

SCTMG 2020

International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism»

CONSTRUCTION “VERB + ACCUSATIVE CASE WITHOUT PREPOSITION”: ACQUISITION BY SINHALA STUDENTS

Rev Kadigamuwe Anuruddha Thero (a)*, Baryshnikova Elena Nikolaevna (b),
Volkhonsky Boris Mikhailovich (c)
*Corresponding author

(a) Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, 6, Mikluho-Maklaya str., Moscow, Russia,
kadigamuweanu@gmail.com

(b) Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, 6, Mikluho-Maklaya str., Moscow, Russia, ent5753@mail.ru

(c) The Institute of Asian and African Studies Lomonosov Moscow State University, 11, Mokhovaya str., Moscow,
Russia, volkhonskybor@gmail.com

Abstract

The article is devoted to the acquisition of the construction "verb + accusative case without a preposition" by Sinhala-speaking students. A list of main syntactic functions of the accusative case in Russian is presented, and difficulties in language acquisition by Sinhala-speaking student, arising from the difference in language structures, are noted. Russian and Sinhalese (Sinhala) languages, both belonging to the Indo-European language family, differ significantly in typological sense. This is reflected in the differences in case systems – the number and functions of case forms. As regards the accusative case in Russian, besides being the case of a direct object it can also characterize the names functioning as verbal modifiers and, in certain syntactic construction types, as subjects. In Sinhala, the functions of the accusative case are neither limited to the direct object, but they differ considerably from what is the situation in Russian. There are also differences in verbal systems – e.g. the basic (in Russian) classifying category of transitivity is not so significant in Sinhala. The current study dealing with the government model "verb + accusative case without a preposition" may be regarded as a first stage of such systematic study aimed at both deeper understanding of the internal structures of the two languages and improvement of Russian language teaching methods for Sinhala-speaking students. A contrastive study of the two language systems may also be used for improving the methods of Sinhala language teaching for Russian-speaking students.

2357-1330 © 2020 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Sinhala language, verb, accusative case, preposition, language training.



This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

1. Introduction

When studying the Russian language for a Sinhalese audience, the most important aspect is the assimilation of its grammatical system. In this regard, the question arises of how much and how the grammatical material should be introduced at different stages of training.

Russian and Sinhala languages belong respectively to the Slavic and Indo-Aryan groups of the Indo-European language family. Both languages, being inflective, relate generally to the languages of the nominative system (with tangible elements of the active system in spoken Sinhala (Volkhonsky, 1982)), differ in the number of agglutinative elements in each of them.

The originality of the history, culture of life and everyday life of each people is clearly reflected in stable phrases – phraseological units with a national component. Such phraseological units constitute a significant part of the entire phraseology corpus in various languages. This also applies to robust grammar models (Vinogradov, 2014).

Mastering the language is one of the important tasks of professionally oriented language teaching.

2. Problem Statement

Grammar (being difficult in Russian) facilitates, systematizes, structures its study. This is a kind of “payment” for the pleasure of communicating in a foreign language. Inattention to one aspect of the language ... leads to serious problems in mastering the language (Pashkovskaya, 2019).

Students for whom Sinhala is the mother tongue need to have an idea of the development model of “verb + accusative case without a preposition”.

A verb is a part of speech whose categorical meaning is a process that unfolds in time. Verbs of the Russian language are characterized by such a lexical and syntactic attribute as transitivity, and such a derivational feature as recurrence.

The verb is one of the most difficult topics in the study of Russian grammar by Sinhala-speaking students. Objectively, this is due to the peculiarities of the verb system of the Russian language, as well as the fact that the verb has numerous grammatical forms: tense, form, conjugation, infinitive, imperative, subjunctive, reflexivity; verbs with different prefixes and suffixes exist. In addition, the verb, being an extremely informative grammatical unit, brings into speech various semantic nuances. In this regard, foreign students often have difficulty using verb forms. One of the priority tasks of a teacher of Russian as a foreign language is not just to introduce the foreigner to the paradigm of inflection of the Russian verb, but also to form a strong skill in the formation and use of verb forms.

