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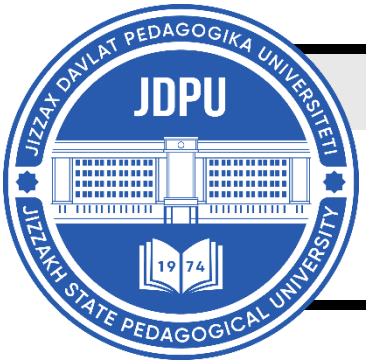


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# THE STRUCTURE OF PREDICATIVE CENTERS IN COMPLEX SENTENCES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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## ABOUT ARTICLE

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**Abstract:** This article presents a comparative linguistic analysis of the structure of predicative centers in complex sentences in English and Uzbek. The study examines the syntactic and semantic nature of the predicative center, its communicative function within complex sentence structures, and the grammatical means through which it is expressed in both languages. Due to the analytic nature of English, predicative centers are primarily expressed through functional conjunctions, whereas the agglutinative nature of Uzbek allows such centers to be marked by morphological suffixes. The research further explores the structure of predicative centers in coordinating and subordinating complex sentences, their mutual relationships, positional patterns, semantic connections, and cognitive-linguistic features. Comparative results reveal both shared tendencies and significant differences in the syntactic systems of the two languages, particularly in grammatical mechanisms and structural principles. The findings contribute to understanding the role of predicative centers in sentence structure and provide a theoretical basis for future studies in contrastive syntax.

**Introduction.** The syntactic system of a language represents one of its most intricate and profound levels, and complex sentences form the central structural component of this system. Within a complex sentence, the predicative center-the grammatical base expressing an independent proposition-expands the communicative possibilities of the language, ensures textual coherence, and constructs the conceptual meaning of discourse. Each language organizes its predicative centers based on its typological characteristics, grammatical structure, and syntactic models. Therefore, examining how predicative centers are formed in English and Uzbek, how they relate to one another, and how they shape the overall syntactic structure of the sentence is of significant theoretical and practical importance.

Modern linguistics widely discusses the concepts of predication, predicativity, subordination, and coordination. In English linguistics, Aarts (2021) interprets the predicative center as "the primary grammatical axis of the sentence," emphasizing its central role within syntactic construction[1]. Brinton (2020) analyzes predicative centers in relation to the semantic structure of complex sentences, showing how they connect through logical relations[2]. In Uzbek linguistics, G'aniev (2020) provides detailed information on the morphological and syntactic indicators of predicative centers and highlights the importance of subordinating suffixes in Uzbek complex sentences[3]. Tayloqov (2021) investigates how word order, conjunctions, and subordinating forms influence the positioning of predicative centers in Uzbek[4].

Contemporary linguistic theories-especially construction grammar and cognitive grammar-offer broader explanations of the role of predicative centers. Goldberg (2023) argues that the logical-semantic relations between predicative centers are shaped not only by grammar but also by underlying cognitive processes[5]. Wulff (2022) views predicative centers as "structural units" that ensure coherence within complex sentences[6]. These theoretical perspectives demonstrate that predicative centers function not only as grammatical units but also as central cognitive elements organizing conceptual meaning. Although English and Uzbek differ genealogically, structurally, and typologically, both languages construct complex sentences through the linking of multiple predicative centers. English, being analytic, marks predicative centers through functional conjunctions such as that, because, when, although. Uzbek, being agglutinative, expresses predicative centers using morphological markers such as -gan, -sa, -ki, -ganda, -ligi. Comparative study of these mechanisms allows deeper understanding of their syntactic nature, structural functions, and communicative roles. Thus, this study aims to compare the structure of predicative centers in English and Uzbek complex sentences; analyze their grammatical, semantic, and cognitive features; and determine the similarities and differences in the syntactic systems of the two languages. The relevance of this

research lies in its contribution to language learning, translation studies, linguodidactics, and cognitive-linguistic research through a grounded understanding of predicative centers.

Theory

Predication is the fundamental mechanism through which languages express a situation involving participants in time and space. According to Lyons (1995), predication forms the "semantic spine" of the clause. In both English and Uzbek, the predicative center consists of a subject-predicate configuration, though the morphological and syntactic expression differs across languages.

