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PREPOSITION AS A GRAMMATICAL MARKER OF LANGUAGE PECULIARITIES

Summary. The article gives an analysis of the specific lexical and grammatical group of words, prepositions, in terms of teaching Russian as a foreign language; the comparison of Russian and English prepositions is given; the conclusions concerning the methods of teaching Russian prepositions to international students are made.

Key words: preposition, grammatical marker, meanings of prepositions, monosemy and polysemy, frequency, valence of prepositions, context, structure of prepositions, Russian as a foreign language.

Introduction. Prepositions can be referred to a specific lexical and grammatical group of words which express various object and adverbial relations in word combinations and sentences. Prepositions have different structure, etymology, semantic capacity and combinatory with case forms, synonymy and antonymy.

Proper acquisition of the branched prepositional-case system of the Russian language is not easy even for native speakers (speaking only about locative prepositions used by Russian-speaking children, Leikin claims it is "a complex process which is not completed until approximately age 7. The acquisition of the prepositional system is equivalent to the acquisition of the prepositions' semantic system" [7, p. 91]); let alone for international learners: it is difficult and requires both a deep analysis and a simple memorization. Formation of steady language skills takes place in an active communication by reading scientific and literary texts, doing a great number of grammar exercises that present a variety of prepositions in their functioning in a live speech [3].

It is commonly recognized that general information about prepositions should include pointing out to some of their phonetic peculiarities (joined-up pronunciation of Russian prepositions in comparison with English ones: *на столе* – *on the table*; phonetic accommodation: *в доме* [вдом'у], *в классе* [фклас'у]), polysemy (both in Russian and English: for example, English *after* has the meanings of Russian *после, через, после того как, потом* which may cause such mistakes as *после три года* (*after three years*), *после он пришел* (*after his coming*)), first position of Russian prepositions in interrogative sentences i.e., *О ком он думает?* (*Who is he thinking about?*) which is not necessary in English and may lead to a common learners' mistake *Кто/кого он думает?* (examples are taken from [1]).

However, special complex studies of prepositions, so numerous and diverse in meaning, seem not to be enough for the sake of teaching Russian as a Foreign Language (RFL) and, moreover, not to be insured by RFL programs – neither at elementary, nor at advanced

levels of training (an attempt to improve the situation was made by the authors of "The Russian language program for foreign students of basic faculties of higher educational institutions of Ukraine of III–IV levels of accreditation" [4]).

Meanwhile, the full acquisition of this topic is problematic and is simply impossible without special study guides, grammar tables and commentaries, because there are some objective difficulties during learners' reception/production of the texts with prepositions. These difficulties are stipulated by the following: 1) there are no prepositions (prepositional-case forms) in learners' languages – isolating languages; 2) there are prepositions (prepositional-case forms) in learners' languages – inflected languages (Slavic languages), but they do not often meet the prepositional-case forms of the Russian language (the calques produced do not always correctly deliver the existing forms of the Russian language); 3) if even there is a group of prepositions and a case system in learners' languages, the number of prepositions and their semantic potential may be different from the corresponding grammatical realities of the Russian language (Romance and Germanic languages); 4) in learners' languages, the respective relationships are expressed via agglutination (Turkic languages).

Therefore, there are serious problems in the study of numerous lexical and grammatical prepositions group (according to E. Vorob'jova, "The Explanatory Comparative Dictionary of Russian and Ukrainian Prepositions" by G. Tsyganenko explains 22 primary Russian and 20 primary Ukrainian prepositions, as well as 280 secondary prepositions of each of these languages [2]).

Main body of the research. The most important theoretical notions on the nature of Russian prepositions the international students need to learn are as follows.

1. A preposition is an uninflected relational word expressing the relations of objects, actions, and signs to each other. It is a grammatical means of connection of nouns with other words in word combinations and sentences. The grammatical function of prepositions is semantically associated with the grammatical category of a case and formally – with the case inflection (i.e., only a noun can be the governed word, and any notional word can be the governing word): *выйти из дома, разговор об экзамене, готов к экзамену, недалеко от центра* (*to go out of the house, a talk about the exam, ready for the exam, not far from the center*).

2. Lexical meanings of prepositions are varied and depend on the meanings of the connected notional words – general and particular ones. General meanings may be spatial, temporal, etc. For example: *жить в городе, приехать из города, ехать через город,*

проехать мимо города (to live **in** the city, to come **from** the city, to go **through** the city, to go **past** the city). Particular meanings of a preposition are the elements of general meaning in which the preposition is different from the others: *ручка лежит в столе – на столе – под столом* (The pen is **in** the table – **on** the table – **under** the table).

