Grammar Skills Development in Studying Foreign Language. Through the example of the Chinese non-copular predicative structures

Desarrollo de habilidades gramaticales en el estudio de lenguas extranjeras. Mediante el ejemplo de las estructuras predicativas no-copulares chinas

Anna Krasnoyarova*
Nanchang University - China
krasnoyarova3@bk.ru

Wang Kewen**
Nanchang University - China

Boris Kondakov***
Perm State National Research University - Russia

Svetlana Chivilenko****
Nanchang University - China

ABSTRACT

The article considers the main methodological principles of studying foreign languages that have been formulated in the works of the Russian researchers (system nature of the education process organization, step-by-step approach to the formation of grammar skills, the reference with a speech context, conscious perception of grammar material, orientation towards the language models that have been learnt, etc.). Basing on these principles, the authors offer a system of exercises that are aimed at learning the non-copular predicative structures of the Chinese language.

Key words: teaching method, grammar skills, foreign language, Chinese language, non-copular predicative structures, system of exercises.

RESUMEN

El artículo considera los principales principios metodológicos del estudio de idiomas extranjeros que se han formulado en los trabajos de los investigadores rusos (naturaleza del sistema de la organización del proceso educativo, enfoque paso a paso para la formación de habilidades gramaticales, la referencia con un contexto de discurso , percepción consciente del material de gramática, orientación hacia los modelos de lenguaje que se han aprendido, etc. Basándose en estos principios, los autores ofrecen un sistema de ejercicios destinados a aprender las estructuras predicativas no copulares del idioma chino.

Palabras clave: método de enseñanza, habilidades gramaticales, idioma extranjero, idioma chino, estructuras predicativas no copulares, sistema de ejercicios.

*Corresponding author. Head of the Department of the Russian Language, Nanchang University, Nanchang, China (330000, Nanchang, Xuefu Street, 999)
**Professor, Department of the Russian Literature, Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Professional Education "Perm State National Research University" Perm, Russia (614990, Perm, Bukireva Street, 15)
***Lecturer, Department of the Russian Language, Nanchang University, Nanchang, China (330000, Nanchang, Xuefu Street, 999)
****Master's student of the Faculty of Economics, Nanchang University, Nanchang, China (330000, Nanchang, Xuefu Street, 999)

INTRODUCTION

The Chinese language becomes more and more popular in the world. According to the data of the State Leading Group of the People's Republic of China on the issues of promoting the Chinese language abroad, more than 30 million of foreigners study Chinese language, it is taught in 2500 foreign universities and in tens of thousands of schools (Popularity of the Chinese language is growing, 2007). The growth of its popularity in the world points to the intensification of influence of the Chinese culture (Cook, 2016; Hua & Wei, 2014; Chuanren, Yuan & Xiaofei, 2015). Language is the bearer of culture. If the language of a certain nation earns popularity, this obviously points to the growth of that country's international status and strengthening of its international influence (Chin, Gong & Tay, 2018; Kondo-Brown & Brown, 2017; Zhang et al., 2014).

However, nowadays, there are few techniques that are aimed at teaching practical grammar of the Chinese language, at the formation of the students' grammar skills in constructing non-copular predicative structures. Grammatical system of the Chinese language significantly differs from the grammar and syntax of the European languages (Po-Ching & Rimmington, 2015; Zhan, 2017; Ross & Ma, 2017). This is conditioned by certain grammatical features such as the use and position of words in a sentence, interaction between auxiliary parts of speech, presence of negative and resultative particles, formation of non-copular grammatical constructions. That is why, the representatives of Romano-Germanic and Slavic languages experience certain difficulties in understanding the predicativity of a Chinese sentence. Theoretical study of predications in the Chinese language and subsequent practical use of the predicative structures in speech allow to build a grammatically correct sentence and to understand the ways of using other grammatical units in a sentence (Li, 2018; Zhang et al., 2014; Meisterernst, 2015). Those who study Chinese language constantly experience problems that are associated with defining the predicate in an isolating language (Chinese language belongs to this group as well) and often make mistakes in translation.

The most important way of learning grammatical forms of a foreign language (especially, at the initial stage) is making exercises. They allow to develop stable language skills, to form basic abilities that are needed for practical use of language in various communicative fields. Thus, the purpose of the article is to consider the main methodological principles of studying a foreign language using the Chinese language as an example.

The article uses general scientific research methods such as: description, comparison, analysis, generalization, synthesis, analogy, etc.

DATA, ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

1. The formation of grammatical skills during studying a foreign language.

Modern methods of teaching a foreign language represent this process as *integral systems*. Such system implies that a teacher and a student are involved into a *joint* activity that is aimed at achieving maximum positive result. Within this interaction, a process of knowledge transfer takes place. Besides, it involves further development of the skills and abilities that are formed by the education system (Galskova, 2000).

 The development of grammar skills is a difficult and long-lasting process. The researches of grammatical constructions and their use during studying a foreign language allow to both develop grammar skills and to improve audition skills through grammar rules (Jingming, 2016; Jienchin, 2016; Jienchin, 2016; Hongxing, 2016; Chiuxiang, 2017; Huaning, 2016).

Correct use of grammatical constructions allows to formulate one's own utterance with orientation to the language models that have been learnt before (Rogova, Rabinovich & Sakharova, 1991). However, it doesn't guarantee that interlocutors won't use more complex structures in their speech. This can seriously impede understanding the essence of an utterance, not mentioning socio-linguistic nuances that are expressed through a possible subtext of what has been said. The lack of adequate understanding serves as a reason of the majority of communicative failures, whereas insufficient level of grammar skills becomes the main barrier for the formation of both language, speech and socio-cultural competence (Passov, 1986).

