

REVIEW

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For obtaining the educational and scientific degree Doctor of Philology
professional field 2.1. Philology, scientific specialty Theory and practice of translation

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Desislava Davidova's work "Comparative study of Italian and Bulgarian concessive clauses" was developed during her studies as a doctoral student (5.11.2014 - 22.05.2017), professional field 2.1. Philology, scientific specialty Theory and Practice of Translation, PhD programme Theory and Practice of Translation at the New Bulgarian University. The paper submitted for review consists of 247 pages (194 pages the main text). In addition, the dissertation includes six appendices, a list of sources for the examples, and a bibliography. In three of the appendices, the author's observations on the data from the parallel corpora for temporal and modal relations in Bulgarian and Italian complex sentences with concessive clauses are summarized in tables. The other appendices present results from the survey, the object of which is the translation of specific concessive constructions, excerpted from Italian and Bulgarian fiction, and comments on the accuracy of translation in relation to the selected tense and mood verbal forms. The bibliography includes 34 titles in Bulgarian, 2 in Russian and 16 in Italian and French. The list shows very good theoretical knowledge of the doctoral student on general theory of complex compound sentences with adjunct clauses and her knowledge of the specific features of temporal and modal systems in both languages, and the temporal structure of complex compound sentences. It should be noted that the texts cited are directly related to the topic of the dissertation, which shows the skills of D. Davidova to select and critically evaluate theoretical sources.

The text is structured according to the standard for designing a dissertation: introduction, three chapters and conclusions. The introduction presents the object and objectives of the work and the methods used. The first chapter includes analytical reviews of theoretical studies on the

features of the retreating constructions in Italian and Bulgarian. In the second chapter, the doctoral student makes a functional-semantic analysis of the Italian concessive clauses and rules or models of temporal plans in Italian to Bulgarian. In the third chapter, according to the model used for Italian, Bulgarian concessive clauses and their translations into Italian are analyzed.

Scientific and applied significance of the problem

D. Davidova's dissertation is developed in a topical and important for translation and foreign teaching area, which sometimes stays away from theoretical studies, but often puts the translator or students of foreign language in critical situations. The work is the first comprehensive and in-depth study of one of the relatively rarely studied types of adjunct clauses. The dissertation focuses on the hitherto unexplored comparatively temporal features of the main and subordinate clauses typical for Italian and Bulgarian in connection with the more general question of sequences of tenses in Italian and the system of temporal-modal forms in the complex sentence in Bulgarian. The relevance of the work is related to the need to establish and study the similarities and differences between Italian and Bulgarian in the choice of lexical and grammatical means for denoting concessive relations. The obtained results are relevant for foreign language teaching and training of translators.

The object of the study is precisely and clearly delineated for each of the two languages, as well as in a comparative plan. D. Davidova analyzes concessive constructions in Italian language in view of the morphological means of expressing the concession: subordinate conjunctions, verb tenses and modal forms. In the Bulgarian the subordinate clauses are presented, and attention is paid to their classification depending on the type of the insufficient, unfavorable or overcome condition. The comparative analyzes are made on empirical data from parallel corpora, compiled of examples from fiction and their translations. It is taken into account that in the Italian concessive constructions dependence between the type of the logical relation cause-effect/result and the use of tenses and modal forms is observed. For Bulgarian, the doctoral student follows the conclusions made by R. Nitsolova that complex sentences with subordinate clauses have more complex semantics, and the choice of verbal tenses and / or modal forms depends on the conjunction used to express real or hypothetical (potential and unreal) conditions or circumstances.

Goals and objectives of the dissertation

The scientific goals (pp. 6 - 7) are realistic, achievable and correspond to the topic of the dissertation. D. Davidova formulates seven scientific goals, some of which could be defined more as research tasks, e.g. item 5, related to rare cases in which the concessive conjunctions weaken their initial function as the main exponents of concessive relations between main and subordinate clauses, or item 7, related to loss of concessive meaning in translations into Bulgarian.

