

EXPRESSIVE COLLOCATIONS “ADVERB + ADJECTIVE” IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Introduction. Some people assume that speech is a sort of device for making statements. They forget its other numerous functions. Speech also expresses the speaker’s attitude to what he is talking about, his emotional reaction, his relations with his audience. He may wish to warn, to influence people, to express his approval or disapproval or to make his speech more emphatic. The problem of expressiveness as a linguistic phenomenon has always been the focus of many linguists because it is associated with the expression of the subjective attitude of the speaker to the subject of speech. However, the phenomenon of expressiveness is so multifaceted that subject cannot be exhausted by existing research work and requires further development.

The expressive aspect of the language occupies an increasingly prominent place in linguistic studies. And, of course, the problem of expressiveness excites those who study a foreign language. In recent decades, in linguistics there has been an increasing interest in the emotional sphere of a person and in the impact of the power of words. Linguistics studies different means of the language with the aim to strengthen this impact.

The chosen topic is quite relevant, since it has not yet been sufficiently studied, and it allows authors to contribute to this development, in our view, an important issue.

Undoubtedly, there are a number of scientists involved in this issue. These are L. A. Furs, I. A. Winter, V. A. Dovkin, B. N. Golovin, A. I. Galperin and others. Every scientist has his own vision of this linguistic phenomenon. We got acquainted with the works of some linguists and their points of view that are quite clear and interesting for us.

So, considering the nature of the concept “expressiveness”, it is possible to take into account the views of L. A. Furs who states that expressive constructions are various intensifiers that increase the degree of emotional attitude to the subject of speech.

The object of our study is expressive vocabulary of the English language.

The subject of our research is expressive constructions in English as a means of emotional impact on the listener.

The aim of our research is examining the concept of “expressive vocabulary” in the context of its use for the expression of emotion and attitude of the speaker to the subject and compiling a dictionary with expressive constructions. For a detailed analysis of our problem we used the following methods: a descriptive method, a method of comparative analysis. Our work consists of two parts: theoretical and practical.

In the theoretical part of our work we have tried to reveal the concept of expressive vocabulary. We have reviewed expressiveness as a linguistic category, studied the predominant means of the expression of emotional attitude, analyzed two kinds of adjectives: weak (gradable) and strong (non-gradable) and the use of intensifying adverbs with them.

In the practical part of our research work we have tried to compile a dictionary entitled “Description of the appearance and character of a person.” We have decided to include into our dictionary adjectives that describe appearance and character of a person and also expressive adverbs that show personal emotions and opinions. For this purpose we used Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English.

Also in the process of compiling the dictionary we got interested in some of the features of compatibility of adjectives and adverbs and tried to analyze our observations.

The novelty of our research is that we have conducted the analysis of the expressive vocabulary of the English language, paying more attention to adjectives and their intensifiers.

The practical significance of the work lies in the compiling a dictionary for curious students who do not only learn English but more than that are interested in the peculiarities of the language. It is possible to use it at English lessons studying the topic “Appearance and character of a person”, as well as dictionaries on some other topics can be created on the same principle.

Main part. What is expressiveness? Expressiveness is seen as detection of the speaker’s personality, which manifests itself in feelings and emotions. It is expressed in speech and in the selection of language means that may have the additional impact on the listener or reader. Thus, expressiveness acts as a phenomenon of the language personality. Expressive means are both syntactical and lexical. In our study, we have paid special attention to the lexical means which is used for positive and negative characteristics.

In our work we have studied the varieties of using expressive constructions and their specific features in speech. Let’s pay attention to the expressive constructions “adverb + adjective”. Compulsory components here are intensifiers that increase the degree of expressive constructions. For example: *She is madly merry today!*

Each of us has happened to talk about the film review with the words: “*It was a very good movie*”. And how to express the delight if it was more than a good movie? “*It was a better film?*” Or probably “*It was the best film!*” However, there is another method for strengthening quality. We can replace this adjective by a strong adjective.