The method of teaching a foreign language implies that a teacher must ensure studying the new and revising old grammatical material as well as its use in the speech situations that are simulated during classes. Unfortunately, the latter element that is the most important for education situation is often ignored. Mainly, this is caused by the deficit of time that is scheduled for making grammar tasks (Buhbinder, 1980). Ignoring speech function

within education process leads to a situation when the meaning and form of an utterance that are not referred to a specific speech context are quickly forgotten, contradict each other, or confused with the structures that are close to them by their form (or meaning) (Skalkin, 1983). It is important to preserve the order and system character of presenting the material during teaching grammatical constructions (Cook, 2012).

In relation to the Chinese language, we should keep in mind that it is not always possible to define an exact meaning of a certain grammatical phenomenon and to formulate the rules of its practical use. The meaning and practical use of a certain grammatical construction often do not correspond to the speech functions that characterize that grammatical structure (Zhan, 2017).

The principle of a necessary conscious perception of grammar material serves as a basis for two main methodical approaches to teaching a foreign language, namely, the *explicit* and *implicit* ones. The first one implies *explanation* of grammar phenomena and rules, whereas the second one implies *revision* and *reproduction* of grammatical structures (without studying the rules). Within the *explicit approach*, the methods can be divided into: *inductive* (a teacher offers to the students a fragment of a speech situation; using it as a basis, they must formulate a grammar rule by themselves) and *deductive* (initially, a teacher explains a rule, and after that students practice to use the new structures through exercises). *Implicit* approach uses structural and communicative methods. Structural method implies addressing to exercises that are aimed at practical use of grammatical models (samples of audition speech, dialogues, uttering). Communicative method is aimed at mastering grammar though solving speech tasks, mechanical repetition, speech imitation.

Each method can be considered both in *theoretical* and *practical* aspects. Full understanding and correct absorption of the grammar material is impossible without the process of independent constructing grammatically correct examples.

Defining the types of grammar skills allows to consider their development as a process that goes through several stages. Each of these stages has its own tasks. Step-by-step approach to the formation of grammar skills was developed by V.S. Tsetlin. She demonstrated that a conscious use of the stages within education process each of which is associated with a certain skill allows to speed up the formation of grammar competencies and to increase the effectiveness of this process. Besides, the author pointed to five main stages of grammar skills formation: "preparatory", "elementary", "integrating", "systematizing communication" and "concluding" (Li, 2018).

Preparatory stage implies prior knowledge of grammar material. During studying new grammar constructions, the students psychologically tune in to receiving new information about a certain phenomenon. During this stage, the teacher's task is to stimulate students' interest and to attract their attention to the purpose of a lesson, namely, to studying a new grammar structure (Ross & Ma, 2017).

In this case, the function of supporting material is carried out by the vocabulary and grammar forms that have been learnt before. The students revise the material and combine the knowledge that has been learnt before with new information. When explaining complex syntactic structures, the examples need to be provided that would allow to apply the patterns and construct a phrase according to a certain scheme. This stage involves the formation of *elementary abilities*. Using the Chinese language as an example, it is possible to consider the following unreal speech grammar exercises that are aimed at understanding active predications:

№ 1. Read the sentences after the speaker, identify a predicate in these sentences.

1) 你的手机很不错。(You have a nice phone)

2) 这本书很有意思。(This book is very interesting)

3) 他的房间非常干净。(His room is very clean)

4) 那个孩子真聪明。(That child is very clever)

5) 我的手机太旧了。(My phone is too old)

6) 这个工资高挺了。(The salary significantly raised)

7) 她的眼睛很漂亮。(Her eyes are beautiful)

8) 这双鞋子很舒服。(This pair of shoes is very comfortable)

9) 那条裤子很长。 (Those trousers are very long)

10) 父亲的工作很不容易 (Father's work is very difficult)

Elementary stage is associated with learning the actions that are needed for using a certain grammar construction. Elementary stage implies the exercises that involve the use of ready word forms of a given structure and constructing the forms that correspond to a pattern. This stage is aimed at comprehending the meaning of a grammar construction and memorizing the patterns that represent grammar forms. In this case, the exercises are used that are oriented towards the analogy, or, in other words, "mechanic exercises" [10]. Let us cite the example that is aimed at learning the ways of using active predicate in Chinese sentences:

№ 2. Build 5 sentences according to the pattern: 我 很忙。(I'm very busy).

Examples of sentences:

1）我很高。(I'm very glad); 2）这个工作很麻烦。(This work is very difficult); 3）考试的成绩很不错。(The exam results are very good); 4）这本书很有意思。(This book is very interesting); 5）她的房间很大。 (Her room is very big).

Integrating stage fixes certain actions to the actions of other grammar constructions (a new grammar phenomenon is learnt through the use of other supportive means). As a result, creative elements are brought into "mechanic exercises". This stage results in independent creative use of the grammar form that is being practiced; *transformative* exercises are usually used for this purpose. *Substitution* exercises that are designed to reinforce grammar skills in the Chinese language can look like this:

N3. Form the sentences out of the given words, while paying special attention to the compound predicate:

1) 我 过 美国 去 以前 了 两年

2) 有 上 我 考试 星期 了 个

3) 上 我 大学 明年 想

4) 当 将来 我 老师 想

5) 我 吃 时候 喜欢 点心 小

Examples of a sentences:

1)两年以前我去过了美国。(Two years ago I moved to the USA)

2)上个星期我有考试了。(Last week I had an exam)

3)明年我想上大学。(Next year I want to enter university)

4)将来我想当老师。(In future I want to become a teacher)

5)小时候我喜欢吃点心。(Being a child, I liked to eat sweets)

The stage of **systematizing communication** is designed for a comprehensive development of active grammar skills. It also helps to teach the skills of understanding grammar constructions when working with various texts. *Reproductive* exercises are used during this stage. Let us provide the examples of exercise that is aimed at reinforcing the knowledge of the Chinese predicativity:

1) I'm going to park.

