

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE GRAMMATICAL MEANS OF FOCALIZATION IN THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE TO TEACH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS HOW TO CREATE LITERATURE REVIEW**

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**Abstract.** The article deals with grammatical means used by the speaker to indicate the source of information when forming an utterance whose purpose is to convey the information obtained in communicative acts prior to a particular communicative act. It will be shown that these grammatical devices, belonging to different departments of the language system, are not fully characterized in the scientific and methodological literature and, in particular, in the official documents regulating the teaching of Russian to international students. For international students, using grammatical means to indicate the source of information in the productive language, for example, when writing a literature review for a master's thesis, poses a significant difficulty. However, it is possible to fill the existing gap in the applied description of the language system (its fragment) based on the research results in theoretical linguistics. In order to determine the place of grammatical means of indicating the source of information in the language system, the authors refer to the concept of communicative grammar by G.A. Zolotova to the terms “focalization” and “means of focalization” proposed within the framework of this concept. Following G.A. Zolotova, the grammatical means of focalization are classified according to the type of interaction between the model of the source text and the chosen model for conveying information in the created literature review. Considering the system of focalization in the Russian language from the point of view of theoretical linguistics, the tasks of their study and description are formulated from the linguistic-didactic aspect and scientifically justified for language teaching.

**Keywords:** *Russian for academic purposes, source work, formal means of focalization, reporting verbs, reporting clauses, writing skills for research work*

**For citation:** Zavjalova O.S., Christou M. Description of the Grammatical Means of Focalization in the Russian Language to Teach International Students How to Create Literature Review. *Education & Pedagogy Journal. 2023;1(5):82–96*. doi: 10.23951/2782-2575-2023-1-82-96

The most important goal of foreign language teaching is forming communication skills. The use of a foreign language as a means of communication is impossible without mastering a sufficient number of lexical and grammatical units necessary for constructing an utterance – a tool for fulfilling a certain communicative task. The description of communicative tasks (intentions) and linguistic units corresponding to them is the basis of normative documents regulating foreign language teaching.

One of the communicative tasks systematically confronted by the participants of one or another communicative act is the transmission of information previously obtained in a communicative act preceding a given communicative act. This communicative intention is specified in different forms in the state educational standards for Russian as a foreign language at different levels<sup>1</sup>:

“A foreigner must be able to convey ... the content, the main idea of the text read or heard” (from Requirements for Russian as a Foreign Language. First level. General mastery of the language [5, p. 10]).”

“A foreigner must be able to:

(a) adequately perceive and understand educationally and professionally relevant information from written and oral texts, process it and present it in oral or written form.

(b) compose textual and oral works of the following genres: ... Abstracts, summaries of various kinds, term papers, dissertations, reports, and scientific communication (from the requirements for the second proficiency level of Russian as a foreign language, taking into account a student’s professional orientation [6, p. 28]).”

When forming an utterance based on the text of another, it is often important for the sender of the message to draw the attention of the receiver of the message to the source of information conveyed, for which the language, including Russian, has special means. In the state educational standards, these

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<sup>1</sup> The systematization of grammatical tools for the creation of literature review is understood as an important task by foreign language teachers in various countries, see e.g. [1–4].

means are described extremely sparingly: “Complex sentences with conjunctions *что, чтобы, как, якобы, ли* (*В статье сообщается, что...; Во второй части описывается, как...*). Indication of direct speech (quotations) and indirect speech. Indication of the source of information” (from the description of the content of language skills in the requirements for the second level of mastery of Russian as a foreign language, taking into account the student’s professional orientation [6, p. 33]). In fact, the standard proposes a formulation of a communicative task instead of a description of lexico-grammatical material that can organize an utterance for implementing this communicative task.

Meanwhile, the system of syntactic means “for expressing the source of knowledge underlying the message” in Russian is very extensive [7, p. 33]; see also [8]. The detailed presentation of these means in describing the content of language competence in normative documents can prevent possibly incomplete, inaccurate reproduction of this language material in textbooks and teaching materials for Russian as a foreign language.

As is well known, to correctly determine the composition of the language material necessary for the implementation of the communicative intentions declared in the educational program, it is necessary to resort to theoretical linguistics [9, p. 9]. In the linguistic studies of the Russian language, the constructions of which the focalized statement is an integral part are singled out and characterized in detail by G.A. Zolotova<sup>1</sup>.