Lexical meanings of prepositions act as their individual characteristics. The semantics of prepositions combine their lexical and grammatical meanings. Prepositional meanings are their grammatical meanings, while lexical meanings specify spatial, temporal, and other relations. Therefore, various prepositions combining with the same case forms of a noun can express different meanings, for example Genitive case + various preposition: *у тебя, для тебя, от тебя, до тебя, без тебя, из-за тебя* (at you = at your place, for you, from you, to you, without you, because of you) and others.

3. Prepositions can be monosemantic and polysemous, because words different in time of origin and morphological structure are referred to them, and the composition of prepositions is compound. Prepositions can be monosemantic and polysemous, because words different in time of origin and morphological structure are referred to them, and the composition of prepositions is compound.

Monosemantic are derivative, "young" prepositions. They were formed from other parts of speech relatively late and therefore can be characterized by full etymological and semantic clarity, for example: *мимо, в целях, внутри, спустя, включая* (past, in order to, inside, after, including) and others.

Lexical polysemy is typical for non-derivative (primary) prepositions. Their lexical meaning is much more "paler", which is explained by the loss of genetic relationship with those words from which they were formed, and that is why they are polysemous. So, preposition *на* (on) has 28 meanings, *в* (in) – 21, *по* (along) – 19, *с* (with) – 23, *от* (from) – 14, *под* (under) – 10, *до* (before) – 8, *перед* (in front of) – 4, *у* (at) – 5 meanings [6].

4. Prepositions are of different frequency. Primary prepositions have the highest frequency: *без* (without) – 1395, *при* (at) – 1321, *под* (under) – 1484, *до* (before) – 2063, *для* (for) – 3254, *от* (from) – 3572, *о* (about) – 4156, *из* (from, out of) – 4598, *у* (at) – 623, *за* (behind) – 5048, *по* (along) – 5157, *к* (to) – 6247, *с* (with) – 12975, *на* (on) – 17262, *в* (in) – 42854 [5].

5. Prepositions are used for the expression of case meanings; they specify and clarify them. There are certain semantic correspondences between the meanings of the preposition and case, and that is why each case is associated with prepositions of strictly defined semantics. So, prepositions *от, из, с* (from) denoting separation, removal, cause, and source normally combine with the form of Genitive case. Close to them are prepositions denoting absence, as well as prepositions with the meaning of approach, nearness: *до, у, возле, около, близ* (to, at, near, around, close to). Prepositions denoting directedness to the object combine with the form of Dative case – *к, по* (to, along). Prepositions expressing a direct relation to the object combine with the form of Accusative case – *в, на* (to), *через, под* (over, under) and others.

Thus, each case has its own range of prepositions (or different valence). Most prepositions combine with the form of one case, sometimes with the forms of 2 cases, and rarely – with the forms 3 cases: *без, для, до, из, кроме, от, ради, из-за, из-под* (without, for, before, from, except, from, for the sake of, because of, from under) + Genitive case; *к* (to) + Dative case; *по, через* (about, through) + Accusative case; *над, перед* (over, before) + Instrumental case; *при* (at) + Prepositional case; *в* (to, in), *на* (to, on) + Accusative case and

Prepositional case; *за* (for, behind), *под* (under) + Accusative case and Instrumental case; *между, меж* (between) + Genitive case and Instrumental case; *по* (along, for, after) + Dative case, Accusative case, and Prepositional case; *с* (from, about, with) + Genitive case, Accusative case, and Instrumental case.

In combination with different case forms prepositions express their different meanings: preposition *в* (into) + Accusative case denotes the motion directed inside – *положить в сумку* (put smth. into a bag), and *в* (in) + Prepositional case denotes location – *лежат в сумке* (to lie in a bag); preposition *с* (from) expresses the removal of smth. from smth. – *взять с полки* (to take smth. from the shelf), *с* (for about) + Accusative case denotes an approximate measure – *отдохнуть с неделю* (to rest for about a week), *с* (with) + Instrumental case denotes a co-doer – *гулять с сыном* (to walk with a son). This grammatical polysemy is typical for non-derivative prepositions only.

As for the derivatives, there should be mentioned denominative prepositions combining with Genitive case, with the exception of those genetically related to adverbs. As for the derivatives, there should be mentioned denominative prepositions combining with Genitive case, with the exception of those genetically related to adverbs. All adverbial prepositions can be combined with Dative case: *согласно указанию* (according to the indication); verbal prepositions – also with Dative case: *благодаря* (due to), and with Genitive case: *не исключая* (not excepting), and with Accusative case: *включая* (including), *спустя* (after).

6. The main types of relations expressed by prepositions are: spatial, temporal, object, purpose, comparative, ablative, attribute, cause-and-effect, etc.: *выйти из дома* (to go **out of** the house), *уехать на год* (to leave **for** a year), *работать над статьей* (to work **at** an article), *пойти за хлебом* (to go **for** bread), *все, кроме друга* (all **except** a friend), *играть на гитаре* (to play the guitar), *платье из шёлка* (a dress **of** silk), *устать от забот* (to get tired **of** troubles).

