SUPER-PHRASEMIC UNIT AS A BASIC UNIT
OF THE TEXT LEVEL OF LANGUAGE ANALYSIS

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Acest articol are drept scop evidențierea rolului unităților suprafrastice și a relațiilor dintre ele. Aceste unități de bază ale analizei lingvistice a textului se caracterizează prin complexitate, interconexiune și independență relativă față de context. Ele sunt compuse din propoziții corelate într-un mod aparte, încât valențele unora dintre ele sunt saturate de informația conținută în celelalte propoziții. Împărțirea textului în unități suprafrastice stabilește astfel structura lineară a textului, identificând, în același timp, liniile de subiect principale și secundare.

Before speaking about super-phrasemic unit as a unit of speech (text), it is necessary to remind of similarity and distinction between two last concepts.

The concept of speech includes any oral or written product of speech activity, hence, necessarily supposing the existence of the doer of the speech act who is transmitting to the listener or reader a certain completed message or a complex of such messages forming the speech (text). Hence, the concept of speech includes any version of oral, but necessarily coherent speech, and also fixing of this speech in writing.

The concept of text is frequently limited to the written fixing of author's speech or speech of the characters of literary work, fixing constructed on the certain laws and rules of literary norm, having, and its inherent linguistic constructions distinguishing it from speech in the wide meaning of this word.

The text as the product of speech activity necessarily has its linguistic form and is made up of words, sentences, super-phrasemic units, pieces of the text containing separate rather independent parts, which are connected among them by a general subject line of the text as a whole. The super-phrasemic unit as a unit of speech is isolated semantically and formally from the flow of speech (text) and represents a certain structured complex. A number of sentences which are included in a super-phrasemic unit, can be formally closed, however number of components, making it, is not determined beforehand and depends on semantic volume of the statement, quantity of the included details, associative connections etc. Consecutively located super-phrasemic units consist of a series of the sentences connected by the unity of the semantic contents of the statement, individual semantic connections between them, and also formal language means - lexical and grammatical connections, intonation.

The first sentence of super-phrasemic unit being relatively independent is connected to the subsequent one, which depends on it semantically and formally. The first sentence can not be considered quite independent, as it assumes continuation and prepares it. The first sentence is cataphoric; it causes "expectation", which is developed in the subsequent text. As for example:

I spoke boldly, freely- in a word, I spoke with passion. I concealed nothing- nothing even of my weakness. I alluded to the romantic circumstances of our first meeting- even to the glances which had passed between us. I went so far as to say that I felt assured of her love; while I offered this assurance, and my own intensity of devotion, as two excuses for my otherwise unpardonable conduct [1].

The "figures" of super-phrasemic unity as units of speech attracted attention of the eastern linguists. The basic beginning of researches based on the understanding of construction features of speech should be attributed to the Russian linguists A.M. Peshkovskii and L.V. Scherba. Their researches were continued by V.V. Vinogradov and N.S. Pospelov.

So V.V. Vinogradov wrote that the study of structure of speech unities, periods and paragraphs is essential for understanding of development of syntax. For the study of these phenomena also is essential the study of speech as opposed to the language system which is giving a model for speech constructions. He considered that the study of Russian literary language, and consequently, of literary text, should include elements of stylistics, i. e. to explain all possible variants of constructions and connections of typical models of sentences in speech, in connection to the speaker's communicative intention and his attitude towards the contents of his speech; listeners attitude and finally volume of its content and opportunities of its speech partitioning. V.V. Vinogradov adhered to the opinion, that the syntactic construction of complex speech units in expressive

syntax of literary language requires a special attention; he identified them with the statement, including a set of syntactic variations transmitting various expressive shades within the framework of superphrasemic unit [2].

N.S. Pospelov paid attention to the study of speech units, as opposed to language units (i.e. sentences). He believed that a sentence cannot be the basic unit of the study of syntactic construction of speech because within a coherent text it is deprived of independence and acts only in connection with other sentences; but a series of the connected among themselves sentences has a relative independence and are used for expression of a relatively completed idea.

