

# Features of representing the subjunctive mood in natural languages (on the example of the translation of short stories by S. Zweig)

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**Abstract.** The article is devoted to the peculiarities of the representation of the subjunctive mood in the literary texts of natural languages (German and Russian). The subject of the study is the sentences with a subjunctive mood in German and Russian. The relevance of the study is due to difficulties in translating sentences with a subjunctive inclination from German to Russian. These difficulties are associated with a large formal discrepancy between the Russian subjunctive mood and the German, as well as the richness of the values of temporal forms in the German language. Research in this area will make it possible to achieve a more holistic view of the subjunctive mood in natural language (German and Russian) in translation and grammatical aspects. On the basis of the linguistic analysis, the authors explain how the artistic sublanguage texts represent the subjunctive mood and consider linguistic translation strategies in the Russian-language texts. The article contains examples from the artistic text in German and their translations into Russian, being accompanied by comments and conclusions, presented in the corresponding diagrams. The material of the study was the original novels of Austrian writer S. Zweig in German and their official translations into Russian. The results of the analysis can serve as a contribution to the theory and methodology of teaching the translation, to the practice of teaching the translation of German texts into Russian, and also in the process of studying the features of S. Zweig's language and style and compiling machine translation programs for literary texts.

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Concept and translation of the subjunctive mood

The very notion of subjunctive mood (conjunctive) has been known in linguistics since a long time. The subjunctive mood existing in the Indo-European languages was peculiar to the Indo-European proto-language [1] and is considered by linguists as a series of special forms of the verbal inclination of most European languages, expressing through subjective

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relation possible, presumptive, desirable or described action. The subjunctive mood in the German language (conjunctive) is a very complex grammatical phenomenon both in terms of theoretical comprehension and practical application, has a high degree of polysemy, and serves not only to express one of the syntactic categories of the sentence - modality, but also to carry temporal characteristics. The conjunctiva is a special phenomenon of the German language, which only partially coincides in its functional orientation with the subjunctive inclination of the Russian language. A conjunctive expresses not a real action, as an indicative, but a desired, supposed, possible in the broadest sense. A separate function of the conjunctiva in German is the formulation of indirect speech [2]. In Russian, verbs in the subjunctive mood do not have morphological indicators of time and face. Time is indicated by lexical means (yesterday, now, etc.) or a specific situation. The person is indicated with the help of personal pronouns. The subjunctive mood is formed by the combination of a verb in the past tense with an unchangeable particle or in a combination of a particle with an indefinite form of the verb (infinitive).

The problem of translating the subjunctive mood in different angles has interested many researchers over a long period of time.

The richness of the paradigm of the German subjunctive mood (six time forms, both in the indicative and two forms of the conditional), as well as its dual nature, causes great difficulties in translating the subjunctive mood in fiction from German into Russian [3, pp. 34-40].

## 1.2 Literature review

Scholarly works devoted to various problems associated with the subjunctive mood are very different from each other, as well as specific problems and general theoretical concepts, from the standpoint of which linguists approach the study of these constructions. But the problem of translating sentences with subjunctive inclinations was (and remains) an actual translation problem, which is confirmed by the research of representatives of both domestic and foreign linguistics, for example, O. I. Moskalskaya [2], E. V. Vestrangrang [4], J. Erben [5], H. Dreyer & R. Schmitt [6], etc. The representatives of different linguistic directions define the essence of the conjunctiva differently. In these definitions, there was a difference in grammatical concepts, which is explained by the difference in the theoretical views of scientists on this phenomenon.

Of the most recent works, mention should be made of the works of O. V. Evstafiadi & U. S. Baymuratova [7], V. V. Babaitseva [8], V. V. Fattakhova [9], B. A. Abramova [10]. Recent foreign works are also distinguished by the breadth of the material under investigation, interest in syntactic constructions with the presence of a subjunctive mood [11, 12]. The last domestic work dedicated to the subjunctive mood in the literary text belongs to T. V. Emets and A. Yu. Trutnev [13]. In this work, the conjunctiva is considered as a syntactic category, in the arsenal of which both in Russian and German languages there are a number of forms of expressing the subjunctive mood.

