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HUMANIZATION TENDENCIES IN PRESENT-DAY ENGLISH GRAMMAR O. V. Hyryn*

The article highlights the latest changes in the grammar system of the English language and explains their connection with social phenomena peculiar of not only native speakers of English, but also the whole modern world. In addition to the recurring social factor, such as generation change, the article examines the unique extralinguistic factors observed in the world after World War II as well as the impact of these factors on English, and grammar in particular.

It is argued that the postwar world is characterized by the processes of democratization and humanization, which in their turn put forward the principles of politeness and respect in interpersonal communication. The article emphasizes that in addition to lexical and phonetic means of implementing these principles, the language also has grammatical means that can express the speaker's attitude to the interlocutor.

The peculiarity of grammatical means is that they developed from the grammatical units already present in the language, the meaning of which was reconsidered precisely due to the processes of democratization and humanization, thus causing systemic changes in English morphology. The article examines in detail the grammatical tools that ensure polite and inoffensive speech, including hedging means, modal verbs and constructions.

In addition, the article considers changes in the meaning and use of modal verbs and modal constructions. The greatest semantic change can be observed in the following verbs: should, ought, have, need, cannot. A common feature of these changes is the tendency to non-imposing position of the speaker and consequently – to an opposite point of view, friendliness toward the interlocutor and respect for their personality.

The results of the study can be considered as the confirmation of systemic grammatical phenomena in the English language caused by extralinguistic factors.

Keywords: democratization, humanization, educated speech, hedging, modality.

ГУМАНІЗАЦІЙНІ ПРОЦЕСИ В СУЧАСНІЙ АНЛІЙСЬКІЙ ГРАМАТИЦІ Гирин О. В.

У статті досліджено новітні зміни в граматичній системі англійської мови та пояснено їх зв'язок із соціальними явищами, у яких перебувають не лише носії англійської мови, але й увесь сучасний світ. Окрім повторюваного соціального чинника, такого, як зміна поколінь, у статті розглянуто унікальні екстралінгвістичні чинники, які спостерігають у світі після

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Другої світової війни, досліджено вплив цих чинників на англійську мову загалом та на що граматику зокрема. Стверджено, післявоєнний світ наповнений демократизації та гуманізації, які, зі свого боку, висувають на перший план у міжособистісному спілкуванні принципи ввічливості та поваги. У статті наголошено, що, окрім лексичних та фонетичних засобів реалізації цих принципів, у мові наявні також граматичні засоби, які здатні виражати ставлення мовця до співрозмовника. Особливістю граматичних засобів є те, що вони розвинулися з уже наявних у мові граматичних одиниць, значення яких було переосмислено саме завдяки процесам демократизації та гуманізації, спричинивши системні зрушення в англійській морфології.

У статті докладно розглянуто граматичні засоби, які сприяють ввічливому та необразливому мовленню, зокрема засоби хеджування, модальні дієслова та конструкції.

Окрім того, проаналізовано зміни в значенні та використанні модальних дієслів і модальних конструкцій. Зокрема, найбільшої семантичної зміни зазнали should, ought, have, need, cannot. Спільна ознакав цих змінах — тенденція до ненав'язливості позиції мовця, а отже, поваги до протилежної позиції, доброзичливості до співрозмовника та поваги до особистості.

Результати дослідження підтверджують системність граматичних явищ в англійській мові, спричинених екстралінгвістичними факторами.

Ключові слова: демократизація, гуманізація, виховане мовлення, хеджинг, модальність.

Defining the problem. It is common knowledge that almost any natural live language undergoes constant changes [3; 4; 9]. English as one of them displays the same features, however its levels phonetic, lexical and grammatical - are characterized by a different rate of change. Scopes of new vocabulary enter a language virtually on a daily basis. As far as phonetics is concerned, every pronunciation generation has its peculiarities [18]. Grammar, namely morphology and syntax, on the other hand, are subject to considerably slower change [7], the former though being more flexible than the latter. conclude from available linguistic research [6: 71 that systemic morphological changes happen English once in several hundred years (200-300 – the time between sub-periods in the chronological periodazation of the English language development into 3 periods and 2 subperiods for the Old and Middle English periods and 3 subperiods for the New English [1: 91-92]) and syntactic - in 500-700 hundred years (the shift towards analytization, grammaticalization etc.).

