

## **Reflexives in the lexical and grammatical system of language and artistic discourse: linguocultural contrastive aspect**

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### **Abstract**

The article is devoted to reflexives in the lexico-grammatical system of the language and artistic discourse in the linguocultural contrastive aspect. The problem of establishing the lexico-grammatical nature of reflexives remains relevant in modern linguistics, since the language system in different linguistic cultures lives according to its linguistic laws. The novelty of the study lies in determining the fact that the level status of reflexives is various in different languages. It has been established that the lexical and grammatical categories of reflexive pronouns are contradictory and unstable, presented not only in different languages, but also in grammatical studies of different authors within the same language. In some studies, the reflexive forms a category consisting of one unit, in others – several units and in some studies, they are considered as personal pronouns. In some languages, the reflexive of verbs is described along with active and passive forms as a grammeme of the grammatical category of voice, in others they have a double-level status. As a result of structural, lexico-grammatical analysis, comparative analysis, interpretative analysis of the actual material (artistic discourse), subject-predicate-object relations in verbs defined as reflexive were revealed. The perspective is the consideration of the discursive nature of reflexives in various types of discourse in different linguistic cultures.

**Key words:** lexical and grammatical categories, category of voice, reflexives, reciprocals, part of speech, reciprocal verbs, reciprocal pronouns, artistic discourse, linguocultural contrastive aspect

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### **Introduction**

The system of parts of speech is characterized by a field structure, in which the core and the periphery are undoubtedly distinguished.

Pronouns by their grammatical (morphological and syntactic) characteristics and lexico-semantic features form an intermediate zone between autosemantic and synsemantic parts of speech, or they can be attributed to the periphery of autosemantic parts of speech (Muryasov, 2019; Muryasov, 2021).

The lexical and grammatical categories of this part of speech are contradictory and unstable, presented not only in different languages, but also in grammatical studies of different authors within the same language. One of the contradictory links in the internal classification of this part of speech is occupied by the so-called reflexive pronouns.

In some studies, the reflexive forms a category consisting of one unit, in others – several units and in some studies, they are considered as personal pronouns.

In some languages, the reflexive of verbs is considered along with active and passive forms as a grammeme of the grammatical category of voice (for example, in Turkic), in others they have a double-level status.

The hypothesis of this study is that the level status of reflexives is different in different languages.

Since the definitions of the term reflexive somehow refer to subject-predicate-object relations, the following question becomes legitimate: are there such relations in all verbs defined as reflexive in different linguocultures?

## Literature Review

In the linguistic literature, there is a tendency to distinguish between two phenomena: reflexive pronouns and reflexive verbs (Schendels, 1988; Glinz, 1994; Alexander, 1995; Vater, 1995; Apresyan, 2004; Vasilyeva & Pitskova, 2016; Boeva-Omelechko et al., 2018; Gazizov et al., 2020; Muryasov, 2019; Muryasov, 2021 etc.).

In Webster's dictionary, **reflexive** is defined as follows:

"1. (of a verb) taking a subject and object with identical referents, as *shave* in *I shave myself*, 2 (of a pronoun) used as an object to refer to the subject of a verb, as *myself* in *I shave myself*" (Webster's encyclopedic unabridged dictionary of the English language, 1994; Random House Learner's Dictionary of American English, 2022).

Thus, there are relations of coreference between the agent and the patient of action.

A similar understanding of the term reflexive is presented in many linguistic sources, for example: "... reflexive verb or pronoun refers back to the subject of the verb. In English, "to enjoy yourself" is a reflexive verb and "yourself" is a reflexive pronoun" (Macmillan English dictionary, 2006: 1186).

It should be noted that not all grammatical studies present the reflexive as an independent category of pronouns.

Thus, in some grammars of the French language, the reflexive pronoun as an independent category is either absent at all (Vasilyeva & Pitskova, 2016), or is considered as a kind of personal pronouns called the personal reflexive pronoun *soi, se*, which is used only in the 3rd person (Ilia, 1964: 92).

In German, the reflexive pronoun *sich* forms an independent category, used only in the 3rd person singular and plural. (Schendels, 1988: 213).

Duden (2005) grammar also considers *sich* to be the only true reflexive pronoun.

