

UDC 1751

THE FUNCTION OF THE OBLIQUE MOOD IN LITERARY TEXTS

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The comparative analysis of sentences in the oblique mood, which have a comic effect in the original text, is carried out on the material of the novel. Various variants of translation of the oblique mood into Russian are considered and its functions are determined when creating the comic effect of the narrative.

The question of the category of mood in modern English is one of the most complex and controversial categories – linguists distinguish from 2 to 16 moods in Modern English. Therefore, the grammatical structure of the English language is the sustained attention object of foreign and domestic linguists, as the category of mood is in the state of development [1].

Modality is a speaker's or a writer's attitude towards the world, that can express certainty, possibility, willingness, obligation, necessity and ability by using modal words and expressions. It is expressed primarily by grammatical mood. Mood – grammatical category of the verb that expresses its modality [7] [8].

The oblique mood has many functions; it is a form of the verb and expresses the desire, possibility, assumption, doubt or unreality of the action. In the Russian language, the oblique mood is expressed by verbs in the past tense in combination with the particle "бы" (чтобы, если бы и т. д.) [4, p. 132].

The oblique mood is often used both in colloquial speech and in literary texts. It is widely used in simple sentences and in various types of subordinate clauses and acts not only as a means of communication, but also it forms different additional modal meanings together with different lexical structures [9].

As it is known, the language is revealed in literature, so it is important to trace how grammatical categories are implemented in literary texts. For our study we have chosen the novel 'Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency' (1987) by Douglas Adams, the novel is a detective story combined with mystery and humor. It contains a lot of comic situations, including those that can be conveyed by the oblique mood. Douglas Adams, the author of the novel and the creator of the famous series of books 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy', is known for his humorous fiction.

The purpose of the research is to determine the functions of the oblique mood in the literary text when creating a comic narrative effect and to consider different variations [2] [3] in translating this grammatical category into Russian.

The definition of comic is quite broad and includes such comedic devices as repetition, hyperbole, pun, juxtaposition, taboo and slapstick. Creating a comic effect in the text is not always easy, so authors decide which device he or she should use when creating a comic effect, which can be revealed in the oblique mood.

The study uses descriptive and analytical research methods, continuous sampling method. The study was held on the basis of sentences in the oblique mood, which have a comic effect.

Taking into account the similarities and differences between the two language systems, additional lexical and/or grammatical means are used to convey the meaning of statements from English into Russian. Conjunctions, connective words and particles can be imposed in order to save the emotional colouring of the utterance.

Some linguists don't consider the category of the oblique mood and speak about five basic types of the mood: indicative, imperative, interrogative, subjunctive and conditional [10]. But we are taking the classification of Prof. A.I. Smirnitsky, who takes into account difference in forms and recognizes 4 oblique moods: Subjunctive I, Subjunctive II, Suppositional and Conditional [5].

We conducted a comparative analysis of 1100 samples of sentences from the text containing verbs in the form of the oblique mood. In most cases, they are translated from English into Russian by past tense verbs in combination with the particle "бы" (чтобы, если бы и т. д.), but in the process of translation this particle can be omitted.

Subjunctive I (the present subjunctive) expresses a condition that is doubtful, hypothetical, wishful or not factual. It is only rarely used in modern British English and, however, found in certain set phrases and in very formal forms of speech and writing.

Subjunctive I is used in simple and complex sentences in subordinate clauses that follow verbs expressing a desire, a demand, a formal recommendation, or a resolve [10]. In the novel it is used in sentences with the verbs 'let' 'suggest':

'Let us think the unthinkable, let us do the undoable' [6, p. 168].

Let's consider the variants of its translation:

«Будем думать о невероятном и делать невозможное». This variant of translation, in our opinion, is neutral, because «невероятное» and «невозможное» are stylistically unmarked words [3].

The variant «Будем думать о немыслимом и совершать невыполнимое» is more stylistically coloured words than the previous one [2, p. 185].

«Давайте думать о недумаемом и делать неделаемое». Words «недумаемое» и «неделаемое» they are formed with the help of affixes, as in the English language, and are similar in stylistic colouring.

