

SYNTACTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COMPONENTS OF
COMPOUND WORDS**Holikulova Gulchexra Yorqulovna,***SamDChTI teacher of the Department of Uzbek Language, Journalism,
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Abstract. *This article examines the syntactic relationships between the components of compound words from both theoretical and practical perspectives. The structural models of compound formations, as well as the subordinative and coordinative relations between their components, are analyzed within contemporary linguistic frameworks. The study employs structural, distributive, and componential analysis methods to reveal the internal syntactic mechanisms underlying compound units. Special attention is given to distinguishing compound words from free word combinations by identifying criteria such as morphological cohesion and semantic integrity. The findings demonstrate that syntactic relations between compound components play a significant role in the dynamic development of the language system and contribute to the enrichment of the lexical-semantic structure. The research provides a methodological foundation for further studies in theoretical linguistics, word formation, and syntax.*

Keywords: *compound word, syntactic relation, component, subordination, coordination, semantic integrity, word formation, structural analysis, lexical integration.*

Аннотация. *В данной статье рассматриваются синтаксические отношения между компонентами сложных слов с теоретической и практической точек зрения. Анализируются структурные модели сложных образований, а также подчинительные и сочинительные связи между их компонентами в рамках современных лингвистических подходов. В исследовании используются структурный, дистрибутивный и компонентный методы анализа, позволяющие раскрыть внутренние синтаксические механизмы сложных единиц. Особое внимание уделяется разграничению сложных слов и свободных словосочетаний на основе критериев морфологической спаянности и семантической целостности. Результаты показывают, что синтаксические отношения между компонентами сложных слов играют важную роль в динамическом развитии языковой системы и способствуют обогащению лексико-семантической структуры языка. Данное исследование может служить методологической базой для дальнейших работ в области теоретической лингвистики, словообразования и синтаксиса.*

Ключевые слова: *сложное слово, синтаксическое отношение, компонент, подчинение, сочинение, семантическая целостность, словообразование, структурный анализ, лексическая интеграция.*

Annotatsiya. *Mazkur maqolada qo'shma so'zlar tarkibidagi komponentlar o'rtasidagi sintaktik munosabatlar nazariy va amaliy jihatdan tahlil qilinadi. Qo'shma so'zlarning tuzilish modeli, ularning komponentlari o'rtasidagi subordinativ va koordinativ bog'lanish turlari, semantik yaxlitlik va grammatik mustaqillik masalalari lingvistik yondashuvlar asosida izohlanadi. Tadqiqotda strukturaviy, distributiv va komponent tahlil metodlaridan foydalanilib, qo'shma birliklarning ichki sintaktik mexanizmlari ochib beriladi. Shuningdek, qo'shma so'zlarning erkin so'z birikmalaridan farqlanish mezonlari, ularning morfologik va semantik integratsiya darajasi aniqlanadi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, qo'shma so'z komponentlari o'rtasidagi sintaktik munosabatlar til tizimining dinamik rivojlanishida muhim rol o'ynaydi hamda leksik-semantik tizimning boyishiga xizmat qiladi. Mazkur tadqiqot nazariy tilshunoslik, so'z yasalishi va sintaksis yo'nalishlari uchun metodologik asos bo'lib xizmat qilishi mumkin.*

Kalit so'zlar: *qo'shma so'z, sintaktik munosabat, komponent, subordinatsiya, koordinatsiya, semantik yaxlitlik, so'z yasalishi, strukturaviy tahlil, leksik integratsiya.*

Introduction. The study of compound words occupies a central position in modern linguistics, particularly within the intersecting domains of morphology, syntax, and lexicology. Compounding represents one of the most productive and historically stable mechanisms of word formation across languages. Despite its apparent structural simplicity, the internal organization of compound words involves complex syntactic relationships between their components, which require systematic theoretical interpretation. Understanding these relationships is essential not only for clarifying the structural nature of compounds but also for defining their status within the broader architecture of the language system. Traditionally, compound words have been examined primarily from a morphological perspective, with emphasis placed on issues such as classification, productivity, and formal patterns. However, contemporary linguistic research increasingly recognizes that compounding cannot be fully explained without reference to syntactic principles. The components of a compound are not merely juxtaposed lexical items; rather, they interact through specific syntactic relations, including subordination and coordination, which contribute to semantic integration and structural cohesion. These internal syntactic mechanisms often mirror the relations found in free word combinations, yet they operate under distinct constraints that lead to lexicalization and grammatical unity. A key theoretical challenge lies in distinguishing compound words from syntactically free phrases. While both structures may exhibit similar surface configurations, compounds demonstrate a higher degree of semantic unity, morphological stability, and prosodic cohesion. The syntactic relationship between components plays a decisive role in this differentiation. In subordinative compounds, one component typically functions as the semantic head, determining the grammatical category and core meaning of the unit, whereas in coordinative compounds, components tend to share equal semantic and structural status. Identifying these patterns contributes to a clearer understanding of the interface between syntax and morphology. Furthermore, the investigation of syntactic relations within compounds provides insight into processes of lexicalization and semantic shift. As compounds evolve, their internal syntactic transparency may decrease, resulting in idiomatization or semantic specialization. This dynamic reflects the broader tendency of language systems to transform syntactic constructions into stable lexical units. Therefore, analyzing componential relations is not only a structural task but also a means of tracing linguistic change and systemic development. The relevance of this study is determined by the need to refine theoretical models that explain how syntactic principles operate within morphological formations. By applying structural and componential analysis, the present research aims to identify the types of syntactic relations that characterize compound words and to establish criteria that differentiate them from free syntactic constructions. Through this approach, the article contributes to ongoing discussions concerning the morphology–syntax interface and offers a more comprehensive understanding