As for reflexive verbs in the forms of the 1st and 2nd person singular and plural they are personal pronouns used in the reflexive function (reflexiv gebrauchtes Personalpronomen) (Duden, 2005: 279).

A similar function of the reflexive pronoun in the 1st and 2nd persons singular and plural are performed by the object forms of personal pronouns in French:

*il se lave*, but: *je me lave*, *tu te laves*, *nous nous lavons*, *vous vous lavez*.

On the one hand, the reflexive is understood as a lexical group of verbs with a postfix *-ся (-сь)*, on the other hand, this morpheme serves as a morphological marker of the passive grammeme (for example, in Russian).

However, verbs with the postfix *-ся (-сь)*, according to some linguists, can serve as an indicator of two voices – reflexive-neuter and passive (Arakin, 1979: 136-137).

Thus, the verbs of the imperfect form in the active form in the Russian language are opposed to the passive constructions of "reflexive verbs, in which the postfix introduces a passive meaning" (Russian grammar, 1980: 615).

Further on, the authors point out that in the examples *Они постигают добро и зло и Добро и зло постигаются ими* "there are two different verbs: transitive (постигать) и reflexive (постигается)" (Ibid.).

It seems appropriate to V.V. Vinogradov's (2001) thesis that "the system of reflexive meanings is a striking example of the "lexicalization" of grammatical relations... "The category of voice" is being increasingly introduced into the sphere of lexis" (Vinogradov, 2001: 528).

## Methodology

The work uses a comprehensive analysis of the reflexivity category.

Definition analysis allows us to define the concept of reflexive.

In the theory of parts of speech, the question of the status of pronouns has been among the debatable problems for centuries. Some linguists consider this class of words to be an autosemantic part of speech, others refer them to the category of synsemantic parts of speech, others generally deny them the status of a part of speech and "dissolve"

them in other parts of speech – nouns and adjectives.

Pronouns play a leading role in ensuring the cohesion and coherence of parts of the text.

Reflexives are characterized by an unstable status in the internal classification of pronouns. They are often included in the composition of personal pronouns or are considered as communicative "amplifiers" of the latter.

Adequate descriptions of the category of reflexive are possible only in the context of field theory, which assumes the presence of a center (core) and periphery of language structures, which allows us to identify prototypical and peripheral classes of so-called reflexive verbs.

In addition, subject-predicate-object relations are detected in verbs defined as reflexive by using structural, lexico-grammatical analysis, contrast analysis, interpretative analysis of actual material.

The study was based on lexicographic sources and artistic discourse in Russian, English, German, and French. Reflexives in artistic discourse were considered on the example of M. Bulgakov's work "Master and Margarita" and translations of this work into English, German, and French.

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Types of reflexives

The analysis of the corpus of verbs in combination with the so-called reflexive pronouns leads to the distinction of four groups.

**1) Pseudo-reflexive (quasi-reflexive) verbs**, i.e. intransitive (subject) verbs that do not have any relationship to any object, which contradicts the internal form of the term reflexive, i.e. the direction of the agent's action to itself.

If the structures of

- Russian: он моется,

- English: he washes *himself*,

- German: er wäscht *sich*,

- French: il *se* lave

are prototypical reflexives, since the actions of the subject are directed to himself, then

- the Russian verbs: удивляться, волноваться, растрогаться, родиться, выпастья, проснуться, спохватиться, заблудиться, стремиться, маяться etc.;

- German: sich ereignen, sich einleben, sich ausschlafen, sich ergötzen, sich verlaufen etc.;

- French: se indigner contre qn, se revolter, se perdre, s'égarer, s'intégrer, s'acclimater, se délecter, se moquer de qn/qc, etc.

are not reflexive in the proper sense of this term.

Such pseudo-reflexives are rare in English:

(to) wind itself, (to) flatter oneself, to flaunt oneself, (to) amuse oneself.

Such pseudo-reflexives in English are rendered either by intransitive verbs or by a passive construction, cf. (to) be (deeply) moved, (to) be surprised and some others.

**2) Prototypical reflexives.** This group is represented in all the languages analyzed by us by the largest number of verbs.

See Table 1.

