomson, Martinet, 2001: 269/.

Thus, the peculiarity of reported speech, which is the transformed version of the direct speech, lies in the fact that it does not produce the exact words, the word-for-word utterance of the first speaker ( $S_1$ ). Since the speech of the original speaker is interpreted and reported from the point of view of the second speaker ( $S_2$ ), changes in semantic and syntactic structure in the process of transformation are unavoidable. Necessarily, the following changes in the grammatical structure of reported utterances can be observed:

- the arrangement of reported speech as a part of complex sentence with a reporting main part in which  $S_1$ , i.e. the original reproducer of the speech, is mentioned;
- changes of the pronouns to match the subject of the sentence (mainly 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronoun is used);
- deictic changes – back-shifting of such deictic words as time and place signifiers are, to match the moment and place of speaking;
- the use of subordinating conjunctions: that, whether, if, etc;
- the use of direct word order and the deletion of auxiliary verb “do” during the transformation of the direct question into indirect question;
- the use of question words (why, where, who, when, etc.) when reporting questions;
- following the rules of the sequence of tenses when the verb in the main sentence is used in the past tense;
- the use of infinitive structures when reporting imperative sentences.

However, as it was mentioned above, in this article we focus on reported speech as a part of text - supraphrasal unity, consisting of several sentences interconnected both semantically and syntactically.

On the supraphrasal level reported speech is called Reported Speech Complex – *RSC*. *RSC* may contain two or more independent sentences. However, sometimes *RSC* can be presented as a complex sentence which consists of several clauses. This is conditioned by the fact that when transposing direct speech into an indirect one several independent sentences are changed into a complex sentence. This phenomenon can be explained by the tendency of language towards economy.

Every component of *RSC*, that is each complex sentence presents the following structure, consisting of two parts:

- 1) The main sentence or reporting context (Rc) representing the second speaker's words
- 2) *Reported speech proper* (reported speech – **Rs**)

So, reported speech structure (**RSS**) can be graphically presented in the following way:

$$RSS = Rc + Rs$$

It ought to be taken for granted that *RSC* contains two and more *RSSs* and correspondingly one *RSS* may contain more than one *Rs*. *RSC*, as any other Supraphrasal unity, is characterized by semantic and structural coherence of its parts.

It is worth mentioning that from semantic viewpoint it is important what verb is used in reporting context (*Rc*), i.e. in reporter's speech (*S*<sub>2</sub>), because these verbs can provide extra-information about the original speaker and his speech. Some specialists group these verbs into different semantic fields according to what they express: evaluation, order and command, warning, advice, inquiry, announcement, declaration, etc. The supraphrasal reported speech may include verbs belonging to different semantic fields. For example:

- 1) *When Grandma went and seen a solicitor in Mackay about it **he advised** her to take her share of the sale price and count herself lucky she was getting anything at all. **He pointed out** that according to the Protection Act she'd never been legally entitled to have her name on any title deeds to freehold country anyway,*

*or even for that matter to have had a legal marriage to Iain Rennie, as the Act prohibited Murriss from holding title to freehold property and from marrying into the white community. **The solicitor advised** her the less said about the matter the better for her, unless she wanted to stir up a whole nest of claims and counter-claims that would most likely tie up the property in expensive litigation for years to come. **He said** it was only having Jude Rennie's name on the document of sale that made the deal look anywhere near legal, as Jude was to all appearances a white man and had a claim to being the grandson of Iain Rennie if he wanted to go into courts and insist upon it. (Miller, p. 256)*

Though supraphrasal reported speech possesses comparatively clear semantic and syntactic structure, sometimes it is difficult to define its limits and to detach it from the rest of the text. In this respect, it drastically differs from direct speech, because its boundaries are strictly marked with the help of concrete punctuation marks: comma, colon, dash, quotation marks, etc. The difficulty of defining the boundaries of supraphrasal reported speech arises from the fact that supraphrasal reported speech is often presented as a part of a paragraph, and, as a result, one cannot easily delimit RSC reproduced by the author (S<sub>2</sub>) on behalf of the original speaker (S<sub>1</sub>) from the author's (S<sub>2</sub>) words.

We should mention that there is no difficulty and fear of obscurity in defining the upper boundaries of the supraphrasal reported speech, because RSC mainly begins with the reproducer's words (Rc): "She told", "He said". In order to define the lower boundaries of the supraphrasal reported speech, we should take into account lexicogrammatical and stylistic factors.