A strong adjective is the adjective to which it is not possible to add the word “very”, as it initially contains it. So, “*It was a very good film!*” is the same as “*It was a great film*”.

Compare the examples:

Why are you so angry? — *I’m always furious when I have to wait.*

Is it a big house? — *Yes, it’s enormous.*

Was the weather bad? — *Yes, it was awful.*

So we see that strong adjectives have a vivid stylistic coloring and they are more expressive counterparts of weak adjectives. But why do we need to distinguish between strong and weak adjectives? The main reason is that with adjectives from different groups we use different intensifiers. With strong adjectives never use adverbs of degree: very, rather, a bit. Agree that the person can’t be “*very scared to death*” and the cloak can’t be “*very soaking wet*”. An alternative to “very” in this case are such intensifying adverbs as *highly, extremely, absolutely, deeply, bitterly, strongly, ridiculously*.

For example, *absolutely and utterly* are combined with such strong adjectives as ridiculous, stupid, impossible, wrong, alone, convinced. Thus, we say *absolutely exhausted, utterly impossible*.

Deeply, as a rule, is combined with the words that express feelings and emotions such as religious, unhappy, ashamed, concerned, shocked. For example: She is deeply unhappy.

So, if we want to identify something we should use expressively colored “strong” adjectives. And the use of “adverb + adjective” expressive constructions allows language learners to express their emotional attitude to the subject of speech. These adverbs so called intensifiers give a special expression to feelings and emotions.

The theoretical knowledge that we gained while working with the literature on the topic has led us to the idea of compiling a dictionary. We’ve decided to include into the dictionary adjectives that describe appearance and character and expressive units that show emotions and personal opinions. We have studied the literature on the topic and selected 121 adjectives for our dictionary. Selected adjectives we’ve divided into those that express positive qualities of a man, and those that express negative qualities. And for these two groups of adjectives we picked expressive units — adverbs. We selected expressive units using Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English. In the process of compiling the dictionary we got interested in some of the features of compatibility of adjectives and adverbs.

Our first interest is adjectives that describe positive qualities. Their compatibility with expressive adverbs is extremely interesting. Look at the adjective *happy* and its intensifiers. Among the expressive units, we see those that cause very positive emotions, and there are those which, by their lexical meaning, are negative. For example: *Happy as a king, completely happy, overwhelmingly happy* — these expressive units give positive emotions. And in such phrases as *fiercely happy, wildly happy* — words *fiercely and wildly* give negative evaluation. So how can we explain such expressive constructions? We see that the components of these combinations are mutually exclusive concepts. Halperin in his book “Essays on the style of the English language” explains this phenomenon as stylistic device called oxymoron.

Thus, we can say that the expressions *fiercely happy, wildly happy* give positive evaluation. Furthermore they sound even more emotional and expressive than the expressions *completely happy, overwhelmingly happy*.

So, basing on the facts mentioned above we can conclude that adjectives that have a positive lexical meaning can be combined with expressive units that have both positive and negative evaluation. And, what is more, the latter have much stronger emotional value.

There is another interesting phenomenon that we have noticed while analyzing expressive constructions “adverb + adjective”. This feature is universal intensifiers. We call them universal because they can be used for the evaluation of almost any adjective. For example:

1) *terribly happy, awfully glad;*

2) *terribly gloomy, awfully ruthless.*

These intensifiers have unlimited potential application to a wide range of concepts, they indicate a high degree of intensity. Thus, adverbs *terribly, awfully* and some others increase the expression of negative human qualities and with the adjectives expressing positive qualities form a stylistic device oxymoron which implies even more significant emotions.

Conclusion. So, if we want to make our speech more intense and brighter we should use intensifiers. They give additional detail and emphasis and make our speech more vivid and emotional.

Basing on the results of the studies, we can talk about the practical value of our research. The result of our research is the dictionary for curious students who do not only learn English but more than that are interested in the peculiarities of the language. There are 121 entries in our dictionary. It is possible to use it at English lessons while studying the topic “Appearance and character of a person”, and on the same principle, dictionaries on some other topics can be created.