Table 1. Instances of complete interlingual symmetry of reflexives

| Russian        | English  | German                              | French  |
|----------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| одеться        | (to) dress oneself,<br>clothe oneself              | sich bekleiden                      | s`habiller  |
| защищаться     | (to) defend oneself                                | sich verteidigen                    | se défendre   |
| унижаться      | (to) demean oneself                                | sich erniedrigen                    | s`avilir  |
| мытья          | (to) wash oneself                                  | sich waschen                        | se laver  |
| бриться        | (to) shave/<br>(to) have a shave/<br>shave oneself | sich rasieren                       | se raser  |
| испачкаться    | (to) dirty oneself/<br>make sth dirty              | sich beschmutzen                    | se salir  |
| отравиться     | (to) poison oneself                                | sich vergiften                      | se empoisonner/<br>s`intoxiquer   |
| намазаться     | (to) rub oneself                                   | sich beschmieren/<br>sich einreiben | s`enduire,<br>se frotter  |
| перекреститься | (to) cross oneself                                 | sich bekreuzigen                    | se signer   |
| обнажиться     | (to) bare oneself,<br>uncover oneself              | sich entblößen,<br>sich entkleiden  | se découvrir,<br>se mettre à nu;<br>se dénuder ;<br>se dévoiler,<br>se dépouiller<br>(on trees) |
| обжечься       | (to) burn oneself                                  | sich verbrennen                     | se brûler   |

The pronominal components of reflexive verbs have different derivational bases in different languages.

In German, they can be considered as forms of indirect cases, in French as a form of a direct object.

English reflexive verbs are characterized by a more complex structure. Its pronominal component is formed by

"possessive pronoun + *self*":

I – myself, you – yourself, we – ourselves

and the object forms of personal pronouns of the 3rd person singular and plural (he-himself, she – herself, they – themselves).

As part of these verbs, the forms of personal pronouns perform the function of an object and they can be replaced by nouns in the object case:

Russian:

- Наташа! – пронзительно закричала Маргарита.

- Ты намазалась кремом?

- Я и ему намазала лысину, и ему! (Bulgakov, 2015)

English:

‘Natasha!’ shrieked Margarita. ‘Did you rub the cream on yourself?’

‘I smeared it on his bald head!’ (Bulgakov, 1967)

German:

„Mädchen!“ schrie Margarita gellend. „Hast du dich mit der Creme eingerieben?“

„... Ich habe ja auch ihm die Glatze eingeschmiert!“ (Bulgakov, 1983)

French:

- Natacha! cria Marguerite d`une vois perçante. Tu t`es mis de la crème?

-... À lui aussi j`en ai mis, je lui ai barbouillé son crane chocuve! (Bulgakov, 1968).

3) As a **special group**, we can distinguish **reciprocals (reciprocal verbs)**. At the same time, two synonymous pronouns often compete – a prototypical reflexive

pronoun used in the meaning of reciprocity and a reciprocal pronoun. Verbs of this group express actions in the implementation of which two persons participate. Reciprocal verbs are typical for Russian, German, and French, and in English they usually correspond to intransitive and sometimes transitive verbs. See Table 2.

Table 2. A special group of verbs in different languages

| <b>Russian</b> | <b>English</b>       | <b>German</b>   | <b>French</b>                 |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| браниться      | (to) scold           | sich zanken     | se disputer,<br>se chamailler |
| примириться    | become reconciled    | sich versöhnen  | se réconcilier                |
| обвенчаться    | become engaged       | sich verloben   | se fiancer                    |
| обниматься     | embrace              | sich umarmen    | s`embrasser                   |
| целоваться     | (to) kiss each other | sich küssen     | s`embrasser                   |
| подружиться    | become friends       | sich befreunden | se lier d`amitié              |
| рассориться    | fall out             | sich verfeinden | se brouiller                  |

Despite the high productivity of models of the formation of verbs with the postfix -ся (-сь), there are sometimes examples when a non-reflexive structure corresponds to a reciprocal verb in the Russian language:

Russian: быть похожим,

English: to resemble each other,

German: sich einander ähneln,

French: se ressembler;

Russian: знать друг друга;

English: to be beside oneself (with),

German: sich kennen,

French: se connaître.

## 2. Reciprocal Verbs

In all languages, the reciprocal pronoun acts as a synonym for the pronominal component of verbs with a reciprocal meaning:

Russian: друг друга,

English: each other/ one another,

German: einander,

French: l'un l'autre.

When translating from one language into another, reciprocal and reflexive pronouns can alternate:

English: We have not seen each other/ one another in years.

