

Бутенко О. А.

старший викладач кафедри

практики іноземних мов

Херсонський державний університет

м. Херсон, Україна

## **LATIN INFINITIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TERMS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

Semi-complex sentences, or sentences expanded by predicative constructions are inherent in Latin as well as modern European languages, but their study offers special difficulty to Ukrainian and Russian speaking students and therefore requires special interpretation while teaching both the English and Latin languages.

Although the use of predicative complexes to express implicit semantic relations is common in Latin, the interpretation of these constructions has as of yet received little attention in linguistic literature on Latin and methods of its teaching. The study subject is Latin constructions with the Infinitive (Nominativus cum Infinitivo, Accusativus cum Infinitivo). The mastery of this phenomenon is of special importance for Ukrainian students of English (French, Spanish) as it is hardly possible to find the analogue in the students' native language.

The object of the article is to investigate the ways of rendering the Latin absolute constructions with the Infinitive in English and in Ukrainian and to trace back the conjectured links between the Latin Accusativus/Nominativus cum Infinitivo and the English Objective/Subjective with the Infinitive constructions.

The nature of the phenomenon of secondary predication is still a disputable issue: whether English syntax was formed under the influence of Romance constructions, or the constructions are of Germanic origin. In any case, there is no

denying the fact that the specificity of Old English language situation and English-Latin bilingualism created favourable conditions for interference and borrowings [4].

In written Latin the prevalence of expanded sentences over *quod* clauses can be traced back to the Archaic and Classical Latin era. According to A. Bartonek, “There is evidence that the infinitival constructions after the *verba dicendi* (and also *sentiendi*) experienced a period of extremely broad expansion, even a monopolization, with a strict prevalence of Accusative (or Nominative) with Infinitive over the subordinate *quod*-clauses, in the written Latin texts at least. In fact, an early subordinate clause with *quod* appears in Plautus already. In the Latin works of the Classical period, however, the construction of Accusative with the Infinitive offered a very strong resistance to the above-said *quod*-clauses in general, having not only a clear monopoly after the *verba dicendi et sentiendi*, but prevailing strongly, for example, also after the *verba affectuum*. It is Classical Latin that fully preserved the infinitival constructions after the *verba dicendi*, giving a nearly total preference to them until the 2nd/3rd cent. A.D. In Latin the position of the Accusative (or Nominative) with the Infinitive remained strong even in the works of early Christian authors” [3]. Existing researches of Old English syntax and English translations of Latin texts give evidence that the following English constructions can be treated as syntactical borrowings from Latin: the Nominative with the Infinitive, Accusative/Dative with the Infinitive with verbs of mental activity, speaking, impersonal verbs and causative verb *do*; Absolute Dative and Absolute Instrumental Participial construction [4].

The Old English constructions further developed into modern Subjective with the Infinitive, Objective with the Infinitive and Absolute Participial constructions. Latin interference has been discovered to prove that the Latin influence resulted in the more intensive use of patterns already existing in Old English (Accusativus cum Infinitivo after verbs of sense perception and other causative verbs), and also promoted generating models by analogy [4].

Accusativus cum Infinitivo is a syntactic construction with the nominal element

(noun, substantivized adjective or pronoun in Accusative and the Infinitive, the nominal part acting as logical subject, the Infinitive – as logical predicate. The syntactical function of the construction is that of complex object to verbs with the meaning of informing (*dicere* ГОВОРИТИ, *narrare* розповідати, *respondere* відповідати, *scribere* писати, *tradere* передавати), mental activity (*putare* think, *existimare* consider, *intelligere* understand, *credere* believe, *scire* know), perceiving (*sentire* feel, *videre* see, *audire* hear), inducement (*velle* want, *imperare* order, *cupere* desire, *vetare* forbid, *sinere* allow) and after some impersonal verbs (*notum est* is known, *constat* is considered, *oportet* is necessary, *apparet* evidently) etc.

In Ukrainian complex object is conveyed by means of a subordinate clause with the conjunction «що» («щоб», «як»), with the logical subject becoming the subject of the subordinate clause and the Infinitive is interpreted as the finite verb which agrees with the subject: *Te hominem esse memento* – Пам’ятай, що ти людина. *Video te laborare* – Я бачу, як ти працюєш. *Scimus Teram rotundam esse* – Ми знаємо, що Земля кругла. English translation is much more satisfiable: *Video te laborare* – I see you work. *Scimus Teram rotundam esse* – We know the Earth to be round [2, p.126]. Unlike Ukrainian, where the infinitives differ in aspect only, the Latin Infinitive has the categories of time and voice, its 6 forms being: Infinitivus praesentis activi, Infinitivus praesentis passivi, Infinitivus perfecti activi, Infinitivus perfecti passivi, Infinitivus future activi, Infinitivus futuri passivi. All of these can be used as logical predicates in Accusativus cum Infinitivo: *Scimus urbem Romam a Romulo et Remo condi* – Ми знаємо, що місто Рим засноване Ромулом і Ремом. / We know the city of Rome to be founded by Romulus and Remus. *Scimus urbem Romam a Romulo et Remo condiam esse* – Ми знаємо, що місто Рим було засноване Ромулом і Ремом. / We know the city of Rome to have been founded by Romulus and Remus [2, p.127]. (It should be noted that the 6 forms in paradigm of the English Infinitive also differ in voice, but unlike Latin, are notable for aspect, not time distinction, which requires special elucidation).