2) They are waiting for a bus.

3) Mother bought a book.

4) Daughter cleaned the room.

5) Father drives a car.

6) Pupils didn't make their home task.

7) I have forgotten my notebook.

8) My friend entered university.

9) She washed the clothes.

10) He saw me.

An example of translation:

1) 我去公园。

2) 他们等公共汽车。

3) 妈妈买了一本书。

4) 女儿打扫房子了。

5) 爸爸开车了。

6) 学生们没做作业。

7) 我望了本子。

8) 我朋友上了大学。

9) 她洗了衣服。

10) 他见了我。

Concluding stage of grammar skills formation implies the use of grammar constructions in speech activity, their active use and reproduction in speech exercises (Chin, Gong & Tay, 2018).

Let us provide an example of exercise that relates to the use of predications in the Chinese language:

Ask five oral questions using modal verbs:

An example: 你能帮助我一下？(Can you help me?)

Example:

Example of questions:

1) 这个孩子能不能听我说什么？(Is this child able to understand what I'm saying or not?)

2) 你不会写汉字吗？(Can't you write hieroglyphs?)

3) 我应该做什么？(What must you do?)

4) 你朋友要不要这本书？(Does your friend need this book or not?)

5) 我可以参加比赛吗？(Can you take part in competition?)

Integrating stage is the most important for educational activity, because it ideally fits for the absorption of the grammar material that has been learnt.

The development of grammar skills is a long process, that is why, grammar material is often reduced during the learning process: the students' attention is intentionally focused upon the *main* grammar constructions that are practiced until they become automatic. This allows to effectively develop grammar skills (Hua & Wei, 2014).

The exercises that are oriented towards developing the students' communicative skills can be organized both in the process of "live" and *unreal* speech communication that greatly favors the effectiveness of grammar skills formation in teaching a foreign language. Unreal speech exercises are elaborated with the focus upon reproducing the situation of dialogic or monologic speech communication in natural conditions (Hagboldt, 1963).

E.I. Passov (2008) formulated three principles that guide the process of elaborating unreal speech exercises:

The first principle implies the use of a speaker's speech task; it is based upon observation of the conditions of the *motivational plan* of activity in order to meet the students' communicative and cognitive needs.

The second principle implies *drawing the analogies* during reproducing the grammar forms, when a student creates his own utterance basing on a certain model or pattern. This principle allows to strengthen the use of a grammar form.

The third principle implies simultaneous learning of a grammar form (syntactic, semantic and structural) through relating it to speech functions that include *communicative* (it ensures communication between people), *regulating* (it is realized in conscious forms of mental activity) and *programming* (it is expressed in building the semantic schemes and grammar constructions in order to make an utterance).

Basing on these principles, the following requirements to grammar exercises can be formulated:

1)   they must be *situational*, that is correspond to a certain real or unreal speech situation;

2)   they must relate to a *student's speech task*;

3)   they must ensure *regular revision* of the learnt material and make the use of grammar constructions one's second nature;

4)   they must favor a gradual *introduction of the new material* in order to decrease the number of mistakes when using grammar constructions;

5)   during each stage of grammar skills formation, they must *imitate communication process*;

6)   they must correspond to the normal speech pace that allows to create enough phrases. They are aimed at making the use of a grammar form one's second nature.

Unreal speech exercises that are oriented towards the formation of grammar skills can be classified according to certain criteria (composition, target attitude, way of accomplishing). By their *composition*, they can be extended (or complex) tasks that include the revision and learning several grammar forms simultaneously. According to the *attitude*, they represent a combination of different kinds of exercises in order to make several grammar forms one's second nature. In relation to the *way of accomplishing*, they can be *imitative* (ensure memorizing the material through repeating the sounds or sound combinations (speech and language patterns) after a speaker), *substitutional* (that are used to fix grammar material, to make the use of a certain grammar structure automatic), *transformative* (that are aimed at practicing the change of grammar forms) and *reproductive* (that are oriented towards reproducing the material that has been heard or read in oral or written form) (Passov, 2008).

It should be noted that the latter exercises are the most effective in making the use of grammar constructions one's second nature, because the development of a skill depends on the actions that the students undertake in relation to speech material and on the way they do it. Of course, the conditions of natural speech communication are the most effective in strengthening grammar constructions, because they favor information exchange that is motivated by certain purposes and learning conditions.

In situations when a foreign language is being studied outside the territory of the country of its origin, speech situations need to be imitated as close to natural conditions as possible (Hua & Wei, 2014). In such cases, *game-based activity* is the best way of realizing (functioning) the unreal speech exercises. Grammar games are aimed at developing the students' speech activity and independence. A correctly organized lesson with the elements of a game that is aimed at strengthening the knowledge of a new grammar construction favors effective mastering of a grammar skill. Game is classified as speech exercises that are aimed at creating a natural situation that is needed for a certain speech model to be used. The games that favor the formation of grammar skills can be phonetic, lexical and orthographic (Stepanova, 2004).