German: Wir haben uns (einander) lange nicht gesehen,

French: Nous ne nous sommes pas vus de depuis long temps,

Russian: Мы не виделись (не видели друг друга) в течение многих лет.

Some English linguists note certain differences between synonymous reciprocal pronouns. L.G. Alexander (1995) states: "Sometimes a distinction is drawn between each other

(used to refer to two people) and one another (used to refer to more than two) (Alexander, 1995: 104)".

Lexicographic sources also indicate some syntactic differences between these synonymous reciprocals.

The Longman Dictionary notes that the reciprocal *each other* is not used as the subject of the sentence:

Susan and Robert kissed *each other* passionately (Longman dictionary of contemporary English, 2003: 492).

The verbs called pluralia tantum are adjacent to the reciprocals.

Many agents participate in the implementation of actions expressed by such verbs:

Russian: Пролетарии всех стран, *соединяйтесь!*

German: Proletarier aller Länder *vereinigt euch!*

French: Prolétaires de tous les pays *unissez-vous!*

In English an intransitive verb is used in this sentence: Workers of the world, unite!

Pluralia tantum can include

the Russian verbs *собираться* (собраться), *сгучиваться*, *толпиться*, *съехаться*, *разъехаться*, *разбрестись*;

German: *sich versammeln*, *sich ansammeln*, *sich anhäufen*, *sich zusammendrängen*, *sich drängen*, *sich häufen*;

French: *se rassembler*, *se réunir*, *se assembler*, *se accumuler*, *s'amasser*, *se masser*, *se presser en foule*, etc.

The verbs of this groups cannot be combined with subjects (nouns or pronouns) in the singular.

The asymmetry of reciprocals has various forms.

In one language, the reciprocal is represented by a special (reciprocal) pronoun, and in other languages, intransitive verbs correspond to this verb:

Russian: *перешёптываться*,

English: (to) whisper to one another,

German: *miteinander flüstern*, *tuscheln*,

French: *chuchoter* (avec son voisin);

Russian: *созвониться*,

English: (to) speak on the phone (to),

German: *sich telephonisch in Verbindung setzen*, *sich telephonisch verabreden*,

French: *se téléphoner*: *nous nous téléphonerons*, *on se téléphonera* (we will call).

The ambiguity of reflexive pronouns may be due to lexical distribution, i.e. the semantics of the verbs with which they are combined:

"There is a difference in meaning between *themselves* and *each other* after verbs such as *accuse*, *blame*, *help*, *look at*": The two bank clerks blamed *themselves* for the mistake (= They both took the blame). The two bank clerks blamed *each other* for the mistake (=The one blamed the other)» (Alexander, 1995: 83).

In other words, there are two syntactic homonyms in the construction *blamed themselves*– reflexive and reciprocal.

### 3. Interlingual symmetry and asymmetry

Verbs of all categories have different degrees of interlingual symmetry and asymmetry.

Complete symmetry is typical for unambiguous verbs:

*мыться*, wash oneself, *sich waschen*, *se laver*;

*унижаться*, to demean oneself (to), lower oneself, *sich erniedrigen*, *s'abaisser/ s'avilir*;

*одеваться* (*одеться*), to dress oneself/ clothe oneself, *sich bekleiden*, *s'habiller*;

*позориться*, to show oneself up, *sich blamieren*, *se couvrir de ridicule par qc*.

The question of interlingual symmetry and asymmetry of polysemous words should be considered at the level of concrete meaning.

Some meanings can be correlative with respect to reflexivity and reciprocity, while others are asymmetric:

Russian: *разойтись*.

See Table 3.

Table 3. Interlingual symmetry and asymmetry of polysemous words

| <b>Russian</b>                           | <b>English</b>                                  | <b>German</b>  | <b>French</b>                              |
|--|---|--|--|
| 1. уйти;<br>рассеяться                   | (to) go away;<br>(to) disperse                  | 1. auseinandergehen<br>2. sich zerstreuen                  | s'en aller,<br>s'écloigner<br>se disperser |
| 2. расстаться<br>(о супругах)            | (to) part (from)<br>(to) separate (from)        | sich trennen,<br>auseinandergehen;<br>sich scheiden lassen | se séparer,<br>se quitter<br>divorcer      |
| 3. (о линиях, о<br>дорогах)<br>(о лучах) | (to) branch off,<br>diverge<br><br>(to) radiate | sich aufspalten<br><br>strahlförmig<br>ausgehen            | diverger,<br>bifurquer                     |
| 4. раствориться,<br>растаять             | (to) dissolve, melt                             | sich auflösen  | se dissoudre,<br>fondre                    |
| 5. распродаться<br>и т.д.                | (to) be sold out                                | ausverkauft sein,<br>vergriffen sein                       | être dépensé,<br>être épuisé               |