I can summarize the scientific goals and tasks of Davidova's dissertation in four main plans:

- Semantic and syntax, related to the Italian concessive constructions and their Bulgarian translation correspondences, as well as to the features of the concessive clauses in Bulgarian and transformations in their translation in Italian;
- Lexical semantics, related to the group of verbs, which by their nature are concessive and can be considered as lexical expressions of this relation in both languages;
- Functional aspects, related to Italian concessive constructions and their translation equivalents in Bulgarian;
- Morphological, related to the temporal relations between the actions in the main and subordinate clauses and the verbal forms (tenses and mood), through which these relations are denoted in each of the considered languages and in translation in both directions.

The list of cited scientific literature on the topic of the dissertation includes 52 titles. An analytical review of the research on the peculiarities of the concessive clauses in Italian and Bulgarian is made in the first chapter of the paper (pp. 13 - 46). As I am not familiar with the scientific publications of or about the Italian subordinate clauses, I cannot give a definite assessment of the representativeness of the titles and authors cited. However, I believe that the chosen model for presenting the semantic structure of concessive constructions (mainly based on the works of Marco Madzoleni), as well as the separation of three types of subordinate concessive sentences: real (factual), conditional and unconditional, are a reliable theoretical basis for achieving goals of the study.

I can confidently conclude that D. Davidova knows the general theoretical studies of the syntax of complex sentences with subordinate circumstantial/adjunct sentences in Bulgarian, as well as studies dedicated to circumstantial sentences representing logical (conditional, causal)

relations. The review of literature in Bulgarian shows Davidova's developed skills for critical reading and comprehension of theory, her ability summarize the accumulated experience. The review of the research on the concessive sentences in Bulgarian begins with presentation of authorial and collective grammars, by Al. Teodorov-Balan (1940) to T. Boyadzhiev, Iv. Kutsarov, J. Penchev (1999). The doctoral student points out that in the earlier grammars, despite the various examples presented, lack systematization of verbal tense and modal forms depending on the type of the concession expressed or the type of action (real or hypothetical). D. Davidova connects this with the practical orientation of these grammars. The literature review also includes a critical reading of the section on the concessive sentences of Academic Grammar (1983). Although two types of concessive sentences are presented, there are neither detailed review of their structural and semantic features, nor description of the conjunctions introducing these sentences. D. Davidova notes that in addition to simple and generalizing concessive sentences, third type of sentences introduced with *i da*, *dazhe i da*, *dori i da*, *dazhe i ako*, *dori i ako* should be established. J. Penchev has made more precise classification of concessive sentences.

The studies on the topic of the dissertation cited by Davidova are representative for the current studies of concessive clauses in Bulgarian. The doctoral student summarizes the conclusions of Z. Genadieva-Mutafchieva about concessive unions (for insufficient condition or contrary circumstances) and their connection with modality or speaker's point of view. R. Nitsolova's contribution to the classification of concessive sentences according to their semantic and formal features is also presented. The conclusions of B. Milcheva about concessional relations in simple sentences and of St. Petrova on asymmetry (inconsistency or contradiction between structure and semantics) are added.

The review of the studies for both languages ends with an analytical summary (pp. 47 - 48). For both languages, the descriptive analysis has been replaced by semantic-functional ones, in which the role of the speaking subject is taken into account. The conclusions show the author's ability to select and synthesize the information presented in previous research on the topic.

Theoretical model of the research

The theoretical model of the study is based on the formulations of functional grammar, according to which the functions of language units are the key to understanding language processes. This approach, originating from the Prague Linguistic Circle and the ideas of Danish Structuralism, in recent years is associated with Systematic Functional Grammar developed by

M. Halliday and R. Van Valin's Role and Reference Grammar. The application of the functional-semantic analysis as a leading method for research of the concessive constructions is motivated, and the description of the language units mostly from function to means - applicable and working for the specific research object. In the course of functional-semantic analyzes, concession is considered as a linguistic and semantic category. When presenting the linguistic aspects of the category, the lexical units and the syntactic constructions expressing it are analyzed. The syntactic analysis follow the model of R. Nitsolova (2004) and V.S. Hrakovski (2004), according to which the uses of tenses in the main and subordinate sentences for expressing the temporal localization of the main and subordinate predication are presented. Due to the comparative orientation of the work, in addition to the temporal modelsq D. Davidova discusses the coincidence or difference in the use of tences in the examples from the parallel corpora. On this basis, she systematizes the use of certain type of concessive sentence in translation from and into Italian. The syntactic analyzes are supplemented by observations about the specific semantics of concessive construction - violation of the logical connection between cause and effect and the degrees of manifestation of concession.

