STUDENTS STUDY ADJECTIVES: RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
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ABSTRACT
This article is devoted to the study of the problems faced by foreign students studying Russian at a professional level. Our task was to give students the assignments that we developed with these adjectives. This allowed us to identify the most common mistakes. The experimental base was the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication of the Kazan Federal University. The search experiment was conducted with 3-year Chinese students, trainees who came to study Russian as part of an exchange program. We also observed the oral speech of students during practical classes in Russian grammar. The experiment involved 100 students. Some could not correctly determine the word formation of the proposed adjectives. We developed an exercise system that helped students learn adjectives, considering their functioning in scientific and artistic speech. The results of our research are of interest to teachers of Russian as a foreign language and can be used in the practice of teaching foreign languages.

Keywords: Adjective. Russian. Learning. Students. Mistake.

ALUNOS ESTUDAM ADJETIVOS: O RUSSO COMO LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA

RESUMO
Este artigo é dedicado ao estudo dos problemas enfrentados por estudantes estrangeiros que estudam russo em nível profissional. Nossa tarefa era dar aos alunos as atribuições que desenvolvemos com esses adjetivos. Isso nos permitiu identificar os erros mais comuns. A base experimental foi o Instituto de Filologia e Comunicação Intercultural da Universidade Federal de Kazan. O experimento de pesquisa foi conduzido com estudantes chineses de 3 anos, estagiários que vieram estudar russo como parte de um programa de intercâmbio. Também observamos a fala oral dos alunos durante as aulas práticas de gramática russa. O experimento envolveu 100 alunos. Alguns não conseguiam determinar corretamente a formação das palavras dos adjetivos propostos. Desenvolvemos um sistema de exercícios que ajudava os alunos a aprenderem adjetivos, levando em consideração seu funcionamento no discurso científico e artístico. Os resultados de nossa pesquisa são de interesse para professores de russo como língua estrangeira e podem ser usados na prática do ensino de línguas estrangeiras.


RESUMEN
Este artículo está dedicado al estudio de los problemas que enfrentan los estudiantes extranjeros que estudian ruso a nivel profesional. Nuestra tarea era entregar a los alumnos los trabajos que desarrollamos con estos adjetivos. Esto nos permitió identificar los errores más comunes. La base experimental fue el Instituto de Filología y Comunicación Intercultural de la Universidad Federal de Kazán. El experimento de búsqueda se llevó a cabo con estudiantes chinos de 3 años, aprendices que vinieron a estudiar ruso como parte de un programa de intercambio. También observamos el habla oral de los estudiantes durante las clases prácticas de gramática rusa. El experimento involucró a 100 estudiantes. Algunos no pudieron determinar correctamente la formación de palabras de los adjetivos propuestos. Desarrollamos un sistema de ejercicios que ayudó a los estudiantes a aprender adjetivos, teniendo en cuenta su funcionamiento en el habla científica y artística. Los resultados de nuestra investigación son de interés para los profesores de ruso como lengua extranjera y pueden utilizarse en la práctica de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras.

INTRODUCTION

The study of adjectives creates favorable conditions for the development of students’ speech, since this part of speech is in second place in frequency of use after nouns. In addition, an analysis of students’ oral responses and written papers shows that errors in the use of adjectives are the most persistent. Therefore, the question of studying adjectives is still relevant. The importance and significance of studying adjectives is evidenced by research by scientists (AZIMOV, 2009; SHAKIROVA, YUSUPOVA, GORDIENKO, 2019; NOVIKOV, 2000; NURULLINA, LATFULLINA, USMANOVA, 2019; YOU, YUAN, YUSUPOVA, 2017; LYSAKOVA, 2014; ZABUGA, ALEEEVA, 2018; LERNER, 1891). It is important that students not only recognize adjectives as part of speech, correctly form forms of degrees of comparison, etc. but also learn to correctly use adjectives in their own speech in accordance with the style and type of text being created, evaluate their own and others’ speech from the point of view of the communicative expediency of choosing morphological means of language.

Scientists talk about the importance of enriching students’ speech with expressive means of language (epithets, metaphors, synonyms) and show how they can be used to develop students’ language sense (POLAT et al. 2009; ERMAKOVA, KONSTANTINOV, MURAVEVA, 2014; AFANASIEVA, 2016; OOK, LUKOYANOVA, BRENCHUGINA-ROMANOVA, 2019). At the same time, it is noted that adjectives occupy an important place in improving speech skills and enriching the vocabulary, since there are many synonyms (fast, rapid, frisky, fast, agile, Brisk, etc.), antonyms (high-low, small-large, etc.), paronyms (stone-rocky, distant, distant, etc.), polysemous words (newspaper, fresh shirt, fresh bread, etc.), they are part of many phraseological units (the Golden mean, Prim young lady, Kazan orphan, outsider, etc.), Proverbs and sayings (next to a penny is much more expensive than the ruble; healthy body, healthy mind; an old friend is better than two new ones, etc.). Our research focuses on identifying the difficulties that foreign students face when using adjectives. This helped us to highlight the aspects that should be paid special attention to when teaching Russian to foreign students.