3. Research Questions

Let us give examples of phrases “verb + noun” in which the verb governs the case forms of nouns with and without a preposition. In such combinations, there is a syntactic relationship of control. Transitive verbs, as a rule, control nouns in the form of the accusative case without a preposition. For example, “lyubit' rebenka” (to love a child), “ugostit' druzej” (to treat friends), “privetstvovat' sosedej” (to greet neighbors), “napolnit' korzinu” (to fill the basket), “otnesti sumku” (to carry a bag), “pojmat' okunya” (to catch perch). These phrases are a striking example of the construction of “verb + noun in the

accusative case" (Bychkov, 2014). In this case, there are also possible cases of managing nouns in the form of the genitive case: a) in negative constructions ("videt' zvyozdy" (to see the stars), but "ne videt' zvyozd" (not to see stars); b) to express the meaning of uncertainty: "vypit' vodu" (drank water) (for example, "vsyu vodu v kuvshine" (all water in a jug)), but "vypit' vody" (drink water) (some indefinite amount).

Sinhalese students meet verbs in the first lessons of the Russian language. As a rule, these verbs are presented in the form of an imperative: слушайте, пишите, повторяйте, читайте, открывайте, идите, etc. Next are presented the forms of the 2nd person singular ("Ty chitaesh'?" (Are you reading?)), 3rd person and singular ("Student chitaet" (The student is reading), "Oni chitayut" (They are reading)). At this stage of training, detailed formation of the form is not required. Here the principle of advanced learning works, in which acquaintance with the grammatical phenomenon occurs without explaining the rule. Phrases with a limited number of verbs are put into speech as idiomatic expressions through memorized dialogs, for example:

- CHto delaet student? (What is the student doing?)
- On chitaet (pishet, rasskazyvaet, etc.) (He is reading (writing, speaking, etc.).

Based on the experience of teaching Russian as a foreign language, the presentation of the verb inflection system is preferable before the introduction of the case system. Up to this point, it is advisable to avoid excessive theorizing and focus on developing reading skills and accumulating lexical material. In this case, the task of minimizing the theoretical part when explaining the material is of large importance.

During the training of foreign students, it is necessary to talk about the features of the accusative case, in particular, that it can be used both without pretext and with prepositions: v (in) ("idti v dom" (to go in the house)), na (on) ("prikhat' na pobyvku" (come for a visit)), za (for) ("nakazat' za prostupok" (punish for misconduct)), o (about) ("bit'sya o stenu" (beat against the wall)), po (till/until) ("pogruzit'sya po poyas" (dive till waist-high)), pod (under) ("ssudit' den'gi pod procenty" (lend money at interest)), pro (about) ("pro vsyo na svete" (about everything in the world)), s (with) ("s nogotok" (nail-size)), cherez (across) ("cherez pole" (across the field)), as well as "v otvet na" (in response to), "vkluychaya" (including), "nesmotrya na" (despite), "skvoz'" (through), etc. (Abdul-Rida, 2015; Bychkov, 2015).

When introducing the accusative case forms into the learning process, first of all, it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that the accusative case answers the questions "kogo? chto?" (Who? What?) and is used in combination with personal and non-personal forms of the verb. The main, typical function of the accusative case is to express the direct object of the action with transitive verbs: "rassmatrivayu kartinu" (looking at the picture), "gotovlyu urok" (preparing a lesson), "otkryvayu knigu" (open the book), "nadevayu plat'e" (putting on a dress) (Mikhailov, 2018; Morkovkin, Lutskaya, & Bogacheva, 2014).

To recognize the accusative case, you need to place to the noun word "vinyu" (blame) (i.e. "obvinyayu" (blame)) or "vizhu" (see): "vinyu (kogo?) mal'chika" ("blame (whom?) boy"), "vizhu (kogo?) slonyonka" (see (whom?) baby elephant), "vizhu (chto?) pal'mu" (see (what?) palm tree) (Gavrilova, 2015; Kuznetsova, 2013).