When adding references to the source of knowledge underlying the message to a sentence that “contains this or that information about objective reality”, Prof. Zolotova calls the sentences a focalization. However, the constructions “have a second structural and semantic plan that refers to the subject, the ‘author’ of perception, who establishes or evaluates the phenomena of reality, and sometimes also to the nature of perception” [7, p. 263], she calls focalization constructions.

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<sup>1</sup> In her study (1971), Professor Zolotova notes how unfortunate it is that Russian is not an international language of science and how this fact leads to many profound and informative works by researchers from other countries going unrecognized. This can be seen in the comparison between the extensive work of G.A. Zolotova on complex syntactic structures and the indication of the source of information and the more recent work of Professor Hyland and his colleague from Hong Kong [1].

G.A. Zolotova has shown that the properties of the focalization construction and the features of its organization directly depend on the constructive possibilities of the focalization tool chosen by the speaker – this is another reason that explains the need for a detailed description of the grammatical tools of focalization in order to teach their practical use.

In the work of Prof. Zolotova, three types of focalization constructions were identified [7, p. 263–278]:

1. The focalizing model is attached to the focalized model, with no interaction between the models (their structural change). For example, this type of focalization is observed when the following is used to indicate a source of information:

(a) the structure of a compound sentence – in this case, the reference to the “author” is expressed in the form of a main clause, in which the focalized model takes the position of a subordinate clause:

***В. Белинский в рецензии на “Риторику” А. Кошанского пишет по поводу бессоюзной конструкции с условными отношениями, что эта форма “проще, легче и лучше” союзной (Золотова Г.А. Бессоюзные сложные предложения с точки зрения текста);***

***Н.С. Поспелов подытоживает, что общим признаком бессоюзных сложных конструкций служит непосредственная взаимосвязанность содержания входящих в их состав предложений (Золотова Г.А. Бессоюзные сложные предложения с точки зрения текста);***

(b) introductory constructions that form the focalization model:

***Если, как справедливо полагают авторы главы, таксисные отношения разновременности / одновременности характеризуют связь в полипредикативном комплексе, то можно вспомнить, что время – лишь одна из предикативных компонент, по В.В. Виноградову, наряду с модальностью и персональностью (Золотова Г.А. К вопросу о таксисе);***

***Пушкин для Виноградова был, по слову Д.С. Лихачева, “любимым героем” исследований. К проблемам анализа текста (Золотова Г.А. В.В. Виноградов в работах о Пушкине).***

(c) Synthaxemes with the meaning of the focalizer and the focalizer with a possessive-locative connotation that are formally included in the structure of the focalized clause but do not enter into collocations with other forms that form the pattern clause." [7, p. 98–99]:

*Для Тимирязева как физиолога растений основной научной проблемой было изучение процесса усвоения зеленым растением углерода под влиянием энергии солнечных лучей, т. е. процесса фотосинтеза (Ракитин Ю.В. Памяти К.А. Тимирязева);*

*В то время как у Ньютона [focalizer] длина спектра превышала ширину в пять раз, у Люкаса длина была больше ширины лишь в три с половиной раза (Филиппов М.М. Исаак Ньютон. Его жизнь и научная деятельность);*

*Заметим, что термином таксис у Р. Якобсона и А.В. Бондарко [focalizer with a possessive-locative connotation]<sup>1</sup> назван известный признак одновременности либо последовательности действий глагольного предиката и деепричастия (потом и других полупредикативных оборотов) в рамках одного предложения (Золотова Г.А. Русский глагол в структуре текста);*

*И ведь он целый век все такой-то был: деньги – ему солома, дрова какие-то (Сухово-Кобылин А.В. Свадьба Кречинского).*

2. The focalized model is integrated into the focalizing model (in a simple sentence). This model interaction is most evident when reporting verbs serve as the means of focalization. That is, verbs of speech-thought-action, through which the modus frame revealing the position of the subject of speech-thought in relation to the dictum content of the statement, is made explicit [12, p. 75].

Two factors determine the nature of the transformation of the focalized model:

a) the construction abilities of the reporting verbs: *кто? отмечает что?* (В. п.), *кто указывает на что?* (на + В. п.); *кто? считает что?* (В. п.) *чем?* (Т. п.); *кто? пишет о чём?* (П. п.) / *о чём?* (П. п.) *как о чём?* (П. п.) и др.;

b) For example, when you focalize a typical model “subject and its quality,” the case forms of the subject and predicate of the basic model are changed according to the requirements of the focalizing construction:

Следующую задачу [the predicate of the basic model is in the accusative case] **Виноградов видел** в систематизации [the subject of the basic model is in the “в” + prepositional case]; «речевых единиц, как типов, однородных форм словесной композиции» (Золотова Г.А. В.В. Виноградов и перспективы филологии);

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<sup>1</sup> For more details on the distinction between the meanings of the syntaxeme “у” + genitive case, which is considered a “proposition of focalization”, see [10], [11, pp. 106–107].