A super-phrasemic unit, as well a sentence, is semantically connected with previous and to the subsequent text, but its difference from a sentence consists in the fact that having a series of sentences of unlimited length, it can more fully express an idea in structures which are easier understood by the reader ,without unreasonable increase of length of sentences that would make difficult the understanding of the communication content [3].

Any coherent text can be divided into pieces of different volume, which are in an unequal degree connected by various means among themselves. First of all, they are connected and delimited from each other by their contents. The content of each fragment of the text is a more or less completed statement, a certain microtheme. It is directly or indirectly related to the basic, central line (or to one of the basic lines) of the narration, thus forming a part of this line and advancing directly a narration (description), or lays on periphery, being a deviation from the main theme, an explanation, addition etc. which enriches the text with details not strictly necessary for its progress.

Formally, but at the same time and semantically any coherent text is divided into super-phrasemic units, paragraphs, sections, chapters, volumes etc.

The division of the text into the paragraphs, chapters, sections has undoubtedly compositional character and, being entirely based on partitioning of the content of the text, includes separate relatively independent parts laying on the main (or on one of main) of the narration line , which develop this narration and. There are different opinions concerning super-phrasemic units and paragraphs [4]. Some scientists consider that super-phrasemic units and paragraphs are the same thing. This is an opinion typical for literary critics who study issues of general stylistics of speech and features of individual styles of the authors. Being a consciously separated by the author fragment of the text, the paragraph irrespective of its volume has a certain unity of the contents and a certain structure.

In the majority of cases a super-phrasemic unit begins in the text together with the paragraph. But in rest the borders of these two phenomena not always coincide. A super-phrasemic unit can come to an end together with the paragraph, but it can come to an end, and consequently, begin in the middle of the paragraph. And finally a super-phrasemic unit can cover two or more paragraphs. Here are some examples:

e.g.1 *I scarcely know where to begin, though I sometimes facetiously place the cause of it all to Charley Furuseth's credit. He kept a summer cottage in Mill Valley, under the shadow of Mount Tamalpais, and never occupied it except when he loafed through the winter months and read Nietzsche and Schopenhauer to rest his brain. Had it not been my custom to run up to see him every Saturday afternoon and to stop over till Monday morning, this particular January Monday morning would not have found me afloat on San Francisco Bay* [5]. (The paragraph coincides with the super-phrasemic unit)

e.g.2(super-phrasemic unit 1) *I stood petrified with horror and rage. I endeavored to reply, but my tongue refused its office. It was evident that my considerate friend, il fanatico, had quite forgotten his appointment with myself- had forgotten it as soon as it was made. At no time was he a very scrupulous man of his word.* **(Super-phrasemic unit 2)** *There was no help for it; so smothering my vexation as well as I could, I strolled moodily up the street, propounding futile inquiries about Madame Lalande to every male acquaintance I met. By report she was known, I found, to all- to many by sight- but she had been in town only a few weeks, and there were very few, therefore, who claimed her personal acquaintance. These few, being still comparatively strangers, could not, or would not, take the liberty of introducing me through the formality of a morning call* [6]. (One paragraph contains 2 super-phrasemic units)

Even if from the point of view of the semantic content a paragraph and a super-phrasemic unit do not coincide still they have much in common. Both of them can contain a completed thematic piece of the text, serve to the progress of the basic line of a narration, and include collateral lines only indirectly concerning the basic text. The difference is that a super-phrasemic unit contains the statement forming an objectively limited microtheme, which though can be sometimes interrupted by collateral inclusions.

A paragraph does not necessarily contain a completed microtheme, which is frequently distributed among neighbouring paragraphs. In over words, one statement - one microtheme is always one super-phrasemic unit, but this uniform superphrasemic unit can cover one, two or more paragraphs. It means that the borders of the paragraphs and super-phrasemic units should not necessarily coincide. As for example this super-phrasemic unit comprises more paragraphs:

But it was the cold that was most distressing. I felt that I could survive but a few minutes. People were struggling and floundering in the water about me. I could hear them crying out to one another. And I heard, also, the sound of oars. Evidently the strange steamboat had lowered its boats. As the time went by I marveled that I was still alive.