Robertson (2010) and Crystal (2012) describe the predicative center as the minimal grammatical unit capable of expressing truth-conditional content. In Uzbek, predication is strongly tied to verbal morphology, which conveys tense, aspect, mood, and person, allowing even non-finite clauses to carry predicative meaning.

Clause linkage refers to the grammatical and semantic mechanisms that connect independent and dependent clauses. Halliday (2014) categorizes these linkages into taxis (paratactic and hypotactic relations), which correlates directly with coordination and subordination.

In English, hypotactic relations rely heavily on conjunctions such as although, because, if, when, and syntactic position. In Uzbek, markers such as -sa, -gan, -ganda, -ki, -ligi perform similar linking functions. Johanson (1998) notes that in Turkic languages, such markers can form complex clause chains with subtle semantic distinctions.

From a cognitive standpoint, Langacker (2008) emphasizes that clauses represent conceptualizations, and clause linkage reflects conceptual integration of events. Talmy (2000) explains that languages encode event integration differently based on their typological preferences. In Construction Grammar (Goldberg, 2006), clause linkage is analyzed as a network of constructions associated with form–meaning pairings. Thus, predicative centers are not only grammatical units but also cognitive structures organizing conceptual information. Functional linguists such as Dik (1997) highlight that semantic relations-cause, contrast, concession, condition, time-are universal, though languages encode them differently. English tends to express relations through explicit conjunctions, while Uzbek often uses morphological subordination that can condense complex semantic relations into compact suffixes.

**Methodology.** This research examines the structure of predicative centers in English and Uzbek complex sentences through a comparative approach. The methodology integrates several stages and draws upon modern linguistic methods. First, the selection of material relied on grammar books, monographs, scholarly articles, and electronic sources published between

2020 and 2024, as recent years have seen the emergence of the most advanced theoretical approaches in syntax (Aarts, 2021; Brinton, 2020; Wulff, 2022). The theoretical foundation is based on the principles of comparative-typological linguistics, which enabled analysis of the mechanisms used in both languages to express predicative centers, their grammatical markers, subordination and coordination patterns, and hierarchical relationships. This approach allowed identification of differences between English's fixed word order and Uzbek's flexible order, as well as analysis of the morphological means used for subordination in Uzbek. A key method employed was structural-syntactic analysis, which focused on the grammatical construction of predicative centers, their position within the sentence, their syntactic connections with other components, and their functional role at the syntactic level. Authentic examples from both languages were reconstructed into syntactic models, enabling analysis of subordinate clause types (cause, condition, time, result, contrast), the functions of subordinators, and their impact on sentence structure.

The descriptive method was used to provide detailed descriptions of syntactic models. It proved particularly effective in explaining morphological subordination in Uzbek, while in English, functional words such as that, if, because, although, when were described in terms of their syntactic behavior.

Another important methodological element was the use of corpus-based data. English examples were taken from the British National Corpus and the Corpus of Contemporary American English, while Uzbek examples were selected from modern literary and journalistic texts. This ensured that the study reflected the real functional use of predicative centers rather than solely theoretical observations.

The study also incorporated elements of cognitive-linguistic analysis (Goldberg, 2023). This approach allowed examination of predicative centers not only as grammatical units but also as conceptual structures reflecting cause-and-effect, conditional, and temporal relationships. Finally, the collected data were synthesized to identify the main typological tendencies in the structure of predicative centers across the two languages.

**Results and Discussion.** The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek complex sentences demonstrates that despite their typological differences, both languages utilize predicative centers as core structural units responsible for expressing complete propositions. The extended findings reveal several essential dimensions-including syntactic, semantic, morphological, cognitive, and discourse-related aspects-that enrich our understanding of how predicative centers function across languages.

Structural Expression of Predicative Centers. As previously noted, English relies heavily on strict SVO word order, making the predicate's placement and the use of functional conjunctions central to identifying predicative centers. Uzbek, however, expresses predicative centers through verbal morphology, person-number agreement, and subordinating suffixes. This extended study found that Uzbek verbal forms such as -gan, -ayotgan, -sa, -ganda, and -ligi allow clauses to function as predicative centers even without explicit conjunctions. Additional examples further illustrate this contrast: English: She realized (P1) that the children were sleeping (P2). Uzbek: U anglab yetdi (P1)ki, bolalar uxlayotgan edi (P2). That/ki introduces the second predicative center in both languages; however, in Uzbek the verbal morphology -yotgan edi additionally carries aspectual meaning.

