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**BUILDING PROFESSIONALLY SIGNIFICANT TRANSLATOR
SKILLS BY THE SPECIALLY DESIGNED SYSTEM OF
EXERCISES**

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Abstract

The article presents a system of exercises for developing grammar discourse, which is professionally significant for a translator. Those skills are the components of the professional translation competencies: "semantic, interpretive, textual, intercultural and discursive. The system of exercises consists of three sets: foregrounding, drilling and control. The first one includes eleven exercises aimed at understanding and activating the grammatical concept of "theme-rheme" in Russian and building the corresponding concept in English. The second complex of exercises is aimed at intralinguistic translation. It comprises the exercises to restore the logical, semantic and syntactic structure of the written text based on the theme (given in bold) of the statement, exercises to restore the correct order of statements in the text, exercises to develop the verbal flexibility of the skill being formed, exercises to transform a short formal text message into a personal informal letter, exercises to compress a personal informal letter into a short message while keeping its theme and rheme arrangement. The third complex of exercises includes tasks for the interlingual translation. It consists of the exercises to convey the meaning of a statement in a foreign language by means of the native language, taking into account the actual division of the original text, exercises for partial translation, exercises to convey the meaning of a statement in another language. The students perform the first and second sets of exercises in the guided-independent learning mode; the third one is performed in the classroom environment.

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Keywords: Grammar discourse skills, system of exercises, theme and rheme, word order, conditionally communicative sentences



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1. Introduction

On the one hand, the skill of utterance actual division is grammatical, since it comprises basic skills (the skill of contextual use of articles, word order, grammatical structures (to change the subject-object relations of an utterance), and determinants. On the other hand, the skill of actual division is discursive, since it is involved in the discourse (the skill of analyzing a perceived utterance, the skill of organizing a reproduced utterance). That is, it is "grammatical-discursive.

This skill is professionally significant for a future translator, since it is involved in professional translation practice; it is part of all professionally significant translation competencies and facilitates the formation of professional translation thinking (Serova, 2001).

2. Problem Statement

Distinguishing the theme and rheme (Halliday, 2013; Mathesius, 1947) of the message remains a big problem for many senior students, which causes mistakes when reproducing the semantic content of the listened / read text. The prosodic means of distinguishing old and new information in an utterance are studied in some detail in the context of the introductory course. Then, due to the complexity of this phenomenon, the concepts of theme and rheme are traditionally explained when studying the introduction to linguistics, the stylistics of the Russian language and the theoretical grammar of the Russian language. That is, in theoretical terms, and only after the start of translation practice classes, the future translators begin to purposefully familiarize themselves with the means of expressing this concept. It is obvious that the utterance actual division skill mastering process can be organized in a different way, and there can be a different approach to mastering grammar when teaching native and foreign languages.

3. Research Questions

The article deals with the types of exercises for the utterance actual division skill mastering.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this article is to present a system of exercises, which help to develop a professionally significant, flexible grammar-discourse skill (Mitchell, 2016; Mitchell & Gural, 2016) that functions in the reception and production language activities.

5. Research Methods

The authors of the research use theoretical and empirical research methods. As for the theoretical ones, they include: analysis and study of scientific and methodological, pedagogical, psychological literature on the research topic, analysis of standards and regulations for the training program in question, analysis and best practice in training future translators, qualitative and quantitative comparative analysis of the students pilot training results. The list of empirical research methods includes: conversation,

observation, testing, analysis of the results of students' educational activities, experimental training, including the ascertaining, forming and final stages.

6. Findings

The translator's professional activity is based on his ability to understand the translation text correctly and fully. To understand the text successfully, the translator must be able to switch from a known fact to an unknown one, from one subject to another, from one talking point to the next. Thus, the grammar-discourse skill becomes professionally significant in the translators' work, and determines their professional effectiveness. They are part of the professional translation competencies: "semantic, interpretive, textual, intercultural and discursive" (Evstigneeva, 2013, pp. 74–82).

In the methodology of teaching foreign languages, there are a number of interpretations of the concept of "exercise" (Bim, 1988; Minyar-Beloruchev, 1990). Shatilov defines this term as: "a single or multiple performance of a separate or a number of speech or language operations, or actions, especially in educational conditions" (as cited in Kuzmin, 2019).

