

УДК [81'367](#)

PLACE OF THE RESPONSIVE SENTENCE IN THE EDUCATIONAL  
DIALOGUE

Suima I. P.

Oles Honchar Dnipro National University

Communication as a linguistic phenomenon was dealt with in different aspects in a wide range of scientific researches connected with the structure and semantics of dialogue parts, speech act theory, question-answer unity etc. 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?).

In some types of the responsives the ideas and plans of the speaker, or intention can directly correlate with the aim of the communication (for example, motivating and sabotage

responsive sentences: “Why are you late for work? — Ask the driver of bus I took to get there!”, “I heard you company has new taxation policy. — I don’t know, speak about it with our director”),. In the other sentences, that are also elements of the responsive sentences typology, there is no direct correlation between the responsive and communicative intention of the speaker (for example, emotional reaction on the utterance: We will never get that train! – Be positive!; What a beautiful weather today! – Great!; I finally passed my exam! – My congratulations!). Therefore, in the given article we consider the responsive sentences within the communicative tasks system, because the aim itself of some communicative units under research can be difficult to identify (for example, latent responsive sentences: Do you pay for the bus ticket? — They always check the tickets on the bus ).

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 responsives 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 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 responsivenesses 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 responsivenesses 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 (responsivenesses) 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. Responsivenesses-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.

Responsivenesses-cliches are of great interest in the lexical aspect. Responsive sentences, which can be called cliches, 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.

Analizing the previous examples, we can make a conclusion that within the clichéd responsives 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.

In dialogical speech the responsive utterances – verbal reaction to the initial, stimulating phrases, — as a rule, are characterized not only with logical and semantic loading, but also the emotional one. Emotivity from the linguistic point of view is studied by a wide range of scientists [1,2,4,5,6], but this notion had not been described yet in relation to responsive sentences. The term “responsive” or “responsive sentence” was used by Charles Fries while identifying the



following types of sentences according to the aim of communication: "situation utterance" (eliciting a response) and 'response-utterances'. Situation utterances are subdivided into 3 groups: 1) utterances that are regularly followed by oral responses only. These are greetings, calls, questions. (*Hello, goodbye, see you soon*). 2) Utterances eliciting action responding. These are requests or commands (*come up to me*). 3) utterances regularly eliciting conventional signals of attention to continue discourse. (*I've been taking to him. — Yes.*) [7; c. 116-117] Under the term "responsive" David G. Lockwood, Peter Howard Fries, James E. Copeland identified such structures as "*They are, we are, I am, he / she is*" etc [8; c. 112-116] if they are used as answers to the question. Jones Bob Morris appealed to the term "responsive" while describing "*yes-no words and their equivalents*" [9]. We understand the notion of "responsive sentences" as term with broader meaning, identifying any verbal reaction to any type of utterance.

Emotivity is one of the most undefined characteristics of the text, despite the fact that the problem of emotions expression in monological, as well as in dialogical speech, today attracts more and more attention of linguists and is one of the most relevant objects of linguistic research. Nowadays there are many approaches to the identification of the emotivity as a language category. According to lexically-based approach, which is considered as main and the most traditional one, the lexical units are the main means of expressing emotions in language and these means are divided into the following groups: 1) interjections and the adjacent words (swear words, addressing to the God, etc.); 2) the names of the emotions; 3) words with suffixes of subjective evaluation; 4) words containing emotionally-evaluative component; 5) evaluation words etc. At the same time in this approach linguists also highlight some of the most important items: 1) within the conceptual approach the term "emotive lexicon" researchers refer to while speaking

about units that reflect sensory phenomena in the form of conceptual characters (love, excitement, passion, anger, etc.); 2) the main criterion for selection of emotive units is their functions in the reflection of the emotional state of the speaker and his/her treatment of the subject of the question; 3) emotivity is interpreted as a part of word's connotation, connected with its subjective-evaluative meaning and expresses a subjective attitude of the speaker to the subject of speech, thereby causing an emotional response from the addressee [1].