Further, it is necessary to show that the forms of the accusative case differ depending on which declension a particular noun refers to: "vizhu zeml=yu", "vizhu stol=Ø", "vizhu mysh=Ø" (see the earth,

see the table, see the mouse). They also differ in the plural: kon=ej, kra=ya, zhyon=Ø, zeml=i, bolot=a, pol=ya, kost=i, docher=ej, imen=a, put=i (horses, edges, wives, land, swamps, fields, bones, daughters, names, paths).

For Sinhala-speaking students, it is necessary to give information that the forms of the accusative case of animate and inanimate masculine nouns related to the second declension differ, and for animated nouns they coincide with the forms of the genitive case: "vizhu stol=Ø", but "vizhu slon=a" (I see the table, but I see the elephant).

In addition, it is extremely important to understand that adjectives in the Russian language are consistent in gender, number and case with nouns: "vizhu krasiv=uyu devushk=u", "krasiv=yj avtomobil'=Ø", "krasiv=oe zdani=e", "krasiv=ogo chelovek=a", "krasiv=ye mashin=y", "krasiv=yh lyud=ej" ("I see a beautiful girl", "a beautiful car", "a beautiful building", "a beautiful man", "beautiful cars", "beautiful people"). Next, you need to gradually introduce students to the various functions of the accusative case.

4. Purpose of the Study

To study the main difficulties arising in the development of the construction "verb + accusative case without a preposition" by Sinhala-speaking students in the conditions for teaching the Russian language outside the linguistic environment, and based on the comparison of grammatical constructions of the semantics of the utterance of Russian and Sinhala languages.

5. Research Methods

The following methods were used for the study: comparison and collation, observations and generalizations, distribution.

6. Findings

The main function of the accusative case in Russian is the accusative case of the object, i.e. association of a name denoting the subject on which the action is directed: "chitat' knigu" (read a book), "brosit' myach" (throw a ball), "kupit' dom" (buy a house), "videt' druga" (see a friend).

The object value of the accusative case is manifested:

- with transitive verbs: "kupit' dom", "chitat' knigu", "videt' druga" ("buy a house", "read a book", "see a friend");
- with predicates "zhalko" (sorry) ("Ptichku zhalko" (Sorry about the bird)), "zhal'" (sorry); as well "nado" (necessary), "nuzhno" (necessary), "bol'no" (painful), "vidno" (visible), "slyshno" (heard), "zametno" (noticeable) – when the sentence contains an indication of the subject of the state/sensory perception: "Nam otsyuda vidno reku" (We can see the river from here);
- in single-component sentences, where the name in the form of the accusative case denotes the desired object: "Karetu mne!", "Nagradu hrabrym!" ("Carriage to me!", "Award to the brave!")

Close to such use and the use of the accusative case as the accusative case of the result is for association of a noun denoting the subject, which is the result of the action: "ryt' yamu", "shit' plat'e" ("dig a hole", "sew a dress.").

Among other functions of the accusative case, the following can be distinguished:

Accusative case of time denotes the time of the action: "vstrechat'sya kazhdyj den'" (meet every day), "lezhat' celyj chas" (lie down for an hour), "prospat' sutki" (sleep the whole day), "vsyo leto" (all summer), "otdyhal mesyac" (rested for a month), "zanimalis' kazhdyj den'" (studied every day), "progovorit' chas po telefonu" (talk an hour by phone), "pomolchat' minutu" (keep quiet for a minute), "prihodil raz v nedelyu" (came once a week), "Nyneshnyuyu noch' emu nezdorovilos'" (He didn't get well tonight) (Mikheeva, 2015). The accusative case of quantity is used in the designation of value, when indicating the quantitative side of the manifestation of a verb action: "stoit dva rublya" (cost two rubles), "povtorit' tri raza" (repeat three times).