In general, these are conditionally-communicative exercises, dedicated to different aspects. The main task of such exercises is to drill the grammar structures in conditionally-communicative professionally-oriented situations. The exercises, where the receptive productive skill is involved in communicative situations that are close to situations of professional translation practice, are considered as the most relevant for our purposes, i.e. the formation of professionally significant grammar-discourse skills. Let's take a closer look at the exercises that are part of the system. The sets of exercises below are included into the complex for the Translation Faculty first-year students' pilot training, and are discussed in more detail in the dissertation (Porshneva & Spiridonova, 2008). The first set of exercises includes eleven exercises aimed at understanding and activating the grammatical concept (Golubeva, 2010a, 2010b; Kuzmina, 2016) of "theme-rheme" in Russian and building the corresponding concept in English. Let's take a closer and more extensive look at the exercises of the first set of the complex.

1. Exercises for choosing a contextual question for an utterance or a micro-text. Choose the questions that correspond to the following statements.

- a) Who left for America last night? A) A pencil.
- b) What is lying on the floor? B) My friend Bobby.

2. Exercises for comparing the statements given in pairs and finding differences in the word order.

What questions can be asked about these statements?

- В первой лаборатории занимаются студенты.
*There are students doing exercises in the first laboratory.
- В первой лаборатории студенты занимаются.
*In the first laboratory students do exercises.
- New Zealand is many things.
- Many things are New Zealand.

3. Exercises for contextual change of the position of the theme and rheme.

Change the statements so that they become an answer to the question "What was he doing at that time?"

- Профессор ответил на вопросы в конце лекции.

* The professor answered questions at the end of the lecture.

• Режиссер возобновил работу над новой пьесой после возвращения театра из гастрольной поездки.

* The theatre director re-started working on the new play after the theatre group returned back from tour.

• Israel's foreign ministry accused Abbas of fuelling religious and nationalist hatred against the Jewish people and Israel last Tuesday.

* The European Union's foreign service also condemned the remarks as "unacceptable" yesterday.

4. Exercises to determine the components of the actual division of the statement. Determine the theme and rheme in the statements in Russian and English.

• Проблемы в работе Telegram возникли из-за массового отключения электричества в районе Амстердама.

* The problems in the Telegram operation arose due to a massive power outage in the Amsterdam area.

• In 1994, Ch. Murray and R. Herrnstein coauthored "The Bell Curve".

5. Exercises to identify the contextual order of words in an utterance. What is the reason for such an order of words in the statements? Identify an example of using inversion.

• Ходила Анна в парк вчера.

* Ann went to the park yesterday.

• Вот восходит солнце.

* Here comes the Sun.

• Anna went to the park yesterday.

• There must be a reason for it.

6. Exercises for the selection of synonymous grammatical phenomena. In this exercise, students identify differences in the grammatical expression of the theme and rheme, as well as in the order of words.

Find the Russian statement that corresponds to the following statement Here is the magazine you asked for:

• Журнал, который ты просил – вот.

* The magazine you asked for is here.

• Вот журнал, который ты просил.

* Here is the magazine you asked for.

• Журнал, который ты просил.

* The magazine you asked for.

7. Exercises to identify semantic differences.

This exercise is aimed at determining the function of the selected member of the sentence in the context of its actual division.

Determine the theme and rheme of the utterance, as well as their type (simple or compound).

• Бельгия одержала победу.

* Belgium won the match.

- Победу одержала Бельгия.
- * It was Belgium who won the match

State the function of the clauses, subjects, predicates, objects, attributes and adverbial modifiers, given in bold, in the context of actual sentence division.

- Mary stepped back.
- Never has James been so stupid!
- His tip is of no value for us.

8. Exercises for grammatical transformation.

This type of exercises is aimed at training the skill of using the contextual word order by changing the order of words in a statement in accordance with the conditions of communication. The exercise is done in two languages.

Find the part of the utterance that is the rheme, and determine its composition.

- Я отправил СМС моей старшей сестре.
- * I sent an SMS to my elder sister
- Мой начальник был чуть более оптимистичен.
- * My boss was a little but more optimistic.
- The car was sold by an old lady.