A detailed analysis of the forms and functions of the subjunctive mood is a matter of syntax, not of morphology. The morphological paradigm of the subjunctive mood in Russian is small [14], and the non-morphological means of expressing meaning are widely represented in the syntax. In the Russian grammar, in our opinion, the most acceptable one is the opinion of V. V. Vinogradov [15], who believes that the Russian language, like other Slavic languages, compensates for the small morphological paradigm of the subjunctive mood syntactically and is quite diverse, so this category should be considered completely syntactical.

## 2 Research design

### 2.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to study the ways of translating the subjunctive mood from German into Russian and to determine the most frequent ones by performing a statistical analysis of the forms of subjunctive mood on the material of one artistic text in the original and Russian translations.

### 2.2 Objectives of the study

- Considering the peculiarities of the subjunctive mood in German on the material of short stories by S. Zweig.
- Identifying the linguo-syntactic strategies for translating the subjunctive mood from German into Russian.
- Conducting a statistical analysis of the forms of subjunctive mood in German and Russian texts.
- Identifying morphological and non-morphological forms when translating from one language to another, as well as syntactic constructions.

### 2.3 Methodology

#### 2.3.1 Study material

The empirical material of the study was the original works of the Austrian writer of the 19th and 20th centuries. S. Zweig, who entered the world literature as an outstanding novelist. Translations of the short stories “Twenty-Four Hours from the Life of a Woman” [16] and “The Governess” [16] were made by well-known Russian translators L. V. Volfson [17] and P. S. Bernshtein [17]. The choice of texts is dictated by the textbook character of works, the variety of syntactic forms of sentences with the subjunctive inclination presented in these novels.

#### 2.3.2 Methods of research

The study uses a comprehensive methodology, including the method of continuous sampling in the analysis of empirical material, the statistical method, and the descriptive method that includes a linguistic analysis of German and Russian sentences.

- The method of continuous sampling involves the collection of language material: 106 sentences with a subjunctive inclination from German texts (a total of 68 pages) and corresponding translation suggestions in Russian.
- The statistical method allows us to establish the numerical characteristics of sentences with a subjunctive mood (simple, union).
- Through the descriptive method, the systematization and syntactic characteristics of sentences are carried out, the description of the grammatical peculiarity of the material are also being studied.

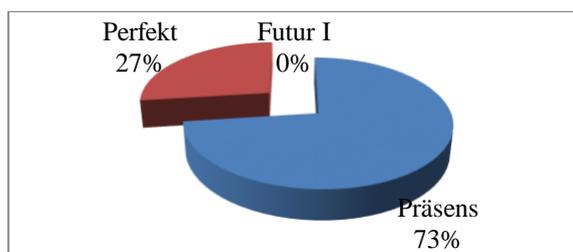
## 3 Results

Based on the theoretical provisions of grammars [2, 4, 5, 6], a study was conducted on the use of conjunctivitis in the German text on the basis of two groups: the *present* (Präsens,

Perfekt, FuturI) and *preterital* (Präteritum, Plusquamperfekt, Konditionalis I, Konditionalis II). The transfer of the present conjunctive group, as practice shows, does not cause any special difficulties. It provided that the specific rules for the interpretation of this phenomenon were observed [3].

### 3.1 Statistical analysis of the present conjunctiva group

A statistical analysis of the present conjunctiva group (26 examples) showed that the form of the subjunctive mood in Präsens is the most common, amounting to 73%. Less common form Perfekt was 27%, and the form Futur I was not found (the results are shown in Figure 1).



**Fig. 1.** Statistical analysis of the subjunctive mood in the present group.

The data given above show that the author of the original text had the need to express more often the simultaneity of the action in the subordinate clause in relation to the moment of speaking presented in the main sentence as part of the compound. It is also irrefutable that this is not a regularity and is purely subjective, being conditioned by the intention of the author.

We give examples of the use of conjunctiva in the present group.

#### **Konjunktiv I (present):**

- The German compound sentence in the form of the first sentence (Konjunktiv Aktiv Präsens) is the second sentence (Konjunktiv Zustandspassiv Präsens): “... *er ... müsse intensiv arbeiten, und hier sei er zu sehr gestört*” [16, p. 12]; its translation: “... *he must prepare intensively, but here he is prevented from working*” [17, p. 294]. The translated compound sentence is in the indicative mood.
- The German compound sentence in the form of the main sentence (Konjunktiv Aktiv Präsens) is a subordinate clause (Konjunktiv Aktiv Perfekt): “... *müsse er sich entschuldigen, man habe ihn plötzlich abgerufen ...*” [16, p. 198]; its translation: “... *as ... apologizing, said that he was suddenly summoned ...*” [17, p. 211]. Thus, it is translated by a complex sentence in the indicative mood.