Note: not a single meaning of the Russian verb *расходиться* (*разойтись*) has no reflexive correlate in English, in German 5 meanings correlate with the Russian reflexive, in French – 3 of them.

Different meanings of a polysemous verb can refer to different categories: reflexives and reciprocals,

cf. Russian:

стреляться:

1. to commit suicide,

2. to shoot yourself in a duel;

English:

1. to shoot yourself,

2. to fight a duel( with firearms);

German:

1. sich duellieren,

2. sich erschießen;

French:

1. se tirer une balle, se loger une balle, se bruler la cervelle,

2. se battre en duel au pistolet.

L.G. Alexander (1995) points to a small group of verbs in English that are used only in combination with reflexive pronouns: "There are only a very few verbs in English which must always be followed by a reflexive pronoun: e.g. absent, available, pride... Other verbs are very commonly followed by reflexives: e.g. amuse, blame, cut, dry, enjoy, introduce..." (Alexander, 1995: 82)

A feature of the English language is the productive use of the passive construction as equivalents of reflexives and reciprocals in other languages,

cf. Russian.

креститься;

English:

to be baptised,

to be christened;

German:

sich taufen lassen;

French:

1. se signer,

2. être baptisé.

In some cases, in all languages, a passive construction is preferred for expressing completed actions:

Russian: - Потрясающе! затрещал Коровьев. – Все очарованы, влюблены, раздавлены! (Bulgakov, 2015);

English: “They were all charmed, they all fell in love with her, they were all crushed!” (Bulgakov, 1967);

German: "Alle sind entzückt, verliebt, erschlagen!" (Bulgakov, 1983);

French: Ils sont tous enchantés, époustouffés, amoureux ! (Bulgakov, 1968).

The interlingual asymmetry of the analyzed verbs is because English reflexive pronouns with -self are multifunctional, which in other languages correspond to reflexive, reciprocal and determinative pronouns and forms of the passive voice.

See Table 4.

Table 4. The interlingual asymmetry of verbs in different languages

| Russian        | English  | German  | French   |
|----------------|--|---|--|
| сам<br>(лично) | oneself  | selber, selb, selbst  | moi-même, toi-même, nous-mêmes, vous-mêmes, etc.   |
| себе           | oneself  | sich (Dat.)<br>mir, dir, uns, etc.  | se, me, te, nous, vous, etc.   |
| себя           | oneself  | sich (Akk.)<br>mich, dich, uns, etc.  | se, lui-même, me, moi-même, etc.   |
| -ся (-сь)      | 1. reflexive (-self)<br>2. reciprocal (-self, one another, each other)<br>3. passive voice (to be, to get + past participial)<br>4. КОМПОНЕНТЫ лексических аналитизмов | 1. reflexiv (sich)<br>2. reziprok (sich, einander)<br>3. passiv (werden + sein +, bekommen + Perfekt Passiv)<br>4. КОМПОНЕНТЫ лексических аналитизмов | 1. reflexive (se, =mème)<br>2. reciproc (se, l'un l'autre)<br>3. passif voix (être + part. pass)<br>4. КОМПОНЕНТ лексических аналитизмов |

Note: when compiling all tables, dictionary data is used (Oxford Russian dictionary, 2000; Oxford German dictionary, 2008; the Comprehensive Russian-German dictionary, 2000; the Comprehensive French-Russian dictionary, 2004).

The authors of the English grammar note: "Some verbs may have much the same reflexive meaning whether used internally or with a reflexive object (Longman grammar of spoken and written English, 2000: 128):

In the morning I *shaved* again and *dressed* and drove Downtown in the usual way... There, since it would be in some sense an official visit, I *shaved myself* and *dressed myself* with care so as to make a proper impression on the captain (Longman grammar of spoken and written English, 2000: 148)".

