THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LINGUISTIC SYSTEMS IN TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

The interference of the native language or the intermediate language (we mean the negative influence of the native language system on the mastering of grammatical phenomena of the language being studied) is determined on the basis of the results of a comparative analysis of two linguistic systems.

The main cause of mistakes in oral and written Russian speech is in the complex interaction of the mechanisms of interlingual and intralingual interference.

Interlingual and intralingual interferences give us a lot of material for various studies. Linguists traditionally use it to conduct research in the field of comparative linguistics, psychologists use it in the development of the theory of speech activity, methodologists and psycholinguists use it for solving problems related to the content of the learning process and the quality and effectiveness of studies of a foreign language.

This analysis makes it possible to use methods of teaching that contribute to a positive transfer of skills of using the phenomena of one language to the formation of skills in the second language system, helps to prevent and to overcome the interference.

We may come across the transference and the interference while studying any linguistic phenomenon and at any level throughout the entire learning process.

Keywords: linguistic system, comparative analysis, interference, transfer, communicative tasks.

1 INTRODUCTION

We are experiencing a period of internationalization and globalization of all processes of social life.

The Council for cultural cooperation in the field of modern languages has developed a European system of language levels based on the communicative approach and including all types of speech activity [1].

The requirements for communicative competence, taking into account the changed contingent and the communicative needs of the students, have led to the creation of a system of standards, programs, lexical vocabulary, control materials and measurement materials for the Russian language as a foreign language [2; 3].

The system is based on a multi-stage description of the Russian language, suggesting the presence of six certification levels of general knowledge of the Russian language. Accordingly, there appeared such a type of errors as “the error of the level”.

It should also be noted that the quantity and quality of mistakes are influenced by the characteristics of the native language of the student.

Interest in mistakes in foreign speech as a result of the interaction of the native and studied languages was manifested in the thirties of the twentieth century, when scientists tried to establish analogies and differences between the two languages. The phenomenon, which was called the interference, allowed dividing the mistakes into two large groups in the eighties: interlingual and intra-lingual.

It was proposed to look for the main cause of violations of oral and written Russian speech in foreign students in the complex interaction of mechanisms of interlanguage and intra-linguistic interference.

2 METHODOLOGY

The following methods were used in the research: analysis of methodical literature and analysis of dissertation researches on the topic; monitoring the process of developing foreign students’ skills in productive oral and written speech, monitoring the process of developing grammar and lexical skills.
3 RESULTS

Analysis of the most frequent students’ mistakes that are found in oral and written speech shows difficulties in solving certain communication problems. The same difficulties arise in the realization of the intentions specified in every standard level.

The reason for these difficulties may be the following factors:

- interference of the mother tongue or intermediary language;
- insufficient development of grammatical forms at the receptive level;
- absence of specific knowledge about the correspondence of grammatical forms to certain situations where they should function;
- absence of well-developed skills in productive oral and written speech, which dramatically increases the number of lexical and grammatical mistakes in corresponding kind of productive speech;
- absence of freedom in choice of language material in the answer, which can be defined as the result of insufficiently developed skills of transformation of language units, selection of synonyms, replacement of syntactic constructions with the synonymous constructions, etc.

As an example, a comparative analysis of some syntactic structures of the source (English) language and the studied (Russian) language can be given.

In the Russian language, a simple sentence consisting of a subject and a predicate, in the bookish speech has the following order: subject, expressed by the form of an independent nominative case with the definitions related to it, is put in the first place. In second place is the predicate for any expression of the subject.

The postposition of the subject is observed most often in the following cases: a) when it has a narrative character (in fairy tales, epics, novels); b) when the predicate is expressed by the verbs of being, existence; c) when the subject of the combinations of quantitative words and a noun in the genitive denotes a period of time; d) when circumstances, words of time and place, course of action are brought to the first place; e) when the predicate is expressed by the verb in the form of the imperative mood.

The predicate is also put in the first place if the predicate together with the subject expresses one concept.

If the predicate comes before the subject the sentence is considered to be the inversion, and the corresponding sentences are considered to be inversion sentences.

The subjective order of words is necessarily accompanied by a change in the place of phrasal stress: it is placed not at the end of the sentence, but at the beginning or middle of the sentence.

In addition to the structural core of the sentence, its predicative basis - subject and predicate - some sentences are also characterized by the presence of additional members. These secondary members syntactically obey the main, define them and express signs, objects, circumstances, in accordance with their morphological nature.

In the most general sense, it can be said that the order of the additions, definitions, and circumstances extending to the other members of the sentence repeats the rules of the word order in the phrase: the agreed members stand before the defined words, the governed - after the governors, the adjacent - before them, and after the dominant word, depending on the mode of expression and the transmitted meaning; the direct addition, included in the structure of the transitive verb, is governed by it, and, as the governed member, is placed after the member who governs it. Inversion is allowed only for certain stylistic and rhythmic purposes. Indirect additions have greater freedom of arrangement. They can be put after the verb, to which they belong, and before it; the post-positive position is the usual location of inconsistent definitions; the order of the adverbial words depends upon many and various features, primarily upon the meaning that is expressed by the substantive word, and the way in which it is expressed.

The main formal feature of the English sentence is a firmly fixed place of verbal members, i.e. the predicate.
In the English language the system of inflectional forms, especially in nouns, adjectives and pronouns, is not very much developed, so the order of words has a special importance. The English language is characterized by the contact arrangement of words, i.e. such an arrangement in which the words related in meaning are placed side by side. Thus, the place of words in a sentence reflects the degree of ties between words: the closer the tie between words, the closer they are in their mutual arrangement. Together with the contact arrangement of words, there is also a distant arrangement of words in the English language, in which words related in meaning are not located in close to each other. In the case of distant arrangement of words the word order in a sentence must be specially regulated.