The semantic analyzes of Bulgarian examples aim to show the nature of the insufficient condition or contrary circumstances, which can be real, potential or unreal. The thematic (information) structure is also considered and presented on the level of the complex sentence. The empirical data indicate the tendency adjunct clause to be in front of the main one in both languages.

Existence of own contribution to the collection and analysis of empirical data

The corpus compiled for the purposes of the study includes texts from Italian and Bulgarian fiction and published translations from Italian texts into Bulgarian and from Bulgarian texts into Italian. The empirical data are reliable and motivate the objectivity of conclusions about features of complex sentences in both languages.

The main criterion for arranging the examples in the corpora is the verbal tenses used in subordinate and main clauses. Due to the tendency the concessive clause to precede the main one, the first part of the corpus includes examples structured according to this model. For the examples with main clause in front of the concessive one, D. Davidova points out that this does not necessarily mean fading of concessive relations, but shows the logical emphasis on the statement in the main clause. In Italian, "asymmetric" structures are also used, in which the adjunct clause is between the parts of the main sentence, and several subordinated argument

and/or adjunct clauses are included. Asymmetry has also a weakening effect on the concessive meaning (p. 74).

Observations on translations of examples from fiction narratives are supplemented by a survey. The results as the author herself points out can contribute to solving practical problems, to support foreign language teaching and training of translators.

Contributions and significance of results for science and practice

The contributions of D. Davidova's dissertation are the result of her independent work on the collection of a corpus of original examples from Italian literary texts and their translations into Bulgarian and examples from Bulgarian literary texts and their translations into Italian; analysis of Italian and Bulgarian examples according to the type of the conjunction used and the temporal-modal verbal forms; analysis of grammatical transformations in translation of concessive clauses in both directions; conducting a survey to test the hypotheses about the translatability of concessive structures from Italian to Bulgarian and from Bulgarian to Italian; summarizing the results of the survey] analyzing the mistakes and inaccuracies in translations done by students, as well as cases of interference at the lexical and grammatical levels.

The dissertation shows that D. Davidova has achieved significant results in solving applied problem through methods corresponding to the present-day's level of philology. The six contributions listed in the dissertation can be summarized in two groups. A significant scientific and applied contribution is the presented original solution to a current problem related to the formal and semantic features of concessive constructions in the languages under consideration. The dissertation expands the field of comparative research, as it is the first study dedicated to the concessive clauses in Italian and Bulgarian. Contributions in the field of applied linguistics are the models systematized for choosing a connector and verbal forms in main and subordinated clauses. These results can find concrete realization in teaching Italian to Bulgarians, in training of translators and editors. Empirical data and data from the survey compound a specific parallel corpus, which is also an applied contribution of the dissertation. I recommend the results of the study of concessive constructions in Italian and their translations in Bulgarian to be presented through publications in Bulgarian or foreign scientific journals in the field of comparative linguistics and foreign language teaching.

The abstract of the dissertation accurately and clearly presents the structure of the work, the observations and analyzes made, their achieved, and scientific contributions of the study.

Conclusion

Desislava Davidova's text "Comparative study of Italian and Bulgarian concessive clauses" meets the requirements for PhD dissertation. It shows the author's in-depth theoretical knowledge in the field of translation theory and practice, as well as her ability for independent research. In conclusion, I can say that the author has very successfully dealt with the objectives she has set in her research. I appeal to the members of the Scientific Committee to give their positive vote and to recommend that Desislava Davidova be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philology in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology, scientific specialty Theory and practice of translation.

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