The Concept of Case Categories

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Abstract

This article deals with the concept of case categories as well as author made an attempt to define the concept of "grammatical category", "category of case" and to consider the main approaches to the problem of case: the theory of positional cases, the theory of prepositional cases, the theory of limited case, the theory of possessive postpositive and the theory of "deep cases" by Charles Fillmore.

Key Words: *case, permanent, grammatical categories, nominative, accusative, genitive, dative, deep cases.*

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The concept of case is one of the main inflectional categories of nominal parts of speech - noun, adjective, and pronoun, numeral. Since antiquity, in the traditional sense, case has been a morphological category, since we can only talk about different cases if a word has formal differences in different cases.

The case can be defined as "a grammatical category of a name expressing its syntactic relations to other words of the utterance or to the utterance as a whole, as well as a separate grammeme of this category" [1].

Ivanova I.P. defines it this way: "Case is a morphological category that conveys the relation of a name in a sentence" [2]. Therefore, the relations of nouns transmitted by case in a sentence should be transmitted by changing the form of the noun itself. All other means that are not enclosed in the form of the noun itself (prepositions, word order) are not morphological, therefore, cannot be considered as case forms. Therefore, there cannot be less than two cases in a language.

Bulygina T.V. gives the following definition of the concept of case category: "Case in languages of inflectional or agglutinating structure is a category of a word (usually a name), showing its syntactic role in a sentence and linking individual words of a sentence. Cases are called both the functions of words in a sentence and the forms of words correlated with them" [3].

In general, the definition of case most often does not cause disagreement among adherents of the morphological interpretation of the problem. The case in most grammars is considered as a "permanent (immanent) morphological category of a noun, expressed in declension forms and expressing the relationship of the referent noun to other objects and phenomena". Thus, the case form of a noun, or - abbreviated - its case is defined as the "morphological form of declension". [4].

The case form (case form) serves as a real form of expression of this category. Also, the case form is a morpheme consisting of a certain scale, which, together with the root morpheme, gives certain content to the word. Declension is formed by a set of case forms that make up a certain system of changes.

It should be noted that in Russian the category of case is strikingly different from the category of case in English. In modern Russian there are six cases of nouns, each of which has a specific function. The English case category is completely different due to the morphological features of the language itself. The category of case in English is studied using different approaches (theories), which will be discussed later in this course work.

Category of case in the Old English and Middle English periods

Before investigating the problem of the category of case in modern English, it is necessary to make an excursion into the history of the development of the English language and find out which grammatical categories were then present. The noun system itself in the Old English language was complex and not entirely consistent, it combined various elements that were inherited from earlier states of the

language and appeared due to new trends in its development.

Ilyish B.A. distinguishes the following grammatical categories in the system of nouns of the Old English language:

• gender;

• numbers;

• case. [5].

Compared to modern English, Old English is morphologically richer and resembles modern Icelandic. There were several cases in it:

nominative: stan - stone;

accusative: stan - stone;

genitive: stanes - stone;

dative: stane - stone.

In the Middle English period, there is a simplification of the Old English case system. In the first half of the Middle English period, a system close to modern English consisting of four cases is formed, which gradually turns into a system of two cases with a difference in parts of speech [6].

As a result of transformations in the noun system, the common and possessive cases are distinguished. At the same time, the old nominative, accusative and dative cases are combined into one common case (the Common Case). As a result, these forms began to be perceived as phonetic variants unrelated to grammatical differences [7]. At the same time, the genitive case is isolated, its meaning becomes narrower, syntactic functions are limited. This separation of the case is not accidental.

Already in the Old English period, the form of the genitive case mainly had a nominal application and acted as a definition. The attributive (determinative) function of this form in the Middle English language was expanding more and more, the

genitive case became a specially determinative nominal case denoting belonging. There was a modification of the meaning and form of the genitive case. It became possessive, denoting the definition of belonging, ceased to be used in verbs and in prepositional constructions. In this regard, the very name of this case has changed: possessive (The Possessive Case) and instead of genitive (The Genetive Case). [8].

With the course of history, the language develops, evolves, merges and mixes cases, due to the fact that the old case forms disappear.

The main approaches to the problem of case in English

According to M.Y. Bloch in English, there are four approaches to the problem of the category of case in English:

The first approach is called the theory of positional cases (the theory of positional cases). This approach is directly related to traditional grammar and is used in school textbooks nowadays.

This theory follows the image of classical Latin grammar, highlighting nominative (nominative), genitive (genitive), dative (dative), accusative (accusative) and vocative (vocative) cases in English. It is proposed to distinguish cases in accordance with the positional function performed by the noun in the sentence, for example:

1) the nominative case correlates with the function of the subject:

Her mother is a teacher - Her mom (who?) the teacher.

