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**Russian as a foreign language  
in the areal context of the European languages**

In this paper, the learning and teaching of Russian as a foreign language will be discussed from the viewpoint of the European linguistic area. The European linguistic area – following B. L. Whorf’s terminology also known as Standard Average European (SAE) – includes the Indo-European languages of the European area (except Celtic); in addition Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian, Georgian and Maltese are also included. Russian belongs to the European linguistic area as it shares a number of features of Standard Average European, such as relative clauses with relative pronouns, the participial passive, anticausative prominence, dative external possessors, particles in comparative constructions, relative-based equative constructions, intensifier-reflexive differentiation [cf. Haspelmath 2001]. On the other hand, there are some features that the Russian language does not share with SAE, such as definite and indefinite articles, ‘have’-perfect, nominative experiencers, negative pronouns and lack of verbal negation, subject person affixes as strict agreement markers [cf. Haspelmath 2001]. Further there will be special focus on the polyfunctional use of the verb ‘have’ as an example of a feature that Russian does not share with SAE.

Most of the European languages use several ‘have’-constructions, including ‘have’-perfect and so they are classified as ‘have’-languages. All Germanic and Romance languages are ‘have’-languages. There are also ‘have’-languages among the Slavic languages (Czech, Slovakian). For German students of Spanish or Czech, the use of ‘have’-constructions doesn’t cause too many problems in the process of language learning. Spanish and Czech, as well as German, are ‘have’-languages. In the

teaching of Russian to German, Spanish or Czech students, special attention though has to be paid to the use of ‘have’-constructions. Russian makes use of the transitive verb ‘have’ with a large number of restrictions. It is a ‘be’-language.

In German the transitive verb ‘have’ occurs in constructions of the type *Geld haben*, *ein Motorrad haben*, *Freunde haben*, *Kinder haben* (implying “possession”). Constructions of this type occur also in Spanish, Czech and in Russian:

*tener dinero, tener una motocicleta, tener amigos, tener hijos;*

*mít peníze, mít motocykl, mít přátele, mít děti;*

*иметь деньги, иметь мотоцикл, иметь друзей, иметь детей.*

There are highly formal expressions in German, such as *die Ehre haben*, *das Wort haben*, *Bedeutung haben*, *den Wunsch haben*, *die Fähigkeit haben*, *die Möglichkeit haben*, *das Ziel haben*, *die Aufgabe haben*.

The same highly formal expressions using the verb ‘have’ also exist in Spanish, Czech and Russian:

*tener el honor, tener la palabra, tener importancia, tener el deseo, tener la aptitud, tener la posibilidad, tener como meta, tener la función;*

*mít čest, mít slovo, mít význam, mít přání, mít schopnost, mít možnost, mít cíl, mít úkol;*

*иметь честь, иметь слово, иметь значение, иметь желание, иметь способность, иметь возможность, иметь цель, иметь задачу.*

In German the verb ‘have’ can be used to mean “to hold”:

*die Tasche in der Hand haben, das Kind im Arm haben, die Hände in den Taschen haben.*

This use of ‘have’ is also common to Spanish and Czech, but not to Russian which uses the verb *держатъ*:

*tener la bolsa en las manos, tener la hija/el hijo en los brazos, tener las manos en los bolsillos;*

*mít v ruce tašku, mít dítě v náručí, mít ruce v kapsách;*

*держат сумку в руке, держать ребёнка на руках, держать руки в карманах.*

German, Spanish and Czech utilize the verb ‘have’ in constructions with the meaning “to be dressed”:

*eine Jacke anhaben, ein Kleid anhaben, einen Mantel anhaben;*

*tener puesta la chaqueta, tener puesto el vestido, tener puesto el abrigo;*

*mít na sobě kabát, mít na sobě šaty, mít na sobě plášť’.*

In Russian there are no ‘have’-constructions with that meaning, but to express this idea, there are ‘be’-constructions or other alternatives:

*(на+prepos.case+быть) куртка, платье, пальто;*

*носить куртку, платье, пальто.*

In German, Spanish and Czech, attributes of a person (outside, inside qualities) are expressed by a ‘have’-construction:

*blaue Augen haben, eine schöne Stimme haben, kurzes Haar haben, ein ruhiges Gewissen haben, ein gutes Herz haben;*

*tener ojos azules, tener voz hermosa, tener pelo corto, tener la conciencia tranquila, tener un corazón de oro;*

*mít modré oči, mít krásný hlas, mít krátké vlasy, mít čisté svědomí, mít dobré srdce.*

In Russian, attributes of a person are expressed by a ‘be’-construction:

*(у+gen.+быть) синие глаза, красивый голос, короткие волосы, чистая совесть, доброе сердце.*

In German, Spanish and Czech, a physical or mental state of a person is also expressed by ‘have’-constructions:

*Husten haben, Fieber haben, Hunger haben, Angst haben, Lust haben, gute Laune haben;*

*tener tos, tener fiebre, tener hambre, tener miedo, tener ganas, tener buen humor;*

*mít kašel, mít horečku, mít hlad, mít strach, mít chut’, mít dobrou náladu.*

Russian in this context doesn't use 'have'-constructions:

(*y+gen.+быть*) кашель, жар, хорошее настроение; *быть* голодным;  
(*dat.+быть*) страшно; (*dat.*) хочется.

In German, Spanish and Czech, the verb 'have' occurs in constructions where it means "to participate in":

*Unterricht haben, Vorlesung haben, Seminar haben, Prüfung haben, (Unterricht im Fach) Russisch haben;*

*tener clase, tener un seminario, tener examen, tener clase de ruso /tener ruso;*  
*mít vyučování, mít přednášku, mít seminář, mít zkoušku, mít ruštinu.*

In Russian, the verb 'have' is not used with the meaning of "participation":

(*y+gen.+быть*) занятия, лекция, семинар, экзамен, русский язык.

Existential relation in German, Spanish and Czech may be expressed by the verb 'have':

*Heute haben wir schönes Wetter. Heute haben wir Mittwoch.*

*Hoy tenemos buen tiempo. Allí hay un teatro. Mañana no hay clase.*

*Dnes máme hezké počasí. Dnes máme středu.*

In Russian there is no 'have'-construction for denoting existential relation:

*Сегодня хорошая погода. Сегодня среда.*

In German, Spanish and Czech, the verb 'have' may appear in combination with an adjective (adverb):

*es eilig haben, es nötig haben, es weit haben, es satt (genug) haben;*  
*tener libre, tenerlo difícil, tenerlo fácil, tenerlo claro, tenerlo oscuro;*  
*mít naspěch, mít zapotřebí, mít daleko, mít dost.*

In Russian, there are no constructions corresponding to this use:

(*dat.+быть*) к спеху, нужно, далеко; (*dat.*) надоело.

Perfect constructions using the verb 'have' occur in German, Spanish and Czech, but not in Russian:

*Ich habe den Brief geschrieben.* (perfect 1 ‘have’ as an auxiliary)

*He escrito la carta.* (perfect 1)

*Tengo la carta escrita.* (perfect 2 ‘have’ as a copula)

*Mám dopis napsán.* (perfect 2)

For Russian cf.:

*Ich habe den Brief geschrieben. He escrito la carta. Я написал письмо.*

*Tengo la carta escrita. Mám dopis napsán. Письмо написано (мною).*

Last but not least ‘have’ in German, Spanish and Czech serves as a modal verb (“must”):

*Du hast zu antworten. Tienes que responder. Máš odpovídat.*

Russ.: *Тебе следует отвечать.*

As mentioned before, most of the languages in Europe are ‘have’-languages. In contrast to this, most of the languages in the world – amongst them Finno-Ugrian and eastern Indo-European – are ‘be’-languages.

Russian is a European ‘be’-language. ‘To have’, or ‘to be’ – that is a question typical for the learning and teaching of Russian as a foreign language in the areal context of the European languages.

#### Literature

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