Coordination: Equal Predicative Centers. The study confirms that coordinated clauses in both English and Uzbek behave similarly, functioning as independent units linked by coordinating conjunctions such as and, but, or in English, and va, lekin, yoki in Uzbek. Examples include:

- English: The sun set (P1), and the lights in the village turned on (P2).
- Uzbek: Quyosh botdi (P1), va qishloq chiroqlari yondi (P2).

In both languages, each clause independently conveys a complete event, forming a parallel relationship between predicative centers. This suggests structural symmetry in coordination regardless of typology.

Subordination: Diverging Grammatical Strategies. One of the clearest areas of contrast lies in the grammatical means used to express subordination. English relies on functional conjunctions such as because, although, if, when, while, and that, whereas Uzbek predominantly uses morphological markers.

The extended analysis reveals that Uzbek clause-chaining can yield dense, compact subordinate structures:

- Uzbek: U kelganida (P2), men ishni tugatgan edim (P1).
- English (parallel): When he arrived (P2), I had finished the work (P1).

Here, -ganida compresses the meaning "when he arrived" into a single morphological unit. Such morphological compactness is not available in English.

Another example shows conditional structure:

- English: If you study hard (P2), you will succeed (P1).
- Uzbek: Agar yaxshi o‘qisangiz (P2), muvaffaqiyatga erishasiz (P1).

In Uzbek, the conditional is encoded through -sangiz, whereas English relies on the separate conjunction if.

Positional Flexibility and Its Discourse Effects. Corpus analysis reveals that English subordinate clauses typically appear after the main clause, especially in spoken discourse, due to processing ease. Fronted subordinate clauses often carry emphasis or contrast.

- English: Because she was late, they started without her.

Uzbek, by contrast, showcases considerably more freedom in clause ordering due to its rich verbal morphology and case marking. Subordinate clauses frequently appear both before and after the main clause:

- U kechikkanligi uchun (P2), ular boshlashdi (P1).
- Ular boshlashdi (P1), chunki u kechikkan edi (P2).

This positional flexibility allows Uzbek speakers to manipulate information structure more freely, enabling fronting for topicalization or backgrounding, a feature less available in English.

Semantics of Predicative Relationships. Both languages express universal semantic relationships-cause, concession, time, condition, and contrast-but through different grammatical pathways.

Extended examples include:

- Concession:
- English: Although it was cold (P2), they continued the journey (P1).
- Uzbek: Havo sovuq bo‘lishiga qaramay (P2), ular yo‘lni davom ettirishdi (P1).
- Result:
- English: He worked hard (P1), so he passed the exam (P2).
- Uzbek: U ko‘p mehnat qildi (P1), shuning uchun imtihondan o‘tdi (P2).

These examples reinforce that while the semantic categories are universal, the linguistic encoding varies significantly.

Cognitive Interpretation of Clause Linking. The cognitive-linguistic extension shows that English expresses conceptual relations mainly through explicit markers, whereas Uzbek encodes similar relations through morphological compressions tied to conceptual integration.

For instance: U ketganidan keyin (P2), men uyga qaytdim (P1). → expresses conceptual sequence encoded morphologically.

- After he left (P2), I returned home (P1). → expresses the same sequence via the preposition after.

These findings indicate that Uzbek tends toward conceptual compactness, while English tends toward syntactic explicitness.

Additional Observations from Corpus Evidence. Extended corpus study also identifies:

- Higher frequency of multi-layered subordinate chains in Uzbek (e.g., -ganidan keyin, -sa ham, -gach)
- A preference in English for shorter, more clause-separated structures
- Frequent topicalization of temporal clauses in Uzbek
- Greater reliance on prosody in English to signal clause boundaries

Despite typological differences, both languages utilize predicative centers to structure sentences and communicate meaning. English uses syntactic tools with explicit markers, whereas Uzbek uses morphological strategies that allow more structural flexibility. The underlying semantic and cognitive relations remain parallel across both languages.