METHODS

For the purpose of this research, we selected adjectives that are most frequently found in Russian language textbooks and are also part of linguistic terms. Our task was to give students the tasks we developed with these adjectives. This allowed us to identify the most common errors. The experimental base was the Institute of Philology and intercultural communication of Kazan Federal University. The search experiment was conducted with Chinese 3rd year students-trainees who came to study Russian as part of an exchange program. We also observed the students’ oral speech during practical classes in Russian grammar. 30 students took part in the experiment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The textbooks we analyzed (ERMAKOVA, KONSTANTINOV, MURAVEVA, 2014; AFANASIEVA, 2016) allowed us to write out 200 adjectives that are found in texts, tasks, and are part of terms. Some examples of adjectives that we have selected are shown in table 1.

Table 1. Examples of adjectives drawn from the textbooks of the Russian language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjectives for colors</th>
<th>Adjectives that are part of linguistic terms</th>
<th>Adjectives that are means of expression (epithets)</th>
<th>Compound adjectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Animate nouns</td>
<td>Clear view</td>
<td>Petrochemical plant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Inanimate nouns</td>
<td>Golden hand</td>
<td>Black and white dress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black-yellow</td>
<td>Personal pronoun</td>
<td>White dance</td>
<td>White-red stripe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Reflexive pronoun</td>
<td>High idea</td>
<td>Railway road, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violet</td>
<td>Qualitative adjectives, Relative adjectives</td>
<td>Desperate act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Possessive adjectives</td>
<td>Bold thought, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>Oil company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarlet</td>
<td>Petroleum geology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, etc.</td>
<td>Petroleum chemistry, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Search data
To identify the difficulties faced by students, we developed tasks that were performed in the classroom without prompting the teacher. Tasks and results are presented in table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Questions and tasks</th>
<th>Percent responses (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>right (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of adjectives in phrases: fresh shirt—fresh newspaper; white paper—white dance; Red price—red dress.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Choose nouns that can be used with these adjectives: brown, chestnut, old, old, business, businesslike, economical, economic</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Determine which words form complex adjectives: petrochemical plant, black and white dress, forest Park, railway station.</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Add the endings of adjectives: Clear ... view&lt;br&gt;Gold ... hands&lt;br&gt;Bell ... dance&lt;br&gt;High ... ideas&lt;br&gt;A desperate act...&lt;br&gt;Dared a thought..&lt;br&gt;Bell...the sea&lt;br&gt;Red ... sea&lt;br&gt;Yellow ... sea</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Make sentences with these phrases and write them down: a good student, a difficult task, a difficult question, an interesting movie, a funny story.</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Explain the meaning of the following terms that contain adjectives:</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animate nouns&lt;br&gt;Inanimate nouns&lt;br&gt;Personal pronoun&lt;br&gt;Reflexive pronoun&lt;br&gt;Quality adjectives&lt;br&gt;Relative adjectives&lt;br&gt;Possessive adjectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Choose antonyms for adjectives: white, good, experienced, delicious, complex, heavy.</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Write an essay on Adjectives in speech** (at least 100 words)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Search data
The results of the experiment show that when using adjectives, foreign students experience difficulties due to the following factors:

1) poor vocabulary of students: many students know a very small number of adjectives;

2) lack of proper attention to adjectives that are part of scientific terms: some students do not consider them adjectives;

3) inability to explain the meaning of adjectives by context: some students did not guess the meaning of an adjective even if there was a noun;

4) lack of formed grammatical skills: some students could not correctly write the endings of adjectives, violated the rules of coordination;

5) absence of complex adjectives in the speech practice of foreign students: some students avoid complex adjectives and try not to use them in their own speech;

6) lack of skills in combining adjectives with nouns: some students could not correctly use adjectives brown and chestnut, etc.

7) lack of skills in using adjectives in professional speech: some students cannot use linguistic terms containing adjectives and cannot explain them;

8) lack of skills in selecting synonyms and antonyms from adjectives;

9) differences in the use of adjectives in the Russian and native (Chinese) language of students. As you know, adjectives don't change in Chinese.

Taking into account the identified difficulties, we have developed guidelines for studying adjectives by Chinese students. Our guidelines will be useful for both Russian language teachers and students.

Guidelines in the study of adjectives:

1. Enriching the speech of foreign students with adjectives, compiling dictionaries of adjectives.

2. The use of adjectives in speech and writing: making offers.

3. Making dialogues with adjectives in educational and scientific spheres of communication.

4. Presentation of students with short reports on adjectives.

5. Enrichment of students' speech with linguistic terms that include adjectives.

6. Study of ways to form adjectives: the most productive are the suffixal method and the addition of bases and words.

7. Working with dictionaries: clarifying the lexical meaning of adjectives: direct and figurative meaning of the word: red dress – red string.