9. Exercises to find and correct mistakes that distort the meaning of the text.

Read the statements in Russian and in English and identify the theme and rheme. Pay attention to the components of the actual division of the statements and indicate the grammatical means of their expression.

- Эти курсовые проверю я.
- * These course works will be marked by me.
- Те курсовые будет проверять заведующий кафедрой.
- * These course works will be marked by the head of department.
- There isn't just one way to cook rice in Russia, there are about 100 tasty dishes cooked with rice in different parts of our country.
- The young have never taken this issue seriously.

10. Exercises focused on the word order in utterances in the native and foreign languages. Students should put the words in English sentences in the correct order, paying attention to the theme (given in bold) of the statement. For example:

Put the words in the correct order.

Сборная/ по футболу / Федерации / поражение / потерпела / в июне 2021 года / с Бельгией / в матче / Российской /.

* National team/ football/ Federation/ defeat/ experienced/ in June 2021/ with Belgium/ in match/ Russian/.

Unscramble the sentences. The rheme is given in bold type.

- aren't / in / neighborhood / there / new / any / our / buildings.
- our / concerns / she/ about / has / business trip / no.

11. Exercises to restore the correct word order in texts in English and Russian. Here it is proposed to analyze the statements from the point of view of the theme and the rheme, as well as restore the word order of the statements.

Determine if the word order in these statements is distorted:

Посетители ежегодного кулинарного фестиваля – в основном молодые люди и семьи с детьми, как и полагается, - сувениры все скупали.

* The visitors to the annual culinary festival were mostly young people and families with children, as it was expected - all the souvenirs were sold out

State whether the word order is correct in the sentences of this text:

When at last I bid farewell to Mr. Black I must admit I didn't notice anything in his behavior that spoke of his grief.

The second complex of exercises is aimed at intralinguistic translation. It consists of tasks for paraphrasing, compressing or expanding the listened (read) text while preserving its actual division.

1. Exercises to restore the logical, semantic and syntactic structure of the written text based on the theme (given in bold) of the statement. The text should be logical and complete.

You will hear (read) 5 phrases. Each phrase is the theme of one unfinished utterance of a text. Complete the sentences to make the text logical.

• Впереди моей машины ехал красный мерседес, очень медленно, хотя впереди дорога была пустая.

* In front of my car a red Mercedes was driving, very slowly, although the road ahead was empty.

• За рулем была _____.

* Behind the wheel was _____.

• С ней рядом находился _____ и _____.

* Next to her was _____ and _____.

• Он казался утомленным: _____ и _____.

* He seemed tired: _____ and _____.

• Я _____ им и _____: они незамедлительно _____.

* I _____ at them and _____: they immediately _____.

You are going to listen to 5 phrases, each being a theme of the unfinished sentence in the text. Complete the sentences making them logical.

• Anyway, Jonathan _____.

• An only child, an owner of a family business, she seemed _____.

• When they did so, they immediately _____.

2. Exercises to restore the correct order of statements in the text. Students are requested to arrange the semantic parts of the text in the correct order.

Restore the meaning of the text by arranging its parts in the right order, paying attention to theme-rheme correlations.

• Он уселся на берегу, засмотрелся на набегающие волны, от них веяло прохладой.

* He sat down on the sea shore, gazing at the approaching waves, coolness emanated from them.

• Он с трудом переносил июльскую жару, но морской пейзаж действовал на него, как настоящее лекарство.

* He could hardly stand the heat of July, but the marine landscape was like a medicine for him.

• Солнце уже было не в зените, но пляж был почти безлюдным.

* The Sun wasn't high already but the beach was almost deserted.

• Шел уже пятый день его пребывания у моря.

* It was his fifth day at the seaside

Here students change the type of syntactic relations between parts of these sentences, as well as the order of sentences in the text. As a result, students may have different texts. This exercise fosters the syntactic skill of building up composite and complex sentences.

Read the mixed up sentences from one text. Put them in the right order. Watch the highlighted themes in the sentences.

In the bus, just opposite me, there were two young ladies; from their conversation I found out that they were studying English philology.

One of the ladies appealed to me very much, I left the bus and waved goodbye to her.

