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THE MANIFESTATION OF STRUCTURAL-SEMANTIC FEATURES OF WORD COMBINATIONS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract

This article examines the structural-semantic features of word combinations in English and Uzbek from a comparative linguistic and cognitive perspective. Word combinations constitute important syntactic units through which speakers organize concepts, establish semantic relationships, and construct meaningful utterances. Although English and Uzbek belong to different typological groups, both languages employ word combinations to express attributive, objective, possessive, adverbial, and other semantic relations. At the same time, these relations are manifested through different grammatical and structural mechanisms. English, characterized predominantly by an analytical grammatical structure, frequently relies on fixed or relatively fixed word order, prepositions, and functional words to establish relationships between components. Uzbek, as an agglutinative language, expresses many grammatical and semantic relations through affixes, case markers, possessive forms, and postpositions. The article analyzes noun, adjective, verb, and possessive combinations in the two languages and demonstrates how structural differences influence semantic interpretation. Particular attention is given to the interaction between the head and dependent components, syntactic relations, semantic roles, word order, morphological marking, and conceptual organization. The comparative analysis



demonstrates that structural-semantic differences between English and Uzbek reflect not only grammatical distinctions but also different ways of organizing linguistic information.

Keywords: word combination, structural semantics, syntax, semantic relations, English, Uzbek, comparative linguistics, grammatical structure, word order, head-dependent relation, agglutinative language, analytical language.

Introduction

Word combinations occupy an important position in the syntactic systems of both English and Uzbek. They represent combinations of two or more grammatically connected words that function as a meaningful syntactic unit but do not normally constitute a complete predicative statement. Through word combinations, speakers express relationships between objects, actions, qualities, characteristics, and circumstances. Consequently, the study of word combinations is essential for understanding the relationship between grammar, semantics, and conceptualization.

The structural organization of word combinations is closely related to the typological characteristics of a language. English and Uzbek demonstrate significant differences in their grammatical systems. English is generally characterized by an analytical tendency in which grammatical relationships are frequently expressed through word order, auxiliary elements, prepositions, and other function words. Uzbek, in contrast, is an agglutinative language in which grammatical relationships are extensively expressed through affixes attached to lexical stems.

These typological differences influence the structural organization of word combinations. For example, the English combination *student's book* expresses a possessive relationship through the possessive marker *-'s*, while Uzbek uses a

combination of possessive and case markers: *talabaning kitobi*. Similarly, the English phrase *read a book* expresses an objective relationship primarily through word order, whereas the Uzbek equivalent *kitob o‘qimoq* demonstrates a different syntactic organization in which the object normally precedes the verb.

The semantic structure of word combinations is equally important. The relationship between the components is not purely formal because each combination represents a particular conceptual relationship. For example, *deep knowledge* and *chuqur bilim* contain semantically corresponding adjective-noun relationships. The adjective modifies the conceptual characteristics of the noun, while the noun represents the central semantic element. Thus, structural form and semantic interpretation operate together.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the structural-semantic features of word combinations in English and Uzbek and to identify similarities and differences in their organization. The study focuses on the relationship between structural patterns and semantic relations, including attributive, objective, possessive, and adverbial relations.

1. The Concept of Word Combination

A word combination can be defined as a syntactically organized combination of words in which the components are connected through grammatical and semantic relationships. Unlike a simple sequence of words, a word combination possesses an internal structure in which one component may function as the head and another as its dependent.

For example:

interesting book

read a book

very quickly

student's research

In *interesting book*, the noun *book* functions as the head, while *interesting* is the dependent component. In *read a book*, the verb *read* is the head and *a book* represents the object-related dependent component.

Uzbek demonstrates similar head-dependent relationships:

qiziqarli kitob

kitob o‘qimoq

juda tez

talabaning tadqiqoti

However, the formal realization of these relationships differs considerably from English.

From a structural-semantic perspective, a word combination can therefore be understood as a unity of:

structural organization;

grammatical relationship;

semantic relationship;

conceptual content.

These four dimensions interact in the formation and interpretation of word combinations.

2. Structural Features of English Word Combinations

English word combinations demonstrate relatively stable structural patterns. Because English has comparatively limited morphological inflection, word order plays a significant role in determining grammatical relationships.

One of the most productive patterns is the **adjective + noun** structure:

beautiful house

interesting book

modern technology

deep knowledge

In these combinations, the adjective generally precedes the noun. The noun functions as the head, while the adjective specifies one of its properties.

The corresponding Uzbek structures normally follow the same general order:

chiroyli uy

qiziqarli kitob

zamonaviy texnologiya

chuqur bilim

This demonstrates an important structural similarity between English and Uzbek in attributive combinations.

Another common English structure is **noun + noun**:

language teacher

university student

computer technology

research project

The first noun functions attributively, while the second noun functions as the head. The semantic relationship between the nouns must be interpreted according to context.

For example, *language teacher* does not simply mean “language + teacher”; it denotes a person whose professional activity involves teaching a language.