8. Study of phraseological units that contain adjectives: Golden hands, white dance, white flies, red string, red sun, red well done, red maiden, etc.

Adjectives are studied in Russian as a foreign language at the first lessons. Russian as a foreign language Lexical minimum contains adjectives such as active, English, English-Russian, white, rich, great, cheerful, high, urban, hot, children's, cheap, etc. A separate list of linguistic terms is provided, including terms with adjectives: accusative, reflexive verb, interrogative pronoun, question mark, exclamation mark, vowel, dative, singular, feminine, plural, masculine, soft consonant, and others. This means that at the initial stage, foreign students become familiar with common adjectives and adjectives in terms. However, when reading texts, in the process of live communication, foreigners meet with new, unknown adjectives that are not in the lexical minimum. Therefore, it is very important to create dictionaries of adjectives. For example: after reading the text, we offer students to work with adjectives:
A few more years passed. Startsev is even more plump, obese, breathing heavily and already walking with his head thrown back. When he, plump and red, rides on a Troika with bells, and Pantailaimon, also plump and red, sits on a box, stretching out straight, like wooden arms, and shouts to people he meets: “Prava hold on!”, the picture is impressive, and it seems that the driver is not a person but a pagan God. He has a huge practice in the city, no time to breathe, and already has an estate of two houses in the city, and he chooses the third. (an excerpt from a story by AP Chekhov’s “Ionych”)

Adjectives to write out from the text:

Plump (he, Startsev)
Red (he, Startsev)
Straight, wooden arms
An impressive picture
Pagan God
Huge practice

During the analysis, foreign students clarify the meaning of the adjective taking into account the use in the context, pay attention to the direct and figurative meaning of the adjective. In some cases, it is appropriate to select synonyms and antonyms and write them down. For example:

Plump—skinny, thin

Huge practice - small (small) practice, etc.

Individual work with the adjective helps to understand. In other words, they become a means of expression and imagery, which is typical in artistic texts.

In scientific texts, adjectives are used to specify, scientifically describe, or characterize an object or phenomenon. Reading scientific texts, foreign students are convinced that in this case there is no imagery. Adjectives are used in the direct sense. For example, students can be given two texts for comparison: a scientific and artistic description of the same subject or phenomenon:

Table 3. Adjectives in scientific and artistic description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific description of the tree «Bereza»</th>
<th>Artistic description of the tree «Bereza»</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birch (lat. Bétula) – genius deciduous trees and shrubs of the Birch family (Betulaceae). Birch is widely distributed in the Northern hemisphere, in Russia it is one of the most common tree species. The total number of species is about one hundred or slightly more. Many species of birch are widespread and important forest-forming species that largely determine the appearance and species composition of deciduous and coniferous (mixed) forests in temperate and cold parts of Eurasia and North America. Many parts of birch are used in agriculture: wood, bark, birch bark (surface layer of bark), birch SAP. Kidneys and leaves are used in medicine: infusions of kidneys and leaves - as a diuretic, bactericidal, wound healing and antipyretic, and oil extract from birch buds - as a dermatological agent. Some species are used for creating protective bands, as well as in decorative gardening.</td>
<td>Birch is associated with the Russian land. She is a symbol of the Slavic people, her pride, and it has long been customary to lean against the birch and ask her advice. Birch is considered a Holy tree and a symbol of the Russian spirit. Since ancient times, its leaves have been used for healing, branches for making a bath broom, bark as paper, and wood for making a fire. This tree was often praised as a maiden because of its refinement, its branches enveloping travelers like the hands of a woman. The tree is quite tall and light, has a spreading crown. Since the tree trunks are white and the leaves are not large, there is always a lot of sunlight in birch groves.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Search data
You should also focus on the grammatical features of adjectives, since errors in the violation of the agreement of the adjective with the noun are often found in the oral and written speech of foreign students. This is because in Russian the adjective agrees with the noun in gender, number and case (if they are full adjectives: red scarf, red hat, red dress), in gender and number (if they are short adjectives: The student is cheerful. The student is cheerful).

**SUMMARY**

Our research draws attention to the specifics of studying adjectives by foreign students. Following the practice of Russian language teaching, we believe that first we need to study adjectives denoting colors (white, black, red, etc.), then adjectives denoting human qualities (good, lazy, smart, funny, kind, etc.). In the future, we study adjectives as part of linguistic terms. Special attention should be paid to complex adjectives, which are quite common in scientific texts. Be sure to show the situation of the use of the name adjectives for this use of sentences and texts.

To improve the use of adjectives, you need to know their grammatical features well, since in Russian, full adjectives change by gender, numbers, and cases, and short ones – by gender and numbers.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The difficulties we have identified in studying adjectives should be taken into account when working with foreign students. We believe that the work should be systematic and at every lesson, only then can we achieve success and help foreign (Chinese) students in learning adjectives. In the future, this will help you think through a system of exercises and tasks that will prevent grammatical errors in the use of adjectives in speech.

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