The noises grew indistinct, though I heard a final and despairing chorus of screams in the distance and knew that the Martinez had gone down. Later, - how much later I have no knowledge; - I came to myself with a start of fear. I was alone, I could hear no calls or cries- only the sound of the waves, made weirdly hollow and reverberant by the fog. Whither was I drifting? The red-faced man had said that the tide was ebbing through the Golden Gate. Was I, then, being carried out to sea? And the life-preserver in which I floated? Was it not liable to go to pieces at any moment? I could not swim a stroke, and I was alone, floating, apparently, in the midst of a gray primordial vastness. I confess that a madness seized me, that I shrieked aloud as the women had shrieked, and beat the water with my numb hands [7].

In this example the super-phrasemic unit contains 2 paragraphs.

From the formal point of view the paragraph has one doubtless advantage over super-phrasemic unit – it is always precisely delimited by the indentation at the beginning and in the end. The signals of a beginning and end of a super-phrasemic unit are less obvious, in one cases they are indisputable, in others can not have formal expression, being shown only in the semantic integrity of the statement, taking the form of super-phrasemic unit. The difference between these two ways of text division is, that the paragraph is related to compositional and - stylistic division of the text, which, certainly, can not argue with its semantic division, but which is to a certain extent connected to the personal taste and individual manner of the author to emphasize in the text those moments, which he would like to see emphasized. It means that the partitioning of the text in the paragraphs carries undoubtedly a subjective character.

Super-phrasemic unit, being the expression of the completeness of the statement, i. e. having its microtheme which is included in a general flow of the text and having in it a certain place (on subject lines of a narration or on its periphery), represents an objective way of conceptual and linguistic partitioning of the text.

As a conclusion we would like to mention the words of N.A. Turmacheva, who was engaged in study of a nature of superphrasemic unit and paragraph and who, comparing these two modalities of partitioning of the text: "... a super-phrasemic unit, being a semantic and grammatical unit is a semantico-syntactic category "and "a paragraph is selected according to composition and expressive-stylistic tasks, is a stylistic category, more precisely, a stylistic and semantic category" [8].

As a first step of the communicative analysis of the text is its division on super-phrasemic units, irrespective of their internal structure, we shall stop on ways of their differentiation in the text.

If we agree that one super-phrasemic unit consisting of group of sentences, serves to transfer in speech one statement reflecting the discrete forward movement of thought, one microtheme, interwoven in a fabric of a narration and developing this narration, than these groups should be semantically connected among themselves. But, forming the text, super-phrasemic units follow one another in the linear order and are not only connected with each other, but should be delimited from each other semantically and formally [9].

The attempt to dismember the coherent text in a series of super-phrasemic units results in detection of both formal signals of a beginning and end of the separate statements. This creates difficulties because some super-phrasemic units have no precise formal boundaries. The majority of them have only semantic borders. As for example:

(Super-phrasemic unit 1) *'It's nasty weather like this here that turns heads gray before their time,' he said, with a nod toward the pilot-house.*

'I had not thought there was any particular strain,' I answered. 'It seems as simple as a-b-c. They know the direction by compass, the distance, and the speed. I should not call it anything more than mathematical certainty.'

'Strain!' he snorted. 'Simple as a-b-c! Mathematical certainty!' He seemed to brace himself up and lean backward against the air as he stared at me. 'How about this here tide that's rushin' out through the Golden Gate?' he demanded, or bellowed, rather. 'How fast is she ebbin'? What's the drift, eh? Listen to that, will you! A bell-buoy, and we're atop of it! See 'em alterin' the course!'

(Super-phrasemic unit 2*) From out of the fog came the mournful tolling of a bell, and I could see the pilot turning the wheel with great rapidity. The bell, which had seemed straight ahead, was now sounding from the side. Our own whistle was blowing hoarsely, and from time to time the sound of other whistles came to us from out of the fog* [10].

But there are also linguistic means for the expression of their beginning and end. For this purpose are used both syntactic structures and lexicon.

