

## PHILOLOGY

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Suima I.P.

### RESPONSIVE SENTENCE AS A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE EDUCATIONAL DIALOGUE

**Irina P. Suima, PhD in Philology, Associate Professor of English  
Philology Department of Oles Honchar Dnipro National University,  
Ukraine**

#### **Abstract**

The article deals with the peculiarities of the responsive sentences as parts of the educational dialogue. It is stated that the responsive sentences are extremely interesting in lexical as well as in semantic aspects, lexical content of the sentence of this type can include lexical material of the question or expression, but, mostly it can be expanded informatively or modal according to the specifics of the issue or expression. These speech units have a wide range of differential features, based on the lexical content, functional loading and communicative orientation of the corresponding constructions.

**Keywords:** responsive sentences, question-answer system, educational process, dialogue, interrogative sentence.

In the process of foreign language training to the implementation of dialogues as a significant element of conversational skills practice a great attention is usually paid. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, dialogue is a literary and theatrical form consisting of a written or spoken conversational exchange between two or more people [2]. While analyzing the proposed definition, it is possible to mention that the answer or reaction to the question or statement (addressed phrase) is a considerable part of the dialogue, especially educational one, because due to this reaction the student can show his/her command of language. These syntactic units are identified as the “responsive sentences” or “responsives” (Eng. Response)[1]. The term “responsive sentence” can be introduced not only for question-response structure, but also may be used to identify the syntactic unit used as a reaction on any expression:

interrogative (*And where have you been? – Nowhere; Can you help me? – I'm on the phone*), declarative (*There's no way we'll make this plane. It leaves in 45 minutes. – Think positive!; – He thinks I'm guilty. – That's not what's important*), exclamatory (*Congratulations! We did it!; Julie! I'll speak with you later!*), and imperative (*Get upstairs now. – Why?; Do it! – Why me?*).

The answer to the question is investigated in a wide range of scientific works [2-9]. The communicative units under research within the educational dialogue can vary depending on the addressed statement, the purpose of the speakers, the topic of the conversation, the communicative situation itself and many other linguistic and extralinguistic factors. In the educational conversation the reaction of the person you speak with to the directed phrase in most cases is functional – the interlocutor gives you the information needed and the conversation, as a rule, is continued: *How long did the internship last? – Almost for one year; How long I will go there? – About 10 minutes*. But, while studying the particular topic, students can encounter the dialogues with the non-functional response – the person you talk to does not provide you with the information you need or tries to escape giving the direct answer to your question. For example: *Did you watch the news this morning? – Have they said something important?; Do you have any free time for a rest? – Why are you asking?* etc. So, the purpose of the article consists in the detail analysis of very significant part of the educational dialogue – the responsive sentence.

The majority of textbooks very often give students the examples of dialogues containing the functional responsive only although the non-functional one is also important for studying because it can be frequently found in real-life situations. Of course, it is difficult and, more likely, impossible to predict all existing answers/reactions to question/statement, but students, while practicing conversational skills should be aware of the lexical material related to this type of answers. Responsive sentences have significant functional loading, these communicative units of all types can be found in all spheres of human activity in colloquial as well as in literary language. Sentences with the communicative orientation “answer to the question” are integral part of foreign language training process.

Responsive sentence, being a verbal reaction to any kind of the expression, can be first of all classified as contented (reaction that is satisfactory for the dialogue partner and gives the needed information: *What time is it? – Seven o'clock!; Have you any money deposited here? – No, sir. I want to leave some here*), uncontented (some kind of manipulation, sabotage, refusal to answer the question or provide the information necessary for the conversation partner: *What is your age? – Must I answer your questions?; What is your address? – It is confidential information!*) or latent one (an answer/reaction, including the needed data, but the participants of the communications are made to analyze the full answer itself in order to find the information they want: *Will you go out tomorrow? – It depends on the weather!; Are you hungry? – Try me,*

*and see*). The latent responsive sentences are subdivided into a wide range of different types. One of the most controversial among them is the responsive with the referential index – answer/reaction containing the quotation which had been taken from various sources: from someone's words to serious scientific researches: *What will you be doing in such a difficult situation? – As my mother always says, we should never give up!; How do you know it? – It is obvious! And what are you going to tell the teacher when he asks you to read your home task composition? – I will just quote the A. Liebling's words "I can write better than anybody who can write faster, and I can write faster than anybody who can write better."* etc.

Responsive sentences with the referential index are of great interest structurally – they can be of different structure – from one word to the whole paragraph; from uncompleted sentence to the composite one, and semantically – usage of quoted words or lines from artistic work can provide the listener with different information concerning his/her question itself, conversation partner's treatment of the object of the communication, intention to continue or vice versa to stop the conversation etc. For example, *Do you know, my brother wants to become a famous painter and he is creating his fiftieth picture now! – Oh, give him a museum and he will fill it!* The responsive sentence (*Oh, give him a museum and he will fill it!*) expresses not only implied answer to the question (that the interlocutor knows or realize the information he is told), but also shows the treatment of this information by the conversation partner. The quotation of Picasso's words "Give me a museum and I will fill it" is used in ironical sense here and by means of this irony he shows his distrust to the talent of the person they speak about. The responsive in the following dialogue has all functions of the latent responsive sentences – it gives an answer to the question, but in a hidden, disguised manner and in order to understand it the conversation partner should think the phrase over: *Will you stop smoking? – You know that "The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it."* So, by means of a famous quote from Oscar Wilde's artistic work the speaker gives, although in a hidden way, the fair answer that he will not stop smoking. The responsive sentences with the referential index can be also implemented when it is difficult to find how to answer someone's question or when you do not want for any reason to reveal the whole information to the conversation partner: *Why have you chosen dancing as your profession, your trade? – Because dancing – is a silent poetry!; Do you believe in our state's legislation? – As Plato says "Good people do not need laws to tell them to act responsibly, while bad people will find a way around the laws."; Who told you about it? – Everyone knows it!* The most frequent reason of usage of the sentences under the research is the desire to relieve of responsibility. For example, *Why were you absent at the office yesterday? – According to the Statue of our company we have two days off; Just imagine! We must learn by heart twenty poems during the term! – It is written in your curriculum that you must do it in order to pass the literature exam.* The

answering person quotes the rules from the Statue or curriculum in order to show to the conversation partner that it is not his\her personal idea or view, but it is just rule to be kept.