Thus, the formation of grammar skills is inextricably connected with exercises. They allow a student to remember and correctly apply grammar material. When making exercises, the students comprehend and become aware of the grammar constructions. This favors the development of a skill of combining several grammar constructions in one sentence.

2. Types of grammar exercises in teaching a foreign language.

The elaboration of the *system* of exercises is one of the main tasks that are solved during preparation of the teaching and methodical materials on a foreign language. The main task of the elaboration of a system of exercises is to organize the learning process and to favor the absorption of knowledge (Cook, 2016).

The majority of the definitions of "exercise" are associated with identification of its meaning and functions. S.F. Shatilov views exercise as a single or repeated performance of separate operations, or a range of speech or language operations, or actions, that is specially organized within learning conditions (Zhang et al., 2014). Ye.P. Shubin views exercise as the main component of studying a foreign language. He defines it as a psychophysiological communicative activity that is carried out by a student and is aimed at the formation of a communicator inside his organism. In other words, it is about the formation of an ability to participate in information exchange through that language (Meisterernst, 2015).

In order to define the functions of exercises that are designed for studying a foreign language, certain requirements need to be formulated. They will be imposed within a united system, where each level has its own purpose and tasks (Zhang et al., 2014).

The system of exercises must meet the following requirements:

- correspond to certain skills and abilities;

- be united by a certain sequence in accordance to the stages of learning the material that are developed on the basis of certain methodical principles;

- favor the effectiveness and dynamic character of the learning process as much as possible;

- ensure correct learning of the material within the terms that have been set;

- establish the relationships between all levels of education system (Cook, 2016).

Before identifying the functions of exercises, let us characterize a range of requirements that are represented in the components of the system of exercises:

Complex of exercises is a set of exercises that are aimed either at making individual actions or realization of individual tasks of the process of learning the material ones' second nature. Complexes of exercises can be distinguished in accordance to the tasks they fulfil: making a certain structure one's second nature, learning of a range of lexical units, learning of a specific sound, improvement of grammar skills, working with a text, achieving the consistence of speech, developing the initiative of speaking. Complexes of exercises can be both simple and complex, depending of the task that has been set and on the speech material being used (Chuanren, Yuan & Xiaofei, 2015).

Subsystem of exercises is a set of exercises that are aimed at learning one of the aspects of speech activity. In relation to teaching speaking skills, three subsystems of exercises can be distinguished: for learning grammar, lexical and pronunciational aspects. Each subsystem is represented in a form of complexes of exercises (Kondo-Brown & Brown, 2017). Each subsystem of exercises must include various tasks, such as reading or listening to text materials, joining the parts of sentences, building a sentence according to a pattern, searching for a certain kind of predicate, translation from native to foreign language or vice versa, constructing dialogues and monologues, etc.

Individual system of exercises is a set of exercises that are aimed at learning a certain kind of speech activity, such as speaking, audition, writing, reading. A system of exercises that are designed for teaching translation skills can also be viewed as an individual system. Each individual system of exercises includes several subsystems. For example, individual system of exercises "speaking" includes three subsystems (Po-Ching & Rimmington, 2015).

General system of exercises is a set of exercises that are designed to develop speech communication in general. General system of exercises includes some (not necessarily all) individual systems. Its composition depends on the *purpose* of learning. It is impossible to build a general system without defining the relationships of the system components on all levels. This must serve as a material for scientific researches within a certain methodological approach (Skalkin, 1983).

The system of exercises must necessarily possess the following characteristics: *scientific character, communicative orientation, interconditionality* of exercises, their *availability, consistency* and orientation towards the *revision* of language material and speech actions.

Classification of exercises is one of the main problems that methodologists face. The choice of a certain criterion (or several criteria) that the classification is based on depends on the features of the foreign language that is being studied.

Learning of the *predicative* structures is especially important in teaching the Chinese language. They function in a significantly different way in comparison to the predicates in the Indo-European languages. Predicativity of the Chinese language is characterized by interaction of two morphological-semantic types: object + attribute and denotation of an object + constant attribute of an object. Thus, we have two forms of predicativity, namely, a word combination and a word. These features demonstrate the development of the Chinese language and the process of its formation.

3. Typological features of the subclass of non-copular predicative structures in the Chinese language

The process of teaching Chinese language has its specific features and significantly differs from teaching European languages. First of all, teachers need to pay attention to the development of grammar skills when using *non-copular predicative structures. The* correct use of them will allow the students to master Chinese language and to use it in all kinds of speech activity (in writing, speaking, reading, audition).

Possessing grammar skills of the Chinese predicative structures implies a strict differentiation between two modes of expressing predicativity, namely, *non-copular* and *copular*.

Non-copular predicative structure is based on the use of a verb or adjectival (expressed by an adjective or noun complex) predicate. Copular predicative structure in the Chinese language represents a nominal predicate or substantivized verbal combination with or without的 particle at the end of a sentence. Besides, copular predicative structure can be expressed by the offered complexes or explicative pronouns.

Within the grammatical structure of the Chinese language, the definition of non-copular predicative subtype has more variants of its usage than the copular ones. That is why, the main emphasis in teaching the Chinese language needs to be placed upon understanding of the *non-copular* predicative structures. In order to characterize the subtypes of predicative structures, we need to consider the typological features of predication class in the Chinese language that have been offered by Ye.I. Shutova in her work "The Chinese syntax" (1991) (Shutova, 1991):

1.   The predicate in a non-copular predicative structure is formed on the basis of verbs and adjectives. The most important syntactic feature of the Chinese language (in comparison to the European ones) is independent predicativity of an adjective that becomes equal to that of a verb. Like in the following sentence: 《很饿》。 – «He is hungry». 2. Combined with accompanying dependent components, the noun can carry out the function of an action attribute and form a full-fledged predicate. For example: 《我二十二岁》。 – 'I'm 22». 3. Monosyllabism of the Chinese language imposes predicative limitations upon the independence of monosyllabic verbs and adjectives. Syntactic integrity of the predicate is achieved either through disyllabism of the main predicative element or through the presence of its dependent components (《我唱歌。》 – «I'm singing»).