In Uzbek, corresponding meanings are frequently expressed through possessive constructions:

til o‘qituvchisi

universitet talabasi

kompyuter texnologiyasi

tadqiqot loyihasi

Thus, English frequently employs noun-noun sequences, whereas Uzbek often



makes the semantic relationship more explicit through possessive morphology.

3. Structural Features of Uzbek Word Combinations

Uzbek word combinations demonstrate the characteristic features of an agglutinative language. Grammatical meanings are frequently expressed by adding clearly identifiable affixes to lexical stems.

For example:

talabaning kitobi — the student's book

o‘qituvchining fikri — the teacher's opinion

bolalarga yordam bermoq — to help children

kitobni o‘qimoq — to read the book

The Uzbek possessive construction *talabaning kitobi* contains two grammatical markers: *-ning*, which marks the dependent possessor, and *-i*, which marks possession on the head noun.

The structure can be represented as:

Dependent + Head

talaba-ning kitob-i

In English, the same relationship can be expressed as:

Possessor + Head

student's book

Although the semantic relationship is similar, the grammatical realization differs.

Uzbek also makes extensive use of case markers. For example:

kitobni o‘qimoq — to read the book

do‘stiga aytmoq — to tell his/her friend

maktabda ishlamoq — to work at school

uydan chiqmoq — to leave the house

Case markers contribute directly to the interpretation of grammatical and semantic relations.

4. Semantic Relations in English and Uzbek Word Combinations

The structural organization of a word combination is closely connected with its semantic relationship. Several major types of semantic relationships can be identified.

4.1. Attributive Relations

Attributive relations express a characteristic, quality, quantity, or property of an entity.

Examples in English:

beautiful woman

large building

academic research

three students

Examples in Uzbek:

chiroyli ayol

katta bino

ilmiy tadqiqot

uchta talaba

In both languages, the dependent element provides additional information about the head. However, the morphological realization of number and definiteness may differ.

The combination *three students* contains a numeral modifying a noun. In Uzbek, *uchta talaba* uses the particle/quantitative marker *-ta* in the numeral phrase. This illustrates how similar semantic meanings can be structurally encoded in different ways.

4.2. Objective Relations

Objective relations typically occur between a verb and its object.

English:

read a book

write a letter

learn English

study linguistics

Uzbek:

kitob o‘qimoq

xat yozmoq

ingliz tilini o‘rganmoq

tilshunoslikni o‘rganmoq

The most significant difference concerns word order. English generally follows the **Subject–Verb–Object (SVO)** pattern, whereas Uzbek predominantly follows **Subject–Object–Verb (SOV)**.

Thus:

English:

The student reads a book.

Uzbek:

Talaba kitob o‘qiydi.

The semantic relationship between the verb and object remains essentially the same, but its structural representation differs.

4.3. Possessive Relations

Possessive relations express ownership, association, or belonging.

English:

student's book

teacher's room

company's policy

Uzbek:

talabaning kitobi

o'qituvchining xonasi

kompaniyaning siyosati

The English possessive construction may be marked by *-'s*, while Uzbek typically employs a two-part possessive structure involving *-ning* and a possessive suffix.

This difference demonstrates the interaction between morphology and syntax in the expression of semantic relations.

4.4. Adverbial Relations

Adverbial combinations express manner, degree, place, time, cause, and other circumstantial meanings.

English:

very quickly

extremely carefully

in the morning

at school

Uzbek:

juda tez

nihoyatda ehtiyotkorlik bilan

ertalab

maktabda

The semantic relationship may be similar, but grammatical marking differs. English frequently uses prepositions, while Uzbek often uses case suffixes or postpositional constructions.

5. Word Order as a Structural-Semantic Factor

Word order is one of the most important structural factors distinguishing English and Uzbek.

English relies heavily on relatively fixed word order. For example:

The teacher praised the student.

Changing the position of the nouns may change their grammatical functions:

The student praised the teacher.

The semantic roles of *teacher* and *student* are therefore closely related to their syntactic positions.



Uzbek has comparatively greater flexibility in word order because case markers can identify grammatical relationships:

O‘qituvchi talabani maqtadi.

The object marker *-ni* helps identify *talabani* as the object even if the word order is modified for pragmatic purposes.

Consequently, English tends to rely more strongly on syntactic position, whereas Uzbek can use morphological marking to support the interpretation of syntactic relationships.

6. Head-Dependent Relations

The relationship between the head and dependent components is fundamental to the structure of word combinations in both languages.

In:

modern technology

technology is the head, while *modern* is the dependent.

In Uzbek:

zamonaviy texnologiya

texnologiya is the head and *zamonaviy* is the dependent.

The same conceptual relationship is therefore represented through parallel structures.

However, differences become more apparent in constructions involving grammatical marking.

English:

the student's new book

Uzbek:

talabaning yangi kitobi

Both combinations contain the concepts of possession, qualification, and an entity. However, Uzbek grammatically marks possession on both components, while English uses the possessive marker on the possessor.

