



## Structural and Semantic Properties of Parenthesis in English Essays

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### **Abstract**

The article deals with structural and semantic peculiarities of parenthesis used in English essays.

**Keywords:** *Parenthesis; Parenthetic Words; Parenthetic Sentences; Essay*

### **Introduction**

Essays as one of the types of oral literary creativity - journalism - represent an extremely rich and varied parenthetical material. At the same time, the study of parenthesis in essays is of particular interest due to the fact that journalism combines the characteristic features of both fiction and scientific prose. Given this kind of dual nature of essay writing, it would be quite natural to assume that here the parenthesis should possess the characteristics of fiction and scientific prose.

### **Materials and Methods**

As to the structure parenthesis used in essays may fall into the following main types:

1. Parenthesis consisting of one word: - *alas, certainly, eventually, however, finally, indeed, meanwhile, moreover, nevertheless, now, perhaps, somehow, similarly, shortly, sometimes, still, strangely, surely, then, therefore, thus, too, true, unfortunately.*

The most common among them: *however, perhaps, too.*

2. Some parenthetic words used as equivalents of parenthesis formed from one-word, among which prevail: *above all, after all, at any rate, at length, in fact, in point of fact, in general, in a word, for instance, for example, no doubt, of course, on the contrary, on the other hand, on the whole, strangely enough.*

3. Parenthetic sentence: *as it were, as I hope to show, as we know, as we might expect, he announces, it is true, it seems to me, I confess, I notice, I reflected, one would suppose, you feel, you insist, for all I know and etc., as well as parenthetical means, like subordinate clauses, introduced by the conjunctions as, despite, if, however, while, though.*

Comparison of the composition and frequency of the use of parenthetical means in essays, novels, plays and scientific texts reveals some of their features, namely: in terms of the composition of the parenthesis in essays are presented mainly in the same way as in novels, however, like scientific texts here practically they do not use the parenthesis of a interjectional character, there are no parenthesis-parasites. The sizes of contributions in essays vary widely and, as in novels, can sometimes be represented by several sentences.

The place of the entries in the essay is also characterized by a certain originality: they occupy the initial and final position extremely rarely, and for some authors, such as I.Vo, they are used mainly in the middle position.

*But she has, we are told, almost limitless power, power which, I must confess, has never much impressed me.* (EW, 391)

*... they will rather tell you something incorrect than tell you nothing at all. Thus, when the garage-man told us that there was no snow on the road from Florence to Bologna, he said so first, because he saw that we wanted to go to Bologna and that we should have been disappointed if it had been impossible and, second, because it was pleasanter for him to say 'No snow' with conviction than confess (which was the truth) that he hadn't the faintest notion whether there was snow or not.* (AH, 200)

The content of parenthetical means in an essay is also easy to analyze in terms of the categories of reference, exemplification, deliberation and refinement. In parenthetical essays, the categories of reference, like novels and plays, are relatively few in number. The analysis made it possible to identify the distinctive features of reference entries in the essay, the most important of which is the almost complete absence of entries such as: *too, as, well, then*, which are often used in novels, plays and scientific texts. The parenthesis indicating the sequence, time and date of events are also few in number, while for novels and plays this type of contributions is very characteristic.

The unequal use of such additions is explained by the differences underlying the compared literary forms. So, in plays and novels, these parenthetical means are necessary for the author to present a multifaceted plot, events replacing one another, comparisons or comparisons with what was mentioned earlier. In an essay, where, for the most part, there are few actions and the presentation is devoted to a narrower topic, the need for such contributions decreases (although, in principle, their appearance is not excluded). Introductions of this category, the most typical for an essay, refer the reader to the source, author, or person to whom the essay is devoted:

*... the main line of fiction, which, as I said on a previous page, began with the pastoral romance of Daphnis and Chloe.* (SM, 261)

*The novel, as the title indicated, deals with war and peace, and that is the sharply contrasted background against which their fates are presented.* (SM, 282)

*It is in this, I repeat, that his principal merit consists - at any rate for us.* (AH, 166)

*It does not ring true. Or rather, in Gilbert Murray's words, it is a queer poetical method simulating realism.* (EW, 398)

*Sonya Tolstoy was, as I have said, jealous and possessive; she had always wanted to monopolize her husband, and she resented the invasion of her house by strangers.* (SM, 272)

The introduction of the category of exemplification in an essay in terms of function and frequency of use does not differ from novels and plays, while in form they are represented not only by insertions *say, for instance, for example*, but also by functionally equivalent multi-element combinations, which are also inherent in lecture register of speech:

*Not all painters are interested in the same sort of forms. Some, for example, have a passion for masses and the surfaces of solids.* (AH, 131)

*Indeed, some very good novels of this kind have been written, "Gil Blas", for instance, and "Monte Cristo".* (SM, 18)

*... and if he is an authorwith, say, Dicken's brilliant gifts, he sees them with a dramatic intensity.*(SM, 11)

Many early photographers, among them the herald of the 'photograph Titans' quoted above, were unsuccessful painters. (EW, 38)

The allegorical groups and costume-pieces produced in the '50s and '60s - such as Rejlander's celebrated *The Two Ways of Life* and Mrs. Cameron's illustrations to *The Idylls of the King* - are what Delaroché feared, and they proved to be wholly ludicrous. (EW, 387)

The danger of this is that one set of characters may be so much more interesting than the other, as, to take a famous example, happens in "*Middlemarch*", that the reader may find it irksome when he doesn't in the least care about. (SM, 8)

High-frequency deliberative parenthesis is represented, first of all, by one-word parenthesis:

Imagine my surprise, therefore, when I received threatening letters from two irate old ladies in London, one in hews castle and one in New York, all identifying themselves and their establishments with my invention. (EW, 362)

Moreover, it is spectacle rather than the theme which impresses a child. (EW, 382)

There is another more intelligent question more often asked: 'Are your characters drawn from life?' In the broadest sense, of course, they are. (EW, 372)

The construction of his novel is necessarily compact. The device, besides, gives an air of verisimilitude to what he writes. (SM, 9)

When, however, his change of heart resulted in a change of behaviour, she was displeased, and did not hesitate to show it. (SM, 269)

A myth survives from past years that film stars live in Petronian luxury. The salary figures seem dazzling, and indeed, she does live in a degree of comfort very enviable by contemporary European measure. (EW, 378)

Quite widely, the essay uses multi-element equivalents of one-word additions:

But this long and, no doubt, necessary narrative has the disadvantage of telling the reader, unless he is abnormally ignorant of history, a great deal of what he knows already. (SM, 286)

... and so the reader enjoys the pleasure of the elucidation, step by step, of what was puzzling, obscure and uncertain. (SM, 9)

... the reader must never be allowed to say: "So and so would never behave like that"; on the contrary he should be obliged to say: "That's exactly how I should have expected so and so to believe". (SM, 12-13)

When one is describing someone's appearance it is quite likely that one will subconsciously be led to describe someone has seen - after all, there is a very limited number of physical characters which one can enumerate. (EW, 362)

Meanwhile the annual deficit of expenditure over allowance had reached a formidable total and I looked for some way of making money - or, at any rate, of avoiding spending it. (EW, 367)

On the one hand, are those who expect a University to be a kind of insurance company into which so much money is paid and from which so much, eventually, is extracted. They expect a B.A. degree to be a badge which will gain them instant preference over poorer competitors, and in nine cases out of ten they are disappointed.

On the other hand, there are those who expect Oxford to be like an Oxford novel. (EW, 365)

Unlike novels and plays, among the deliberative introductions in essays, there are almost no interjection parentheses and parasitic parentheses. This is due to the fact that the author's presentation is more formal and businesslike. Feelings, emotions, mood of the author are expressed much more restrained and in a more delicate form than in novels and plays. In addition, dialogic speech is not characteristic of the essay, which abounds, as shown above, with interjection and parasitic insertions.

### **Results and Discussions**

If in novels and plays this kind of parenthesis helps the author to characterize the character and the meaning of “oha” or “aha” is clear in context, then in an essay “looping with sighs and hints” would hardly be appropriate. In this genre, as well as in scientific texts, the authors use other ways of presentation, using more “neutral” parenthesis, for example:

*... the peasants sang divinely (you should hear the way they sing now!), every church had a good choir which was perpetually producing new passes, motets and oratorios. (AH, 50)*

*Buskin, we may be sure, would be serenely confident in his early judgement. (EW, 389)*

*Above all, acting was recognised as an art which it took a life time to learn. (EW, 377)*

In the essay, as well as in the novels, all types of parenthetical contributions of the category of refinement are presented:

- a) parenthesis of an actual clarifying nature, for example:

*Not everyone in 1923, not I for one, knew without recourse to the dictionary that a “hey” or “hay” was a country jig. (EW, 389)*

*Those little old houses which Dickens so loved to describe - all holes and corners and curious accidents - are typical pieces of quaintness. (AH - 194)*

*Tolstoy calls him "that infinitesimal tool in history, who at no time, not even in exile, showed any manly dignity". (SM, 281)*

- b) additions that determine the modality or attitude of the author to the described phenomena,