Проф. Л. А. Булаховский также, вслед за Дельбрюком, возводит эту форму [the subject of the basic model is in the accusative case] прошедшего к повелительному наклонению [the predicate of the basic model is in the “к” + dative case] (Виноградов В.В. Русский язык. Грамматическое учение о слове);

Ключом [basic model predicate is in the instrumental case] к архитектонике текста В.В. Виноградов считал “образ [the subject of the basic model is in the accusative case] автора” <...> (Золотова Г.А. Коммуникативные регистры речи в композиции текста).

When we focalize models with other typical values, the basic model undergoes a transformation “that converts a subordinate clause (in a propositional context) into a predicate name.” [13, p. 317]. The syntactic derivation implies a nominalization of the predicate of the basic model, which causes a change in the case form of the subject and, if necessary, of the object:

Суммируя идеи предшественников, Е.В. Падучева отмечает возможную многозначность [substantive from an adjectival predicate in the accusative case] иллюкутивного предназначения [the subject of the basic model in the genitive form] предложения (Золотова Г.А. О путях синтаксических исследований);

Далее, он [Timiryazev] устанавливает определенную зависимость [substantive from a verbal predicate in the accusative case] химического действия [the subject of the basic model in the genitive form] от напряжения света (Крашенинников Ф.Н. Климент Аркадьевич Тимирязев);

Он [Macer-Prinsep] не сомневался в происхождении [substantive from a verbal predicate in the “в” + prepositional case] всех этих тел [the subject of the basic model in the genitive form] из хлорофилла Пелтье и Каванту (Тимирязев К.А. Спектральный анализ хлорофилла).

3. The focalized model includes the focalizing model (in a simple sentence). This kind of interaction between the focalized and the focalizing model is described by G.A. Zolotova on the example of sentences in which the reporting verb is used in passive form as a means of focalization. In this case, the basic model (the focalized model) also undergoes transformations determined by its typical meaning. However, the different interaction between the focalizing model and the basic model is reflected in the different case form of these models: the subject of the basic models with the typical meaning “subject and its qualification” is used in the nominative case, while

the subject focalizer in the focalizing model is in the instrumental case. Models with another typical meaning in the nominative case have a predicate name (the result of the transformation of the predicate of the basic model):

*Квадратура* [the subject of the basic model is in the nominative case] *сложных кривых сводится Ньютоном* [subject-focalizer is in the instrumental case] *к квадратуре слагаемых (Вавилов С.И. Исаак Ньютон);*

*По-видимому, вся совокупность древних славянских письменных памятников* [the subject of the basic model is in the nominative case] <...> *рассматривается Ломоносовым* [the subject-focalizer is in the instrumental case] *как письменность на «древнем славянском языке»* (*Успенский Б.А. М.В. Ломоносов о соотношении церковнославянского, древнерусского и “древнеславянского” языков (на материале его записки о А.Л. Шлецере)*);

*Тенденциозность* [the substantive from an adjectival predicate in the nominative case] *утверждений* [the subject of the basic model is in the genitive case] *названных историков тогда еще была с горечью и едкой иронией высмеяна Михаилом Васильевичем Ломоносовым* [the object-focalizer in the form of the instrumental case ] <...> (*Порфиридов Н.Г. Древний Новгород. Очерки из истории русской культуры XI–XV вв.*).

G.I. Rozhkova has repeatedly emphasized that the methodology should be understood as “dependent on and derived from the whole system of the Russian language” [14, p. 9]. The interpretation of the syntactic properties of sentences in which the *modus* and *dictum* models interact, proposed by Professor Zolotova, and the systematization of the lexical and grammatical means of designating the source of information allow us to formulate and scientifically justify the tasks of studying and describing the above fragment of the language system for methodological purposes. It seems possible to outline two main directions of the applied work:

1. First, the teacher of Russian as a foreign language must prepare a list of lexical and grammatical means of indicating the source of information in normative documents. This should be done based on the language system and research results in theoretical linguistics. It is also necessary to justify the distribution of means of focalization in normative documents according to different levels of language proficiency.