Grammatical and semantic analysis of literary works of various genres as well as contemporary oral speech suggests that the 20th century saw certain social

and cultural events, that brought about significant grammatical change to English in late 20th – early 21st centuries.

The aim of this paper is to define the nature and systematize recent morphological changes in English.

Methods. This research suggests some linguistic issues, which should be considered while tracing morphological change, as well as the usage of the scientific methods of analysis, synthesis, description, statistical analysis, comparison, linguistic as well as semantic analysis methods of substitution in order to illustrate the trends in recent morphological change.

Analysis of previous research. As it has been noted, English grammar gradually evolves, though the nature and the scope of such change tend to receive primarily post-factum diachronic highlight, whereas phonetic and lexical innovations receive linguistic attention almost immediately once systemically attested.

Since the 1960s generative linguists, whose main research object is grammar and namely syntax, have tried to come to terms with the indisputable fact that languages do change. They have however focused on language transmission between older and younger generations as the suitable setting for the change.

Following this approach, language change corresponds to a different parameter setting, reconsidered by the new generation as a result of reanalysis of the existing grammar rules [17: 230)]. Indeed the basis of the hypothesis about the so-called internal cause of language change is imperfect language transmission from one generation to the next. This assumption is not new, as shown in Weinreich, Labov and Herzog (1968) [21], since similar views were supported by Herman Paul back in the century. modern 19th Similar to Paul generativists, too saw the competence of individual speakers as the proper object of linguistic research [16].

Despite the substantial history and various implementations, the "child based theory" [4: 44] leaves a number of basic questions, which still remain unanswered:

- how do children all over the speech community of various size independently come up with the same imperfect language transmission and reanalysis at about the same time?
- why does this happen with certain generations, whereas preceding generations of children (who admittedly in their time had a different, often lower level of schooling standards) did quite well preserving language parameters the same way as their parents did?
- and consequently: why does grammar often exhibit no changes over remarkably long periods of time?

Thus these questions show that the child based theory by itself does not account for the causes, why a language, grammar in particular may be changing.

Moreover, a brief research of adults' speech would discover development of innovations among adult population, especially in specific social groups, and that those innovations are more likely to spread within certain types of community and less likely to spread within other types. Such field works have taken place and have provided no evidence for a crucial role of children as agents of change [12, 21-36].

Results and Discussion. Not denying the child-based-theory, this paper will argue that certain historic and cultural events are the ultimate cause and source of a language change, whereas a new generation in a speech community is that layer of speakers, who are more susceptible to the linguistic change (c.f. [9]). However certain processes may happen naturally due to internal linguistic factors.

Let's take one subtle change which difficult to explain, happened, but there may as well be no need to do it since it displays no obvious link to any social, historic, or cultural factors. There is a number of verbs in English that take an object in either the gerund form or the infinitive form. Both of these constructions are still in use. but there has been a steady shift over time from the "to" to the "-ing" complement.

When comparing the language of Ernest Hemingway (first half of the 20th c.) and Ben Mezrich (early 21st c.) a shift in constructions like they started to walk towards they started walking becomes obvious. These two authors are being opposed in this research since the language, that they use in their works, is informal colloquial. and Thus, indicatively start +infinitive stories Hemingway's short attested in 60 instances, whereas start + gerund – in 12 (83% and respectively).

By contrast in Ben Mezrich's novel the ratio is 26 to 13 (67% and 33% respectively).

- (1) If he had been better with women she would probably have started to worry about him [5: 28].
- (2) We can start interviewing people, throw the word around that we're looking for someone [11: 30].

Similar trend is observed regarding verbs "begin", "like," "love," "hate," and "fear". However, not all verbs in such constructions have taken part in the change: "stand," "intend," and "cease" display the shift towards the infinitive as a complement.

Thus we see and can note a change, which is non-systemic and thus seemingly sporadic. Trying to explain it would be a challenge and would present little if any sociolinguistic interest.