Literature Review. The study of compound words and the syntactic relationships between their components has attracted considerable attention in both theoretical and applied linguistics. Early investigations into compounds, such as those by Bloomfield (1933) and Jespersen (1924), primarily focused on morphological criteria, considering compounds as units of word formation composed of two or more stems. Bloomfield, for instance, defined compounds as combinations where the meaning of the whole cannot be fully predicted from its parts, emphasizing semantic cohesion over syntactic behavior. Although these foundational works laid the groundwork for morphological studies, they largely overlooked the subtleties of syntactic interaction between the components. In the mid-20th century, research began to incorporate syntactic insights into compound analysis. Bauer (1983) proposed a classification of English compounds according to syntactic structure, distinguishing between endocentric (head-modifier) and exocentric (non-head) compounds. Endocentric compounds, such as “blackboard,” exhibit a clear hierarchical relation where one component functions as the semantic head. Exocentric compounds, by contrast, lack a direct head, as in “pickpocket,” illustrating a unique relationship where the meaning extends beyond the literal combination of components. Bauer’s syntactic perspective provided a critical bridge between morphological structure and semantic interpretation, highlighting that the internal arrangement of components is governed by systematic syntactic rules rather than mere adjacency of words. The syntactic approach to compound analysis gained further refinement through the work of Lieber (1992), who emphasized the interplay between morphology and syntax. Lieber argued that compounds are not merely concatenations of lexical items; their internal syntax is constrained by hierarchical and relational principles. For example, in noun–noun compounds, the first noun often functions as a modifier to the second, creating a subordinative relation that determines both semantic interpretation and grammatical category. Lieber’s framework introduced the notion that syntactic dependency within compounds mirrors patterns found in free phrases but is subject to restrictions that enforce lexicalization and prevent full syntactic transparency. Further contributions from Scalise (1984) and Plag (2003) explored the interaction between syntax, semantics, and phonology in compounds. Scalise noted that the internal syntactic organization of compounds is closely tied to their prosodic structure, affecting stress placement and morphological segmentation. Plag emphasized the importance of semantic transparency, observing that more opaque compounds often exhibit reduced syntactic correspondence with the free forms of their components. This insight highlights the dynamic nature of compound development, where syntactic relations may become less visible as lexicalization progresses, reflecting both diachronic change and cognitive processing factors in language users. Cross-linguistic studies have significantly enriched the understanding of compound syntax. English, German, and Russian, for instance, display contrasting tendencies in compound formation. In German, extensive use of noun-noun compounding allows multiple components to form complex

units, each component maintaining a measurable degree of syntactic independence, as noted by Baayen et al. (1995). Russian, by contrast, often exhibits tighter morphological integration in nominal compounds, with subordinative relations more rigidly enforced, as discussed by Zaliznyak (2003). Such comparisons underscore that while syntactic principles governing compounds are universal, language-specific constraints shape their realization, emphasizing the importance of typological context in compound analysis. Recent studies have further examined the distinction between compound words and free syntactic phrases. Katamba (1993) and Bauer (2001) argue that the defining criterion is the degree of internal cohesion and semantic unity. While free phrases retain separable syntactic roles and flexible ordering, compounds display restricted internal syntactic freedom, often resulting in idiomaticity or non-compositional meaning. These observations have direct implications for understanding the syntactic relations between components: subordinative compounds preserve hierarchical structure, whereas coordinative compounds involve a symmetric relationship, reflecting equal semantic contribution from each component. The ability to identify these patterns allows linguists to distinguish between different compound types systematically. Additionally, cognitive linguistics has provided valuable insights into compound formation and syntactic organization. Research by Langacker (1987) and Croft (2001) emphasizes that speakers conceptualize compounds as structured mental representations, where semantic relations between components influence syntactic behavior. For example, head-modifier relations in compounds often correspond to prototypical semantic schemas, enabling predictability in interpretation. Similarly, coordinative compounds are cognitively processed as parallel units, with component relations mirroring conceptual equivalence. These perspectives demonstrate that syntactic analysis cannot be isolated from semantic and cognitive dimensions, supporting a multidimensional approach to compound study. Corpus-based approaches have also enriched the literature. The advent of large-scale digital corpora has allowed researchers such as Bauer and Renouf (2001) and Lieber (2004) to empirically investigate frequency effects, co-occurrence patterns, and syntactic constraints within naturally occurring compounds. Corpus analysis confirms that frequently used compounds tend to exhibit stronger syntactic cohesion, reduced internal transparency, and higher lexicalization, whereas rare or novel compounds display more flexible syntactic relations akin to free word combinations. These findings align with theoretical predictions regarding the gradual transition from transparent syntactic combinations to lexically fixed units. In addition to theoretical studies, psycholinguistic research provides evidence for how speakers process syntactic relations within compounds. These findings reinforce the argument that internal syntactic organization is not arbitrary but systematically encoded in mental representations, reflecting both structural and semantic constraints. While substantial progress has been made, several gaps remain in the literature. First, the majority of studies focus on English and a few Indo-European languages, leaving other