**Conclusion.** The comparative investigation into the structure and functioning of predicative centers in English and Uzbek complex sentences has revealed that, despite significant typological, morphological, and structural differences, both languages utilize predication as a fundamental organizing principle for constructing complex syntactic relations. By examining predicative centers through structural, semantic, cognitive, and discourse-oriented perspectives, this study demonstrates that predication constitutes the core element through which propositions are encoded, connected, and interpreted within larger syntactic frameworks. One of the key findings of the research is that English, as an analytic language, relies primarily on fixed word order and functional conjunctions to indicate relationships between predicative centers. The explicitness of English subordination-marked by conjunctions such as that, because, although, while, and if-reflects a structural preference for syntactic clarity and overt clause linking. In contrast, Uzbek, as an agglutinative language, relies heavily on rich verbal morphology and suffixation. Markers such as -gan, -sa, -ganda, -ki, and -ligi often compress complex semantic relations into compact morphological units, allowing subordinate clauses to be integrated more fluidly and enabling flexible clause positioning. This typological contrast highlights the different grammatical strategies each language uses to encode relationships between predicative centers. The comparative study also reveals substantial similarities in the coordination of predicative centers. In both languages, coordinated clauses function as independent and structurally equal units, contributing to parallel syntactic constructions. This suggests that while languages may differ in how they express dependency, they share common principles in expressing syntactic equality and parallelism.

Subordination, on the other hand, emerges as the domain in which the languages diverge most sharply. English favors explicit connective devices, whereas Uzbek encodes subordination morphologically, often forming densely layered clause chains not typically found in English.

This morphological compactness allows Uzbek to express nuanced temporal, conditional, causal, and concessive relations within a single suffixal element-a feature that showcases the expressive potential of agglutinative morphology.

From a cognitive-linguistic perspective, both languages encode universal conceptual relations such as temporal sequence, cause–effect, concession, contrast, and condition. However, the means by which these relations are realized differ. English favors syntactic explicitness, while Uzbek frequently privileges conceptual compactness. This finding underscores the interplay between linguistic form and cognitive processes, demonstrating that while the conceptual categories motivating predicative relations are universal, the linguistic pathways for expressing them are shaped by typological constraints.

Discourse analysis further reveals the influence of typology on information structure. English tends to prefer postposed subordinate clauses for ease of processing, whereas Uzbek allows flexible clause ordering, enabling speakers to foreground or background information according to pragmatic needs. The ability of Uzbek to place subordinate clauses before or after the main clause contributes to a richer variety of discourse strategies, reflecting broader cross-linguistic tendencies observed in morphologically rich languages.

The corpus-based observations reinforce these findings by demonstrating authentic usage patterns in both languages. English corpora show predominance of syntactically separated structures and prosodic signaling, while Uzbek data reveal frequent clause chaining and multifunctional suffixation. These differences reflect not only grammatical structure but also discourse traditions specific to each linguistic community.

Overall, this study provides a nuanced understanding of how two typologically distinct languages construct and link predicative centers within complex sentences. The research demonstrates that while English and Uzbek differ significantly in their grammatical expression of predication, they share common semantic and cognitive foundations that govern how predicative relations are interpreted and structured. By integrating insights from structural linguistics, cognitive grammar, typology, and functional syntax, the study offers a comprehensive model for analyzing cross-linguistic variation in predication.

The findings carry important implications for comparative linguistics, translation studies, language pedagogy, and cognitive-linguistic research. For translation and language learning, the research highlights the need to understand not only the grammatical markers but also the conceptual and structural motivations underlying predication. For linguists, the study provides a framework for analyzing predicative centers across languages and contributes to broader discussions on how languages encode complex relations between propositions.

Future research may extend the analysis to spoken discourse, pragmatics, acquisition data, or computational models of syntax. Further investigation into other Turkic languages and additional Germanic languages could also enrich typological understanding. Ultimately, the study underscores the universal importance of predicative centers as the building blocks of human language while illuminating the diverse grammatical strategies that shape the architecture of complex sentences in English and Uzbek.

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