It was early June, the bus was overcrowded with students.

I was going to the Technical University, it is opposite the Linguistics University.

3. Exercises to develop the verbal flexibility of the skill being formed. Their purpose is to develop the skill of amplifying the theme and rheme of a statement. At the same time, students should keep in mind that the order of adverbial modifiers, objects and attributes is strictly fixed in English. For example:

Read the advertisement. Make it more emotional by using the determinants and expressive attributes in the themes and rhemes of the statements. Highlight the inserted text in bold.

Гостиничный комплекс “Измайловский” находится в непосредственной близости от Измайловского Кремля – одной из достопримечательностей Москвы. Гостиница окружена многочисленными кафе, ресторанами, магазинами...

* The Izmailovsky hotel facilities are located in close proximity to the Izmailovsky Kremlin, one of the sights of Moscow. The hotel is surrounded by numerous cafes, restaurants, shops...

Read the following advertisement. Using more emotional language units (expressive adverbial modifiers and attributes) in the themes and rhemes, make the ad more vivid and eye-catching. Highlight the inserted text.

KILLARNEY PLAZA HOTEL AND SPA.

This smoke-free hotel features 3 restaurants, a full-service spa, and an indoor pool. Wi-Fi in public areas is free. Additionally, a health club, a bar/lounge, and a coffee shop/café are onsite.

All 198 rooms provide conveniences like electric kettles and free tea bags/instant coffee, plus free Wi-Fi and plasma TVs. Room service, premium bedding, and free newspapers are among the other amenities available to guests.

Front desk staff will greet guests on arrival.

Pets not allowed

Children are welcome.

Rollaway/extra beds are not available.

4. Exercises to transform a short formal text message into a personal informal letter. Students paraphrase the telegram into a personal informal letter. In this exercise, students broaden the statement while maintaining its actual division, taking into account the style of the text they deal with.

5. Exercises to compress a personal informal letter into a short message while keeping its theme and rheme arrangement. The texts of the letters are authentic messages.

The third complex of exercises includes tasks for the interlingual translation. The receptive-productive grammar-discourse skill of the utterance actual division is trained with the constant comparison of the systems of the two languages. The complex includes the tasks to convey the meaning of the original utterance while keeping the actual division of the sentence in the other language, as well as the tasks to find corresponding grammatical features in the system of two languages, in order to express the actual division of the utterance, relevant for the speech situation. It should be noted that the exercise may include sentences for analysis with a missing or zero rheme. Here, students are to choose the necessary parenthetical phrases in their native or foreign language in accordance with the set communicative task. At the same time, the main purpose of these exercises is to form the grammar-discourse skill as the core feature for readiness to master translation.

1. Exercises to convey the meaning of a statement in a foreign language by means of the native language, taking into account the actual division of the original text. The original text, consisting of well-known words, is full of parentheses.

Say it in Russian.

My car is not fast, it is slow. Under its hood, there is a sixteen valve four cylinder engine. There are four power windows. There is an AC system. There is a car audio system. There are four passenger seats. There

2. Exercises for partial translation. Students define the function of the subordinative conjunction "THAT" in various subordinate clauses and find its equivalent in Russian, taking into account its function in the utterance.

Read the text. Say "that" in Russian.

Nowadays everybody knows THAT cardio is extremely good for health. City parks, river banks and modern urban spaces are famous for the scooters and bicycles THAT can be hired online, and there are many news items in cities' TV and internet media about THAT...

The assignment contains several phrases and statements in which the usage of different similar words (conjunctions, pronouns) is compared.

3. Exercises to convey the meaning of a statement in another language. Some of the sentences have zero themes (impersonal sentences with a formal subject).

Say the same in Russian.

- It is fun to have many friends.
- It is a pleasure to meet you.

Convey the meaning of this phrase in English and indicate the type of subject.

Say it in English.

- Светает.
- * It's getting light.

- Смеркается.
- * It's getting dark.

7. Conclusion

There are the exercises, to be performed by students independently, or in the classroom, guided by a teacher, as well as in the form of blended learning (Polat, 2005). The mode of performing grammatical exercises depends on a number of objective factors: the amount of classroom time allocated for mastering the grammatical side of a foreign language and the students' general level of training.

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