Thus, our analysis has revealed the following lexico-grammatical factors which help define the lower boundaries:

1. the application of deictic words which are situationally determined, directed towards S<sub>2</sub>, that is, in this case, we deal with proximal deixis (personal pronouns; demonstrative - this, these; adverbs – here, now, today; etc.). For example:

- 2) *Marilla says that a large family was raised in that old house long ago, and that it was a real pretty place, with a lovely garden and roses climbing all over it. It was full of little children and laughter and songs; and now it is empty, and nothing ever wanders through it but the wind. How lonely and sorrowful it must feel!* (Montgomery, p. 8)
- 3) *He said that when boys were that kind they ought to be whipped and well whipped. When a boy was rough and unruly there was nothing would do him any good but a good sound whipping. A slap on the hand or a box on the ear was no good: what he wanted was to get a nice warm whipping. I was surprised at this sentiment and involuntarily glanced up at his face.* (Joyce, p. 13)

It is worth mentioning that while speaking about deictic shifts one should be aware of the notion known as “origo” (or the deictic centre). Karl Bühler writes that origo is fixed by the person who speaks, by the place of the utterance, and by the time of the utterance /Bühler, 1934: 113/. When the speech is reported, the speaker, time and place are changed. In direct speech situation there is a Speaker (S<sub>1</sub>) and a Hearer (H<sub>1</sub>), meanwhile in indirect speech situation the Hearer (H<sub>1</sub>) of the direct speech situation becomes the Speaker (S<sub>2</sub>) reporting the speech of the first Speaker (S<sub>1</sub>) to another hearer. Thus, in reported speech deictic expressions are changed so that to be adapted to the speech situation of the report in such a way as to be consistent with the new speaker perspective. In reported speech the so-called proximal deictic expressions (now, today, here, this, etc.) are changed into distal ones (then, that day, there, that). However, these deictic shifts are not strictly fixed and, sometimes, we meet cases which represent deviations from the expected norm. For example:

- 4) *Once, while he was looking at Antonia, he sighed and told us that if he had stayed at home in Russia perhaps by **this** time he would have had a pretty daughter of his own to cook and keep house for him. He said he had left his country because of a “great trouble”.* (Cather, p. 18)

- 5) *I told her about the feeling of her father's presence I had on that winter day when my grandparents had gone over to see his dead body and I was left alone in the house. I said I felt sure then that he was on his way back to his own country, and that even **now**, when I passed his grave, I always thought of him as being among the woods and fields that were so dear to him.* (Cather, p. 91)
- 6) *My grandfather called me **tonight** and told me he and I were in grave danger. He said he had to give me something.* (Brown, p. 95)

In the above mentioned examples we have deictic expressions of temporal nature which are not changed into their distal counterparts. This phenomenon calls for an explanation. As is known, in direct speech time deixis is coordinated with the moment when the speaker utters the speech and in reported speech it is coordinated with the moment of the utterance of the reporter, however, if these two moments (of the given speech situations) are within the same period of time, time deixis is not shifted.

2. the cease of the observation of the rules of sequence of tenses:

- 7) *Makoye-kin said he got it from his brother who was one of a party that massacred an American outfit of trappers headed for Peace River. He doesn't know whether the picture of the woman in the locket was that of one of the women in the camp.* (Raine, p. 177)

3. the use of exclamatory and interrogative sentences:

- 8) *Mrs. Milton White says she never met a perfect person, but she's heard enough about one . . . her husband's first wife. Don't you think it must be very uncomfortable to be married to a man whose first wife was perfect?* (Montgomery, p. 14)