To sum up, responsive sentences with the referential index are among the most interesting and frequently used type of latent responsive; they are characterized with the existence of various intentions, transferring the inner state of the participants of the communication and their treatment of the discussed subject as well as the answer\reaction to the asked question or addressed expression.

For the educational process the responsives, representing emotional reaction, are very significant and are of the great interest.

Responsive sentences of the emotional reaction can be subdivided into several groups: 1. The responsives of evaluation: *We will never get that train! – Be positive!; What a beautiful weather today! – Great!; I finally passed my exam! – My congratulations!* 2. Devaluation of an issue: *He still thinks I had broken that vase! – It is not important now!; I forgot to buy butter – You have a lot of products to eat even without it!; I promised to visit my aunt today! – You are busy today, she will understand.* 3. Responsives of quarrel: *Don't ask me stupid questions! – You are stupid, but not my questions!; You have mental problems! – Not so much as you are!; I was advised not to deal with you! – I had the same advice concerning you!* 4. Doubts concerning the objectiveness of someone's praise, compliments or abuse: *You English is very good! – Americans always say that in order to show their politeness!; Your paper is out of theoretical value! – But it is only your opinion!; You can miss this film in the cinema, it is not so interesting! – I don't think so!*

This type of the responsive sentences can be influenced with linguistic factors as well as extralinguistic. The verbal reaction to such type of syntactic construction can be reasoned with, first of all, usage of the correspondent lexical material, grammatical structure of the initial phrase (linguistic reasons) and the communicative situation itself, attitude of the speakers to each other and to the subject of conversation (extralinguistic reasons).

The responsive sentences of the emotional reaction are interesting in lexical as well as in semantic, functional and structural aspects, lexical content of the sentence of this type can include lexical material of the question or expression, but, mostly it can be expanded not informatively but modal according to the specifics of the issue or expression. These speech units have a wide range of differential features, based on the lexical content, functional loading and communicative orientation of the corresponding constructions.

Responsive sentence is verbal reaction to any kind of statement; the most widespread situation the students while learning English are faced with is the reaction to an interrogative sentence : *How are you? – I am well, thank you.* One of the most widespread subtype of the empty responsive sentences is the stereotyped or cliché responsives: *Have a good day! – Have a good day too!*

*Help yourself! – Thank you!* etc. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English, cliché is an "idea or expression, that has been too much used and is now stereotyped phrase" [10, p. 154]. Cliché responses do not give the answer in its direct meaning and do not provide the questioner with some information, but the constructions of this type are used to continue the dialogue and to show the intention of the respondent. Cliché responses are characterized with the possibility to reproduce these syntactic units, combine them with the other communicative units, interpret in different ways according to the desire of the speaker.

In the "question-answer" construction the character of the responsive sentence depends on the addressed phrase. This statement is also true for cliché elements of the dialogue. For example, there is a limited number of answers (responsives) we can give as a reaction to the greeting "*Good morning!*". The stereotyped reply may be "*Good morning!; Nice to meet you*" or something like that. Responsives-cliches appear in our speech under different circumstances and in various contents. A lot of reasons of the usage of these syntactic units can be found. First of all, the desire to be polite, to continue the dialogue or begin the conversation, to make good relations with the person you speak with etc. Moreover, while reproducing the prepared responsive-cliché, the participant of communication has time to think over the further conversation, to find better facts to convince the interlocutor to do something.

Responsives-cliches are of great interest in the lexical aspect. Responsive sentences, which can be called clichés, are used also while expressing your agreement: *There are many reasons for...; There is no doubt about it that... I am of the same opinion; I am of the same opinion as the author. I completely / absolutely agree with the author; I agree with you 100 percent; I couldn't agree with you more; That's so true; That's for sure; etc.* disagreement: *There is more to it than that; The problem is that...; I (very much) doubt whether...; This is in complete contradiction to...; What is even worse,...; I am of a different opinion because...; I cannot share this / that / the view; I cannot agree with this idea; What I object to is...; Unlike the author I think...; I don't think so; etc.* with the speaker addressing you.

Analyzing the previous examples, we can make a conclusion that within the clichéd responses in parallel with proper responsives-cliches there are also complemented responsive sentences-cliches, which contain additional information and include the new, not clichéd lexical material demanded with the character of the question or statement.

The usage of responsives-clichés does not mean that syntactic units of this type are related to the uniformity, monotony and tediousness.

To sum up, the responsive sentences, that are clichéd or containing the clichéd element, are used during all stages of communication: establishing contact or introducing an issue for a discussing, continuation of the

conversation and its logical development, concluding of the communication, presenting of final arguments, drawing to the conclusion. The responsive sentences are extremely interesting in lexical as well as in semantic aspects, lexical content of the sentence of this type can include lexical material of the question or expression, but, mostly it can be expanded informatively or modal according to the specifics of the issue or expression. These speech units have a wide range of differential features, based on the lexical content, functional loading and communicative orientation of the corresponding constructions.

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