*But all the same I am annoyed that such mental strength should be lost at log-splitting, lighting samovars and making boots - which are all excellent as a rest or a change of occupation; but not as special employment. (SM, 270)*

*But while we poor common tourists were spending money on the way, the Thaumaturgical Arm - and this was perhaps its most miraculous achievement - was raking it in. (AH, 146)*

*The rain, it is true, a little blurred the scene. Greyly it hung, like a dirty glass, between the picture and the beholder's eye. But through it, unmistakably, I distinguished the fabulous landscape of the Fleming's little paintings. (AH, 62)*

- c) clarifying parenthesis of a descriptive nature, for example:

*They go on, term after term - hospitable, malicious, unchanged. (EW, 363)*

*It had only to show itself through the crystal window of the reliquary in which it travelled - a skeleton arm, with a huge amethyst ring still glittering on one of the fingers of its bony hand - to command the veneration of all beholders and a copper collection, thinly interspersed with nickel and the smallest paper. (AH, 148)*

Concluding the review of the content of parenthetical means, we note that in the essay the semantic aspect of the parenthesis, to one degree or another, combines the characteristics of both fiction and scientific prose.

As for the punctuation design, in essays, parenthetical entries are predominantly highlighted traditionally: short conventional ones - with commas (or not at all), longer copyright-individual ones - with brackets and dashes. At the same time, in the essays of I.Vo and O.Huxley there are interpolations, the parenteticity of which is of a special, expressive character in comparison with the usual additions. Authors do not mark such parentheses with parentheses or dashes expected in such cases:

*After a little I relapse into my old bad ways.*

*Deplorable weakness! I try to comfort myself with the hope that even my vices may be of some profit to me. (AH, 17)*

*We stood at easels in a large, hideously overheated studio and drew from the nude from ten until four. Heavens, how badly I drew. The trouble about my upbringing was that whereas my family knew very well how badly I wrote, they had rosy illusions about my drawing. (EW, 367)*

As you can see from the examples, the authors “deviate” from the topic in order to give their assessment to what is being described. Such a case of punctuation registration of contributions is quite rare and therefore can be considered more an exception than a rule.

The language of the essay is determined by the general laws of the journalistic style arising from the tasks of communication. There are no literary images in the essay. The persons, facts, events described in them are reliable.

Regardless of how much a particular issue is developed in literature, philosophy or aesthetics, the essayist only slightly, one might say superficially, concerns the subject being described, trying to illuminate the individual, most significant from his point of view, signs of phenomena, in a witty and show your attitude towards them in an unexpected way. The brevity and accuracy of expressions is one of the characteristic features of the essay. Individual-creative interpretation of the facts of reality cannot go beyond the evaluative elements of speech. All of the above features of the works of this literary form leave their mark on the ways of organizing speech, including the use of parenthetical contributions.

The analysis of non-smooth speech in the journalism of S.Maugham, O. Huxley and I.Vo allows us to draw the following conclusions:

- I. In an essay, depending on the individual style and theme of the work, the use of parenthetical contributions approaches either the style of scientific prose or the style of artistic speech.
- II. A comparative analysis of the parenthetical material of publicism, fiction and scientific presentation reveals the following features of the use of parenthetical contributions:
  1. In terms of the composition of the introduction in the essay, it is closer to the main types of introduction of novels.
  2. The middle position of the entries in the essay is dominant.
  3. In terms of the content of the entry in the essay, they are represented by all four categories, however, in the ratio of their use, some originality is noted:
    - a) reference entries are few in number as well as in fiction;
    - b) reference entries indicating the sequence, time and date of events, as well as entries such as too, then, as, well (as in the scientific style) are limited in use;
    - c) the introduction of the category of exemplification is represented by all types of similar entries of the scientific style of speech;

- d) among the deliberative contributions of essays, like scientific texts, there are no interjection parentheses and parasitic parentheses;
- e) the category of refinement is presented in the essay as well as in fiction.
4. Punctuation of parenthetical contributions in an essay is closer to the traditional "moderate" punctuation style of the style of scientific presentation (meaning understopping). The author's individuality in the use of punctuation marks is minimized.

### **Conclusion**

The revealed features of the use of parenthetical insertions confirm the previously stated assumption that non-smooth speech in an essay has a symbiosis of the properties of scientific and artistic prose. So, the analysis of speech material shows the need to study parenthetical contributions, taking into account a certain functional style and a specific genre, as well as not only in relation to the sentence, but also in terms of their functions in the verbal tissue of speech of a work of art, i.e. e. as an element of verbal and artistic creativity.

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