Non-copular predicative structure is characterized by the descriptive predicative attribute that helps to assess and qualify a non-copular predicate that is expressed through individual nouns. Thus, it illustrates the model of a descriptive predicate: 这个人真君子 - «This man is a real gentleman». Two grammar attributes of verb and adjective are especially important for building such structure, namely, denotation of an attribute and reflection of this attribute through a value that can be measured in quantitative terms (temporal attribute, degree attribute). These grammar attributes serve as a basis for the formation of predicative relationships. Non-copular predication that is characterized by the *temporal* attribute is formed by the abstract suffixes – 过，着, whereas the adverbs of degree point to the *intensity* of an attribute. Such adverbs as 当然 (of course)，一定 (surely) and negations are used. The relationships of predication that emerge between object and attribute are expressed through the formation of the compound non-copular predicates, that is through the use of two predicates that share the same attribute with the subject. Compound predicate is formed through the use of a resultative particle 得, that is placed between two verbs. Let us consider an example: 他伤心得哭起来 (He cried bitterly). Another feature of a compound predicate is *impersonality* (or the use of indefinite personal type): 教师坐得满满 (The audience is full) (Shutova, 1991).

All the above-mentioned features of the descriptive predicative attribute are expressed in two *compositional variants* that Ye.I. Shutova called "variant A" (active construction of a sentence) and "variant B" (passive construction of a sentence).

Compositional variant A has several *forms of manifesting* the activity in a sentence.

Variant A1 is based upon the use of transitive and non-transitive verbs. That is why, in some cases a predicative attribute can be located between the subject and a resultative or negative particle. It can denote: 1) *attribute-action*:

妈妈爸爸都担心着 – «Both mom and dad worry»; 我跑得快 – «I was running quickly»; 他说不出来 – «He didn't manage to express himself»; 我们看过 – «We saw»; 她说得不清楚 – «The way she talked was obscure»;

2) *attribute-quality*; the bearer is an object or object-place (time) that are denoted by the subject. Let us consider the examples of denoting an object: 这本书好看 – «This book is beautiful»; 这个学生真聪明 – «This student is really clever»; 他的话不对 – «His words are incorrect»; 这个东西比较便宜 – «This thing is very cheap»; 冬天很冷 – «Winter is very cold»; 他很害羞 – «He is very shy»; 这段课文可不容易 – «This text is not easy at all»; 语法特别难 – «Grammar is especially difficult». These are the examples of denoting an object-place (time): 教师理特别安静 – «It is very quiet in the audience»; 他心里很不高兴 – «He is not joyful in his soul»; 地上扫得很干净 – «The floor is cleanly swept».

3) *attribute-unintentional condition;* the bearer is either an object or object-place (time) that are also denoted by the subject: 他不怎么样 – «He's no good»; 这个男孩儿很厉害 – «This boy is very strong»; 我们受不了 – «We won't stand this»;

4) *quantitate attribute*: 学生比较多 – «The number of students is relatively big»; 时间不够 – «The time is not enough»; 人很少 – «There are very few people» (Shutova, 1991).

Variant A2 is formed by transitive verbs with the name of an object in postposition to the verb, that is the verb attaches itself to the subject. The verb element of predicate can express action or process: 我修手机 – «I'm fixing the phone»; 我到了公园 – «I arrived to park»; 他看过我 – «He saw me»; 我们都当了老师 – «All of us became teachers»; 你还担心他的身体吗？ – «Do you still care about his health?»; 我听不到他的话 – «I didn't hear his words»; 父亲坏了我的电脑 – «Father broke my notebook by himself».

Besides, this content of a predicate can be extended in a form of several complements: 我发给她短信 – «I sent her a message»; 母亲骂我了很长时间 – «Mom scolded me for a long time»; 我看了他一眼 – «I looked at him once». Nominal component of the construction is often represented in a form of binary relation: 哥哥请我帮助他 – «My elder brother asked me to help him»; 他叫我去办公室 – «He invited me to go the dean's office with him»; 我让学生读课文 – «I told the students to read the text»; 朋友有一个老师住在意大利 – «My friend's teacher lives in Italy»; 他写了自己的名字在本上 – «He wrote his name on the cover of a notebook».

Variant A3 is based on transitive and partially transitive verbs with the object's name in a verb preposition:

1) through the use of *preposition* 把 with a necessary presence of a verb that is located to the right in relation to the noun or pronoun: 我把电脑放在桌子上 – «I put notebook on the table»; 他把我送大学门口 – «They accompanied me by the entry of university»; 我朋友把杂志扔掉 – «My friend thrown the magazine»; 儿子把母亲的手机玩儿以下 – «The son took his mom's phone to play»;

2) with the use of *auxiliary words* 也 (too) и 都 (all; both): 我们什么东西都忘了 – «We forgotten everything that has happened»; 我三本书都看过了 – «I read all the three books»; 什么话我都不相信 – «I don't trust anything»; 学生什么词语也没记住 – «Students didn't remember any phrase». Particle 连 (even) can be used to make emphasis, to accentuate the object, for example:我连茶也没喝过 – «I didn't drink even tea»; 他连一毛钱也没花 – «He didn't spend even a mao»; 我哥哥连衣服都没拿过 – «My elder brother didn't even take his clothes».