2. Second, it is necessary to characterize the working methods (presentation, exercises, techniques of speech introduction) to the

constructions of focalization that teacher-practitioners can use in developing textbooks for Russian as a foreign language.

It is obvious that introducing new methods into teaching Russian as a foreign language should be gradual and build on already learned material [14, p. 27]. From this point of view, the first ones that should be introduced are the means of focalization that do not require structural changes to the models they connect, i.e., they are used in constructions of focalization of the first type. These means are listed above. For a correct linguodidactic description of these means related to the source of information, a number of problems have to be solved:

1. It is necessary to investigate possible semantic differences between syntaxemes with the meaning of focalization with locative connotation and syntactic contexts in which these forms are used. It is necessary to work thoroughly on the methods by which these prepositional forms can be presented to a foreign audience – in particular, to avoid their confusion with homonymous syntaxemes, for more details, see [15, pp. 199–201].

2. It is useful to conduct a similar investigation with respect to introductory constructions such as *с точки зрения* + *genitive*, *по* + *dative*, *согласно* + *dative*, in order to understand whether they can be introduced as a list, as absolute syntactic synonyms, or whether the context of the use of each of the constructions should be specified.

3. One of the main tasks in characterizing complex sentences, the structure of which can be used for focalization of a message, should be the formation of a list of reporting verbs, impersonal predicative words beginning with “о” and occupying the position of a predicate in the main clause. It is necessary not only to select the most frequently used lexical units but also to find out the semantic differences between them. It is obvious that *Н.С. Поспелов пишет, что...* is not the same as *Н.С. Поспелов обнаружил, что...*, or *Н.С. Поспелову известно, что...* is not the same as *Н.С. Поспелову ясно, что....* When speaking about the semantic differences between reporting verbs, one usually refers to the nuances of the modus meanings contained in the modus framework formed by these verbs. Based on the analysis of these modus meanings, G.A. Zolotova elaborated:

a) Qualifying Focalization – Focalization models “that contain an evaluation of objects or phenomena, or reveal the content of concepts.” [7, p. 265];

b) Perceptual focalization [7, p. 272];



c) Recognition focalization – in these sentences, focalizing models interact with basic models by “reporting the feature of the object recognized by the subject of the focalizing model” [7, p. 274].

Professor Zolotova’s paper lists verbs that can be used in the modus framework with qualifying focalizations, perceptual focalizations, and recognition focalizations. Here are some examples:

a) Он [Yablochnikov] **писал**, что «русская свеча в короткое время распространилась по всему миру, дойдя из Парижа до дворцов шаха персидского и короля Камбоджи...» (Вейтков Ф. Русский свет);

Рассуждая по аналогии со звуком, Ньютон **полагает**, что эфирные колебания отличаются по величине, но не по скорости (Вавилов С.И. Исаак Ньютон);

...Еще **подлежит сомнению** (особенно после последних исследований Шунка и Мархлевского), принадлежат ли эти линии главному составному началу хлорофилла или какому-нибудь из его продуктов разложения (Тимирязев К.А. Космическая роль растения);

б) Ежедневно мы **видим**, как Солнце и Луна появляются из-за горизонта, описывают на небе дуги и снова прячутся за Землю (Зеликович Э. Спор о земле);

в) Вольта **открыл**, что два разных металла при прикладывании к языку вызывают кислый вкус (Владимиров С. Рождение двух наук);

В результате **оказалось**, что между икс-лучами и фосфоресценцией на самом деле нет никакой связи (Нечаев И. Открытие радиоактивности).

These few examples already show that some reporting verbs merely denote the source of knowledge underlying the message. In contrast, others are semantically more complex: They not only indicate the source of information but also contain other mode meanings: Evaluation, an emotional attitude of the speaker towards the message presented in the dictum part. Reporting verbs should be carefully and thoughtfully grouped in textbooks and study guides so that international students can select the correct lexical unit from the list<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> A similar problem arises when studying other foreign languages. For example, an article about English reporting verbs in a foreign class says that international students do not see the semantic nuances of reporting verbs [16, pp. 33, 45]. See also [17, 18].

The examples also show grammatical problems, which, on the one hand, are not specific to focalized constructions, but on the other hand, must be taken into account when presenting and practicing these constructions. These are:

1) the grammatical construction of the predicate of the focalizing model with an indefinite-personal focalizer (*Считают, что..., оказалось что...*);

2) the possibilities of syntactic synonymy: the formation of the predicate of the focalizing model with the help of the compensator verb and the derivative of the reporting verb in the corresponding case form (*Ньютон предположил, что... – Ньютон высказал предположение, что...*).

