ACTUAL DIVISION: ITS DISTINCTIVE FEATURES IN SCIENTIFIC RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH SPEECH

Elena Guzheva (a)*
*Corresponding author

(a) Novosibirsk State Technical University, Novosibirsk, Russia, ochidr@mail.ru

Abstract

The so-called communicative-functional approach, i.e. the study of language units from the point of view of communication has long been of great interest among scientists. The actual division of sentences is one of the most important tools for mastering the scientific style of speech, which helps students build cohesive, coherent and logical statements in oral and written professionally significant communication. The article considers the relevance of studying the theme-rhematic division of a sentence or utterance in scientific speech in a comparative analysis of Russian and English. The ways of highlighting the theme and rheme in these languages are described. The main focus is on the relationship of the syntactic word order with the actual division of a sentence or utterance. Special attention is paid to intonation, logical stress, and context as means of highlighting the theme and rheme in the languages being considered. The importance of creating a special manual which helps students master English using the basic knowledge of the actual division of a sentence or utterance is emphasized.

Keywords: Actual division, intonation, lexical means, syntactic

1. Introduction

As a result of the changes that have taken place in the nature of education, the view of a person as a learning component of the educational system has been replaced by a view of a creative, proactive, competitive, socially and academically mobile personality who is capable of working in a dynamically changing world of technology and social life. Such features as creativity in theoretical and scientific-cognitive activities, intentional, purposeful activity focused on solving practical problems are in the foreground (Kolesnikova, 2019).

Taking into consideration the openness of educational space in the modern world, and as a result, the growing need for students to master a foreign language for personal and professional communication, it becomes necessary to include a course for special purposes that helps to master the styles of oral and written scientific speech in the curriculum of studying a foreign language.

The need for the course is also due to the fact that, along with the requirements to perform scientific work in written form (annotations, articles, translations), students have to read reports, introduce presentations and speak at academic English conferences in Russia and abroad.

To build the statement properly, it is important for students to understand the features of communicative syntax, i.e. to have not only a clear idea of the order in which the subject and the predicate are arranged in a sentence or utterance. They should also understand how the division into the theme and rheme occurs. It contributes to the correct placement of accents during the speech process.

The practical value is to use the obtained results in the educational process when teaching the proficient oral and written speech to students. The proper topic segmentation and recognition is necessary not only when translating from one language into another for a more subtle transfer of the speaker's emotional state, but also for a more accurate statement construction.

2. Problem Statement

The problem of the actual division in Russian and English was subjected to detailed study. The connection between the grammatical and actual division of the sentence, the rules and types of arrangement of parts of the sentence, the peculiarities of rhematisation of individual parts of the sentence, methods of topicalization were established and clarified (Ivshin, Kovtunova, Raspopov, Mathesius, Fibras,). In English linguistics the communicative division of a sentence has also been studied by a number of scientists (Barkhudarov, Shevyakova, Smirnitsky).

It should be noted that not only scientists of the previous centuries, but also modern linguists have paid attention to the study of the actual division of a sentence or utterance. The role of the actual sentence division for the methodology of teaching a foreign language is emphasized in recent works of such linguists as (Alyousef, 2016; Chen et al., 2011; Leong, 2019; Potter, 2016; Wie, 2016).

These studies concern mainly the relationship between grammatical and actual division of a sentence, as well as take into account the actual division when translating from Russian into English and from English into Russian. However, creating special manuals that contribute to mastering the basics of the actual division of a sentence or utterance in the process of teaching a foreign language is still relevant.

3. Research Questions

The study of the actual sentence division is directly related to the study of syntax, since the wrong word order distorts sentence meaning, and makes it difficult to understand.

The research tasks are as follows:

- reviewing the main scientific works on the study of topic-comment relation;
- considering the list, if possible, of all intonation, syntactic, and lexical ways of highlighting the theme and rheme in English and Russian;
- establishing the differences and similarities of the theme and rheme characteristics and those of the sentence word order in the studied languages;
- summarizing the results obtained and drawing conclusions.

4. Purpose of the Study

According to Czech linguist Mathesius and other scholars, in addition to syntactic division, there is something else in the sentence or utterance, due to which the sentence is constructed in accordance with the speech situation, namely, the actual division. It is especially important to use the comparative aspect in the study of the actual division of a sentence. Firbas (1992) in his work notes that the contrastive method of learning languages is justified from the point of view that it is an important heuristic tool capable to reflect the characteristic features of the compared languages. It is the type of the research that makes it possible to identify certain similarities and differences in the functioning languages. Therefore, the teacher has the opportunity to take into account the peculiarities of the native language during the teaching process, which leads to a higher quality of mastering the subject.

It is expected that the results of the study will allow a deeper understanding of both the main and peripheral features of the semantic structure of an utterance in Russian and English, as well as contribute to the further development of English communicative grammar.

5. Research Methods

The main methods of the work are the comparative and structural methods, which allow one to highlight the constituent components of a sentence and consider how they relate to each other.