1. One of the most frequently used means signalling the beginning of a super-phrasemic unit, is the circumstance of time at the beginning of the first sentence expressed by different classes of words. As the most part of narrations means a number of events, developing in time, it is clear, that, settling down in a temporary flow, each of them occupies in it a certain place, covers a certain duration. The time appears as though divided into pieces, each of which contains a separate episode, separate event o. In these cases the super-phrasemic unit is introduced by temporal adverbs and prepositions:

At six-thirty, *sharp to the minute, he was back with a larger tray. Dick Forrest put away the proofs, reached for a book entitled "Commercial Breeding of Frogs," and prepared to eat* [11].

2. The indication on a place of action development can serve as a sign which indicates the beginning of a new super-phrasemic unit. The named place is a kind of background, on which the event is developed:

Never are there such departures as **from the dock at Honolulu***. The great transport lay with steam up, ready to pull out. A thousand persons were on her decks; five thousand stood on the wharf. Up and down the long gangway passed native princes and princesses, sugar kings and the high officials of the Territory. Beyond, in long lines, kept in order by the native police, were the carriages and motor cars of the Honolulu aristocracy* [12].

3. The beginning of a more or less significant piece of the text, and consequently the beginning of a super-phrasemic unit is signalled by the introduction of a new character accompanied by his representation to the reader:

Hawaii has a ripening climate and **Dorothy Sambrooke** *had been exposed to it under exceptionally ripening circumstances. Slender, pale, with blue eyes a trifle tired from poring over the pages of books and trying to muddle into an understanding of life–such she had been the month before. But now the eyes were warm instead of tired, the cheeks were touched with the sun, and the body gave the first hint and promise of swelling lines. The tropics had entered into her blood, and she was aglow with the warmth and color and sunshine* [13].

4. The indication on the suddenness of change of a situation, on unexpectedness of occurrence of the new character serves as a signal of a beginning of new super-phrasemic unit and as a rule is expressed by the appropriate lexicon:

Then everything happened, and **with inconceivable rapidity.** *The fog seemed to break away as though split by a wedge, and the bow of a steamboat emerged, trailing fog-wreaths on each side like seaweed on the snout of Leviathan. I could see the pilot-house and a white-bearded man leaning partly out of it, on his elbows. He was clad in a blue uniform, and I remember noting how trim and quiet he was'* [14].

5. A formal attribute of a beginning of a new super-phrasemic unity can be the use of the indefinite article:

A shrill little whistle, *piping as if gone mad, came from directly ahead and from very near at hand. Gongs sounded on the Martinez. Our paddlewheels stopped, their pulsing beat died away, and then they started again. I looked to my companion for enlightenment* [15].

6. The beginning of a super-phrasemic unit can be the indication of the beginning of the action, which is expressed by verbs of appropriate semantics (to begin, to start, to commence etc):

I found Talbot at home, and **proceeded** *at once to acquaint him with my good fortune. He professed excessive astonishment, of course, but congratulated me most cordially, and proffered every assistance in his power* [16].

A super-phrasemic unit is a formal and semantic unit. Therefore it is natural, that its beginning and end coincide with the beginning and end of a more or less delimited statement as the content unit of speech. A super-phrasemic unit has as formal indicators, signalling the beginning of the statement, and formal ending of it, which can be expressed by means of grammar or lexicon.

The end of a super-phrasemic unit can be designated lexically by a verb indicating the removal, leaving of the character:

'Have you any dry clothes I may put on?' I asked the cook.

'Yes, sir,' he answered, with cheerful alacrity. 'I'll run down an' tyke a look over my kit, if you've no objections, sir, to wearin' my things.'

***He dived out of the galley door, or glided**, rather, with a swiftness and smoothness of gait that struck me as being not so much cat-like as oily* [17].

