

Concessive semiosis in Old English complex sentences

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In studying complex sentences, syntax can be investigated in conjunction with semantics, which does not affect the overall meaning of the sentence unit. Moreover, by understanding syntactic structures, we can analyze the pragmatic and semantic realization of sentences on a deeper level without violating specific linguistic rules of sentence organization. In the system of language, semantics plays a crucial role in perceiving language units, and it can be studied in relation to other disciplines, such as pragmatics, lexicology, morphology, syntax, word-building, and text linguistics.

Our study is focused on the semantic and syntactic relationship between clauses of concessive semantics (universal (pure) concessive, conditional, contrastive, and causative concession) based on the Relevance Theory approach, with defining truth-conditional and non-truth-conditional meanings of the Old English complex sentences by way of identifying concessive conjunctions (*þeah* / *þeah þe*, *gif* / *gyf þeah* / *nymþe*, *ac* / *opres*, *forþan þe* (*forðanþe*) / *siþðan*, etc.) as interchangeable implementers of concessive sentences' "concessive semiosis".

The rationale of the present research is to find out the relevance of concessive conjunctions functioning as markers of uniting concessive sentences of four different semantics under the term or notion "concessive semiosis", based on the semantic interaction and syntactic integration of concessive clauses between themselves.

The findings of the study show that Old English concessive conjunctions can be interpreted as linguistic code signs and regarded as mutually interchangeable implementers of a concessive action with dual semantic-syntactic relationship vs. non-dual syntactic relationship in the next paradigm of clauses: universal (pure) concessive = contrastive = conditional = causative clauses vs. universal (pure) concessive/contrastive ≠ conditional/causative clauses. The concept of "concessive semiosis" is realized in all types of Old English complex concessive sentences in the semantic-syntactic integration of non-truth-conditional vs. truth-conditional clauses as: universal (pure) concessive = contrastive clauses vs. causative = conditional clauses.