Emotions can be expressed in various ways: in the form of emotional responses or as an emotional state, which reflects the internal human experience, but it has no external expression. While emotional reactions are external way of expressing emotions, feelings one of their means is an expression of emotions through language: different kinds of exclamations, questions, interjections, etc. Because language is not just a unique mean of communication, getting of the information and influencing the listener, but also a mean of self-expression. There is a certain set of means of emotional reaction expression that can be used separately, but more often it is used in complex. Oral speech is characterized, first of all, with emotional colouring, which is manifested in the use of emotionally colored words, different morphemes (eg, the use of diminutive suffix), interjections, but primarily in the intonation. This occurs automatically in the speech on the basis of previous experience of communication. The circumstances of the situation, for example, being in a hurry, leaves the speaker no time for thinking over the situation. The speaker uses words that are common and customary for everyday life and are stored in memory with the general semantics of the word. In dialogical speech the responsive sentences, expressing the verbal reaction on the different kind of utterances, are of major importance when it is needed to reflect the emotional state of the speaker, his/her feelings and preferences, because in the language emotions

are, as a rule, expressed by means of questions, exclamations, exclamations, interjections etc. and are reactions on different kind of expressions (declarative, imperative, interrogative). In dialogical speech the emotive constructions, used in the responsive sentences and uttered in different contexts and with different intonation can express joy, surprise, anger, and even irony; the meaning of these language units is characterized with the situation of the communication. Phrase-reaction is almost always emotionally coloured, which is reflected in the use of emotionally colored words, different morphemes (for example, the usage of diminutive suffixes), interjections, but primarily with the intonation.

The dialogue elements are closely related within the dialogical entity, many of them present a direct response to the preceding remark, and their construction as syntactically complete sentences would lead to a repetition of information and the syntactic structure of the preceding remarks. Therefore, ellipsis, highlighting only the most important thing in a sentence and paying attention only to the most important details, makes the responsive phrase more emotionally-coloured, more expressive, and is one of the basic principles of the spoken text, and especially reactive phrases.

Reacting utterance (response) – is a phrase or sentence, which is the response to the stimulating phrase (question, statements, offers, etc.). Responsives can be expressed in different ways: in the form of interrogative, exclamatory and negative sentences, as interjections, elliptical constructions, phraseological units etc. They are directly dependent on the stimulating or initial phrases. Emotionally-coloured reacting phrases can be not only the reaction to the stimulating phrase, but they can become the stimulating phrases themselves: *Your behavior at the lecture was intolerable! – Look at yourself! You are not better, believe me! – Me? – Don't pretend to be very surprised! – No, you should explain... etc.*

As we can see from the example, all utterances are connected semantically and logically and every reacting utterance becomes a stimulating one. Responsive utterances are closely connected with the initial ones within the context [3].

Emotivity in responsive sentences may be expressed in different ways: by using stylistic devices, by peculiar syntactic structure, by intonation etc. The most widespread example of the emotional responsive sentence is the actualization of the whole phrase or its part: *You are always doing nothing! – What?!; What a nuisance you are! – I am...who?; I don't like to work with people like you are! – Like me?! etc.*

In these examples the speaker actualizes some parts of the phrase expressing such emotions like "fear", "anger" etc. So, the usage of such type of phrases is quite natural for expressing of mentioned emotions because experiencing strong emotions like this, the speaker can not be logical in giving the argumentation to his/her statements, he/she uses ellipsis, trying to say as little as possible. In this case, the use of elliptic repetition helps to express the emotional state of the speaker.

The main stylistic mean of the expression of the emotional state of the speaker in the responsive sentences – verbal reactions to any kind of utterance – is syntactic repetition. It includes parallel constructions, chiasmus, anadiplosis, anaphora and epiphora. The most widespread among the above-mentioned units are anadiplosis and parallel constructions.

The practical implementation of the given stylistic means can be shown on the following examples: *"What was there to be gained by fighting the most evil wizard who has ever existed?" said Black, with a terrible fury in his face. "Only innocent lives, Peter!"*

*"You don't understand!" whined Pettigrew. "He would have killed me, Sirius!"*

*"Then you should have died!" roared Black. "died rather than betray your friends, as we would have done for you!"* [10, p. 146].

In this example, anadiplosis is seen as the stylistic mean of the expression of the emotions "anger", "resentment" etc. The author repeats the word «died», using it at the end of the first sentence and at the beginning of the second one, to create a rhythmic text and link two sentences together. Also, due to the author's remark and special syntactic construction of the reacting utterance we can better understand the emotions of the speaker.

In the next example: *"What the hell are you thinking? Is she more important than everything—than the whole tribe? Than the people getting killed?"*

*"She can help," Jacob said quietly.*

*"Help!" the angry boy shouted. His arms begin to quiver. "Oh, that's likely! I'm sure the leech-lover is just dying to help us out!"* [11, p.182] the author repeats the word «help», using it at the end of the phrase of one character and as responsive sentence of another character to create a connection between the two phrases and to highlight the main reason of the statement. In this case, the anadiplosis serves as a stylistic mean of expressing of the emotion "anger" in the reacting utterance.

