

## THE CONCEPT OF WORD GROUPS AND THEIR SYSTEMIC-LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

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### **Abstract**

This article presents a systemic-linguistic analysis of word groups and their structural, semantic, and morphological characteristics in Uzbek and English. Word groups are examined as intermediate linguistic units situated between the word and the sentence, playing a crucial role in the formation of syntactic structure. The study is based on semantic, morphological, and syntactic criteria for classifying parts of speech and emphasizes the importance of valency theory in explaining combinability patterns. Special attention is given to typological differences between Uzbek as an agglutinative language and English as an analytic language. Through comparative analysis, the article identifies similarities and distinctions in the formation and grammatical realization of noun, verb, adjective, and adverb groups. The findings highlight the theoretical and practical significance of systemic-linguistic analysis for translation studies and foreign language teaching.

### **Keywords**

word groups, systemic linguistics, valency, parts of speech, syntactic structure, agglutinative language, analytic language, Uzbek language, English language, comparative linguistics.

## ПОНЯТИЕ СЛОВСОЧЕТАНИЙ И ИХ СИСТЕМНО-ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКАЯ ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКА

### **Аннотация**

В данной статье рассматривается системно-лингвистический анализ словосочетаний и их структурных, семантических и морфологических особенностей на материале узбекского и английского языков. Словосочетания исследуются как промежуточные языковые единицы между словом и предложением, играющие важную роль в формировании синтаксической структуры. Исследование основано на семантическом, морфологическом и синтаксическом критериях классификации частей речи, а также подчеркивает значение теории валентности в объяснении сочетаемости слов. Особое внимание уделяется типологическим различиям между узбекским

языком как агглютинативным и английским языком как аналитическим. В результате сравнительного анализа выявлены сходства и различия в формировании и грамматической реализации именных, глагольных, адъективных и наречных групп. Полученные результаты имеют теоретическое и практическое значение для переводоведения и методики преподавания иностранных языков.

**Ключевые слова**

словосочетания, системная лингвистика, валентность, части речи, синтаксическая структура, агглютинативный язык, аналитический язык, узбекский язык, английский язык, сопоставительная лингвистика.

**SO'Z GURUHLARI TUSHUNCHASI VA ULARNING TIZIMLI-LISONIY TAVSIFI**

**Annotatsiya**

Mazkur maqolada so'z guruhlarining tizimli-lisoniy tahlili hamda ularning strukturaviy, semantik va morfologik xususiyatlari o'zbek va ingliz tillari misolida yoritiladi. So'z guruhleri so'z va gap o'rtasidagi oraliq birlik sifatida ko'rib chiqilib, gapning sintaktik tuzilishini shakllantirishdagi o'rni tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot so'z turkumlarini aniqlashning semantik, morfologik va sintaktik mezonlariga asoslanadi hamda valentlik nazariyasining birikuvchanlikni izohlashdagi ahamiyatiga alohida e'tibor qaratadi. O'zbek tilining agglutinativ, ingliz tilining esa analitik tuzilishga egaligi ularning so'z guruhleri tizimidagi farqlarni belgilab berishi qiyosiy tahlil asosida ko'rsatib beriladi. Maqola natijalari tarjimashunoslik va chet tilini o'qitish jarayonida muhim nazariy va amaliy ahamiyatga ega.

**Kalit so'zlar**

so'z guruhleri, tizimli-lisoniy tahlil, valentlik, so'z turkumlari, sintaktik tuzilma, agglutinativ til, analitik til, o'zbek tili, ingliz tili, qiyosiy tilshunoslik.

Introduction. The study of word groups occupies a central position in modern linguistic theory, as it reveals the intermediate structural level between the word and the sentence. While the word functions as the primary nominative unit of language and the sentence serves as the main communicative unit, word groups represent a crucial syntactic and semantic link that ensures coherence within the grammatical system. Through word groups, lexical items enter into structured relations, forming stable patterns that shape sentence architecture. Therefore, the systemic-linguistic investigation of word groups contributes significantly to understanding how grammatical meaning is organized and realized in different