Variant A4 allows using modal verb as a structural center of a predicate. The attribute is described as a possibility or necessity: 我可该打电话 – «However, I have to phone»; 我要选择专业 – «I must choose specialty»; 他敢赢这个比赛 – «He will be able to win this competition»; 他能参加我们的晚会 – «He can take part in our evening party»; 我应该走 – «I must go» (Shutova, 1991).

Compositional variant B can be formed through the use of a passive indicator. One of these indicators is a particle 被 (denotes an impact upon something or somebody). But it doesn't need to be necessarily used due to a range of reasons. Double orientation of the main predicate element is distinguished as general predicative attributes of this constructive form. Predicate expresses an action that is carried out in relation to an object or without indication of the agent of action. Or, the agent can be specified or the object itself becomes the bearer of the passive condition. For example:

钱包丢了 – «The wallet is lost»; 钱包被妈妈丢了 – «The wallet was lost by mom»; 自行车修了 – «Bicycle was repaired»; 自行车被爸爸修了 – «Bicycle was repaired by dad»; 椅子掉了 – «The chair fell»; 椅子被小孩儿掉

了 – «The chair was thrown by a child».

Apart from passive and active constructions, Ye.I. Shutova distinguished *possessive* construction (form B) that expresses the connection between two objects. One of them is denoted by the subject, the other – by the predicate. The construction of such predicative attribute has three subtypes:

1) nominal component of a predicate precedes the attribute component, that is their relationships are lexical-semantic (mutually dependent). For example: 我肚子疼 – «My stomach is aching»; 孩子玩具多了 – «There are a lot of children's toys»; 这两本书的内容相似 – «The content of these two texts is similar»; 生活中难题多了 – «There are always a lot of problems in life»; 公司的工资不高 – «Office salary is not high»;

2) predicate is expressed by several qualitative or quantitative subject combinations of words. For example: 我二十二岁 – «I'm 22»; 中国人黑头发黄皮肤 – literally: «The Chinese have black hair and yellow skin»; 一个小时六十分钟 – «There are 60 minutes in one hour»; 公司里五十个人 – «50 employees work in the company»; 房子里三个小猫 – «There are three kittens in the room».

It should be noted that this type of the descriptive predicative structure can be expressed through the auxiliary word 是. However, we can'' t state that 是 is not a linking word, but a modal particle. That is why, this auxiliary word is used to form the structures with a negative predicative attribute and with auxiliary adverbs 都 (all, it total),也 (too) in order to express their modal prominence. In these cases, the sentences remain non-copular predicative, whereas 是 is not a linking word. For example: 孩子不是调皮 – «Children are not spoiled»; 老师都是好 – «All the teachers are good»; 他们也是老 – «They are old too»; 他不是聪明 – «He is not clever».

3) predicate is expressed by a non-predicative construction, that is, it doesn'' t point to an object, whereas the relationships between objects represent the process of action without indicating its source. We can cite the verbs of presence, of appearance and disappearance as well as the verbs with aspective suffixes 了. For example: 今天发生了一个事儿 – «Today, one common business appeared»; 快要小雨 – «It is going to rain»; 我起了一个想法 – «An idea came to my mind»; 经济在发展 – «Economics is developing»; 十四年过了两年 – «2 years of 14 have passed» (Shutova, 1991).

The final compositional variant (D) is a predication with a definite or indefinite object. Basing on the identification of the way that a predicate structure is formed, three subtypes of predication can be distinguished:

Compositional variant D1: 1) predicate is expressed by the predicative construction "name + transitive verb". This construction is characterized by the presence of a definite agent. That is why, it often uses transitive verbs of a thought, feeling, speech; transitive verbs in combination with modal verbs, with the forms of possibility or impossibility; verbs of movement. For example: 你的话我听得懂了 – «I heard your words»; 这座山我记得 – «I remember this mountain»; 这个作业你做得了做不了 – «As for this home work, you can do it or not»; 那儿我都看过 – «I have already seen everything there»; 2) predicate is expressed though a transitive verb in a generalized personal meaning. For example: 这个句子说起来容易，写起来难 – «This sentence is easy to tell, but hard to write down»; 3) predicate is formed with transitive verbs of indefinite or generalized personal meaning in combination with other verb: 我不准锻炼身体 – «I'm not allowed to study, to train»; 4) predicate is created through the construction "name + transitive verb" and a modal verb: 这个问题用不着多说了 – «This problem is not worth further discussion».

Compositional variant D2: predicate is formed on the basis of a verb that is non-transitive in relation to the subject as well as through a modal verb: 这不能说没有问题 – «It can't be said that there are no problems»; 这辆车不会是她的 – «This is not her car».

Compositional variant D3: the subject denotes a place (time): 1) predicate is represented by a transitive verb with the name of subject in the right: 在这个公司我已经工作了 – «I have already worked in this company»; 2) predicate is expressed by a transitive verb without indication of an object or subject of action:书上写得很清楚 – «In this book everything is written in a very clear way »; 3) predicate is expressed by a modal verb with a meaning of possibility: 路上不要停 – «No stops should be made along the way»; 今天不要过来 – «There is no need to come today» (Shutova, 1991).

Thus, the formation of grammar skills in relation to non-copular predicative structures is a rather difficult process. However, it can be formalized and, consequently, used in learning process. Studying grammar constructions of non-copular predicativity plays an important role in studying the Chinese language. Through the use of the system of exercises, the students' grammar skills can be effectively developed.