The main stylistic mean of expression of the emotivity in the responsive utterances – syntactic repetition — includes: parallel structures, chiasmus, anaphora, anadiplosis etc. For instance: 1) *Why can't you understand! I don't like speak with these pigheaded people! – Then you must speak with our clients and you will speak with our clients because it is part of your work!* In this example, the anadiplosis serves as a stylistic mean of expressing emotion "anger" in reacting utterance; 2) *I will ask Jane to help me with translation! — Help? I hope with her help you will fail you exam!* In the example, the word «help» is repeated in stimulating and in reacting utterances to create a connection between the two



phrases. In this case, the anadiplosis serves as a stylistic mean of expressing emotion "anger" in reacting sentence. 3) *They invited you to that party! — They invited me! Did you hear it? They invited me!* In this example, repetition is used to express positive emotions "joy" in reacting utterance. 4) *Kate will be the chairperson at our meeting! — Kate can't do it! Kate doesn't know all details of our project!* In this example the first element of the sentence is repeated, repetition is used to express the emotional state of the speaker and specify the emotive-coloured responsive utterance. It is used to repeat the expression of positive emotions "surprise" and "discontent" in reacting utterance.

Another fairly common mean of expression of the emotivity in the responsive sentences is an ellipsis. As well as repetition, ellipsis can be used to express different emotions: *How did you get here? — I got there by the first bus! — Great! It is good to see you here!* In this example, the phrase "It is great!" is ellipped not only in order to show the emotional state of the speaker, but also to make the speech realistic. In the next example: *Can I go by that tram? — Overcrowded* the construction "no, because it is overcrowded" is shortened only to one word in order to save time and to show that the interlocutor doesn't want to speak for a long time.

Except of different stylistic devices, the emotivity in the responsive sentences can be expressed by means of emotionally-coloured words (wonderful, great, awesome, delighted, horrible, awful etc.): *This year I will finally have a rest from work! We can go abroad! — Wonderful!; What a downpour! It rains cats and dogs! — Terrible!* and interjections (wow, oh, ow, hm, am): *Can you listen to me and then you can speak via your phone for as long time as you can! — Hm...; Just look at this dress! — Wow!*

So, the most common types of stylistic means used to express the emotivity in the responsive sentences are repetitions, ellipsis, and actualization of the whole phrase or part of it; actualization of the whole phrase or part of it is the



main stylistic mean of expression of the emotivity in the responsive sentences (43%), and is primarily used to reflect such strong emotions as joy, fear and anger.

The second mean of the expression of the emotivity in the responsive sentences is repetition (27%), but mostly it is used to express emotions such as fear and surprise; the next mean is anadiplosis (15%), which we analyzed in the dialogues, only used to express such emotions as fear and surprise. In addition to stylistic means, the other means of the expression of the emotivity in the responsive sentences are such elements as emotive-coloured vocabulary, interjections etc (15%).

### *References*

1. Джобава И. М. Эмотивность реагирующих реплик // Англистика XXI века: сборник материалов III Всероссийской научной конференции. Санкт-Петербург, 24 – 26 января 2006 г. – СПб.: Филологический факультет СПбГУ, 2007. – 730 с. – С. 64 – 73.
2. Колокольцева Т. Н. Специфические коммуникативные единицы диалогической речи. – Волгоград: Изд-во Волгоградского государственного университета, 2001. – 260 с.
3. Меньшиков И. И. Типология респонсивных предложений в современном русском языке // Избранные труды по лингвистике. – Днепропетровск: Новая идеология, 2012. – С. 85-100.
4. Филимонова О. Е. Эмоциология текста. Анализ репрезентации эмоций в английском тексте: учебное пособие. – СПб.: ООО «Книжный Дом», 2007. – 448 с.
5. Шаховский В. И. Лингвистика эмоций // Филологические науки. – 2007. – № 5. – С. 7-13
6. Якубинский Л. П. О диалогической речи // Избранные работы: Язык и его функционирование. – М., 1986. – С. 17-58. – Режим доступа: <http://www.philology.ru/linguistics1/yakubinsky-86.htm>
7. Fries, Ch. C. The Structure of English: An Introduction to the Construction of English Sentences. – London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957. – 304 p.
8. Functional approaches to language culture and cognition / edited by David G. Lockwood, Peter H. Fries, James E. Copeland. – Michigan state university: John Benjamins B.V., 2000. – 656 p.

9. Jones Bob Morris. The Welsh answering system. – Berlin: Rotaprint Druck Werner Hidebrand, 1999. – 360 p.
10. Rowling, J. K. Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban. – London: Bloomsbury, 1999. – 170 c.
11. Stephenie Meyer New Moon. – 1<sup>st</sup> ed. – NY: Little, Brown and Company Time Warner Book Group, 2006. – 319 c.