If super-phrasemic units have formal language means of their delimitation, they have also means of linking them with each other. The semantic connection provides content cohesion of the text as a whole, and it is expressed language connectors, more often as "transitions" or "lexical bridges ", which unite the neighbouring super-phrasemic units. These transition can include separate words, or group of words, or even whole sentences. They are placed more often at the end of previous super-phrasemic unit, sometimes - in the beginning of the second one, less often - between them:

(Super-phrasemic unit 1) *Senator Jeremy Sambrooke's stout neck and portly bosom were burdened with a dozen wreaths. He thought the flowers an abomination, and as he looked out over the multitude on the wharf it was with a statistical eye that saw none of the beauty, but that peered into the labor power, the factories, the railroads, and the plantations that lay back of the multitude and which the multitude expressed. Had Senator Jeremy had eyes for his **daughter**, he would have seen that, in place of the young girl of fifteen he had brought to Hawaii a short month before, he was now taking away with him a woman.*

(Super-phrasemic unit 2) *Hawaii has a ripening climate and **Dorothy Sambrooke** had been exposed to it under exceptionally ripening circumstances. Slender, pale, with blue eyes a trifle tired from poring over the pages of books and trying to muddle into an understanding of life–such she had been the month before. But now the eyes were warm instead of tired, the cheeks were touched with the sun, and the body gave the first hint and promise of swelling lines* [18].

Internal connections of a super-phrasemic unit, i. e. connections between sentences, included in it, have both grammatical and lexical expression.

1) Juxtaposition is a very expressive means of connecting in a single unit a complex of details, specifying the general picture given at the beginning of a super-phrasemic unit.

S-1: A shrill little whistle, piping as if gone mad, came from directly ahead and from very near at hand. S-2: Gongs sounded on the Martinez. S-3: Our paddlewheels stopped, their pulsing beat died away, and then they started again. S-4: The shrill little whistle, like the chirping of a cricket amid the cries of great beasts, shot through the fog from more to the side and swiftly grew faint and fainter. S-4: I looked to my companion for enlightenment [19].

2) Parallel and chain constructions are a common way of linkage of sentences inside a super-phrasemic unit; by the use of these constructions is carried out either the opposition or enumeration of parts, included in the given super-phrasemic unit. The opposition of the enumerated parts is included in the following example:

*No one had disapproved of his teaching her to ride a surf-board, nor of his leading her by the hand through the perilous places of the crater of Kilauea. **He <u>could have</u>** dinner **with her and her father, dance with her, and be a member of the entertainment committee**; but because there was tropic sunshine in his veins **he <u>could not</u> marry her*** [20].

3) The theme-rheme order in two neighbouring sentences can be used as a connection between these sentences, where the rheme of the first sentence is the theme of the following one, here are used as a rule pronouns and (contextual) synonyms.

*"But, Talbot," I continued, pulling him by the shoulder, "listen to me will you? Do you see the stage- box?- there!- no, the next.- did you ever behold as lovely **a woman**?"*

*"**She** is very beautiful, no doubt," he said.*

*"I wonder who **she** can be?"*

*"Why, in the name of all that is angelic, don't you know who **she** is?'Not to know her argues yourself unknown.' **She** is the celebrated **Madame Lalande**- the beauty of the day par excellence, and the talk of the whole town. Immensely wealthy too- **a widow**, and a great match- has just arrived from Paris"* [21].

Even in the most brief characteristics of structures of super-phrasemic units it is necessary to mention that they not always settle down in the text consistently, keeping the internal formal integrity. Very frequently in the text one super-phrasemic unit is interrupted by another or even by several other super-phrasemic units.

This super-phrasemic unit appears to be divided into parts connected among them, first of all, semantically, but also linguistically, that is expressed by repeating lexicon. The super-phrasemic units intertwined in the basic super-phrasemic unit can contain either a microtheme serving to the progress of a narration at a level of the same subject line, or contain additional reasoning or descriptions lying on other subject line.

The super-phrasemic unit can be interrupted any number of times and include fragments of the text of any volume, that does not prevent the opportunity of restoration of its semantic integrity. More often breaks of super-phrasemic unit take place when the narration about a series of events is interrupted by reasoning or reflections of the heroes or author concerning these events. The attention of the reader, his perception of the contents of the text is as though stratified: on one hand - chain of actions and events, developing a narration, on the other hand - reflections revealing feelings and experiences of the hero or author's attitude towards the described events.

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