The accusative case of a measure indicates a measure of time, space or size: "zhdet' celuyu nedelyu" (wait a whole week), "projti pyat' kilometrov" (walk five kilometers), "vesit' tonnu" (weigh a ton).

It is extremely essential and poses difficulties for foreign students studying the Russian language to use the accusative case to associate the subject of an emotional or physiological state. The accusative of the subject is used in the following types of sentences:

In constructions that describe the emotional state of a person, if the formal subject is expressed by an abstract noun, or in impersonal constructions with an infinitive: "Menya ogorchaet neudacha, nastorazhivaet lozh'" (I am saddened by failure, guarded by a lie); "Rebyat voodushevil uspek" (The guys were inspired by success); "Sem'yu postiglo gore" (The family befell grief); а также: "Ego tyanet puteshestvovat'" (He is drawn to travel); "Sobesednika podmyvaet sporit'" (The interlocutor is tempting to argue).

In impersonal sentences describing physiological conditions: "Bol'nogo toshnit" (the patient feel sick); "Menya vsego tryasyot" (I'm shaking).

It should be borne in mind that in the Russian language the same verbs in different meanings can be characterized by either transitive or intransitive, that is, the sign of transitive/intransitive is directly related to the lexical meaning of the verb. For example, "igrat' rol'" (to play the role), "igrat' p'esu" (play a play) (verb "igrat'" (play) is transitive); but "igrat' s rebyonkom" (play with baby), "igrat' v lotto" (to play lotto) are intransitive.

For verbs that lose their independence in verb-nominal expressions, pseudo-transition can be observed: "osushchestvlyat' uborku" (carry out cleaning), "prinyat' reshenie" (make a decision) (in fact, these are verbs-compensators, they can easily be replaced by the verbs "pinyat'" (remove), "reshit'" (solve), etc..).

Transitional verbs include many semantic groups, such as verbs of creation: "sozdavat'" (create), "stroit'" (build), "sazhat'" (plant), "vyrashchivat'" (grow), "sochinyat'" (compose), "rozhat'" (give birth); verbs of destruction: "unichtozhit'" (destroy), "ubit'" (kill), "razrushit'" (destroy), "razorit'" (ruin); verbs with the meaning of an object change: "peredelat'" (redo), "sokratit'" (shorten), "ukorotit'" (shorten), "razmnozhit'" (duplicate), "skopirovat'" (copy); verbs of object moving: "dvigat'" (move), "perekladyvat'"

(shift), "stavit" (set), "peresyapat" (pour), "ottashchit" (pull off); verbs of emotional attitude: "lyubit" (love), "uvazhat" (respect), "nenavidet" (hate); verbs of rejection and assignment: "kupit" (buy), "prodats" (sell), "zalozhit" (lay); verbs with the meaning of perception, sensation: "slyshat" (hear), "chuvstvovat" (feel), etc.

For most transitive verbs, an addition in the accusative case is mandatory: its absence in the structure of a sentence or phrase is perceived as an ellipse, for example, in response replicas of a dialogue (1):

1) – Ty pivo segodnya pil? – Pil. – Mnogo pil? – Mnogo (Did you drink beer today? – I did. - Did you drink a lot? - A lot) (Bychkov, 2012).

The deliberate omission of the complement without contextual support, in contrast to (1), is considered as a special “objectless” use of the transitive verb in (2):

2) ZHal', ochen' zhal', on malyj s golovoj; / I slavno pishet, perevodit (Sorry, very sorry, he is small with his head; / And gloriously writes, translates) (Altynova, 2014).

In objectless use, the transitive verb, as a rule, means the subject's ability to perform an action. It is logical that mentioning the object is redundant in this case: the implied object is easily restored.

Native speakers use the correct case correctly, but they do not realize in which cases they use each of them. However, the differences in the grammatical structures of the mother tongue and the language of learning create serious difficulties for Sinhala-speaking students, including the development of accusative forms.