Structurally focalized constructions of the second and third types are more complex and will be considered in the next section. To describe these constructions from a linguodidactic point of view, you need to do the following:

1. Outline the rules for transforming the basic model in interaction with the focalizing model (for teaching purposes); point out possible difficulties that students might encounter (especially those caused by the characteristics of the student's native language);

2. Determine the construction potential of the reporting verbs (i.e., the case structure of the interacting models of modus and dictum with a given reporting verb). From our point of view, for this task, it is useful to refer to the appendix "Verb Combinations" compiled by G.A. Zolotova in the "Syntactic Dictionary of the Russian Language" [10, pp. 351–375].

When introducing grammatical means of message focalization within a new educational level, it is important to follow the principle of systematic learning.

Both the teacher and the student should combine new and already learned means of focalization in a paradigmatic way when "different branches of the linguistic system solve the same problem – the expression of subjective meanings" [15, p. 204].

Above, we discussed examples of message focalization where the author and the author of the literature review are not the same. The B2 language level defined in the educational standards includes the ability of students not only to understand and analyze the work of others but also to write their scientific texts, such as coursework, dissertations, and scientific communications. Achieving this requires specific analysis from a language teaching and

learning perspective, including focalization constructions where the speaker and author are the same person. This is called the metatextual use of focalization, where the author is also the commentator of the text [19, p. 404].

*Замечу, что используется этот термин в разных смыслах: у А.В. Бондарко речь идет о значениях грамматических категорий, а в “Коммуникативной грамматике” это обобщенные значения частей речи и их подклассов (Золотова Г.А. Проблемы грамматики русского глагола);*

*На мой взгляд, точнее было бы в этом труде название полей не функционально-семантическими, а категориально-семантическими (Золотова Г.А. К теории поля в языкознании).*

It is obvious that special attention should be paid to these constructions in language textbooks and teaching materials for non-native speakers of Russian. However, for effective teaching, it is also important to consider the context in which they are used in an applied pedagogical language model [20].

In conclusion, we would like to say that understanding the linguo-didactic perspective of focalization constructions, which are not yet fully described in the literature, while relying on a language system, is crucial for effective teaching of these materials to non-native speakers and for successful mastery of the materials by students.

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*Submitted September 22, 2022*

## **ОПИСАНИЕ ГРАММАТИЧЕСКИХ СРЕДСТВ УКАЗАНИЯ НА ИСТОЧНИК ИНФОРМАЦИИ В РУССКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ В ЦЕЛЯХ ОБУЧЕНИЯ ИНОСТРАНЦЕВ СОЗДАНИЮ ВТОРИЧНЫХ ТЕКСТОВ**

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**Аннотация.** Рассматриваются грамматические средства, которые используются говорящим для обозначения источника информации при организации высказывания, цель которого – передача сведений, полученных в коммуникативных актах, предшествующих конкретному акту коммуникации. Показано, что эти грамматические средства, принадлежащие разным отделам системы языка, не охарактеризованы в полной мере в научно-методической литературе и, прежде всего, в нормативных документах, регламентирующих обучение иностранцев русскому языку. Между тем для иностранцев использование грамматических инструментов указания на источник информации в продуктивной речи, например, при написании обзора литературы в магистерской диссертации, представляет значительную трудность. Восполнить существующий пробел в прикладном описании системы языка (ее фрагмента) можно, опираясь на результаты ее исследования в теоретической лингвистике. Для определения места грамматических средств указания на источник информации в системе языка авторы обращаются к концепции коммуникативной грамматики Г.А. Золотовой, к предложенным в рамках этой концепции понятиям «авторизация», «средства авторизации». Вслед за Г.А. Золотовой грамматические средства авторизации классифицируются в зависимости от характера взаимодействия модели из текста-источника и выбранной модели передачи информации в создаваемом вторичном тексте. При рассмотрении системы средств авторизации в русском языке с позиций теоретической лингвистики формулируются и научно

обосновываются задачи их изучения и описания в лингво-дидактическом аспекте, в целях обучения языку.

**Для цитирования:** Zavjalova O.S., Christou M. Description of the Grammatical Means of Focalization in the Russian Language to Teach International Students How to Create Literature Review // Education & Pedagogy Journal. 2023. Вып. 1 (5). P. 82–96. doi: 10.23951/2782-2575-2023-1-82-96

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