There are not many exceptions from this rule of word order in the English sentence: in some cases, the subject and the verb can exchange their places, and the adverbial words can take different places in the sentence. The inverse word order occurs only in four cases: in interrogative sentences; after the words so and there, after negative adverbs or after negative expressions; in sentences beginning with objects; in a shortened conditional sentence.

The characteristic feature of the Russian word order is the mobility of word forms in the sentence, if this sentence is taken out of the context. Nevertheless, the word order in the Russian language cannot be considered absolutely free, although its main characteristic feature can be defined as a weaker stability of word order compared to the word order in sentences in other languages. However, it does not mean that different changes in the word order in a Russian sentence will not change syntactic and semantic relationships between words in this sentence.

Although the elements of the Russian sentence are more mobile and the sentence itself is more flexible, this mobility has limits. In many other languages belonging to other language groups, the picture is quite different. For example, in different languages belonging to the Turkic group we may observe directly opposite features of the word order in a sentence. As for the languages of the Romano-Germanic group, they also have their specific distinctive features. For example, most English grammars point out that the word order in the English sentence is very important and it serves as means of syntactic connections transmission and that fixed certain position of the words here is more important than word order in the Russian language, due to the lack or poverty of inflections in the English language.

We can conclude about the probability of interference in the process of constructing new phrases and sentences of the studied language. This conclusion can be based on the comparison of the word order patterns in the sentences of the compared languages.

Taking into account the specific characteristic features of a complex sentence, we can pay attention to a high probability of transformations and changes in the positions of the main members of its parts within a complex sentence or splitting a complex sentence into independent simple or complex sentences.

It is possible that in two compared languages we can create sentences which will have identical syntactic structures. Here we speak not only about the simple sentences, which are usually the object of research works dealing with syntax, but also about complex extended sentences. It is in the field of syntax that it is possible quite unconsciously to transfer to another language the unchanging and most essential phenomena that are characteristic of a given language.

An important way to establish the nature of interlanguage relations is to analyze the typical mistakes of students. Some of them are generated by the interference of another language; others can be considered as false formations that arise as a result of erroneous generalizations of the studied language phenomena.

Both types of mistakes are elements of the "intermediate language" – a transitional language system, which students use at a certain stage of language studies, if the fragments of the internal system of the language are not sufficiently formed.

The analysis of the most frequent mistakes which students have in oral and written speech shows that they often have difficulties in solving certain communicative tasks and in realization of the intentions specified in the standard of a certain level. For example, the difficulties appear when it is necessary to express negation, very often the problem is detected when the communicative tasks demand to express the presence of something or absence of something. In this case it is necessary to take into consideration the fact, that in the Russia language the use of the verbs "to be" and "to have" differs greatly from many other languages.
Many mistakes appear in the expression of modality (desire, opportunity, duty), when the need to express the meaning and idea of the place and the meaning and idea of the direction.

When it is necessary to express the meaning of time, the verbs of perfective and imperfective aspects are mixed, especially when it is necessary to use the future tense.

Traditionally, there are problems when it is necessary to use numerals. It is a very serious grammatical topic and for a foreign audience it is very difficult.

Special attention demand the use of the forms of the imperative of the verb, and it is just evident, that the expression of a request, advice and invitation causes difficulties for students.

Often students find it difficult to appraise something, to make a value judgment. At the same time, mistakes are caused both by incorrect use of lexical units (including the lack of the necessary lexical unit in the student's dictionary) and by not developed grammatical skills, i.e. by the fact that the corresponding models of a simple sentence have not been mastered.

The problems of using verbs of motion are often caused both by the difficulties of the choice of the verb itself and by the lack of knowledge about grammatical government (sometimes both at the same time). It should be noted that mistakes in the verbal (as well as nominal) government are the most common mistakes in the oral and written speech of students. Therefore, although the new vocabulary is introduced in the determined by the solved communicative tasks sequence, but sometimes it is advisable to group the lexical units, united by one and the same grammatical government in order to systematize the grammatical material.

Students often demonstrate the lack of developed lexical skills, for example, they can not clearly distinguish between the use of reflexive and transitive verbs of the same root (встречать – встречаться, видеть – видеться, учить – учиться и т.д.).

Analysis and systematization of students' mistakes allows to detect gaps within a particular component of communicative competence and helps to intensify the preparation of students for testing, to make the learning process more effective, increases the motivation of students and improves the results.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The identification, analysis and systematization of the most common mistakes help to identify both difficulties of a universal nature and lexical-grammatical and speech material that causes interference, i.e. to determine the material that is particularly difficult for this group of students. Such work is extremely useful and has a positive impact on results.

It is necessary to study the entire volume of lexical and grammatical mistakes associated with violation of grammatical and lexical norms, with violation of accuracy, clarity, logical use of words, ignorance of the semantics of the Russian word, lexical compatibility, polysemy of words, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms and other phenomena that may be associated with language interference.

When using the methodology of national language orientation, this analysis makes it possible to establish such methods of teaching that contribute to the positive transfer of the skills of using the phenomena of the native language to the formation of ideas about the system of the studied language, prevent and overcome interference.

Typical students' mistakes help us to determine an adequate language learning strategy.

The results of a comparative linguistic analysis serve as a scientific basis for teaching a foreign language, including Russian as a foreign language.

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