

CATEGORY OF TENSE IN THE MODERN ENGLISH LANGUAGE; ITS STYLISTIC POTENTIAL AND TRANSLATION PROBLEMS

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Abstract: The article investigates the tense category of the English language. The main peculiarities of the English tense are explained, stylistic potential is revealed and translation problems are analyzed.

Keywords: grammatical category, stylistic potential, verbal forms, translating process, nonstandard English.

From our point of view, English Grammar is the most difficult subject for studying not only for students but also for everyone who wants to be a professional philologist. There are two important facts in relation to the notion of “tense”.

First, from a formal point of view, tense is a grammatical category, usually expressed overtly on the verb. Second, from a semantic viewpoint, tense serves to locate situations in time. The verb as a part of speech is the most capacious grammatical category. In verbal word with all variety of its denotations, meanings and stylistic potentials there are combinations with different grammar forms, organic connections and associations with tenses and aspect, which characterize all verbal system in the whole. The system of the English verb offers its own difficulties for a foreign student to master. The most troublesome problems are concentrated in the area of the finite verb, and include, in particular, tense, aspect, and modal auxiliary usage.

The problem of Tense has always been in the focus of attention. Linguists differ in the number of tense forms. This number varies from 2 to 12. During our investigation, we have analyzed different linguistic works. Such work as “A comprehensive grammar of the English language” presented by Randolph Quirk was considered, where the author listed the examples and explanation of the verbal system (Quirk, Greenbaum, Svartvik, 1992).

Also we have analyzed George Yurl’s work, which was called “Meaning in contexts”, where the author shows how to use the stylistic potential of tense. There are some differences between studying the English verb itself and studying how to use it (Yurl, 1998).

G. Yurl provides some easy explanations to describe how to use different styles in a magazine article, news reports, academic writing, narratives and other genres:

- information that is treated as a part of the «background» will tend to be expressed in the past tense;
- information that is of current concern is in the «foreground» and will be expressed in the present tense;
- background scene-setting, particularly in stories, is often expressed in the past progressive tense;
- ongoing current situations are described in the present progressive tense;

Following the description of basic verbal forms, an author conveys not only specific features of verbal forms and structures according to tenses, but includes a piece of information on how meanings of verbal forms can be shaped of context and communicative purpose – stylistic potential of verbal forms.

The field of grammar is often divided into two domains: morphology and syntax. In our case we have examined some points from transformational relations that were involved in tense formations of the morphological level. Different kinds of transformations depend on the purpose of communication and can be treated only in the contexts (Arnold, 1990).

We analyzed stylistic potential and problems which can appear during the translating process of the tense category.

As the analysis of the stylistic potential of the nonstandard structures of English *am not, is not, are not, have not were taken*. In conclusion we could say that all these quotations present by themselves the low colloquial sublanguage. Writers prefer to depict their personages in words by writing such structures. A detailed analysis of these non-grammatical speech patterns show that they are elements of a system, which is not deprived of rationality. Nonstandard English is used by millions of people in the English speaking countries. It is a conspicuous indicator of a low language culture and the educational level. Being introduced into books, it becomes a picturesque means of protagonist's characterization.

Modal verbal forms were also analyzed. More complex structures of the modal verbs were taken. They are known as periphrastic modals and are formed with the verbs **be** and **have**, as in **be able to** (can, could);

be allowed to (may, might);

be going to (will, would);

be supposed to (shall, should) – (meant, expected, obliged);

have (got) to (must);

to be to (have to according to the plan).

We have taken the quotations from the “Pride and Prejudice” written by Jane Austen as an example. As the result we could make a conclusion that periphrastic modals are used to communicate a lot of connotations and subtle shades and tinges. This process of activation of periphrastic modals by relating them to our speaking and writing expands possibilities and potentialities of texts and discourses in the frame of their contexts. They convey the identities, knowledge, emotions, abilities, beliefs, and assumptions of the writer (speaker) and the reader (listener); association and the relationships holding between them.

The second part of our investigation was the analysis of the translating process and problems connected with the translation of the tense category. Translations and ways of making translation of the category of tense correct were our object of interest during this analysis. Literary and scientific texts were examined.

For instance: Then he lightly brushed a hair from my forehead, took my cheek in his hand and kissed me, urgently, desperately. - И тут он нежно убрал волосы у меня со лба, приложил руку к моей щеке и поцеловал меня, настойчиво, страстно. Тогда он нежно откинул с моего лба волосы, погладил меня по щеке и впился в меня захватывающим дух поцелуем (modulation).

Hideous, wasted two days glaring psychopathically at the phone, and eating things. - Отвратительные, бесполезные два дня я сидела, как психопатка, свирепо уставившись на телефон и обжираясь всем, чем попало. Целых два мерзких, бес толку прошедших дня, без конца, словно психопатка, поглядывала на телефон и не переставала жевать (substitution of parts of speech and modulation).

If the New Hardware Found window appears during the installation procedure, click «X» in the upper right corner of the box, or click Cancel. - Если во время установки появляется окно Найдено новое оборудование, щелкните «X» в правом верхнем углу окна или кнопку Отмена (word-for-word translation).

As we could see from the examples given above the usage of such transformations as modulation and substitution is a better way of translating literary texts. But scientific texts are exact and concrete. In order to make a correct and also exact translation, word-for-word translation is more preferable. In some cases other ways of translation could be accepted as a better way during the translation of scientific works.

References:

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