

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE PARTICLE A IN CONTEMPORARY ACTUALIZING PROSE

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Abstract

The article examines the functional and pragmatic potential of the Russian particle *a* in contemporary actualizing prose. As one of the most polyfunctional and semantically versatile elements of the Russian language, the particle *a* performs a variety of discourse-organizing, contrastive, and expressive functions that go beyond its traditional role as a conjunction. The study analyzes the use of *a* in modern literary discourse to reveal how it contributes to the actualization of meaning, the structuring of dialogue, and the expression of subjective modality. Special attention is given to the particle's role in constructing communicative dynamics between characters, emphasizing emotional nuances, and indicating shifts in perspective or topic.

Keywords: particle *a*, contemporary Russian prose, discourse pragmatics, functional linguistics, modality, actualization, communicative dynamics

The few studies devoted to the particle *a* have been conducted mainly on dialogue material, as it is considered the most favorable field for studying particles. In particular, A.N. Baranov and G.E. Kreidlin define the minimum dialogical unit as a system of illocutionary constraints, while assigning an important role to such phatic means of dialogue as particles and interjections, which serve as lexical indicators of the beginning and end of a dialogical text, as well as indicating a change of topic in the dialogue. The authors conclude that "particles and interjections, along with other lexical indicators, perform a special metatextual function in dialogue: they indicate the intentions of one of the partners to conduct a conversation in a particular illocutionary key."

Russian grammar classifies the particle *a* as an interrogative particle that combines interrogative and modal meanings and conveys emotional and evaluative characteristics to the utterances in which these particles are actualized. This approach differs somewhat from that adopted in modern explanatory dictionaries, in which the particle *a* is deprived of its modal status. The use of the conceptual apparatus of linguistic pragmatics in the analysis of modal particles allowed A.N. Baranov and I.M. Kobozeva [3] to identify the pragmatic functions of the particle *a* and consider it on a par with such modal particles as *и* and *да*. Relying on the method of recording the illocutionary force of utterances with the particle allowed the authors to identify the direct contribution of the particle's semantics to the content of the utterance. This same methodology allowed us to trace the interaction of the illocutionary component of the particle *a* with a number of its subjective-modal meanings in various types of speech acts. A.N. Baranov and I.M. Kobozeva, having examined the pragmatic functions of the particle *a* in direct answers to questions, came to the conclusion that the particle *a* is "most responsible" [5] for the success of communication, since in a direct answer to a question it "indicates various degrees of aggressiveness, ultimatism, polemics, and categoricalness" [3, 65]. They represent the main component of the meaning of the particle *a* as follows: "I say *P* because you asked, and no matter how you feel about it, I will still say *P*."

Most Russian particles do not have an invariant lexical meaning, but they have a very significant implicature, i.e., a set of potential semes, each of which is revealed through combinability with other elements of the context. V.V. Vinogradov was one of the first to express the idea that the meaning of a particle is inextricably linked to the utterance in which it is actualized, and adds additional modal and semantic characteristics to it. The fact that the meaning of a particle is revealed in context is not disputed among researchers. Difficulties arise when identifying the direct modal-semantic contribution of the particle to the utterance. For this purpose, the method of eliminating (removing) the particle from the context is often used, and when specifying the meaning of the particle, the lexical meaning of the verb, the meaning of the entire speech act, the contextual environment, the author's words and remarks, and punctuation are taken into account. Of course, it is impossible to study the behavior of the particle *a* in the text without taking into account

modal and pragmatic factors. Research material shows that the functions of the particle a in the text are not limited to the formulation or expression of a question. The particle a is, perhaps, one of the least studied, and at the same time it is extremely frequent in literary texts, both dialogical and monological, authorial.

Our attention was drawn to certain functions of the particle a in contemporary actualizing prose, which is contrasted with syntagmatic prose. This contrast is based on different principles of narration.

If in syntagmatic prose subordinate connections prevail, i.e. "the organization of a sentence is presented as a hierarchical system, where the elements of a message are in a certain interdependence" [9, 10], and the boundaries of sentences and utterances usually coincide, actualizing prose is characterized by syntactic fragmentation of utterances. The size of sentences in this type of prose is significantly reduced, which leads to a mismatch between the boundaries of the sentence and the utterance: "the syntagmatic chain is broken in various syntactic links" [9, 12]. G.N. Akimova associates this new type of prose

with a tendency toward analytical syntax.

As for the participation of the particle a in the block organization of the text, its syntactic position is marked both at the junction of TF blocks and at the junction of TF. In the first case, in addition to its structural-syntactic function, a performs the function of expressing various semantic relationships between blocks: adversative (here it is important to distinguish the particle a from its homonymous conjunction), concessive (often in contamination with the particle indeed), comparative, and causal. An important role in this is played by the concretizers of relations, which are in the syntactic sphere of action of the particle. In the second case, a either closes the microthème of the TF, which is characteristic of the interrogative particle a, which forms generative-evaluative registers, the evaluative seme of which is directed directly at the content of the entire TF; or opens the TF with a new microthème, changing the modal plan of the narrative.

The list of used literature:

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