

The Peculiarities of Realizing the Contextual Meaning of the English Article in Ukrainian Translation

Modern English grammars normally refer articles to determiners, i.e. words preceding nouns. They are often defined as '... a problem area in English for students even at advanced level, especially for those whose own language has a very different article system' [2, p. 272] saying nothing of those languages which lack articles at all. These facts account for the necessity of searching for special ways and means used in teaching this part of grammar to Ukrainian students. Another problem is raised when we speak about the peculiarities of rendering the meaning of the English article in Ukrainian. To say that it is not translated at all would be a simplified approach as there are many cases when the English article requires certain ways of rendering. To have a better idea of how and under what conditions we attempt translating the article, it is necessary to consider its grammatical and lexico-grammatical functions.

The grammatical functions of the article are as follows [1,p. 208]:

1. It can identify a word showing that it is a noun but not the other part of speech.

E.g. There is *a book* on the table.

2. The article determines the noun singling out a certain person or thing differing from the other similar nouns.

E.g. Give me *the book* which is on the table.

3. The article shows the superlative degree of the quality of the noun. The definite article is usually used in this function if the noun is modified by an adjective in the superlative degree.

E.g. This is *the most interesting book* I've ever read. Це найцікавіша книга, яку я будь-коли читала.

Speaking about this grammatical function and its realization in translation it should be mentioned that the indefinite article can be used with a noun modified by

an adjective in the superlative degree but in this case it has the meaning 'very' and requires in Ukrainian translation the word 'дуже'.

E.g. It's *a most interesting book*. Це дуже цікава книга.

4. The article can be used to show the order of a noun in a row of similar nouns.

E.g. I need *the first book*, not the second one.

Sometimes the article is lexicalized and it acquires a certain lexico-grammatical meaning. It may serve as a peculiar means of 'expressive connotation'. [3,86] As a result it may serve as:

- a particle (E.g. *the more, the better* – чим більше, тим краще. She would call him *an odd man* – Вона назвала б його **просто** диваком);
- a pronoun (E.g. He never sold *a picture* – Він так і не продав *жодної* картини);
- an adjective (E.g. She had acquired **a** reputation – Вона здобула *солідну* репутацію).

In some cases the article can show some lexical meaning and it can be translated into Ukrainian as a noun.

E.g. *the Browns* – родина Браунів, *the Alps* - гори Альпи, at *the baker's* – в хлібному магазині.

As it has been mentioned the article is a structural part of speech which has no lexical meaning and is not translated into Ukrainian. It is explained by the fact that our language has no articles at all and we can't find any equivalent part of speech in it. On the other hand, there are cases when the article is to be translated as its use becomes quite meaningful. So we can speak about some factors which influence the necessity of searching for the appropriate variant in Ukrainian. They are:

1. the origin of the article;
2. its lexico-grammatical meaning;
3. the contextual environment.

It's common knowledge that the indefinite article is derived from the old English numeral 'an' which means 'one'. It usually implies 'one of many' which

equals to 'any'. As a result of its origin the indefinite article is used only with countable nouns in the singular usually preserving the indefinite meaning. When we have the first reference to an object, we present it as one of many similar objects of the same kind and there's no need translating the indefinite article into Ukrainian.

E.g. This is *a book*. (one of many books of the same kind) – Це книга.

But sometimes it's necessary to emphasize the indefinite meaning of the article in Ukrainian translation and we use the corresponding pronouns 'якийсь, будь-який'.

E.g. *A man* is waiting for you. – *Якийсь* чоловік чекає на вас.

The definite article is derived from the old English pronoun 'se' which means 'this'. As a result of its origin the definite article often preserves its demonstrative meaning and it usually determines this particular noun being translated into Ukrainian by means of demonstrative pronouns 'цей, той, такий'.

E.g. I need *the book* badly. – Мені дуже потрібна *ця книга*.

The lexico-grammatical meaning of the article is usually realized in certain grammatical structures, such as comparative ones.

E.g. *The more* he spoke about all that, *the less* I understood him. – *Чим більше* він говорив про все це, *тим менше* я розумів його.

When the indefinite article is used with a predicative noun, it can be translated as an adjective 'справжній, солідний, значний'.

E.g. It was *a fortune* for him. – Для нього це було *справжнє багатство*.

If the indefinite article is used with a noun in the negative sentence, it can often be translated as a negative pronoun 'жоден'.

E.g. He didn't say *a word*. – Він не сказав *жодного слова*.

If the definite article precedes the personal name in the plural, it's usually translated 'родина, сім'я'.

E.g. I often visited *the Smiths*. – Я часто відвідував *родину Смітів*.

If the definite article precedes names of mountain ranges, groups of islands, deserts etc., we use in Ukrainian translation the words 'гори, острови, пустеля'.

E.g. *The Alps* are a wonderful place for skiing. – *Гори Альпи* – чудове місце для катання на лижах.

The above-mentioned peculiarities of the article prove the fact that even being a structural part of speech, it can realize its lexical meanings in certain contexts.

References

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