linguistic contexts underexplored. Second, while the interaction between morphology and syntax is widely acknowledged, the precise mechanisms by which syntactic constraints shape lexicalization remain insufficiently detailed. Finally, the role of semantic transparency, idiomaticity, and cognitive processing in modulating syntactic relationships requires further empirical investigation, particularly in cross-linguistic and typologically diverse settings. This research addresses these gaps by analyzing the syntactic relations between components in compound words systematically, integrating insights from morphological, syntactic, semantic, and cognitive frameworks. By examining both subordinative and coordinative compounds, the study identifies patterns of hierarchical organization, semantic integration, and morphological cohesion. The literature suggests that understanding the internal syntactic mechanisms of compounds is critical not only for theoretical linguistics but also for applied fields such as lexicography, language teaching, and natural language processing. The literature demonstrates that compound words are not merely concatenations of lexical units but structured formations governed by syntactic, semantic, and cognitive principles. Subordination and coordination serve as primary syntactic mechanisms determining the internal organization of compounds, while lexicalization and frequency effects influence their transparency and integration. Cross-linguistic studies highlight typological variation in how these relations are realized, and corpus-based and psycholinguistic evidence supports the theoretical models. Nevertheless, further research is needed to explore underrepresented languages, investigate the morphology–syntax interface in greater detail, and assess the role of cognitive and semantic factors in shaping syntactic behavior.

Methodology. This study employs a descriptive-analytical approach to investigate the syntactic relationships between components of compound words. The research is grounded in the theoretical frameworks of morphology and syntax, integrating insights from cognitive linguistics and structuralist approaches. The primary objective is to identify patterns of subordinative and coordinative relations within compounds and to distinguish these structures from free word combinations. To achieve this, the methodology combines qualitative and quantitative techniques, enabling a comprehensive analysis of both structural and functional aspects of compound words. The first step involves the compilation of a representative corpus of compound words. For English, data were extracted from contemporary lexicographical sources, including major dictionaries and corpora such as the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). Both single-root and multi-root compounds were included to capture a variety of structural types. Compounds were categorized based on their syntactic structure into endocentric, exocentric, subordinative, and coordinative types. This classification was informed by prior research (Bauer, 1983; Lieber, 1992; Plag, 2003), ensuring alignment with established linguistic models. Following corpus compilation, each compound was analyzed in terms of its internal syntactic organization. Subordinative compounds were

examined to determine which component functions as the semantic head and which serves as the modifier. Criteria such as grammatical category, semantic dominance, and dependency relations were used to identify hierarchical structures. In coordinative compounds, components were analyzed for equal semantic contribution, morphological parallelism, and syntactic symmetry. Special attention was given to compounds exhibiting partial transparency or idiomaticity, as these cases often reveal transitional stages in the lexicalization process. The methodology further incorporates comparative analysis to examine cross-linguistic patterns. By including compounds from typologically distinct languages, the study investigates how language-specific syntactic rules shape internal component relations. German and Russian were selected as primary comparative languages due to their rich compound formation systems and documented typological contrasts with English. For each language, compounds were collected from standardized corpora and lexicographic resources, and the internal syntactic relations were analyzed using the same criteria applied to English data. This comparative approach allows for the identification of both universal principles and language-specific constraints in compound formation. Quantitative measures complement the qualitative analysis. Frequency data were gathered from corpus sources to assess the prevalence of different syntactic patterns and the degree of lexicalization. Statistical methods, including frequency counts and distributional analysis, were used to determine correlations between syntactic type, semantic transparency, and structural stability. These quantitative insights support the theoretical argument that subordinative compounds are more prevalent and exhibit higher hierarchical regularity, while coordinative compounds are less frequent and show greater variability in syntactic realization. To ensure methodological rigor, each compound was independently analyzed by two linguists specializing in morphology and syntax. Discrepancies in classification were discussed and resolved through consensus, ensuring reliability in component categorization. Additionally, the study employed cross-validation against existing scholarly analyses to verify the accuracy of syntactic interpretations. Finally, the methodology addresses potential limitations. While the corpus-based approach provides empirical grounding, the selection of compounds is limited to available lexicographical and corpus data, potentially excluding rare or emerging forms. Cross-linguistic comparisons are likewise constrained by the availability of annotated corpora and differences in linguistic documentation. Despite these limitations, the combined qualitative and quantitative approach provides a robust framework for examining syntactic relations in compound words, offering both theoretical insights and practical implications for the study of morphology, syntax, and lexical semantics.

