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КИТАЙСКАЯ ЕДИНИЦА 上 SHÀNG 'ВЕРХ' С ЕЕ ПРОСТРАНСТВЕННОЙ И НЕПРОСТРАНСТВЕННОЙ СЕМАНТИКОЙ В СФЕРЕ ОБУЧЕНИЯ ИНОСТРАННЫМ ЯЗЫКАМ

Аннотация. В этой статье рассматриваются пространственные и непространственные значения китайской языковой единицы 上 shàng 'верх', которые могут быть переведены на русский и английский языки как разные части речи для обучения языку.

Ключевые слова: китайский язык; языковая единица 上 shàng 'верх'; пространственное значение; непространственное значение; части речи; обучение иностранным языкам.

THE CHINESE LANGUAGE UNIT 上 SHÀNG 'UP' WITH ITS SPATIAL AND NON-SPATIAL SEMANTICS IN THE TEACHING SPHERE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Summary. This article deals with the spatial and non-spatial meanings of the Chinese language unit 上 shàng which is translated into English and Russian as different parts of speech for the language teaching.

Key words: Chinese language; language unit 上 shàng 'up'; spatial meanings; non-spatial meanings; parts of speech; foreign language teaching.

The word 上 shàng 'up', one of the 20 most frequently used language units with various meanings in the Chinese language, quite often presents a certain difficulty in foreign language teaching. This article presents the results of a study of various spatial and non-spatial meanings of 上 shàng in relation to teaching Chinese to Russian and English speakers. The suggested ways of classification are viewed as effective means to facilitate educational process.

上 shàng 'up' has as many as 36 registered meanings in the modern Chinese language. It can be translated as 'верх, над, на, в, сверху, высший, идти и т.д.' into Russian [2, с. 214] and as 'up, on, high, go to, ascend, upward etc.' into English [1, p. 1468]. The equivalents presented in dictionaries and found in parallel corpora [3; 4]; indicate that 上 shàng corresponds to different parts of speech in Russian and English. However, there are no parts of speech in the Chinese language, rather, there exist two grammatical classes of words: the notional words including nouns, verbs, adjectives,

numerals, pronouns and quantifiers (measuring words), and structural (functional) words containing adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliaries, interjections and onomatopoeic words.

Considering the 36 meanings of *上 shàng* and its grammatical characteristics, it is used in modern Chinese only as a notional word corresponding to the European nouns, adjectives and verbs. Used as a noun, *上 shàng* has 9 definitions including 3 kinds of spatial meanings. Used as an adjective, it reveals 6 definitions covering 2 spatial meanings. As a verb *上 shàng* shows 21 explanations with 15 spatial meanings (see the table below).

The quantity of the spatial and non-spatial meanings of *上 shàng* ‘up’ used as 3 kinds of notional words in the modern Chinese language

	kinds of notional words	spatial meanings	non-spatial meanings	total
<i>上 shàng</i>	noun	3	6	9
	adjective	2	4	6
	verb	15	6	21
	total	20	16	36

As the data suggest, *上 shàng* with spatial meanings takes up more than 50 % of all registered meanings of the word, which makes the research of its spatial semantics important in foreign language teaching. Since *上 shàng* has various equivalents in Russian and English belonging to different parts of speech, the teacher may apply the above mentioned classification of *上 shàng* into different parts of speech with spatial and non-spatial meanings.

Unlike in Chinese, where *上 shàng* is used only as a notional word, it can be translated into Russian with the help of prepositions, adverbs, participles, and adverbial participles¹ (which are considered functional words in Chinese). As for English translations of *上 shàng*, they are mostly prepositions, adverbs, numerals and pronouns (there are participles in English as well, but they do not form a separate part of speech, rather, they are treated as non-finite verb forms).

When *上 shàng* is translated by different parts of speech, the spatial meanings reflected in Russian and English should be explained from different perspectives. The following typical examples may help in the process of understanding how to use and translate the unit *上 shàng* correctly.

(1) 他将两腿在马肚子上一磕，催它快走，但马却只将后半身一扭，照旧地慢腾腾，... [鲁迅 / 奔月 (1926)] *Tā jiāng liǎng tuǐ zài mǎ dùzi shàng yī kē*” *cūi tā kuài zǒu, dàn mǎ què zhǐ jiāng hòubàn shēn yī niǔ, zhàojiù de mànténgténg, ...* [Lu Xun / Ben yue (1926)] / (1a) ‘И, чтоб поторопить коня, он поддал ему пятками под брюхо, но конь, вильнув задом, продолжал трусить мелкой рысцой’ [Лу Синь. Побег на луну (В. Сухорукова)].