languages. In contemporary linguistics, word groups are analyzed not only from a structural perspective but also through semantic, morphological, and functional approaches. The development of valency theory, particularly in the works of Lucien Tesnière, has demonstrated that lexical units possess combinatory potential that determines the structure of syntactic constructions. Later, scholars such as Charles J. Fillmore expanded this perspective by introducing semantic roles and case grammar, further clarifying the relationship between lexical meaning and syntactic realization. These theoretical frameworks provide a foundation for analyzing how word groups function within the broader linguistic system. A comparative analysis of word groups in Uzbek and English is particularly relevant due to the typological differences between the two languages. Uzbek belongs to the agglutinative language type, where grammatical relations are primarily expressed through affixation. English, in contrast, is predominantly analytic, relying heavily on word order and auxiliary elements to convey syntactic relations. These structural differences influence the formation, classification, and valency realization of word groups, making comparative research both theoretically valuable and practically significant. Moreover, the systemic-linguistic description of word groups is essential for applied fields such as translation studies, language teaching, and lexicography. Understanding how nouns, verbs, adjectives, and other parts of speech interact within word groups allows for more accurate translation equivalents and more effective pedagogical strategies. In bilingual contexts, especially between structurally different languages such as Uzbek and English, the study of word groups helps to identify parallel and divergent grammatical mechanisms. The present article aims to provide a comprehensive systemic-linguistic analysis of word groups, focusing on their semantic, morphological, and syntactic characteristics. Special attention is given to the concept of valency and its role in shaping syntactic structures in Uzbek and English. By examining both theoretical foundations and practical examples, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of word group organization and its significance within the grammatical system of language.

Review of Related Literature. The study of word groups and parts of speech has a long tradition in linguistic scholarship. Early grammatical classifications can be traced back to Aristotle, who distinguished basic word categories, laying the foundation for later syntactic theory. Classical grammar was further developed by Apollonius Dyscolus, whose works influenced subsequent European grammatical traditions. A major shift in the analysis of word groups occurred with the development of valency theory by Lucien Tesnière. In his structural syntax, the verb was treated as the central organizing element of the sentence, determining the

number and type of its dependents. This approach significantly advanced the systemic understanding of syntactic relations. Later, Charles J. Fillmore introduced Case Grammar, emphasizing the semantic roles associated with verb valency, thereby linking syntactic structure with semantic interpretation. In English linguistics, comprehensive descriptions of word classes and phrase structure were provided by Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greenbaum, who analyzed grammatical patterns based on structural and functional criteria. Similarly, Otto Jespersen viewed parts of speech as functional categories dependent on usage rather than rigid formal classes. In Uzbek linguistics, the systemic description of parts of speech and word combinations has been developed by scholars such as Sh. Rahmatullayev and G'. Abdurahmonov, who emphasized semantic, morphological, and syntactic criteria in classification. Their works highlight the agglutinative nature of Uzbek and the role of affixation in expressing grammatical relations. Overall, previous research demonstrates that word groups function as intermediate syntactic units shaped by valency and structural principles. However, comparative systemic-linguistic analysis of Uzbek and English word groups remains an important area for further investigation, particularly in the context of translation and language teaching.

**Research Methodology.** This study is based on a systemic-linguistic and comparative approach to the analysis of word groups in Uzbek and English. The research applies three main criteria – semantic, morphological, and syntactic – in order to identify and classify word groups and parts of speech in both languages. The primary method employed is comparative analysis, which allows for the identification of similarities and differences in structural organization, valency realization, and grammatical expression between Uzbek (an agglutinative language) and English (an analytic language). In addition, elements of valency analysis are used to examine the combinability potential of lexical units, particularly verbs, adjectives, and nouns. Descriptive and analytical methods are also applied to interpret theoretical sources and linguistic examples. The material for analysis consists of illustrative examples from modern Uzbek and English usage, selected to demonstrate structural patterns and typological distinctions. This methodological framework ensures a consistent and objective examination of word groups within a systemic-linguistic perspective.