2) accusative case - with direct complement function:

He reads a list - He reads (what?) list

3) dative case - with indirect complement:

He gave this book to Mary - He gave the book (to whom?) Mary

4) vocative case - with the address: Mr.Smith... - Dear Mr. Smith.

As we can see, in the "theory of positional cases" there is a clear confusion of the morphological characteristics of the noun with its functional and syntactic features. Comparative analysis of nouns in English and Latin within the framework of this approach proves only that the meanings conveyed by case forms in inflectional languages (in languages with a noun declension system) can be conveyed in English by other means, in particular, through syntactic positions, or word order" [9].

M.Y. Bloch believes that this approach is erroneous, because it replaces the morphological property of a word class with the functional characteristics of a sentence member.

The second approach, the theory of prepositional cases, focuses on the role of prepositions in the formation of the case of nouns. This approach, as well as the first one, is focused on classical Latin grammar. Proponents of this principle interpret combinations of nouns with prepositions as special analytical case forms, for example:

- dative case (the dative case) - noun with prepositions to, for - for the girl - girl;
- genitive case (the genitive case) - nouns with the preposition of - of the girl - girl;
- instrumental (creative) case (the instrumental case) - nouns with the preposition with - with a key is a key.

This approach also reveals a number of controversial points. For example, following this theory, it is possible that all prepositions in English can be considered as expressions of some case meaning, and not just to, for, with, of. In this case, the total number of "cases" can increase many times, reducing to zero all the achievements of theory and practice.

The third approach, which can be defined as the theory of the limited case (the limited case theory). To date, it is the most widely used case theory in the English language. This theory was formulated in the works of foreign scientists, such as G. Sweet, O. Espersen, and was further developed by Russian linguists A.I. Smirnitsky, L.S. Barkhudarov and others.

This theory is expressed on the opposition of grammatical forms: the first form is the form of the genitive case (the possessive case), is a strong member of the opposition, since it is marked with the help of the postpositive formant `-s after the apostrophe in the singular and just an apostrophe in the plural (the girl's books - girl's books; the girls' books - books girls). The second, unmarked form, represents a weak member of the opposition and is usually called the common case form. [7].

This approach will be discussed in more detail below.

The fourth approach, which can be defined as the theory of the possessive postposition (the theory of the possessive postposition) or the theory of the absence of the category of case (the theory of no case). It states that the category of case, which really existed in the noun in the Old English period, was completely lost by it in the course of historical development. Supporters of this theory (G.N. Vorontsova, A.M.

Mukhin) it is argued that what is traditionally regarded as the inflectional form of the genitive case is nothing more than a combination of a noun with the postpositive -s, meaning belonging (the mother's cup). The main arguments in support of this point of view are as follows:

☐ the formant - 's can attach not only to words, but also to units larger than a word, for example, to phrases and even sentences - e.g. his daughter Mary's arrival - the arrival of his daughter Mary; the man I saw yesterday's face - the face of the person I saw yesterday.

☐ this formant can be attached not only to nouns, but also to words of other parts of speech, for example, to pronouns - e.g. somebody else's car;

☐ the same meaning of belonging is transmitted in English by phrases with the preposition of - e.g. this man's daughter- the daughter of this man is this man's daughter.

Among other arguments proving the absence of a case in the English language, the following can be mentioned: the forms of the genitive case of nouns in the plural are practically indistinguishable by ear from the form of the general case, and are homonymous to the forms of the genitive case of nouns in the singular (boy's, boys, boys').

According to M.Y. Bloch, the solution to the problem of noun case in English should be sought based on the positive statements of the last two theories as the most scientifically sound: the theory of limited case and the theory of the absence of a category of case.

In addition to the above approaches to the problem of case, there is also the theory of "deep cases" by Charles Fillmore. Fillmore proposed a slightly different way to determine the category of case in English. This method is based not on the morphological change of the word, but on the basis of its semantic or deep role. A separate section will be devoted to the coverage of this issue below.

The analysis of theoretical literature shows that the problem of the case of nouns in modern English is still controversial and unclear. This question is rightfully considered one of the most confusing in English grammar. There are disagreements about the number and nomenclature of noun case forms in English, and about the semantics of these forms; moreover, the very existence of the category of noun case in English is questioned.

In the Old English period, according to researchers of this period, at least four cases were defined: nominative, genitive, accusative and dative, which were clearly traced in the sentence. In the future, the language changed, and its grammar changed. Currently, several theories have been proposed for determining the category of case in English, and each theory has its own followers and critics, has its pros and cons.

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