- 9) *He says I'm not to be soft with Catherine: she's my wife, and it's shameful that she should wish to leave me. He says she hates me and wants me to die, that she may have my money; but she shan't have it: and she shan't go home!* (Bronte, p. 336)
4. the use, application of modal words (expressed mainly by adverbs, e.g. certainly, surely, perhaps, possibly, happily, unfortunately) and sentences expressing S<sub>2</sub>'s appreciation and evaluation of what has been uttered, said by S<sub>1</sub>, that is, the attitude of S<sub>2</sub> towards the reported information and also his/her opinion about it. Here are some examples to illustrate this point:
- 10) *Mrs. Lynde was complaining the other day that it wasn't much of a world. She said whenever you looked forward to anything pleasant you were sure to be more or less disappointed . . . perhaps that is true.* (Montgomery, p. 15)
- 11) *He told her the names of the ships he had been on and the names of the different services. He had sailed through the Straits of Magellan and he told her stories of the terrible Patagonians. He had fallen on his feet in Buenos Ayres, he said, and had come over to the old country just for a holiday. Of course, her father had found out the affair and had forbidden her to have anything to say to him.* (Joyce, p. 21)
- 12) *Michael asked him for pain-killing drugs, the pain getting worse as time went on, and more frequent. Taza explained that there was a facial nerve below the eye from which radiated a whole complex of nerves. Indeed, this was the favorite spot for Mafia torturers, who searched it out on the cheeks of their victims with the needle-fine point of an ice pick.* (Puzo, pp. 154-155)
- 13) *Lynde says she's afraid they won't respect me as they would a stranger unless I'm very cross from the first. But I don't believe a teacher should be cross.* (Montgomery, p. 15)

- 14) *He began to speak to us about girls, saying what nice soft hair they had and how soft their hands were and how all girls were not so good as they seemed to be if one only knew. There was nothing he liked, he said, so much as looking at a nice young girl, at her nice white hands and her beautiful soft hair. He gave me the impression that he was repeating something which he had learned by heart or that, magnetised by some words of his own speech, his mind was slowly circling round and round in the same orbit.* (Joyce, pp. 12-13)

In the light of the analysed data it is well observed that several factors may be combined within the same sentence which makes it easier to define the lower boundaries of the supraphrasal reported speech, e.g. in the example **10**) we have the combination of two grammatical factors (the use of the modal word (**perhaps**), the cease of the observation of sequence of tenses - that **is** true); in the example **12**) the grammatical factor is accompanied by the lexical factor (the use of proximal deixis - **this**).

Now, let us observe the following stylistic factors which may be taken into account to mark the lower boundaries of the supraphrasal reported speech:

- the use of various stylistic devices as well as emphatic means and elliptical constructions:
- 15) *He was told his father stood up to the Camorra, tired of paying a large part of his salary to criminals, fed up with having to hand over loans at such insane interest rates. That was what he was told and that was what he believes. To this very day.* (Carcattera, p. 342)

In our example the last two sentences are stylistically marked and it helps the reader to realize that the reported speech ends. In the first sentence we have anaphora (That was what... that was what), which aims at logical emphasis in order to fix the attention of the reader to the given part of the sentence. The first sentence is followed by an incomplete



sentence which contributes to the intensification of the utterance. A careful look at these sentences makes it clear that these two sentences represent one complete sentence. Taking into account the semantic and structural continuity that exists between them, we can construct the following sentence: *That was what he was told and that was what he believes to this very day.* However, for the sake of expressiveness, the author breaks the sentence into two separate ones by the use of *parcellation*, thus stressing the period of time marked by the second sentence (*To this very day.*). In this example the stylistic factor is accompanied by the lexical (proximal deixis – this) and grammatical factors (the cease of the observation of the rules of sequence of tenses – believes).

It should be mentioned that descriptive RSC mainly contains more than five Rs. For example:

➤ Rc + 6Rs

- 16) *He told about the midnight dances and how the Nymphs who lived in the wells and the Dryads who lived in the trees came out to dance with the Fauns; about long hunting parties after the milk-white stag who could give you wishes if you caught him; about feasting and treasure-seeking with the wild Red Dwarfs in deep mines and caverns far beneath the forest floor; and then about summer when the woods were green and old Silenus on his fat donkey would come to visit them, and sometimes Bacchus himself, and then the streams would run with wine instead of water and the whole forest would give itself up to jollification for weeks on end.* (Lewis, p. 7)

Having analysed a great number of examples, we have sufficient ground to assume that from the viewpoint of its graphical structure, supraphrasal reported speech does not correspond to a paragraph, but acts only as a part of it. However, it would be wrong to suppose that there are no instances of supraphrasal reported speech embracing a paragraph, or more than one paragraph. In this connection, it should be added that we have come across such examples, but we must admit that they occur rarely. For the sake of economy and briefness, we shall adduce only two of them:

➤ One paragraph

- 17) *Shasta was a little reassured by the breath: so he told how he had never known his real father or mother and had been brought up sternly by the fisherman. And then he told the story of his escape and how they were chased by lions and forced to swim for their lives; and of all their dangers in Tashbaan and about his night among the tombs and how the beasts howled at him out of the desert. And he told about the heat and thirst of their desert journey and how they were almost at their goal when another lion chased them and wounded Aravis. And also, how very long it was since he had had anything to eat. (Lewis, p. 462)*