The first difficulty is due to the fact that in Sinhala (Sinhala language) there are two systemically opposed options – literary and colloquial – each of which has its own norm and has its own sphere of use. The differences between the two options are not limited to “distortions” or “deviations from the norm,” which allows speaking about the situation of diglossia (Gair, 1968).

The second difficulty is related to the fact that, in contrast to the Russian language, where the category of the gender of nouns is compiled by contrasting the male, female and middle gender, the main classification category of nouns in the Sinhala language is the category of animateness-inanimateness. Animate nouns include names denoting people, animals, gods, demons (minihā "chelovek" (person), lamayā "rebyonok" (child), dāriya "devochka" (girl), aliyā "slon" (elephant), kurullā "ptitsa" (bird), deviyā "bozhestvo" (deity), yakā "yaksha, demon" (demon)), inanimate names include those denoting objects, substances, phenomena, processes, etc. (pota "kniga" (book), geya "dom" (house), vāssa "dozhd" (rain), avva "znoj, solnechnyj svet" (heat, sunshine), baelma "vzglyad" (sight), gamana "poezdka" (ride), bat "varyonyj ris" (boiled rice)).

Animate and inanimate nouns distinguish between a set of cases, ways of expressing cases of the same name and their semantic-syntactic functions. Unlike the Russian language with its six-case declension system, in Sinhala the inanimate nouns have four synthetic case forms (direct, dative, ablative-instrumental and genitive-local cases), animate have five (nominative, accusative, dative-affective, ablative and genitive).

As regards the accusative case, inanimate nouns do not have a juxtaposition of the forms of the accusative and nominative cases – the same form (in the singular having, as a rule, the ending =a) serves both to designate the subject and direct addition: mēsaya uḍa pota tiyenavā "Na stole lezhit kniga"

(There's a book on the table); lamayā pota kiyavanavā "Mal'chik chitaet knigu" (The Boy is reading a book).

Animate nouns have different forms of the so-called "accusative" case in literary and colloquial languages. In the literary language, the "accusative" case (also called the "general case") can draw up not only the name of the direct supplement, but also the name of the subject, depending on the presence or absence of verbal coordination: minissu yati "Lyudi idut" (People go) (minissu is the nominative, plural from minihā "chelovek" (person); yati is the 3rd person, plural of the verb yanavā "idti" (go)); but minisun yanu æta "Lyudi, vozmozno, pojdut" (People might go) (minisun is the accusative, plural of minihā; yanu æta is an analytical construction of the imperative mood of yanavā, not changing in person and number).

In colloquial language, the indicator of the "accusative" case of animated nouns =va, firstly, is optional and can be omitted: mama lamayāva dækkā and mama lamayā = Ø dækkā YA uvidel mal'chika" (I saw a boy); in the last example, the form of the "accusative" case is identical to the nominative form); secondly, it can associate not only the name of the direct object, but also the name of the subject for certain types of verbs denoting spontaneous processes that occur contrary to the will of the subject (so-called involutive verbs): mama vætunā and māva vætunā "YA upal" (I fell).

In the Sinhala language there is also a certain number of verbs that are transitive into Russian, but they control not the accusative but the dative case of the object (baninavā "rugat'" (scold), koṭānavā "rubit'" (chop), gahanavā "bit'" (beat), aninavā "protykat'" (pierce) and some others): kumārayā nāgayā(va) mæruvā "Princ ubil zmeya" (Prince killed a snake), where nāgayā (va) is the accusative from nāgayā "zmej" (snake); but kumārayā nāgayāṭa keṭuvā "Princ razrubil zmeya" (Prince cut the snake), where nāgayāṭa is the datum).

The subjective function of the accusative case in the Russian language was noted above with predicates denoting emotional or physiological states. In the Sinhala language, to convey similar meanings, as a rule, constructions are used with the dative case of the subject (ending =ṭa): maṭa nidimatay "YA sonnyj; Menya klonit ko snu" (I'm sleepy; I'm getting sleepy); maṭa næṭenavā "Menya tyanet tancevat'" (I feel like dancing); maṭa ridenavā "Mne bol'no" (It hurts).