4. Automation of grammar skills in relation to the active constructions of a Chinese sentence.

Grammar exercises that are designed for effective mastering the non-copular predicative structures are the key ones for studying the Chinese language. The knowledge of them allows the students to acquire necessary skills that will be used in future. Whereas a teacher will be able to speed up the process of fixing grammar material through it.

The exercises represent a system of sentences that are aimed at absorption of grammar knowledge of a foreign language. The basis of grammar knowledge of the Chinese language is the use of predicative structures with non-copular structure as its main type. This type of predication is represented in several forms. Their characteristics (compositional variants) were provided in a previous chapter.

The formation of grammar skills is realized on all stages of learning: "preparatory", "elementary", "integrating", "systematizing communication", and "concluding". Through the work with a certain type of grammar exercises at each of the stages, the students memorize grammar constructions. As it has already been mentioned, the main kind of exercises that are used for strengthening grammar skills is represented by the unreal speech exercises that have their own classification and are organized into a system.

The above-mentioned principles allow to offer a system of grammar exercises that are aimed at the development of grammar skills in relation to using the non-copular predicative structures.

As our research shows, during *preparatory* stage, it is preferable to use *imitative* exercises. They imply fixing grammar material at the basic level and favor the formation of the students' elementary grammar skills. The exercises that are used during "preparatory stage" include listening to audio-records, repeating of texts after a speaker, uttering of phrases. Such tasks are aimed at providing a preliminary knowledge of material. During this stage, the exercises must not be long, because learning an active construction is only being formed as a grammar skill.

Differentiated exercises are the most effective for being used at the *elementary* stage. They help the students to identify grammar constructions and to compare them. This favors memorizing of grammar material. Elementary stage can involve joining the parts of a sentence, building a sentence according to a pattern. Such tasks favor understanding the way that active predication functions in a sentence.

Integrating stage must include *substitution* exercises. A clue to the elements for substitution is an important aspect of using substitution exercises. That is why, these exercises are aimed, first of all, at fixing the material that has been learnt not long ago. During the development of grammar skills, students need to build their own word combinations basing of the patterns and examples that were offered. These exercises allow to correct numerous mistakes that can be made during studying new grammar constructions. The exercises at the integrating stage can include the following tasks: building a sentence out of the words that are given, translation of sentences from a foreign into native language.

As for the stage of *systematizing communication*, it is preferably to use *constructive* exercises that imply the extension of a sentence or its structural scheme through definitions, complements, circumstances. These exercises are aimed at strengthening the existing knowledge of grammar constructions. The exercises during this stage can include searching for grammar constructions and building the dialogues with the use of the construction that is being studied. When introducing constructive exercises into the system of grammar tasks, the students' existing knowledge level should be taken into account. The use of these exercises will speed up the process of grammar skills formation and increase its effectiveness.

Concluding stage must represent a complex of combined exercises that are oriented towards revision and strengthening of all grammar phenomena that have been learnt before. This stage can include the following tasks: formulating the questions with the use of a grammar construction that has been learnt or searching for such construc-

tions in a certain original context.

DISCUSSION

When studying grammar material, students need to learn to use various examples that will allow them to build sentences by themselves in future. The tasks must develop their logic and stimulate creative approach to formulating their own utterances that are oriented towards the use of active grammar constructions (Zhang et al., 2014).

It should be kept in mind that exercises should include the most various vocabulary. This allows to both increase the students' knowledge level and favor visual memorizing of unknown hieroglyphs. The students must learn to reflect their own vision of a speech situation that is being formed in a sentence (Li, 2018).

The use of predicate in Indo-European and Chinese language significantly differs. That is why, translation from native into Chinese language must be the most important task for the development of grammar skills. This is also necessary in order to demonstrate to the students the difference in functioning of a predicate in a non-copular predicative sentence in the Chinese and native languages.

Getting familiar with grammar material that is associated with the use of an active predicate in a sentence takes place gradually and simultaneously with learning the content words of the Chinese language, such as adverbs 也 (too) and 都 (all; in total). These parts of speech are the main indicator of a predicate's agency in a non-copular predicative sentence.

Active constructions in Chinese language include both auxiliary words and *modal verbs*. That is why, the development of grammar skills that are aimed at using active predicate needs to involve exercises that are designed for strengthening grammar skills of using modal verbs (Ross & Ma, 2017).

The tasks that are based on building the sentences, monologues and dialogues must be oriented towards *fixing* the material that has been learnt. Such tasks allow to learn to formulate one's utterance in unreal speech situations. When students construct dialogues by themselves, we are able to define their level of knowledge of grammar material that has been learnt before as well as the level of mastering new material. If they experience any difficulties with understanding grammar constructions, the dialogues allow to better understand the situations in which they make the mistakes and to identify the material that wasn't sufficiently absorbed by them.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the exercises that are aimed at the formation of stable skills of using active predication in non-copular sentences of the Chinese language, allow to introduce new grammar material with due regard to gradual formation of a grammar skill in relation to the use of active predicate. The exercises must be oriented towards memorizing the material, mastering the skills of using active grammar constructions of a non-copular predicative sentence, building the sentences by the students themselves according to the patterns that were offered.

Correct use of grammar material, correct form of an utterance and resulting understanding of foreign speech is realized by virtue of gradual formation of stable grammar skills. Such system of exercises allows to make grammar skills of using active, passive, possessive constructions as well as the constructions of a subject's mediated personal characteristic in a non-copular predicative sentence ones' second nature.