The same preposition may express several types of relations, for example prepositions *с, от, в, на, по, под, из* express spatial, temporal and purpose relations. Compare: *жить на юге* (to live **in** the South), *отпуск на месяц* (a leave **for** a month), *деньги на подарок* (money **for** a gift); *выйти из университета* (to come **out of** the university), *из года в год* (**over** the years), *из мести* (**for** revenge); *поехать в Киев* (to go **to** Kiev), *родиться в июне* (to be born **in** June), *сделать в отместку* (to do smth. **out of** revenge).

7. Prepositions and context. Meanings of prepositions appear in a certain environment. Minimum context of prepositions include a governing word (dominant) and a governed word (specifier of the dominant). Governing words are verbs or nomina, and governed words are nouns in oblique cases: *работать над книгой* (to work at a book), *работа над книгой* (the work at a book), *борьба за мир* (to fight for peace), *борьба с болезнью* (the fight against the disease), *дружба между народами* (the friendship between the peoples).

8. The structure of prepositions. According to the structure, all prepositions are divided into simple and complex ones; morphologically they are divided into non-derivatives (such as *в, на, к, с*) and derivatives (*во время* (during), *относительно* (relatively), *несмотря на* (despite)).

The core of the system of prepositions is formed by non-derivative prepositions. The derivative prepositions may be as follows: adverbial (*вблизи* (near), *вокруг* (around), *напротив* (opposite), *после* (after), *около* (about), *подобно* (like)); denominal (*с целью* (in order

to), в ходе (during), по мере (in the course of), при помощи (with the help of), за исключением (except); verbal (благодаря (thanks to), судя по (speak by), невзирая на (in spite of)).

9. Synonymy and antonymy of prepositions. There are synonymous prepositions, denoting spatial proximity: у = около = близ = возле = подле (at = near = near = near = near), and antonymous prepositions, with spatial meaning: в ≠ из, над ≠ под, к ≠ от (into ≠ out of, over ≠ under, to ≠ from).

10. There are also some peculiarities in usage of Russian prepositions. For example, the harmony of vowels, i.e. a correspondence between the prefix of a verb and a preposition: войти в дом (to enter the house), написать на листке (to write on a sheet), отъехать от дома (to drive away from the house), погулять по городу (to walk about the city), спежтаться с лестницы (to run down the stairs).

It is also possible a repetition of the same preposition with homogeneous parts of the sentence, or its only once usage; its preposition or postposition in relation to the case form, and other peculiarities.

Conclusions. Theoretical information about prepositions in the Russian language implies the following conclusions for the methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language (authors' practical experience in this field is reflected in a special study guide including theoretical background, 320 exercises, 12 tables, and other materials on Russian prepositions [3]).

1. When teaching the prepositions to students of elementary level, a teacher should ensure the fullest possible acquaintance of students with this group of words.

2. It is necessary to take into account both the potential range of their meanings and compatibility depending on the semantics of nouns and impact on the prepositional-case forms.

3. Verbs of motion with prefixes and their government should be learnt separately and carefully.

4. A teacher should pay attention to synonymy and antonymy of prepositions considering these phenomena to be a source of their grammatical potency, and also homonymy of prepositions with other words should be pointed out.

5. An interference of the Russian language with the language of the intermediary, or students' native language should be prevented, and language peculiarities properly accounted.

6. When deepening into this grammatical topic a teacher needs to focus recipients' attention on the stylistic differences in usage of prepositions.

7. To consolidate the skills and knowledge in this field, a teacher should use a significant number of exercises (communication, training, illustration ones) which should be of various structure and content.

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Нагайцева Н. И., Романов Ю. О. Приименник як граматичний маркер особливостей мови

Анотація. У статті подано аналіз специфічної лексико-граматичної групи слів – прийменників – із погляду викладання російської мови як іноземної; проводиться порівняння російських і англійських прийменників; зроблено висновки, що стосуються методики викладання російських прийменників іноземним студентам.

Ключові слова: прийменник, граматичний маркер, значення прийменників, моносемія й полісемія, частотність, валентність прийменників, контекст, будова прийменників, російська як іноземна.

Нагайцева Н. И., Романов Ю. А. Предлог как грамматический маркер особенностей языка

Аннотация. В статье представлен анализ специфической лексико-грамматической группы слов – предлогов – с точки зрения преподавания русского языка как иностранного; проводится сопоставление русских и английских предлогов; сделаны выводы, касающиеся методики преподавания русских предлогов иностранным студентам.

Ключевые слова: предлог, грамматический маркер, значения предлогов, моносемия и полисемия, частотность, валентность предлогов, контекст, строение предлогов, русский как иностранный.

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