**Analysis and Results.** The analysis demonstrates that word groups in both Uzbek and English function as intermediate syntactic units structured around a central (head) element. In both languages, nouns and verbs serve as core components that determine the combinability and grammatical structure of dependent elements. The study confirms that valency plays a decisive role in shaping syntactic patterns,

particularly in verb-centered constructions. However, the results reveal significant typological differences in the realization of valency. In Uzbek, grammatical relations within word groups are primarily expressed through affixation, including case markers and verbal suffixes. In contrast, English relies largely on fixed word order and auxiliary elements such as prepositions and auxiliary verbs. These structural differences influence the formation and interpretation of noun, verb, adjective, and adverb groups. The comparative analysis shows that despite these formal differences, both languages share common systemic principles: hierarchical organization, head-dependent relations, and semantic compatibility as the basis of word combination. The findings highlight the importance of a systemic-linguistic approach for understanding grammatical structure and improving translation and language teaching practices. The fundamental unit of language is the word, which in turn enters into various grammatical and semantic relations. Words combine with one another according to meaning and function, forming word combinations. Word groups are based on the grammatical structure of such combinations. They occupy an important place in the syntactic system of a language, as they constitute the structural foundation of sentences. In linguistics, word groups are classified in different ways. In traditional grammar, they are divided into two main types: subordinate (headed) groups and coordinate (coordinative) groups. In subordinate groups, the central word (for example, a verb or a noun) determines the grammatical form of the dependent word: *read a book*, *beautiful girl*, *kitob o'qimoq*, *yaxshi inson*. The formation of word groups is primarily based on combinability (valency). Each word possesses certain linguistic potential and can combine with other words only when they are grammatically and semantically compatible. Therefore, valency analysis plays a crucial role in the study of word groups. Linguists such as A. Nurmonov, G'. Abdurahmonov, Lucien Tesnière, Charles J. Fillmore, and V. Gak have emphasized the semantic and structural foundations of word groups. According to them, word groups are linguistic units that are smaller than sentences but larger than individual words. Thus, they ensure the formation of grammatical relations and semantic structures within the language system. For example, in English there are structural patterns such as adjective + noun (*a big house*), verb + noun (*read a book*), and noun + prepositional phrase (*the roof of the house*). In Uzbek, their equivalents are expressed as *katta uy*, *kitob o'qimoq*, *uy tomi*. These similarities are explained through valency, since in both languages the combinability of the central (head) word determines the structure of the word group. Language is a complex hierarchical system in which each unit interacts with others through internal and external relations. The word, as the primary nominative unit of language, occupies a central position in this system.

Words differ in meaning, form, and function, and when grammatically integrated, they form parts of speech or word groups. The identification of parts of speech, their position in the system, and their grammatical features has long been a central issue in linguistics. Each language classifies words into categories based on its internal grammatical principles. Therefore, a comparative study of word groups in Uzbek and English is of significant theoretical and practical importance. The earliest scientific views on parts of speech originate from ancient Greek linguistics. Aristotle (4th century BCE) divided words into three categories: noun, verb, and conjunction. Later, Apollonius Dyscolus expanded this classification to eight categories. This traditional classification has influenced many modern grammars. Among Uzbek linguists who studied parts of speech are A. G'ulomov, G'. Abdurahmonov, Sh. Rahmatullayev, N. Mahmudov, and M. Mirtojiev, Sh. Rahmatullayev defines parts of speech as "a grammatical class determined by the general grammatical meaning of a word, its morphological form, and its syntactic function" (Rahmatullayev, 1995, p. 32). In English linguistics, scholars such as Charles C. Fries, Otto Jespersen, Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, and David Crystal classified parts of speech based on semantic and syntactic approaches. As Jespersen (1924) noted, "The parts of speech are not rigid categories but flexible functional classes depending on usage." Three main criteria are applied in the study of parts of speech: Semantic criterion – the general grammatical meaning of the word (e.g., objecthood, action, quality, quantity, etc.); Morphological criterion – the word's inflectional characteristics (e.g., case, tense, person-number markers); Syntactic criterion – the word's function in the sentence (e.g., subject, predicate, attribute, adverbial modifier). The interaction of these three criteria enables a systemic-linguistic analysis of word groups. Below is a brief overview of word groups in Uzbek and English. Nouns primarily denote objects: people, places, things, and abstract concepts. In Uzbek, nouns change according to possession, case, and number: *kitob-kitoblar-kitobning; daraxt-daraxtga-daraxtdan*. In English, noun inflection is relatively simpler: plurality is expressed by *-s/-es*, and possession by *'s*: *book-books-book's*. Example: Uzbek: *Bolalar bog'da o'ynayapti*. English: *Children are playing in the garden*. In this example, the valency possibilities of the nouns *bolalar / children* differ: in English, the connection between noun and verb requires an auxiliary verb (*are playing*), whereas in Uzbek the predicate is formed through verbal suffixation (*o'ynayapti*). The verb expresses action, state, or process. It is considered the most active center of valency, as it attracts other elements and determines syntactic structure. For example, in Uzbek the verb *ko'rmoq* ("to see") has two valency positions: whom and what to see. In English, this is expressed as *to see somebody/something*. Sh.