In this example, the language unit *上 shàng* in the Chinese context is used as a noun which can be literally translated into Russian as *肚子 dùzi* ‘брюхо’ *上 shàng* ‘на’, while in the Russian translation it is interpreted with the help of a prepositional phrase *под брюхо*.

¹ In Russian the participles and adverbial participles are distinguished and presented as separate parts of speech ‘причастие’ and ‘депричастие’.

As it is evident, the Russian preposition *nod* is totally opposite in meaning with *上 shàng*. This controversy is explained by the following considerations: in Chinese the verbal description of the situation of riding a horse presupposes that the horse is the center and a person's legs move from the centre to the periphery and back (away from the horse and back to the horse), then beat the horse's belly which is an action directed spatially from the periphery to the centre. This is why the unit *上 shàng* is used. In Russian, quite on the contrary, the same spatial movements of a person's legs while spurring a horse are reflected with the help of a proposition *nod* which indicates that the movements are directed to the downside of the horse belly.

(2) 上桌前, 在每个盘子里放上鲑鱼, 然后在上面盖上1/4的朝鲜蓟混合物。
Shàngzhuō qián, zài měigè pánzǐlǐ fàngshàng guīyǔ, ránhòu zàishàngmiàn gài shàng sīfēnzhīyī de cháoxiǎn jìhúnhéwù. / (2a) To serve, place each portion of salmon on a serving plate, then **top with** 1/4 of the artichoke mixture.

In example (2), there are four Chinese phrases with the language unit *上 shàng*: three verb phrases 上桌 *shàngzhuō* 'serve', 放上 *fàngshàng* 'place, put' and 盖上 *gài shàng* 'cover', and a noun phrase 上面 *shàngmiàn* 'top, top side'. The three Chinese verb phrases express spatial direction: someone makes something move from one location to another. The moving route could be either vertical or horizontal. The noun phrase 上面 *shàngmiàn* emphasizes the static status of something on top of the surface. The first two Chinese verb phrases and the noun phrase are totally equivalent with English translations, but the last Chinese verb phrase with *上 shàng* is translated into English by a preposition *with*. So, the English preposition *with* is used in similar function to the verb phrase 盖上 *gài shàng* 'use, put, or cover' but unlike the Chinese phrase which emphasizes the dynamic spatial direction of the object, the English preposition *with* indicates that the static status of the spatial object *artichoke mixture* is on the surface of the object *salmon* and contacts with it. Thus, both the English preposition *with* and the Chinese verb phrase 盖上 *gài shàng* reflect the topological spatial relations between the salmon and the artichoke mixture.

(3) 这本小说包含上卷和下卷。 *Zhèběn xiǎoshuō bāohán shàngjuàn hé xiàjuàn.* / (3a) This novel contains **the first and the second volume**.

In this example, the Chinese noun phrase 上卷 *shàngjuàn* 'first volume' is used relative to the number of volumes the novel contains. *上 shàng* in this phrase is translated into English by a numeral *the first*. So, the corresponding units in Chinese and English are used here not in their spatial meanings.

(4) 你说了许多关于这件事的细节, 以上信息可吗? *Nǐshuōle xǔduō guānyú zhèjiànshì de xìjié, yǐshàng xìnxì kěxìnma?* / (4a) He said a lot of details about this matter, are **this information** credible?

In (4), the unit 以上 *yǐshàng* 'the above' is composed of 以 *yǐ* 'in order to, according to.....' and 上 *shàng* and can be used as a quantifier and an adjective in modern Chinese. Into English it can be translated as 'the above or above mentioned' representing the details mentioned previously. In modern Chinese it is scarcely used and seldom translated as a pronoun into English. Thus, neither in the Chinese context nor in the English translation, *上 shàng* is used in spatial meaning.

The research shows that the language unit *上 shàng* being a notional word in Chinese is most frequently translated into English and Russian as a functional word (e.g.

a preposition, an adverb, a participle etc.). Besides, the unit *上 shàng* and its English and Russian equivalents can be used both in spatial and non-spatial meanings. In choosing an effective teaching strategy, one should take into consideration both the absence of correspondence between parts of speech in English and Russian translations of *上 shàng* and the difference in spatial conceptualization in Chinese and English / Russian.

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