6. Findings

As early as 1855, French linguist Henri Weil drew his attention to the importance of actual sentence division when solving the problem of the word order. The doctrine of the actual division of the sentence was raised to new heights by William Mathesius. His main merit in this area is that he significantly deepened the understanding of the basic concepts of actual division and clarified its relationship to the formal division of a sentence (Zolotova, 1979). Each sentence contains certain information. However, new information may be available for understanding only if it is based on prior knowledge of the subject. Consequently, the structure of the sentence should contain not only the

information, which is known (the theme), but also the new one (the rheme). It indicates the binary nature of the actual division.

The information that was previously used in the text is considered to be activated. The new information is not activated. However, it cannot be said that the theme is always something that is activated, and the rheme is something that is not activated.

For example, in the sentence: "Turn on the lathe and place the blade of the cutter," "the lathe" is used as something known, i.e. the theme, although it is the first time the subject is spoken of, i.e. the theme is not activated.

In the following example, the rheme is activated:

"The turner was offered an angle grinder and a grinding machine to process the part. He used a grinding machine. In the second sentence, "the grinding machine" is included in the rheme being its accent, although the subject was already mentioned in the previous sentence.

Therefore, the theme is not always activated, and the rheme is not always deactivated. However, the rheme is definitely a carrier of illocutionary meaning, i.e. it contains a pragmatic component of the statement meaning and reflects the speaker's communicative goal.

As a rule, in a simple two-part sentence, the topic is the subject, since by its nature it is substantive, and the rheme is a predicate, which indicates its predicative nature.

The actual division is closely related to the syntactic one, which contributes to the expression of the subtlest gradations of meaning that are associated with the same object.

In order to understand the actual sentence division, it is important to apply not only the syntactic analysis, which is formally traditional for the sentence parts, but also the structural and semantic component analysis, which is prospective (Mathesius, 1967).

In addition to the main components of the theme and rheme in a sentence or utterance, there are additional non-rheumatic components, for example, "situations," a concept introduced by Vardul. These are attributive-adverbial phrases that relate to the situation in the sentence as a whole. They set a kind of condition in which the topic-focus contrast is realized: "In our Galaxy, in the vicinity of the Sun, the mass of dark matter is approximately equal to the mass of ordinary matter" (Vardul, 1989, p. 20).

According to Mathesius (1967) and Chafe (1976), most of the sentences with an objective word order implement the standard theme-rhematic scheme of actual division. Sentences with a subjective word order implement the rhematic or rheme-thematic scheme.

It should be noted that both languages are characterized by usual sequence of actual division – from the theme to the rheme, as well as by direct word order (Table 1).

Table 1. The features of actual sentence division in Russian and English

Common features	Differences
The actual sentence division reflects the main function of a sentence as a speech unit and its organization based on the principle of the availability of the information it provides.	There are significant differences in the possibilities of arranging word order, when organizing communicative division.
Both languages are characterized by the similarity in the functioning of typological actual division categories and the linear sequence of actual	Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships can be different.

division components.		
In both languages, it's possible to distinguish types of utterances.	However, different types of utterances are distinguished according to their structure.	
Both languages use the same methods and means of actual division.	The differences are in the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the methods and means of actual division	
Basically, the theme has the lowest degree of dynamism, the rheme has the highest (Bekchaev, 2019).	Russian	English
	Progressive sequence of actual division components, i.e. the communicative dynamism is increasing.	Regressive sequence of actual division components, i.e. the communicative dynamism is decreasing.

Many linguists believe that the theme and rheme of a sentence or utterance can be identified intuitively. However, there are certain means in the language making signal to the theme and rheme. These include intonation, syntactic, and lexical means which can be used differently in Russian and English.

The most striking is the prosodic method in which the speaker highlights the topic through intonation, pausation, stress (logical, phrasal, etc.). Through logical stress the speaker draws attention to the necessary word. The utterance becomes more emotional due to the emphatic stress. The theme is characterized by rising intonation, whereas downturn is typical for the rheme (Table 02).

Table 2. The common features in highlighting the theme and rheme using prosodic methods in English and Russian

Intonation	Intonational emphasis marks the syntactic function of each sentence part.
Logical stress	It is an absolute rheme indicator, which is characterized by a drop in tone.
Emphasis	When the rheme is initial inverted and non-inverted, the entire sentence receives some emphasis, since the end of the sentence, the theme, forms the second intonation center.

Another important means that plays a significant role in highlighting the theme and rheme in both languages is syntactic. As a rule, the known, that is, the given comes first in a sentence or utterance and often coincides with the subject.

If the subject expresses the theme, and the predicate expresses the rheme, then in Russian the predicative opposition is provided by intonation (Table 03); however, in English the intonation is complemented by the segmentation of a sentence: "The Professor, he has gone".