In the Russian language, to express a completed action, instead of the verb -ся (-сь), an analytical passive construction is used,

cf. Дом строился долго и Дом построен, Дом был построен.

To express the future tense, two forms are also used – the form -ся (-сь) and the analytical form:

will + perfect participle,

for example.

Будет строиться и Будет построен.

Sometimes in impersonal constructions, the pronouns *сам* and *себя* are used to emphasize the authenticity of the statement:

Russian: Само собой разумеется, что я был счастлив пригласить его к себе



(Bulgakov, 2015);

German: Es versteht sich von selbst, daß ich glücklich war, ihn zu mir einzuladen (Bulgakov, 1983).

In the Russian language, the postfix -ся (-сь) serves as a means of forming impersonal verbs that are used only in the form of the 3rd person singular:

Ему *нейдется*, *снится*, *нездоровится* etc.

In an impersonal form, verbs with a full grammatical paradigm can also be used:

жить – *живется* (неплохо),

спать – *мне не спится*,

спросить – *с него спросится*,

работать – *работается* (сегодня хорошо *работается*),

сидеть – *ему не сидится* etc.

Such verbs, as a rule, do not have impersonal reflexive equivalents in other languages:

Russian: Мне не *здоровится*.

English: to feel unwell.

German: Ich *fühle mich unwohl*.

French: Je suis *indispasé*.

Russian: Ему *живется* неплохо.

English: to live, get on

German: Er *lebt nicht schlecht* / Es *geht ihm nicht schlecht*.

French: Il *ne vit pas mal*.

Russian: Ему не *сидится* дома.

English: He can't bear staying at home.

German: Er *kann nicht zu Hause sitzen*.

French: Il *n'est pas casanier*.

Russian: Ему не *терпится*.

English: He is *impassioned* (to).

German: Es *drängt ihn*/ Er *brennt darauf*.

French: Il *se tarde de...* / Il *brûle de...*/ Il *grille de ...* etc.

In some cases, pronouns acquire syntactic independence from the verb and are used as autonomous objects, i.e. they are no longer components of reflexive verbs...

Russian: Глянув на себя в зеркало, Николай Иванович отчаянно и дико завыл, но было уже поздно (Bulgakov, 2015).

English:

Looking at himself in the mirror Nikolai Ivanovich gave a wild, despairing squeal but it was too late (Bulgakov, 1967).

German:

Als Nikolai Iwanowitsch sich im Spiegel betrachtete, ließ er ein wildes Verzweiflungsgeheul hören, aber es war schon zu spät (Bulgakov, 1983).

French:

En se voyant dans la glace, Nikolai Ivanovitch poussa un burlement d'épouvante, mais il était trop tard (Bulgakov, 1968).

Reflexive pronouns also acquire a similar syntactic autonomy when performing a special communicative function, namely, when emphasizing the special role of the agent:

Russian:

Дело в том, что я лично присутствовал при этом (Bulgakov, 2015).

English:

The fact is ..., I was there *myself* (Bulgakov, 1967).

German:

Die Sache ist die..., daß ich bei allem *persönlich* dabei war (Bulgakov, 1983).

French:

Le fact est... que j'ai assisté *personnellement* à tout cela (Bulgakov, 1968).

Russian:

Он *сам* пришел (Bulgakov, 2015).

English:

He has come *himself* (Bulgakov, 1967).

German:

Er ist *selber* gekommen (Bulgakov, 1983).

French:

Il est venu *lui-même* (Bulgakov, 1968).

The object function of reflexive pronouns is particularly clearly manifested in imperative constructions with transitive verbs:

Latin: *Cognosce te ipsum!*

English: Know *yourself!*

German: *Erkenne dich selbst!*

French: *Connais -toi toi-même!*

Russian: *Познай самого себя!*

#### **4. Grammatical features of reflexives and related phenomena**

Reflexive, quasi-reflexive and reciprocal verbs, unlike transitive and other intransitive verbs, have a few grammatical (morphological and syntactic) features. Morphologically, the above groups of verbs are defective in the sense that they are not able to have all the grammatical categories of the verb.

This applies primarily to the category of voice. In this respect, they are like intransitive verbs, which do not form the grammatical opposition "active – passive".

However, in the expression of the category of voice, in the degree of productivity, i.e., the specific weight of the passive constructions within intransitive verbs in different languages is different.