7. Structural-Semantic Correspondence

Structural-semantic correspondence refers to the relationship between the formal organization of a word combination and the meaning expressed by that organization.

For example:

English: *deep knowledge*
Uzbek: *chuqur bilim*

The structural correspondence is almost direct:

Adjective + Noun

The semantic correspondence is also close because *deep/chuqur* metaphorically represents a high degree of knowledge.

Another example is:

English: *strong argument*
Uzbek: *kuchli dalil*

Here, the adjective expresses an evaluative conceptual property of the noun. The meaning of *strong* is not physical strength but logical or persuasive effectiveness.

This demonstrates that word combinations may encode conceptual meanings that cannot always be understood through the literal meanings of individual components.

8. Cognitive and Conceptual Aspects

From a cognitive-linguistic perspective, word combinations reflect the way speakers conceptualize experience. The combination of words creates a conceptual relationship between the elements.

For example:

deep knowledge

The adjective *deep* originally describes physical depth, but in combination with *knowledge*, it expresses the conceptual idea of extensive or profound understanding.

Uzbek uses the equivalent:

chuqur bilim

This demonstrates a shared conceptual metaphor in the two languages.

Similarly:

high hopes — katta umidlar

warm relationship — iliq munosabat

cold reception — sovuq kutib olish

strong argument — kuchli dalil

Such combinations illustrate the relationship between linguistic structure and conceptualization. The semantic interpretation of the entire combination may depend on cultural experience, metaphorical mapping, and conventional language use.

9. Comparative Analysis

The comparison of English and Uzbek demonstrates several major similarities and differences.

Feature	**English**	**Uzbek**
Typological tendency	Analytical	Agglutinative
Basic clause order	SVO	SOV
Attributive structure	Usually adjective + noun	Usually adjective + noun
Noun-noun relations	Frequently noun + noun	Often possessive constructions
Possession	*student's book*	*talabaning kitobi*
Object marking	Often dependent on word order	Frequently marked by case suffix
Grammatical relations	Word order, function words	Affixes, word order, postpositions
Prepositions/postpositions	Prepositions are common	Postpositions are common
Morphological marking	Relatively limited	Extensive

Feature	English	Uzbek
Semantic interpretation	Strongly influenced by syntax and lexical context	Strongly influenced by morphology, syntax, and lexical context

The comparison demonstrates that English and Uzbek employ different structural mechanisms while expressing many similar semantic relations.

10. The Interaction of Structure and Meaning

The analysis shows that structure and meaning cannot be considered independently. A structural pattern determines the possible relationships between components, while semantic interpretation provides the conceptual basis for those relationships.

For instance:

language teacher

may be interpreted as “a teacher of language,” whereas:

teacher language

would normally have a different or incomplete interpretation.

Similarly, in Uzbek:

til o‘qituvchisi

clearly expresses the relationship between the subject being taught and the person who teaches it.

Therefore, syntactic structure contributes significantly to semantic interpretation.

The structural-semantic organization of word combinations also depends on lexical compatibility. Certain words naturally combine with specific words because of conventional usage.

For example:

make a decision

heavy rain

strong tea

Their Uzbek equivalents may use different lexical combinations:

qaror qabul qilmoq

kuchli yomg‘ir

achchiq choy

This demonstrates that structural correspondence between languages does not necessarily guarantee complete lexical or semantic correspondence. Translation and comparative analysis must therefore take collocational and conceptual differences into consideration.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis of word combinations in English and Uzbek demonstrates that structural and semantic features are closely interconnected. Both languages employ word combinations as fundamental syntactic structures for

expressing relationships between concepts, objects, actions, qualities, and circumstances. At the same time, the formal realization of these relationships is influenced by the typological characteristics of each language.

English, with its predominantly analytical grammatical organization, relies substantially on word order, prepositions, functional elements, and relatively limited morphological marking. Uzbek, as an agglutinative language, expresses grammatical relationships more extensively through affixes, case markers, possessive forms, and postpositions. These differences are particularly visible in objective, possessive, and noun-noun constructions.

Despite these structural differences, the two languages demonstrate significant semantic similarities. Attributive relations, objective relations, possessive relations, and adverbial relations can be identified in both linguistic systems. This suggests that universal conceptual relationships may receive different formal representations depending on the grammatical structure of a particular language.

The study also demonstrates that word combinations should not be examined exclusively from a formal syntactic perspective. Their semantic and conceptual organization is equally important. Combinations such as *deep knowledge / chuqur bilim* and *strong argument / kuchli dalil* illustrate how linguistic units can reflect shared conceptualizations while maintaining language-specific structural patterns.

Therefore, the comparative structural-semantic investigation of English and Uzbek word combinations provides important insights into the relationship between syntax, morphology, semantics, and conceptualization. Such research is particularly relevant to comparative linguistics, translation studies, foreign-language teaching, cognitive linguistics, and intercultural communication.

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