Some other changes however we can try and explain, and in finding the reason, we can precisely see a definite direction in which grammar is moving thus causing systemic novelties in the language. The latter and rather recent ones are those, caused by primarily extralinguistic factors, which have taken place in the post-war 20th and 21st century. Among other factors we define acceleration of democratization humanization processes. Moreover, some politologists add demilitarization to the 137]. This seemingly nonlist [19: linguistic factor however brings about humanitarian consequences, among which is quality change of scientific, state and managerial units. institutes, lifestyle public consciousness of many people burdened with stereotypes from "Cold War" times [19: 138]. Such humanitarian consequences cannot but be explicated by language means of various levels.

Democratization, though having different forms and achievements in different nations and states, is reflected in universal urge to, on the one hand, eliminate authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, and on the other hand - build advanced just society and legal state. Humanization means that politics and state cease being self-goal and self-value. They become means of meeting the growing human requirements, defending their rights, freedoms and interests. In political international "humanization" is considered as growing impact of moral norms on this sphere, making it more human, in order to acknowledge human self-value as a complete rights and freedoms enforcement [19: 140].

The paper interprets humanization and democratization as post-war, postcolonial social features introduced or reinforced by a number of historic events, both completed and ongoing:

failures of non-democratic systems (fascism, nacism, communism, ruscism etc.), passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act in the USA, loss of major colonies by Great Britain, France, Netherlands, Portugal etc., collapse of Soviet Union and non-democratic regimes in postsoviet states. Basically all these events have a common thread - in all of them in the centre there stands a human being, a personality, whose dignity and rights must be acknowledged and respected by others, as opposed to the human being as a senseless unit within a larger, more important state mechanism. Thus the principles consideration of and politeness in communication stand out among others.

In sociolinguistics and conversation analysis, politeness strategies are speech acts that express concern for others and minimize threats to self-esteem ("face" [15]) in particular social contexts.

The best known and most widely used approach to the study of politeness is the framework introduced by Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson [2]. Their theory of linguistic politeness is sometimes referred to as the "'face-saving' theory of politeness."

The theory has several segments and aspects, but it mostly deals with the concept of "face," or social value, both to oneself and to other participants of the interaction. Social contacts require all participants to cooperate in order to maintain everyone's face - that is, to simultaneously maintain evervone's needs of being liked and independent (or being seen as such). Thus, politeness strategies develop to negotiate these interactions and achieve the most favourable outcomes.

Linguistically speaking, politeness is usually associated with interjections like "Please", "Thank you" and "You're welcome", whereas impoliteness rudeness suggests the absence thereof and/or the presence of vulgarisms, obsoletisms etc. All the mentioned means belong to the lexical level of the language. As far as the phonetic level is concerned, it involves intonation, namely

pitch, stress and tempo, which can render indifference or involvement, offensive or comforting messages.

We will understand politeness as practical application of good manners or etiquette aimed at remaining friendly in a conversation and not offending others either by attitude or words.

Correspondingly we can distinguish between certain politeness strategies: friendly politeness strategies, that are aimed at stressing the speaker's good attitude towards the interlocutor (combining criticism with compliments, honorifics, using jokes, nicknames, defining common ground, using tag questions and special discourse markers, familiar jargon and slang, phraseological units); and softening strategies that are intended to avoid giving offence showing understanding of participants' feelings (grounding, questioning, hedging, and presenting disagreements as opinions). Hedging in this paper is viewed upon in conformity with my previous research [8].

Obviously, in different cultures and speech communities, different politeness strategies are used, whereas others are absent. People who grow up in communities that are more oriented at softening strategies may find that they create an impression of detached or cold people if they find themselves in a

community where friendly politeness is emphasized more. They mav mistake some of the conventional friendly politeness strategies expression of genuine sincere friendship closeness. Conversely, accustomed to utilizing only friendly politeness strategies may find that they are perceived as unsophisticated or bold individuals if they find themselves in a community that is more oriented at softening strategies. Alternatively speakers with prevailing friendly oriented politeness strategies may as well perceive "softeners" as a feature of weak-willed people, etc. (c.f. [10]).

However, cultural representation of politeness strategies, especially in cross-cultural communication does not constitute the subject matter of this research thus remaining a perspective direction for further insight into the matter.

Grammatical level is often overlooked in search of "polite" linguistic means. The following table (with the preserved grammar, punctuation, and orthography) with seemingly polite and impolite negative comments to various posts in social media can serve an illustration of how a statement can seem rude or offensive without the usage of vividly expressive lexical and phonetic means.