This variation of the translation more accurately conveys the comic effect of the original sentence, as it shows not only the category of the subjunctive mood, but also the comic effect, which the author put in it.

The English language is more capacious, than Russian. The structure of the Russian language does not always allow to convey the same construction, meaning and stylistic features of the sentence, so the translation has to either resort to additional lexical and/or grammatical means, or use stylistically neutral words, or use different translation techniques (e.g. compensation).

'It's just that it's a good idea not to let him have your phone number unless you possess an industrial-grade answering machine' [6, p. 30].

«Он отличный парень, но лучше не давать ему свой номер телефона» [3].

«Правда, лучше не давать ему номер своего телефона, если только у вас дома не стоит автоответчик промышленного класса» [2, p. 32].

'The thing [computer] is hopeless. It's the major reason the original company went bust. I suggest you use it as a big paperweight' [6, p. 85].

«Эта модель компьютера безнадёжна. Именно поэтому обанкротилась первая фирма моего хозяина. Советую использовать его в качестве пресса для бумаг» [3].

«Компьютер безнадёжен. Именно из-за него разорилась наша первая компания. Предлагаю использовать его в качестве пресс-папье» [2, p. 101].

Subjunctive II (the past subjunctive) represents an action as contrary to reality. It is typical for literary writing and formal style and in spoken language. It is used in simple sentences and in certain subordinate clauses and refers to unreal or improbable present or future situations [9].

In the text, we can find its use in dialogues where the subjunctive II is used:

a) to express unreal situation:

'As a hat it was a remarkable rather than entirely successful piece of personal decoration. It would make an elegant adornment, stylish, shapely and flattering, if the wearer were a small bedside lamp, but not otherwise' [6, p. 36].

«По эlegantности формы и дерзости принимаемых положений ей следовало бы быть не банальным головным убором, а, скажем, предметом интерьера. Например, она великолепно смотрелась бы как абажур на ночной лампе» [3].

«Весьма примечательная вещь, которая, впрочем не подчёркивала достоинств своего обладателя. А вот в качестве абажура на ночника она вполне могла бы послужить стильным и броским декоративным элементом» [2, p. 51].

b) in simple sentences containing the modal phraseological expressions *would rather* to express a preference. They can be translated into Russian with the phrase 'уж лучше бы':

'You said I should call you if I was free this evening and I said I'd rather be dead in a ditch, remember? Well, I suddenly discover that I am free, absolutely, completely and utterly free, and there isn't a decent ditch for miles around' [6, p. 9].

«Помнишь, ты просил позвонить тебе, если я буду свободна. Я еще тебе тогда сказала, что скорее подохну в канаве, чем позвоню, даже если буду свободна? Так вот, я свободна, совершенно, полностью и абсолютно свободна, но поблизости нет ни одной подходящей канавы» [3].

«Помнишь, ты просил позвонить, как только выдастся свободный вечер? Я тогда еще ответила, что лучше сдохну в канаве. Так вот, сегодня я абсолютно, полностью и совершенно свободна, а приличной канавы поблизости нет» [2, p. 14].

c) in the main part of the conditional sentence related to the past tense:

'I'm sure if you scraped away the mud from the bottom,' he remarked wittily, 'it would probably say "Made in Birmingham"' [6, p. 24].

«Если соскоблить грязь с ее дна, я уверен, мы найдем метку: «Сделано в Бирмингеме» [3].

«Уверен, если соскоблить отсюда грязь, - заметил он с лёгкой иронией, мы увидим надпись: «Сделано в Бирмингеме» [2, p. 38].

d) in adverbial clauses of comparison or manner introduces by the conjunctions *as if*, *as though*. The predicative clauses with Subjunctive II immediately follow the link verbs *be*, *seem*, *look*, *feel*:

'Richard stood transfixed for a moment or two, wiped his forehead again, and gently replaced the phone as if it were an injured hamster' [6, p. 56].

«Затем он вытер пот со лба и с превеликой осторожностью, словно больного хомячка, положил трубку на рычаг» [3].

