



Semantic-Structural Classification of Aphorisms and Quotations

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Abstract: The article is devoted to the study of semantic-structural classification of aphorisms and quotations in the English language. It was the subject of deep study of scientists in most different ideological branches. Most of the scientists agreed that aphorisms and quotations give emotionality, expressiveness to the speech, where was not only the person's point of view, but also general people's outlook is expressed. Aphorisms and quotations play important role in language.

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Introduction:

An aphorism is a pithy statement or observation that conveys a general truth about the world. Writers often create general statements in their texts in order to convey a moral or philosophical idea they hold to be universally true. It helps them to solve a set of different tasks such as to state particular facts, making information more precise and vivid, to express indirectly one's attitude towards the quoted statement, to create a dramatic effect, influencing readers, and even to detach from what is claimed.

An aphorism can be a thought, a joke, a small 'poem', a loose haiku, an image, a glance, a paradox, an observation – almost anything, as long as it is short and concise.¹ It is defined as “a short, pithy statement containing a truth of general import”².

The etymological root of the word 'aphorism' also comes from the Greek: 'apo' means 'from' and 'boros' means 'boundary' or 'horizon'. So the original meaning of the term was 'something that marks off or set apart' - i.e., a definition. The definition is among the most durable forms of the aphorism, and the English novelist Samuel Butler supplied a wonderful example of it: A definition is the enclosing of a wilderness of idea within a wall of words.

¹ Chapko, W. (2007) “Writing Aphorism”. copyright deposit.com

² Gross, J. (2003). The Oxford Book of Aphorisms. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Modern aphorisms are concerned with the same ideas and questions that have been puzzling humanity from the beginning of time. The desires and longings of the heart, our sense of identity, the nature of good and evil, time, religion, and the aftertime are common themes found in today's aphorisms. They are used to express the need to find spiritual fulfillment and understanding of the cultural experience of the 20th century.

Main part:

The purpose of an aphorism is to convey a message to people that is generally regarded as a universal moral or truth. Therefore, when creating an aphorism, it is important to identify your audience and the purpose of your writing in order to convey an appropriate message. The correct usage of aphorisms is also important, while translating any other work of art we should pay close attention to this point, and that is the reason of the study of the theme we have taken under discussion. So express any idea or plot of the work in translation as in original demands a person's high skill and deep knowledge. Translator ought to know the rules of translation, furthermore the history, slang, life, customs and traditions of the people whose language he / she translating into.

These are present in common phrases as well as in well-known literature. Here are examples:

➤ Common statement: a penny saved is a penny earned.

This aphorism is used to convey the importance of frugality.

From Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*,

➤ A man who cannot choose ceases to be a man.

This aphorism is used to emphasize the importance of free will. Furthermore, we also can classify following aphorisms according to subjects. For example:

I. Statistical aphorisms:

- a) Statistics analyzes variability
- b) What is special about statistics is its capability to quantify uncertainty
- c) Descriptive statistics is not the poor sister of research
- d) Our world, our life, our destiny are dominated by uncertainty; this is perhaps the only statement we may assert without uncertainty Bruno de Finetti

II. Aphorisms on scientific diffusion.

1. Nobody puts a candelabrum under a table.
2. English is the Esperanto of science.
3. The summary is the offspring of the research work.
4. No one is born an orator, but becomes one.

In addition to the above mentioned analysis of aphorisms, they also should be differentiated from quotations³. An aphorism is usually a saying expressing a belief, an idea, a thought, a saying, a piece of literature and so on. They can act as an inspiration and serve as a practical guide to living a better and more conscious life. Quotation, being one of the most common structural and semantic constituents of media discourse, is widely employed by a great number of journalists time and again. Since it may perform various functions, quotation constitutes a powerful tool at reporters' disposal used to suit their own purposes. Consequently, the analysis of this issue can be found in

³ Wells-Jopling R. When is writing already quotation. A developmental perspective on a postmodern question? *J Aesthet Educ.* 2006;40:59– 74. [Google Scholar] [Ref list]

numerous works, but authors mostly study quotation from a stylistic perspective, paying less attention to its lexical aspect, which requires a closer examination.

Since quotation is really popular with many authors, it is quite reasonable that there are a great number of classifications, based on different criteria or characteristics of quotes. For example, Prof. Aleshchanova in her Candidate of Science Thesis, "Quotation in media discourse" among other classifications, suggests grouping quotes according to their form, thus she defines the following structural types: full, reduced and segmented quotes⁴.

Quotation structural classification

1. The quote-sentence type presents a literal logically finished utterance, without any abridgements.

e.g.: They need more incentive to make the transition that they must know they need to make, from fossil fuel companies to energy companies,

2. The quote-word-combination type is represented by a contracted part of a quoted text, the content of which is not altered. While this quotation type is not introduced by any words, it still logically fits the new environment, becoming a part of a sentence. The case of quotation in this type is apparent only in writing as quotation marks are used.

e.g.: Set out your strategic posture - for instance, emphasising IT as a driver or enabler of strategy. (The Financial Times, The first 100 days of a new CIO: Nine steps for wiring in success, December 4, 2012)

3. According to the findings of this study, which are constituent with what is known about quotation, the quote-word type is the least employed by authors, while it is also claimed to be the most expressive one. Quotes of this type are inseparably linked with the text they are introduced in.

e.g.: The British state's determination to chase foreign earnings while lowering public spending threatens the judicial standards that bring in international business in the first place. (The Spectator, Export only justice, December 8, 2012)

Needless to say, that to quote somebody is to manage the words of others to convey and serve the purpose of the writer, giving a slant to what is said.(Calsamiglia & Ferrero 2003, p.149)⁵. In media discourse, journalists actively make use of quotations, trying to control the way readers process and make sense of the report (Teo,2000,p.14)⁶.The findings of this research suggest that newspaper authors may alter the organization of a quoted utterance,trying to achieve desired effects, which in their turn usually determine the author's choice of a quote structural and semantic type.

In conclusion, aphorisms and quotations have certain pure linguistic features that must always be taken into account in order to distinguish them from ordinary sentences. They are brief statements showing uncondensed form of the accumulated life experience of the community and serving as conventional practical symbols for abstract ideas. This study provides insights into structural and semantic features of quotation and assists readers in perceiving and analyzing information given in English.

⁴ Aleshchanova, I.V. (2000). Quotation in Media Discourse. Candidate of Science Thesis: 10.02.20 Volgograd

⁵ Calsamiglia, H. & Lopez Ferrero, C. (2003), Role and position of scientific voices: reported speech in the media. Discourse Studies, Vol. 5 (2). 147-173.

⁶ Teo, P. (2000). Racism in the news: A critical discourse analysis of news reporting in two Australian newspapers. Discourse & Society, Vol. 11 (1). 7-49

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