Polite disagreement comments

Impolite disagreement comments

Comments to a joke: *Please vaccinate. I have no desire to learn the entire Greek alphabet*

- (3) Well, you don't have to
- (4) So scientifically speaking, virus mutate within unvaccinated hosts only?
- (5) Well, you are a doctor you should already learned Greek alphabet on the first place
- (6) Open your mind and learn it, it may do you good

Comments to a post with a picture: *Map Ranks Languages From Least To Most Difficult To Learn*

- (7) Would love to see this with signed languages added
- (8) Try to learn Danish...

Comments to a post with a picture: *Magnificent Linguistic Family Tree Shows How all Languages are Related*

- (9) I majored in Linguistic and English
- (10) It actually shows that not all

& American Studies in Japan. This tree, I see, quite closer to the accurate theories and historic data. Unfortunately the roots and the relation among East Asian languages both in spoken and written systems which are very old from ancient times, for example, are still not clear.

Since these are examples of mainly disagreement comments, sentences contain softening strategies. Indeed sentence (3) has double hedging (well and a modal expressing lack of necessity, rather than unsoftened imperative). Sentence (4) is an example questioning, sentence (7)disagreement (in this case suggestion of improvement) presented as an opinion; sentence (9) contains mainly grounding (authour's education) as well as hedging and an opinion.

As the comparison with the nonoffensive comments suggests, sentences (5), (6), (8), (10) contain "disrespectful" grammar. Here this adjective is used in quotes, as by themselves, the following grammatical phenomena have neutral semantics (neither positive nor negative), but in the argumentative discourse they obtain offensive patronizing meaning:

- imperative sentences (examples (5), (8)):
- semantics of the modal reproach (example (6));
- non-hedged categorical statements (example (10)).

The list and the examples above are naturally non-conclusive and are used only with an illustrative purpose. Contemporary oral and written speech provides evidence that among grammatical means, aimed at expressing friendly and non-offensive utterances, there can be:

- the use of tag questions instead of direct statements (You were here yesterday, weren't you?)
- the use of negation in that part of the sentence which refers to the speaker/author, rather than to the addressee (*I don't think you know me* rather than *I think you don't know me*)
- the use of various types of grammatical hedges.

languages are related. Uralic has its own tree. Where are the rest of the languages? Also their own tree and not related? It's a cool image but a bit anti climatic. It says all the languages are related. It's not all the languages. And they're not all related.

The latter include:

- modal verbs used instead of notional or link vebs (Such a measure <u>might be</u> (instead of is) more sensitive to changes in health after specialist treatment);
- -parenthetic phrases (we feel that, I believe, to our knowledge, it is our view that etc.):
- adding a clause to the sentence thus making the statement the object clause ([It is possible that] you are wrong.);
- adding "if" clauses ([If true,] our study contradicts the myth that men make better managers than women.);
- usage of simple "if" sentences ([If we can] move on to the next point for discussion.):
- the use of passive voice ([It was concluded that] sleep deprivation has three effects on cognitive performance.);
- the use of a past tense form instead of a present tense form (*I think thought* you might want to rest for a while.);
- the use of continuous / progressive instead of simple / indefinite tense and infinitive forms (*I will complete be completing my task soon. My aunt might arrive be arriving here soon*);
- the use of declarative, or interrogative sentences instead of the imperative (*It's cold in here. Could you close the window, please?* both meaning: *Close the window!*) or a combination of them (*Do not interrupt me! I was talking. Is that OK with you?*)

Democratization and humanization however cause not only shifts in the language towards more polite semantics of grammatical units, but also towards the accountability for one's actions or absence thereof. This could be best shown by the change in the use of some modal verbs and modal expressions in the recent decades.

Negative form of the modal verb *can* serves a vivid example of this humanization shift.

Can't among other meanings _ (physical impossibility, prohibition) has a meaning of theoretical improbability/disbelief, thus rendering idea that something is 100% impossible to happen or be happening [13: 56]. In the whole analyzed novel by B. Mezrich the latter meaning wasn't attested not even once. It can be explained by the idea that stating impossible definitely something as suggests that it is beyond someone to do it, but since human beings within the current paradigm are in the centre of the Universe [20], everything is possible for them.