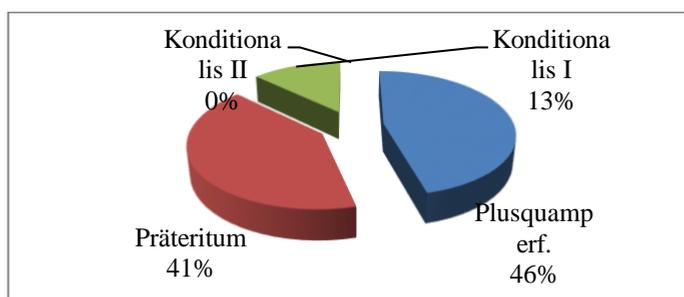
In the above examples, as in the vast majority of cases found, the current conjunctive is an indicator of indirectness. However, in the presence of a complex sentence, the conjunctive can be redundant, since the function of transmitting evidential semantics is taken up by the syntactic structure itself, including the corresponding lexical elements. The main sentence contains a verb or a noun with the semantics of speech-activity, and the subordinate clause is sometimes introduced by an alliance or a union word.

### 3.2 Statistical analysis of the conjunctiva preterital group

Translation of the subjunctive mood in the preterital group is a more complex and interesting phenomenon. The conjunctiva in the preterital group (80 examples) with the meaning of unreality is translated into Russian by L. V. Wolfson and P. S. Bernshteyn. The typical analytical forms with the help of the particle *would* (b), including in the composition of the union to (s):

- Forms of the past tense of the verb (*would run*) (38 examples) – the morphological form;
- Infinitives (*to save*) (6 examples) – the morphological form;
- Predicatives (*it would be better*) (1 example) – the morphological form;
- Participles (*it would seem*) (2 examples) – the non-morphological form;
- Gerunds (*not doing the job*) (3 examples) – the non-morphological form;
- Verbs in the indicative mood (*entertain her, would like to talk*) (30 examples).

Statistical analysis of the subjunctive mood in the preterital group showed that the most common forms are Plusquamperfekt (46%) and Präteritum (41%), the least common form is Konditionalis I (13%), and there are no proposals with the form of Konditionalis II. The results of statistical analysis of the subjunctive mood in the preterital group are shown in Figure 2 (80 examples).



**Fig. 2.** Statistical analysis of the subjunctive mood in the preterital group.

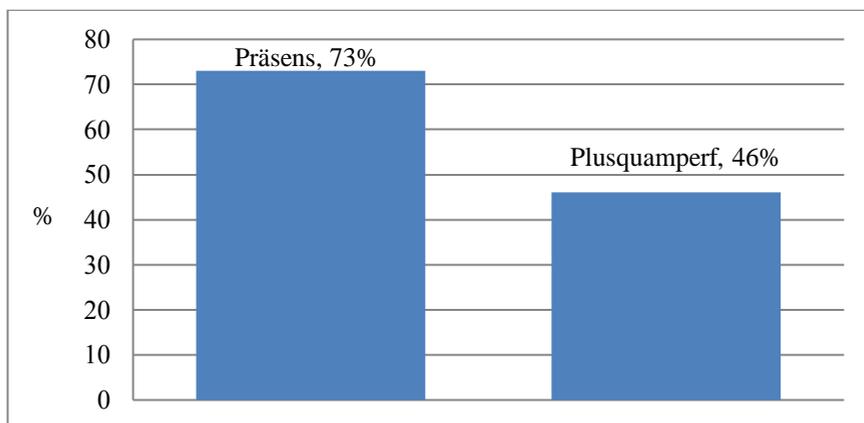
The investigated tendency can be characterized as the author's need to describe primarily the present, the future, and the past tense for describing the unreal (desire, condition, opportunity, interrupted action, negation) as an objectively existing reality (absolute time).

