THE SYNTACTIC NATURE AND STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF WORD COMBINATIONS: WORD COMBINATION AS A UNIT OF SPEECH

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Abstract: This article theoretically examines the syntactic nature of word combinations, their place in the language system, and their distinguishing features compared to sentences. The structural models of word combinations, the relationship between head and dependent components, and the types of grammatical connections are analyzed through illustrative examples. In addition, simple and complex forms of word combinations and their usage characteristics in speech are demonstrated based on practical linguistic materials. The results of the research reveal the significance of word combinations as an independent syntactic unit.

Keywords: syntactic nature of word combinations, system of syntactic units, relationship between head and dependent components, mechanisms of grammatical connection, structural models and constructions, predicativity and non-predicativity, syntactic hierarchy, formal-grammatical analysis, functional-syntactic approach, realization of word combinations in speech.

Introduction

Language is considered a complex system of signs that expresses human thought, social experience, and communicative needs. The primary function of the language system is to form and transmit ideas in the process of speech, and this process is carried out through various syntactic units. One of these units is the word combination, which is studied separately in linguistics as an important object of syntax [1]. A word combination appears as an independent syntactic phenomenon in the language system and is formed as a result of grammatical and semantic connections between at least two independent lexical units.

The issue of word combination syntax has long attracted the attention of scholars. As early as the eighteenth century, M. V. Lomonosov, in his work Russian Grammar (1775), was interested in the nature of word combinations. Although the concept of a word combination did not yet exist at that time, considerable attention was paid in a section of syntax to the ways in which words combine and the structural forms of such combinations [2]. After M. V. Lomonosov, the problem of word combinations was further studied by A. Kh. Vostokov.

The syntactic nature of word combinations is determined by their place in the system of language units, their functional role, and their characteristics of usage in speech. A word combination is smaller than a sentence but more complex than a single word, enabling a clearer and more meaningful expression of thought. In this respect, a word combination is not only the product of grammatical connection but also an important structural element that organizes meaning in speech [3], [4], [5], [6].

In linguistics, the structural features of word combinations, the syntactic relations between their components, the interaction between head and dependent elements, and their functional role in speech have been widely studied [7], [8]. This article analyzes the syntactic nature of word combinations, their

structural characteristics, and their functional possibilities as a unit of speech [9]. It also highlights their place within the syntactic system, their grammatical formation, and their communicative function in speech.

Methodology

The Concept of Word Combination in Speech

In speech, there is often a need to express concepts more precisely and clearly. This necessity leads to the preference for word combinations that express relatively more specific meanings than individual words. For example:

to read — to read quickly

In the second expression, the action of "recognizing letters and understanding meaning" is expressed more precisely because it is modified by the word quickly. Thus, both a word and a word combination express a concept. However, the concept expressed by a single word is relatively broader and less specific, while a word combination expresses a clearer and more definite meaning because two independent concepts interact while retaining their autonomy.

A word therefore often requires another independent word to reveal its semantic potential more clearly. For this interaction to occur, the words must be compatible both semantically and grammatically.

Consider the following combinations:

to pick of the apple

to bite the sky

Halim came

to read the book

In the first combination (apple's picking), the words are semantically compatible but grammatically inconsistent. In the second combination (to bite the sky), the grammatical structure is possible, but the semantic incompatibility prevents it from forming a meaningful unit. In the third case (Halim came), the elements are both semantically and grammatically compatible, yet they form a sentence, expressing a complete thought rather than a concept. The fourth combination (to read the book) differs from the others because it consists of more than one independent word connected through grammatical dependency and expresses a concept rather than a complete thought.

Result and Discussion

Thus, the following characteristics can be identified for word combinations in speech:

they consist of more than one independent word;

their elements are semantically and grammatically compatible;

they are based on a relationship of dependency;

they express a concept [10].

A word combination resembles related linguistic phenomena in some respects and differs from them in others [11]. For instance, it differs from a word in that it consists of more than one independent lexical unit, but it resembles a word in that both express a concept. A sentence may also arise from grammatical dependency between words, but unlike a word combination, it expresses a complete thought.

Therefore, the relationship between word combinations and other syntactic units should be considered separately.

Syntactic Nature and Features of Word Combinations

A word combination is a syntactic unit smaller than a sentence that is formed through the dependency of at least two independent words and expresses an object or feature more precisely. According to its

syntactic nature, it is based on dependency relations, and according to its structural characteristics, it is divided into simple and complex (expanded) types. In such structures, the head word governs the dependent word [12].

Main characteristics

Dependent syntactic relation

In a word combination, words are connected through dependency: one element is the head, and the other is dependent.

Nominative nature

Word combinations serve to specify or describe concepts such as objects, actions, or qualities more precisely.

Syntactic unit

Unlike a sentence, a word combination does not express a complete thought but functions as a component within a sentence.

Structural Features

Simple combinations

These consist of two independent words.

Examples: golden autumn, to read a book [13].

Complex (expanded) combinations

These consist of several words connected to a single head word.

Types of Connection

Agreement (attributive construction)

The dependent word is connected through meaning and position.

Example: beautiful girl.

Government

The dependent word appears in a specific case required by the head word.

Example: to go to school.

Genitive construction

Expresses a possessive relationship between elements.

Example: the power of knowledge.

Head and Dependent Components

In a word combination, the word whose meaning is specified is called the head, and the word that clarifies or specifies its meaning is the dependent component. For example, in the phrase to read the book, book is the dependent element, while read is the head element.

A head word may govern several dependent words, but each dependent word can usually relate to only one head within the same combination. For instance, in large beautiful wreath, the word wreath functions as the head governing two modifiers (large and beautiful).

In Uzbek speech, the dependent element usually precedes the head element. However, exceptions occur in cases of inversion, such as I read the book → Read I the book [14], [15].

The head word may also be called the expanding element, while the dependent word is the expander. These terms indicate that the combination expands the formal structure of the expression while narrowing its semantic scope. For example, the word read expresses a broad action applicable to many objects. In the phrase to read the book, the meaning becomes more specific.

Word Combination and Sentence

A word combination is formed by the dependency of two or more independent words and names a phenomenon or object but does not express a complete thought. A sentence, however, expresses a complete idea about a subject or event and is usually formed around a predicate.

Thus:

a word combination names something (summer vacation),

a sentence communicates information (The vacation began).

A word combination does not contain a complete thought, whereas a sentence does. Word combinations involve dependency relations, while sentences may contain both coordination and subordination.

Conclusion

In conclusion, within Uzbek linguistics, word combinations represent a complex structure in terms of their structural organization, grammatical relations, and their possible equivalence to words or sentences in certain contexts. For this reason, establishing a single universal model for word combinations is difficult. It is also necessary to reconsider the classification of nominal combinations within the structure of word combinations.

In general, the study and classification of word combinations remain relevant issues in modern linguistics. A word combination serves as an intermediate syntactic stage that adapts lexical resources of language to communicative needs in speech. It not only names phenomena but also organizes their attributes and relationships into logical groups.

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