A similar shift has occurred in the use of modal phrase to have (qot) to. Its basic meaning of circumstantial necessity and obligation [13: 62] (i.e. when one has no choice but comply with the conditions, suggested by the environment) contradicts to the assumption of the "almighty human" and thus is frequently replaced by the notional verb to need, thus suggesting that the necessity is not caused by the environment, but comes from within the person, (i.e. whatever one is doing - it is their decision). Compare: *I have to go – I need to go.*

In the analyzed 21st c. novel [11] in the present tense to have to was attested in 1 sentence, to have got to – in 3, got to – in 2 sentences, whereas to need was registered in 70 instances.

As for other modal meanings, actions which are presented as advisory in the present or past (past regret/reproach) underwent serious changes due to the mentioned democratization principle. If not directly asked, giving an advice in itself has become an impolite act, as it is treated as being partonizing condescending [14].Indeed democratic society an advice to have its effect and meaning, has to be supported certain level of the advisor's expertise. Traditional modal means of advice (should, ought) and (should+have+participle reproach II,

ought+have+participle II) sound binding and consequently are being rejected by a democratic speech community. Such a shift of attitude can be traced in the mentioned literary works. It has to be noted though that as an advice and reproach we will consider the use of should and ought (with or without perfect infinitive) regarding all but 1st person.

In Hemingway's short stories *should* as an advice is attested in 44 out of 94 instances. However, considering the mentioned linguistic softening means of politeness, out of these 44 instances, 39 represent unhedged advice which today would be considered impolite: (example (11))

(11) You should not say such things, sir [5: 258].

Ought in the novel as an advice is used in 42 (all unhedged) out of 64 instances.

(12) You oughtn't to go out in the heat now—it's silly [5: 248].

In Ben Mezrich's novel *should* as an advice is attested in 8 out of 18 instances, and *ought* isn't attested at all. Only one example of *should* represents an unhedged and thus impolite advice. The rest of the sentences with should contain hedges of some kind.

(13) <u>Maybe</u> you should try getting a girl back toyour dorm, first [11: 20].

In Hemingway's short stories should (with perfect infinitive) as a reproach is attested in 12 out of 24 instances, and ought (with perfect infinitive) – in 12 out of 12 – all unhedged.

(14) You ought to have seen me, Manos [5: 150].

In Ben Mezrich's novel should (with perfect infinitive) as a reproach is attested in 4 out of 9 instances, and ought (with perfect infinitive) isn't attested at all. And the mentioned 4 instances in the novel do not contain impolite past advice or reproach as they all occur as an inner monologue and are never explicitly expressed.

(15) Eduardo should have realized it earlier [11: 120].

Eduardo in the novel is the logophoric centre of the narration so he reproaches

himself and thus is not offending anyone.

As the examples illustrate, the use of an "imposing" modal phrase containing *ought* and unhedged *should* have become highly unlikely.

In everyday communication, however, there remains a need to express an advice or an instruction in some form. So consequently, there are linguistic means of giving advice in those cases when it is socially acceptable, that do not contradict the politeness principle. Such advice is non-binding and more informative than imperative, e.g:

- (16) You should do it this way. I'll show you the way how I would do it.
- (17) Check if the process has begun. We want to/wanna make sure that the process has begun.
- (18) Buy these screws in any shop. You can actually buy these screws in any shop.
- (19) Try this way. You may want to try this way.

Sentence represents (16)preferable way of doing a certain activity as a mere option. The person being advised in such a manner in no way would feel patronized. Sentence (17) not just shows the usage of softening construction make sure but also puts the advisor on the same involvement level as the person, being advised by using pronoun we. In sentences (18) and (19) we observe a transposition of modal from advice/imperative meaning possibility thus making it non-binding.

Similar process can be observed regarding "non-democratic" prohibitions. Instead of negative imperative *Don't do it!* We are more likely to come across *You don't want to (wanna) do it!*

Conclusion. Both intralinguistic and extralinguistic factors are capable of initiating semantic shifts in the language, affecting not only the lexical language, level of а grammatical. The second half of the 20th and the early 21st century is the time of changes, which have accents in interpersonal communication emphasizing humanistic thus

democratic approach to speech. This process has brought about a shift in modal semantics and the formal means of performing certain speech acts, which may become a trigger to systemic changes in grammatical semantics in English.

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