Finally, unlike the Russian language, adjectives in Sinhala do not vary by gender, number and case, and are not consistent with the nouns they define: lassana gæhæniyak āvā "Prishla krasivaya zhenshchina" (A beautiful woman came); mama lassana gey innavā "YA zhivu v krasivom dome" (I live in a beautiful house); lamayā lassana pintūrayak dækkā "Mal'chik uvidel krasivuyu kartinku" (The boy saw a beautiful picture).

A different set of classifying categories of a noun in Russian and Sinhala languages, a different set of cases and mismatching semantic and syntactic functions, a difference in matching models, all this creates considerable difficulties when studying Russian by Sinhala-speaking students. Constructions like "*Otec udaril mal'chiku" (Father hit the boy; should be "Otec udaril mal'chika", "*YA uvidel krasivyy zhenshchina" (I saw a beautiful woman; should be "YA uvidel krasivuyu zhenshchinu"), "*Menya vygonyal iz universiteta" (I was kicked out of university; should be "Menya vygnali iz universiteta") are typical examples of mistakes made by Sinhala students, especially in the early stages of learning the Russian language.

7. Conclusion

All this requires such an organization of the learning process in which the influence of the structures of the mother tongue will be minimized. Cases can be mastered only through situations in which they are used. This fact should be taken into account by teachers of the Russian language. That is, the best training for learning information about the new structure “verb + noun in the accusative case” will be a monologue (for example, a story about yourself, about your desires or preferences) or a dialogue (at best with a teacher who will steer towards answers with the right grammatical construction) based on previously read original texts in Russian. It is useful to describe pictures, retell read original texts and even memorize them by heart.

References

- Abdul-Rida, A. A. (2015). *Methods of teaching the use of Russian prepositions in the classroom in Russian as a foreign language in Sinhala audience*. (Cand. Dissertation). Moscow.
- Altynova, M. N. (2014). *Teaching methodology mastering the construction of the verb accusative case without the preposition Sinhalese audience*. Cheboksary.
- Bychkov, I. V. (2014). *Function words as a means to make it intelligible*. Cheboksary.
- Bychkov, V. I. (2012). Implementation of the requirements of the system-activity approach in the study of the preposition as part of speech in the Russian language lessons for students of Sinhala audience. *Modern probl. of sci. and ed.*, 6. Retrieved from <http://www.science-education.ru/106-7390>
- Bychkov, V. I. (2015). Typical mistakes of students in the use of prepositional structures of the Russian language. *In the world of sci. discover.*, 9(2), 434-440.
- Gair, J. W. (1968). Sinhalese diglossia. *Anthropol. Linguist.*, 10(8).
- Gavrilova, I. V. (2015). *Model mastering the construction of the verb accusative case without the preposition Sinhalese audience*. Cheboksary.
- Kuznetsova, I. V. (2013). The question of the development of the construction of the verb accusative case of different languages. *Bull. of Chelyabinsk state Univer.*, 2(293).
- Mikhailov, M. M. (2018). *Mastering the construction of the verb accusative case*. Cheboksary.
- Mikheeva, S. L. (2015). *Semantics of the temporal order in the use of verbal forms in combination with the circumstances in the modern Russian language*. (Cand. Dissertation). St. Petersburg.
- Morkovkin, V. V., Lutskaya, N. M., & Bogacheva, G. F. (2014). *Development of the verb accusative case construction*. Moscow: Lazur.
- Pashkovskaya, S. S. (2019). Searching for the “golden key” (problems of modern Russian as a foreign language textbooks). *Russ. Lang. Studies*, 17(1), 7-28. <https://doi.org/10.22363/2618-8163-2019-17-1-7-28>
- Vinogradov, V. V. (2014). *Russian language (grammatical teaching about the word)*. Moscow.
- Volkhonsky, B. M. (1982). *The system of grammatical word-classes and semantic foundations of the Colloquial Sinhalese grammatical structure*. (Doctoral Dissertation). Moscow.