➤ Two paragraphs

- 18) *My grandfather said that no one knew exactly how many he killed, but it was thousands and among those thousands there were only few lucky ones who survived the slaughter. Even fewer of those survivors remained sensible enough to describe what happened. They spoke of nightmarish vision of the man who wore a face that was covered in blood so, it looked more like a shadow than a face. People started to fear him, women, children, poor and rich, everyone, with no exceptions. He became a monster, with whom mothers would scare their children, so they would behave, about who men would tell scary stories, when they were gathering after work. They'd say he could appear anywhere at any time. People started to call him man with the face of a shadow.*

*Right around the time when these stories were created, mass killings had stopped. The man started to choose those exceptional ones who were truly rotten, who were spreading destruction without any reason, those who were truly lost. And when he would come to those men he would make them scream so horribly that people around them would run away leaving them screaming. Their horrible scream would be heard from far away, and that would continue for days before it would stop. My*

*grandfather told me it was believed that if a truly evil deed has been done the man would feel it, and he would come and the scream would follow.* (Kanoukoev, p. 48)

The examples, which we have studied so far, are sufficient to assume that the samples of supraphrasal reported speech embracing one or two paragraphs are descriptive stretches of speech.

Thus, our analysis enables us to conclude that the supraphrasal reported speech is an holistic unit which has its semantic and structural peculiar features. It has been made absolutely clear that the lexico-grammatical and stylistic factors are of great importance in the process of delimitation of the supraphrasal reported speech within a larger text unit. Our analysis also sheds light on the fact that supraphrasal reported speech may be located within the boundaries of a paragraph, i.e. it can be a part of the paragraph; its boundaries may correspond to the boundaries of a separate paragraph and, finally, it can go beyond the limits of a paragraph embracing two and more paragraphs.

## NOTES

1. One of the main reasons for this shift was the limitations that the study of sentences held for linguistic study, it became evident that “*sentence grammars do not tell the learner the whole story about communication by means of language*” /Werlich, 1976: 14/.

Many renowned linguists of the time shared the following idea: “... *it has become obvious to a growing number of linguists that the study of the syntax of isolated sentences, extracted without natural context from the purposeful constructions of speakers is a methodology that has outlived its usefulness*” /Givon, 1979 - cf. Carstens 1997: 17/.

So, the textual perspective was developed in order to explain some of the phenomena (e.g. deixis, anaphora, definiteness and indefiniteness, modality, etc.) that could not be researched properly from a sentential perspective. G. Brown and G. Yule later added: “... *in recent years the idea that a linguistic string (a sentence) can be fully analyzed without taking “context” into account has been seriously questioned. If the sentence-grammarians wish to make claims about the “acceptability” of*

*a sentence in determining whether the strings produced by his grammar are correct sentences of the language, he is implicitly appealing to contextual considerations. After all, what do we do when we are asked whether a particular string is “acceptable”? Do we not immediately, and quiet naturally, set about constructing some circumstances (i.e. a “context”) in which the sentence could be acceptably used? ”* /Brown & Yule, 1983: 25-26/.

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**Ն. ԹԱՄՈՅԱՆ – Վերասույթային անուղղակի խոսքի որոշ առանձնահատկությունների շուրջ.** – Սույն հոդվածում անուղղակի խոսքը ներկայացվում է որպես վերասույթային միավոր, որը շարահյուսական և կառուցվածքափմաստային առումներով ավելի անկախ և ամբողջական միավոր է, քան պարզ նախադասությունը: Հոդվածի հիմնական նպատակն է ներկայացնել և քննել այն գործոնները (բառային, քերականական, ոճական), որոնց շնորհիվ ամբողջական տեքստի մեջ առանձնացվում և սահմանազատվում է վերասույթային անուղղակի խոսքը:

**Н. ТАМОЯН – О некоторых особенностях сверхфразовой косвенной речи.** – В данной статье косвенная речь представлена как сверхфразовое единство, которое с синтаксической и структурно-смысловой точек зрения является более независимым и полноценным единством, чем простое предложение. Основной целью статьи является предьявление и исследование факторов (лексико-грамматических, стилистических), с помощью которых становится возможно разделение и делимитация сверхфразовой косвенной речи в рамках крупно текстовой единицы.