Table 3. Similarities and differences of syntactic features of a sentence or utterance in Russian and English

Common features	Differences	
	Russian	English
Word order performs a grammar and syntactic function.	The scope of this function is not the same in both languages. The grammar and syntactic functions of the word order in English are much wider than in Russian.	
	Type of morphological structure	
	Inflectional (synthetic)	Anglicism (analytical)
	Free word order	Fixed word order
Ability to rearrange words	Free word order Any word can be moved to the end, beginning or middle of the sentence.	As a rule, rearranging words is not possible, or it is associated with semantic shifts. It usually entails certain structural

		modifications of the entire sentence.
The concordance of words in a sentence	Words in a sentence agree by means of endings.	Categorial grammatical meanings in English are formed, as a rule, beyond the morphological structure of a word (Sarymbetova, 2019).
It is possible that both logical-grammatical subject and logical-grammatical predicate can take any position in a sentence or statement (Bekchaev, 2019).	There is no article, or the article is replaced by demonstrative pronouns: such, this, that, etc., which can be used before a logical-grammatical subject.	There is an article that can also serve as an indicator of a logical-grammatical subject and a logical-grammatical predicate (Bekchaev, 2019).

As previously mentioned, statements are where the rheme comes before the theme are often emphatic. In English, such phrases as "it's… who", "it is… that" are used for the purpose. Due to this kind of emphatic construction, it is possible to distinguish, i.e. rhematize any part of the sentence, except the predicate. "It's" and the highlighted word are followed by the conjunction (that, who, which), which introduces the rest of the sentence: It was N. Bohr who proved the stability of the Rutherford atom.

In Russian, it is possible to achieve an emphatic fall without changing the word order by means of logical stress: "It was Niels Bohr who confirmed the stability of Rutherford's atom".

Thus, this construction can be translated into Russian in various ways: syntactically (by subject's inversion), lexically (by particles: this, exactly) and logically stressed (Shevyakova & Pavlikova, 2001).

Another emphatic construction in English is the construction "there is", where "there" can be considered as a formal subject. Its main goal is to focus not on the expressiveness of the statement, but on the subject, as the semantic center of the sentence, i.e. the rheme. Also, in English, the rheme can be expressed by the agent in the final position, which is introduced by the preposition "by" when using the passive voice.

Lexical means are also important when highlighting the theme and the rheme in both languages.

The use of such means as intensifying and restrictive adverbs and particles does not differ significantly in the compared languages.

Other ways of predicative highlighting, such as particles, repetition, and syntactic parallel constructions are common to all parts of a sentence.

To highlight the theme and rheme, relational words are also used. They can be divided into 2 types:

▪ - determinatives that are used with a noun: in English, these are articles; in Russian they are adjectives and pronouns such as "один, какой" ("one, some") etc. In English, an indefinite article before a subject sometimes suggests that the latter is the rheme, it allows one to avoid inversion;

▪ - words with intensifying and restrictive meaning: in English they are "just, only, merely, mainly"; in Russian: "only, just, this, exactly, really," etc.

The use of the emphatic auxiliary verb "do" before the main verb is also a marker of the rheme. If it is before the main verb, it highlights the latter as the semantic center of the sentence, e.g.: The wave functions do exist. However, it can be used not only to highlight the rheme, but also in the rhythmic function, e.g.: Only in special cases do waves reinforce one another (Shevyakova & Pavlikova, 2001).

The rheme can be found due to the context (in a negative way). In English, the context is expressed more clearly, the theme is more specific. It is characterized by more explications, less implications.

The main ways of highlighting the rheme in English are intonation, the final position in a sentence or utterance, adverbs and special constructions.

The study made it possible to come to a very important conclusion that in the languages there are many common features in the implementation of theme-rhematic relations. These include the use of repetitions, elliptical constructions, the use of pronouns, intensifying particles and relative words as rhematizing and thematizing elements. In addition, logical stress, as one of the main markers of the rheme, is a universal means of predicative emphasis in both languages. However, the fixed order of the main parts of the sentence in the first and second places in English is due to the grammatical factor.

Thus, it can be noted that Russian and English use the whole range of syntactic, grammatical, lexical means for expressing the actual division of a sentence or utterance.

7.   Conclusion

When transmitting information, it is important to take into account the theme-rhematic organization of the text, which is formed by certain markers of the theme and rheme. Inaccurate transmission of the communicative structure of an utterance out of context can lead to a distortion of the meaning.

The paper considers the most relevant aspect of syntax from the point of view of the functioning of the language, i.e. the actual division of the sentence in Russian and English. The comparative analysis of this aspect made it possible to identify similar, specific features of the implementation of theme-rhematic relations in both languages. The theme-rhematic principle is the leading or even the only one in the organization of a sentence or utterance.

All the methods of highlighting a theme or rheme in each of the languages are quite an interesting material for comparative study. The comparative analysis showed that the compared languages have many universal features.

Thus, the comparative study of the actual division made it possible to reveal the common and characteristic features of the theme-rhematic organization of the utterance in Russian and English. The common thing is the presence of the components the "theme" and "rheme", the sequence of their arrangement within a sentence or utterance, as well as the same ways of highlighting the theme and rheme. The filling of a separate group of methods for predicative and nominative highlighting of sentence parts and their effectiveness in organizing a semantically meaningful statement is specific for each language. The results and conclusions obtained in the research will help to optimize the process of mastering English in order to form adequate communicative competence among non-native speakers.

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