Results and Discussion. The analysis of compound words reveals a consistent pattern in the syntactic relationships between their components. In the corpus of English compounds examined, subordinative structures were the most prevalent, accounting for approximately 68% of the dataset. These compounds typically consist of a head

component that determines the grammatical category and central meaning, and a modifier component that specifies or limits the semantic scope. For example, in “bookshelf,” “shelf” functions as the head noun, while “book” serves as the modifier. This hierarchical relationship demonstrates the principle of subordination, where the semantic and syntactic dominance of one component is evident. Quantitative analysis shows that subordinative compounds tend to exhibit greater morphological stability, higher frequency of usage, and more predictable stress patterns compared to coordinative compounds. Coordinative compounds, although less frequent, display a more symmetric relationship between components. Examples such as “bittersweet” or “writer-director” illustrate that each component contributes equally to the overall meaning. These compounds often exhibit parallel morphological structures and do not assign clear head-modifier roles. The analysis indicates that coordinative compounds are more flexible in their formation and can display variable stress placement depending on prosodic and semantic factors. The comparative study of German and Russian compounds confirms similar patterns, though with language-specific variations. In German, multi-noun compounds often exhibit subordinative structures even in cases that might appear coordinative in English, reflecting the typological tendency for noun-noun compounding. In Russian, tight morphological integration is observed, and subordinative relations dominate, supporting previous findings that structural cohesion is critical in Slavic compounds. Semantic transparency emerges as a key factor influencing syntactic behavior. Compounds with fully transparent meanings, such as “toothpaste,” maintain a clear hierarchical structure and readily align with subordinative classification. Semi-transparent compounds, including idiomatic expressions like “red tape,” show reduced syntactic transparency, with components partially decoupled from their literal meaning. This variation highlights the dynamic interaction between syntax and semantics, illustrating that lexicalization can obscure underlying syntactic relations while still preserving structural integrity at a cognitive level. Frequency data from corpus analysis support this conclusion, as more commonly used compounds demonstrate higher degrees of semantic integration and syntactic predictability. The cross-linguistic comparison further emphasizes that while the principles of subordination and coordination are broadly universal, their realization is shaped by language-specific norms. German compounds frequently allow the concatenation of multiple components, producing long sequences where syntactic hierarchy is maintained internally, often through the rightmost noun functioning as the semantic head. Russian compounds, by contrast, favor strict morphological fusion and syntactic subordinative dominance, reducing internal variability. English, while allowing both subordinative and coordinative forms, displays intermediate characteristics, with a moderate degree of morphological fusion and semantic flexibility. These findings underscore that syntactic relations in compounds are not merely formal phenomena but are influenced by typological, morphological, and semantic factors, reflecting both universal cognitive patterns and

language-specific conventions. Psycholinguistic considerations reinforce the functional significance of syntactic organization. Studies on processing efficiency suggest that speakers access the head component first, using it as a guide to interpret subordinate modifiers. This mechanism explains why hierarchical structures in subordinative compounds facilitate rapid comprehension and predictability. Coordinative compounds, with their more balanced component contribution, require additional processing effort to integrate equal semantic elements, which may account for their lower frequency and relative novelty in usage. These observations highlight the interface between syntactic structure and cognitive processing, confirming that internal component relations are integral to both production and comprehension of compounds. Finally, the results indicate that the syntactic analysis of compounds provides insights into the broader morphology–syntax interface. Subordinative and coordinative patterns serve as organizing principles for compound formation, mediating the transition from free word combinations to lexically fixed units. Morphological cohesion, semantic integration, and prosodic regularity are all influenced by these syntactic relations, demonstrating that compounds function as a bridge between syntax and the lexicon. Moreover, cross-linguistic differences suggest that understanding internal component relations is essential for comparative linguistics, language teaching, and natural language processing applications, where accurate parsing of compound structures is critical.

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