The specificity of the passive in the Russian language is that the same postfix -ся (-сь) reveals an inter-level polyfunctionality: it is a grammatical means of forming a passive construction as well as a word-forming means.

In other words, the presence or absence of the affix -ся (-сь) cannot serve as a marker of voice, because "verbs of the active voice can be both without -ся (-сь) and with this affix: *лежать, синеть, смеркаться*" (Rosenthal, Golub & Telenkova, 2017: 233).

In addition, the affix -ся (-сь) is preserved in non-finite forms of the verb – participles (*встретиться – встречающиеся*), adverbial participles (*встречаясь*), which is impossible in English and German.

However, in French, reflexive pronouns are preserved in the form of the present participle: *se laver – se lavant*, etc.

The grammatical difference between the category of voice in I-E. languages also lies in the fact that different authors allocate different amounts of voices.

In some grammars of the Russian language, the voice is represented as a binary (binomial) grammatical opposition (Rosenthal, Golub & Telenkova, 2017: 232-233; Russian grammar, 1980: 615-617), in others as a three-term opposition – active, passive, and reciprocal-middle voice (Grammar of the Russian language, 1960: 413-413; Shansky & Tikhonov, 1981: 187-188; Valgina et al., 1966: 136-137).

In German, as a rule, there are three grammemes of the category of voice: active, passive, stative. In the grammars of the French language, the number of voices varies from 2 to 5 by different authors.

The authors of (Nikolskaya & Godenberg, 1973; Glinz, 1994; Riegel, Pellat & Rioul, 2014) present the categories of voice in the form of the opposition of two grammemes: active (*il lave*) and passive (*il est lavé*).

V.G. Gak includes the third grammeme in this binary opposition – a reflexive (or pronominal voice) (Gak, 1999).

In the concept of E.A. Referovskaia and A.K. Vassilieva (1982), along with the above three grammemes, the fourth voice grammeme is distinguished – the factive (i.e. causative voice) (*il fait laver*) (Referovskaia & Vassilieva, 1982).

Thus, the number of voices in Russian and French is determined to a certain extent by the status of reflexives.

If in the passive constructions in English, German, and French all the time forms are analytical, then in the active voice both synthetic and analytical forms are used.

There are certain interlingual differences in the nominal forms of the verb.

In English, German and French, the infinitive forms also form the opposition "active-passive" (read-be read, lesen-gelesen werden, lire-être lu).

In the Russian language, the postfix -ся (-сь) in different hypostases is also available in the forms of the participle and the adverbial participle:

строиться – строившийся долго дом,

встречаться/ встретиться – встретившись, встречаясь,

улыбаться – улыбаясь, улыбнувшись, улыбавшийся etc.

In English, German, reflexive and reciprocal pronouns do not occur in participial forms.

As it is known, the core of the category of voice is formed by an active voice that covers all verbs (transitive, intransitive, reflexive, impersonal), and the passive belongs to the periphery, since it is usually formed by transitive verbs, less often certain types of intransitive verbs.

However, in each of the languages there are specific features of the formation of the passive voice.

Thus, in German there is the so-called impersonal passive, which can be formed from intransitive verbs expressing various types of human activity:

Im Nebenzimmer wird laut gesprochen. (There is a loud conversation in the next room).

Reflexives, quasi-reflexives, and reciprocal per definitionem are intransitives.

However, in German-speaking Germanistics, there were works whose authors, because of studying the facts of colloquial speech, revealed a tendency to use reflexives in a passive form (Vater, 1995: 185-192):

Jetzt wird sich schnell gewaschen.

Er wurde sich bemüht.

Jetzt wurde an sich gedacht.

The authors of Duden-Grammatik consider some constructions of "transitive verb + sich" as alternatives to the passive:

Die Tür öffnet sich langsam.

Eine Lösung wird sich schon finden.

Das Buch verkauft sich gut (Duden, 2005: 555-556).