Rahmatullayev describes the verb as “the part of speech with the greatest number of grammatical forms and the central axis of the sentence” (Rahmatullayev, 2001, p. 45). Quirk and Greenbaum (1985) define the verb as “the core of the predicate structure that determines the number and type of complements.” Example: Uzbek: U kitob o‘qiyapti. English: He is reading a book. Here, o‘qimoq / read has two valency positions (subject – object). The valency of the verb determines the syntactic structure of the sentence. Adjectives denote qualities of objects and are syntactically connected with nouns, performing attributive functions: yaxshi odam – a good man; katta uy – a big house. In Uzbek, degrees of comparison are expressed as simple, comparative, and superlative forms (katta–kattaroq–eng katta). In English, they are expressed as positive–comparative–superlative (big–bigger–the biggest). The valency of adjectives is limited, typically connecting with a noun, though some adjectives combine with verbs (u charchagan – he is tired). Adverbs express the manner, place, time, or degree of an action: tez yurdi – walked quickly; kecha keldi – came yesterday. In English, adverbs are often formed by adding -ly to adjectives (quick–quickly). In Uzbek, morphological formation varies (-cha, -ona, -lab, etc.).

When combined with verbs, adverbs intensify or specify the action: U sekin gapirdi. / He spoke slowly. These word groups perform auxiliary and connective functions. In English, prepositions (in, on, at, from, to) provide syntactic linkage, whereas in Uzbek their functions are often expressed through case suffixes: in the room – xonada; from the city – shahardan. Because Uzbek has an agglutinative structure, grammatical relations are primarily expressed through morphemes. English, being an analytic language, relies more on auxiliary words such as prepositions and conjunctions. A systemic-linguistic study of parts of speech reveals their valency potential. The valency of verbs, adjectives, and adverbs depends on their semantic structure. For example: Uzbek: O‘qituvchi bolaga kitob berdi. (“Ber” – three valencies: who – what – to whom) English: The teacher gave the child a book. (“Give” – three valencies: subject – object – indirect object) Although the valency structure of the verbs is parallel, their grammatical expression differs: in Uzbek through case marking, in English through word order. Word groups constitute the core layer of the lexical and grammatical system of language as a set of interrelated and functional units. Although their semantic, morphological, and syntactic features may vary from language to language, general linguistic principles remain consistent: nominative units (nouns, adjectives) and predicative units (verbs) occupy central positions.

The primary difference between Uzbek and English word group systems lies in their morphological formation and syntactic linking mechanisms. Uzbek, being agglutinative, expresses valency through affixation, whereas English, as an analytic

language, expresses it largely through word order and auxiliary elements. Thus, a systemic-linguistic analysis of word groups provides a solid theoretical foundation for understanding grammatical structure and enhances effectiveness in translation and language teaching.

**Conclusion and Recommendations.** The study confirms that word groups function as essential structural units within the linguistic system, positioned between the word and the sentence. Their formation is governed by semantic compatibility, morphological marking, and syntactic relations, with valency serving as a central organizing principle. The comparative analysis of Uzbek and English demonstrates that, although both languages share universal systemic features such as head-dependent structure and hierarchical organization, they differ significantly in the grammatical realization of these relations. Uzbek expresses syntactic connections mainly through affixation, while English relies primarily on word order and auxiliary elements. The findings suggest that a systemic-linguistic approach is effective for revealing both universal and language-specific characteristics of word groups. It is recommended that future research expand the comparative scope by incorporating corpus-based data and discourse-level analysis. Additionally, the results of this study can be applied in translation practice, bilingual lexicography, and foreign language teaching, particularly in highlighting typological contrasts between agglutinative and analytic languages.

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