We give examples of the subjunctive mood in the preterital group:

#### Konjunktiv II (preterital):

- The German compound sentence in the form of the subordinate clause (Konjunktiv Präteritum) is the main sentence (Aktiv Präsens): "*Wenn du **wüßtest**, wo ich morgen bin!*" [16, p. 232]. Translation: "**If you knew** where I'll be tomorrow!" [17, p. 236]. Translated by a complex sentence: in the subordinate clause the subjunctive is stored.
- The German compound sentence in the form of the first sentence (Indikativ Aktiv Präteritum) is the second sentence (Konjunktiv Aktiv Plusquamperfekt): "*Aber er **schob** meine Hand zurück mit einer Energie, die ich ihm nicht **zugetraut hätte**."* [16, p. 231]. Translation: "**But he took** my hand with unexpected force" [17, p. 235]. It is translated by a simple sentence without preserving the subjunctive mood
- The German compound sentence in the form of the main sentence (Konditionalis I) is a subordinate clause (Konjunktiv Aktiv Präsens): "*Er **würde** sich irgendwo ein Zimmer **nehmen** für diese ein, zwei Monate, bis alles vorüber sei*" [16, p. 12]. Its translation: "**He will hire** himself somewhere a room for one or two months, until the exams are over" [17, p. 294]. It is translated by a compound sentence without preserving the subjunctive mood.

We will reflect the result of the statistical study in the Figure 3.



**Fig. 3.** Summary statistical data.

As the Figure clearly demonstrates, the most common forms of subjunctive mood in the German original text are Präsens and Plusquamperfekt, which amounted to 73% and 46% respectively.

## 4 Discussion

In the course of our study, the following fact is also confirmed. Proposals in the subjunctive mood in the present and preterital groups (106 examples) are translated into Russian by a variety of syntactic constructions:

1. Complex (union and union) proposals: 76 examples;
2. Compound sentences (union and unconditioned): 23 examples;
3. Simple sentences: 7 examples.

Especially widely the subjunctive mood is used in compound sentences with clauses of the following types: conditional, target, additional, and relative. The variety of syntactic forms intended to express the subjunctive mood testifies to the richness of the German language, which has synonymous means of expressing the conjunctiva. We note the following results of the study:

1. Analysis of the present form of the conjunctiva showed that in the methods of translating Präsens Konjunktiv and Perfekt Konjunktiv, there is no grammatical analogy to the Russian language. Its meaning is transferred to the Russian language by lexical and syntactic means. Futur I in these fictional texts was not identified.
2. When analyzing the preterital forms of the conjunctiva, it was revealed that they correspond to the subjunctive mood of the Russian language and are translated into Russian: (1) with verbs with the suffix -l- and with the particle present, future, and past tense in the direct meaning; (2) verbs in the indicative mood; (3) Konditionalis I is translated basically by future time in the display without the particle “would,” but the translation of Konditionalis I in the indicator by the future time also occurs with the particle; (4) Konditionalis II in these literary texts was not identified.

## 5 Conclusion

Thus, in this article, the features of the representation of the subjunctive mood in a natural language (German and Russian in particular) were considered. These syntactic

constructions with a subjunctive inclination acquire various forms of linguistic expression in the natural language that allow translators to express this or that thought in view of their own abilities in terms of language proficiency. In the present study, we are talking about an illicit translation, which reflects not only linguistic patterns, but also other factors that depend on the individual skill of the translators and the creative tasks that confront them. In the course of the study, a statistical analysis of the frequency of using the subjunctive mood in German on the example of a work of art was made, focusing on the most common forms of the conjunctiva. In most cases, when translating from German into Russian, the Russian sentence does not overlap with German one, not coinciding with it in its syntactic structure. Often the structure of the Russian sentence in translation is completely different from the structure of the German sentence: various syntactic constructions, inconsistency of temporal forms, the presence of interesting non-morphological forms of conjunctiva. These non-morphological forms in Russian grammars are described as extremely rare and even as erroneous in school textbooks. In our opinion, this state of affairs is strictly subjective in the artistic style of S. Zweig. The results of the analysis can be taken into account in the practice of teaching the translation of German texts into Russian, in the process of studying the peculiarities of language and style of S. Zweig, and well-known translators L. V. Wolfson and P. S. Bernshtein, as well as in the compilation of programs for machine translation of literary texts.

Having considered syntactic constructions presented in the German and Russian language texts with a subjunctive inclination, it can be concluded with certainty that analysis of the translation of the subjunctive mood in natural language is of great interest. Numerous examples serve as proof. The data presented in the article can be considered only as a trend in the development of this topic, which requires further development with original works of art by other German-speaking authors.

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