Ambiguous relations exist between reflexive verbs and the stative (passive state):

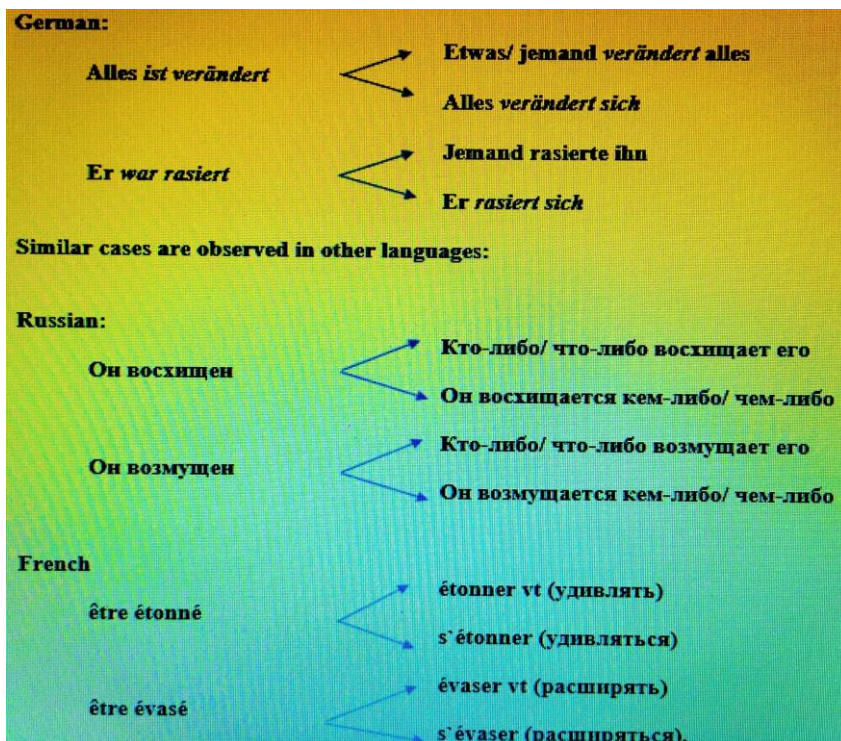


Figure 1. Ambiguous relations between reflexive verbs and the stative (passive state)

Reflexive verbs, despite their high frequency in texts (Russian, German, and French), belong to the peripheral zone of verbs in relation to their grammatical categories.

The analyzed material of different languages confirms the thesis of Yu.D. Apresyan (2004) that "the more peripheral a grammeme is, the fewer meanings of compatible grammemes it has and the greater the number of morphological, syntagmatic and lexico-semantic conditions is imposed on its implementation" (Apresyan, 2004: 24).

The grammatical differences between reflexives and reciprocals of the analyzed languages also include the use of different auxiliary verbs in the formation of analytical forms of the past tense.

German and French form two opposite poles in this respect.

In German, grammatical analytisms are formed from all reflexive verbs using "haben" (Ich habe/ hatte mich gewaschen. Wir haben/ hatten uns lange nicht gesehen), while in French all reflexives and reciprocals form similar analytisms using the verb "être" (Je me suis lavé. Nous ne nous sommes pas vus de depuis long temps).

In English, perfect forms are formed from all verbs with the help of "(to) have" (I have / had washed myself. We have/ had not seen each other/ one another in years).

## Conclusion

As a result of the analysis, the lexico-grammatical nature of the reflexive in the artistic discourse in different languages and cultures was established.

1. Based on the internal form of the term reflexive, we should state that in the linguistic literature there is an unjustified use of it in relation to verbs that do not express reflexivity, which implies the coreference of the subject (agent) of the action

and its object. Common to all verbs (reflexive proper and quasi-reflexive) is only the presence of a reflexive pronoun, which cannot be considered as an object of action. Therefore, it seems unjustified to raise the class of the so-called middle-reflexive verbs to the rank of a grammeme of the category of voice.

2. If we assume a broad understanding of reflexivity, then we must postulate the field structure of this category, the core of which is formed by the proper-reflexive, i.e. prototypical reflexives, to which belong the reciprocals and pluralia tantum and quasi-reflexives are located on the far periphery. In Russian artistic discourse, we can observe the lexicalization of grammatical relations.

3. The definition of reflexive as a grammeme of voice in the Russian and French artistic discourse is theoretically untenable, primarily because it contradicts the ontology of understanding a grammatical category based on the opposition of at least *two forms of the same word* to express a certain categorical meaning. The verbs of the imperfect form in the active form in the Russian artistic discourse are opposed to the reflexive verbs in passive form with the passive meaning of postfix.

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