Nominativus cum Infinitivo consists of the subject expressed by a noun, substantivized adjective or pronoun in the Nominative case and (logical) predicate expressed by one of Infinitive forms. This construction is used after the same verbs as the Accusativus cum Infinitivo (*dicor* I am said to, *putor* I am considered to, *videor* I seem to: *dicor scribere* - I am said to write, *dicimur scribere* – we are said to write, but in the passive voice, also translated into Ukrainian by a subordinate clause introduced by the conjunction «*що*», «*щоб*».

Due to distinctions between the students' native language the process of assimilation of the phenomenon of predicative constructions requires special interpretation. Besides the traditional explanatory deductive method, there is the method of logical induction which appeals to the students' awareness of similar constructions in their first/major foreign language [1, p.107].

Analyzing the pattern *Video eum venire* (I see him come) based on N. Katzman's series of consequent cards students are expected to reach a self-reliant conclusion about predicative relations between the second action (come) and (him) as the performer of this action via the comparison with analogous construction in French or English [1]. Unfortunately, Latin is taught in the first year when most students lack knowledge in syntax of their first foreign language (e.g., English, French or Spanish). It is Latin predicative constructions that establish a framework for future mastery of the phenomenon of secondary predication.

It is also appropriate to compare the structures of Latin, English and Ukrainian sentences to explain why the former two are not complex though containing two predicative units. The deduction is to be drawn about secondary predication as prerequisite for the infinitive construction. (Further this kind of analysis is to facilitate the comprehension of Objective with the Infinitive construction in English, as Latin Infinitives are easy to identify due to uniform inflections).

The next step may be a substitution table, which allows building sentences equivalent in syntactical structure to the one analyzed before (Table 1):

Finite verb	Nominal element	Infinitive
<i>Video</i>	<i>eum</i>	<i>venite</i>
<i>Puto</i>	<i>terram</i>	<i>scribere</i>
<i>Scio</i>	<i>discipulos</i>	<i>bene discere</i>
<i>Constant</i>	<i>fratrem</i>	<i>esse sphearum</i>

*Table 1. Substitution table*

The system of training exercises traditionally proposed in Latin manuals can be adapted and arranged in the following sequence:

1) Translation of sentences with predicative complexes from Latin into native language. It should be recommended here to propose extended sentences containing popular quotations and proverbial phrases already familiar to students and therefore easily recognized in a new syntactical context: *Notum est scientiam potentiam esse* – It is known that knowledge is power; *Sapientia antique docet ibi simper victoriam esse, ubi concordia est* - The old proverb reads as follows: where there is concord there is victory; *Scio me nihil scio* – I know that I know nothing; *Dicunt Homerum caecum fuisse* – They say Homer was blind.

2) Translation of sentences based on new lexical material, or involving new vocabulary: *Socrates: “Scio,- inquit,- me multa nescire, itaque multo sapientior sum, quam homines, qui putant se omnia scire”* - Socrates (said): I know that I don't know much, but I am wiser than those who think that they know all.

3) Transforming expanded sentences into complex ones: *Video pulchras in scholam properare* (I see girls go to school) – *Video quod pulchrae in scholam properant.*

4) Transforming complex sentences into those expanded by predicative complexes: *Pater dixit: (Ego) librum scribo* – *Pater dixit se librum scribere.*

The system of traditional training exercises in Latin grammar arranged in this way is to help the students to assimilate secondary predication as a typologically relevant feature of European languages and further to facilitate the acquisition of predicative complexes in the study of their first foreign language.

#### References

1. Кацман Н.Л. Методика преподавания латинского языка. – М.: Гуманит. изд. центр ВЛАДОС, 2003. – 256 с.

2. Корж Н.Г., Шведов С.А. Латинська мова: Підручник для 9-11 класів ліцеїв, гімназій та гуманітарних класів загальноосвітніх шкіл Н.Г. Корж, С.А. Шведов. – К.: Абрис, 1995. – 288 с.

3. [digilib.phil.muni.cz/bitstream/handle/11222.digilib/126314/SpisyFF\\_375-2008-1\\_17.pdf?sequence=1](http://digilib.phil.muni.cz/bitstream/handle/11222.digilib/126314/SpisyFF_375-2008-1_17.pdf?sequence=1)]

4. <http://www.dissercat.com/content/sintaksicheskie-zaimstvovaniya-v-drevneangliiskom-yazyke>