«Некоторое время Ричард стоял как парализованный, потом стёр со лба пот и с осторожно, как раненого хомячка, положил трубку на место» [2, p.113].

e) in adverbial clauses of condition:

'If you picked a number at random, he was probably a little older than that, but--well, it was impossible to tell' [6, p. 8].

«Он был немолод, вернее в том возрасте, который у мужчин бывает уже трудно с вероятностью определить, а угадав, все равно захотелось бы накинуть еще несколько годков» [3].

«Если выбрать наобум любое число, то скорее всего он всё равно оказался бы хоть чуточку, но старше» [2, p. 15].

f) in adverbial clauses of unreal condition or concession *'even if, even though'*:

'The Door would still be there, even if the door was not' [6, p. 46].

«Дверь должна быть там, даже если ее там нет» [3].

«Дверь все равно есть, пусть даже ее и нет» [2, p. 48].

'Someone should get some humanity into him even if they have to knock it in with a brick' [6, p. 235].

«Ему не мешает немного человечности, даже если ее придется насильно вбивать в него» [3].

«Как научить его добрее относиться к людям? Разве что стукнуть по башке кирпичом» [2, p. 246].

One of the forms of the oblique mood is the suppositional mood.

The Suppositional Mood can be used in subordinate conditional sentences if it relates to a future tense:

'If nothing terrible happened to him soon maybe she'd do it herself. Now there was an idea' [6, p. 9].

«Если в ближайшее время с ним действительно ничего не произойдет, она постарается ему в этом помочь. Неплохая мысль» [3].

«В глубине души шевельнулась мысль собственноручно помочь ему исправить ситуацию. А что, замечательная идея» [2, p. 13].

The Conditional Mood is used:

a) to denote unreal actions in simple sentences:

'It would be hard to learn much less than my pupils,' came a low growl from somewhere on the table, 'without undergoing a pre-frontal lobotomy' [6, p. 5].

«Трудновато было бы мне знать меньше моих учеников. Для этого пришлось бы сделать себе лоботомию, – негромко проворчал кто-то из гостей» [3].

«Чтобы усвоить меньше моих учеников, нужно хорошенько постараться, – проворчал кто-то из присутствующих. – Такое возможно разве что после лоботомии» [2, p. 29].

b) in the principal clauses of complex sentences with the subordinate clauses of unreal condition or unreal concession:

'It would have interested you strangely if you'd had to get the bloody thing down a bloody winding staircase at one o'clock in the morning as well' [6, p. 185].

«Он [случай] заинтересовал бы вас еще больше, если бы вам пришлось спускать это чертово животное по узкой винтовой лестнице в час ночи» [3].

«Это интересовало бы тебя куда больше, доведись тебе вытаскивать окаянную лошадь из ванной и спускать по винтовой лестнице в час ночи» [2, p. 199].

The principal clause of the Subjunctive II contains a form of the Conditional Mood.

There are also mixed forms for expressing unreal conditions in the novel:

If you were learning fast you would have put the phone down by now, of course [6, p. 110].

«Если бы вы соображали быстрее, вы давно бы уже бросили трубку» [3].

«Будь вы способным учеником, вы, разумеется, уже давно положили бы трубку» [2, p. 112] (Present Conditional +Perfect Subjunctive II).

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The form Present Subjunctive II + Perfect Conditional isn't used.

After considering all functions of the oblique mood into Russian, we can note that:

- 1) the conditional mood is used more often than Subjunctive II and the suppositional mood;
- 2) the oblique mood often used in complex sentences, which have development or continuation of thought;
- 3) in most cases, the verb in the form of the oblique mood is translated from English into Russian as a verb in the oblique mood;
- 4) sentences may omit or add a particle «бы» in translation as an indicator of the oblique mood;
- 5) in the novel you can find many sentences in the oblique mood or sentences containing a supposition, wish, possibility or doubt, but they don't have a comic effect

After analyzing all the examples, we came to the conclusion, that only 20% are used to create a comic effect, which indicates that the category of mood can be dynamic, although it is static.

The comic effect can be created with the help of the oblique mood; the conditional mood is used for it more often.

The literary text uses the potential of the oblique mood to create a comic effect, but the main function of using this category is expressed in order to convey wish, possibility or unreality of the action.

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