Each year Chinese language becomes more and more popular. This leads to the need for elaborating the exercises that are aimed at studying this language and considering both the features of the students' native language, their age and cognitive characteristics and their knowledge level, learning process schedule and its duration. As far as the Chinese language grammar significantly differs from that of the Indo-European languages in structural and syntactic terms, the development of corresponding exercises must include gradual learning of grammar structures and constant revision and strengthening of the constructions that have been already learnt. Elaboration of exercises that are aimed at the formation of grammar structures needs to account for the difficulty level of grammar material (moving from easy exercises to more difficult ones).

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Buhbinder, V. A. (1980). The main starting points for the description of the process of oral-speech communication and teaching oral speech//Essays on the methods of teaching oral speech in foreign languages. Kiev, Vyshcha shkola. 11-48.

Chin, C. K., Gong, C., & Tay, B. P. (2018). Chinese Language Teaching Paradigm: Case Study. In Teaching Chinese Language in Singapore. Springer, Singapore. 37-49.

Chuanren, K., Yuan, L., & Xiaofei, P. (2015). Assessing International Chinese Language Teachers' Second Language Acquisition Theoretical Foundation and Language Pedagogy [J]. Chinese Teaching in the World, 1, 016.

Cook, V. (2016). Second Language Learning and language teaching. New York, 5th Edition, Routledge, 344.

Cook, V. (2016). Second language learning and language teaching. Routledge.

Galskova, N. D. (2000). Modern method of teaching foreign languages. Moscow: Arkti-Glossa, 165.

Hagboldt, P. (1963). Studying foreign languages. Moscow: Uchpedgiz. 69.

Hua, Z., & Wei, L. (2014). Geopolitics and the changing hierarchies of the Chinese language: Implications for policy and practice of Chinese language teaching in Britain. The Modern Language Journal, 98(1), 326-339.

Kondo-Brown, K., & Brown, J. D. (2017). Teaching Chinese, Japanese, and Korean heritage language students: Curriculum needs, materials, and assessment. Routledge.

Li, D. (2018). Modern Chinese Grammar: A Clause-Pivot Approach.

Meisterernst, B. (2015). New issues in Chinese grammar: The morpho-syntax of the aspectual system in Late Archaic Chinese. Mínsú diǎnjí wénzí yánjiū.

Passov, Ye. I. (1986). The bases of the communicative method of teaching communication in foreign language. Moscow: The Russian Language, 276.

Passov, Ye. I. (2008). Conditionally speech exercises for the formation of grammar skills. – Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 128.

Po-Ching, Y., & Rimmington, D. (2015). Chinese: A comprehensive grammar.

Popularity of the Chinese language is growing. (2007). Study guide. http://www.studyguide.ru/news.php?id=101

Rogova, G.V., Rabinovich, F. M., Sakharova, T. Ye. (1991). The method of teaching foreign languages in secondary school. Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 287.

Ross, C., & Ma, J. H. S. (2017). Modern Mandarin Chinese grammar: A practical guide. Routledge.

Shutova, Ye. A. (1991). Syntax of the modern Chinese language: monograph. – Moscow: Nauka, 392.

Skalkin, V. L. (1983) Communicative exercises in English language: teacher's manual. Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 142.

Stepanova, Ye. A. (2004). Game as a means to stimulate interest to the language that is studied//Foreign languages in school. № 2. 66 – 68.

Zhan, H. (2017). Cognitive Chinese grammar. Review of Cognitive Linguistics. Published under the auspices of the Spanish Cognitive Linguistics Association, 15(1), 297-303.

Zhang, Y., Song, J., Zhu, X., & Peng, W. (2014). The identification of grammar points in international Chinese language teaching materials based on sentence-based annotation. In Educational Innovation through Technology (EITT), 2014 International Conference. 29-36.

Zhang, Y., Song, J., Zhu, X., & Peng, W. (2014). The identification of grammar points in international Chinese language teaching materials based on sentence-based annotation. In Educational Innovation through

Technology (EITT), 2014 International Conference of (pp. 29-36). IEEE.

于金明，《语料库与认知语言学视阈中的语法教学观》，湖北广播电视大学学报，2016，36 (1) :41-43页 [You Jingming. (2016). Cognitive Linguistics and Basic Materials for Studying Language in Teaching Grammar/Hubei. Radio and TV University. Vestnik of Hubei Province. 36(1). 41-43].

王建勤，《对外汉语语法教学的认知视角》，北京:中国社会科学出版社，汉语应用语言学研究，2016 (14):17-28页 [Jienchin, W. (2016) Views of Teaching the Chinese Language Grammar// Research on applied linguistics of the Chinese language. (14), 152].

谷红杏，《新形势下对外汉语语法教学研究》，沈阳师范大学文学院:散文百家(新语文活页)，2016 (5)，196 页 [Hongxing, G. (2016). The Research on Teaching the Grammar of the Chinese as Foreign Language in Modern Conditions//Thinkers of the new prosaic literature/ Shenyang, Shenyang University of Humanities. (5). 196.

赖秋香，《外语习得者的语法技能与听力技能的实证研究》,吉首大学学报:社会科学版,2017 (S1): 224-227页[Chiuxiang, L. (2017). Empirical Research on the Use of Grammar and Audition Skills of Foreign Language. 1st edition, Jishou; Jishou University: Social sciences. 224-227]

阮黄英，《对越汉语教学语法体系建设的几点思考》，北京,语言大学出版社,国际汉语教学研究，2016 (2): 42-48页 [Huaning, Y. (2016). The Analysis of the Formation of Grammar Constructions in Teaching the Chinese language//The Research on teaching the Chinese language on international level. Beijing: Beijing University of Philology. 42-48]