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A COMPARATIVE-TYPOLOGICAL STUDY OF WORD ORDER IN FRENCH AND UZBEK

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Abstract

This article provides a comprehensive comparative and typological analysis of word order in French and Uzbek. The study examines the syntactic structure of both languages, the positional patterns of sentence constituents, and the grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic functions of word order based on scholarly sources and illustrative examples. French is analyzed as an analytic language with a relatively fixed word order, whereas Uzbek is characterized as an agglutinative language with a relatively free word order. Special attention is given to the role of word order in information structure (theme–rheme), pragmatic emphasis, and translation processes. The findings of the study are of theoretical and practical significance for comparative linguistics, translation studies, and foreign language teaching methodology.

Keywords: Word order, syntax, comparative linguistics, French language, Uzbek language, sentence structure, information structure.

INTRODUCTION

In modern linguistics, issues of syntax—particularly word order—constitute one of the central areas of scholarly investigation. Word order determines not only

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the grammatical structure of a sentence but also its semantic interpretation and pragmatic orientation. The comparative study of languages belonging to different typological groups is especially important for revealing universal and language-specific mechanisms of syntactic organization.

French and Uzbek differ significantly in their genetic affiliation and grammatical structure. French belongs to the Indo-European language family and is an analytic language, whereas Uzbek is a member of the Turkic language family and exhibits an agglutinative structure. These typological differences are clearly reflected in the principles governing word order. Therefore, a systematic comparison of word order in French and Uzbek is both relevant and necessary.

The aim of this article is to identify the main patterns of word order in French and Uzbek, to analyze them comparatively, and to demonstrate their functional characteristics through concrete examples. Descriptive, comparative, and functional methods of linguistic analysis are employed in the study.

MAIN PART

The concept of word order and its linguistic nature Word order refers to the linear arrangement of words and phrases within a sentence and represents one of the key indicators of syntactic structure. In linguistic theory, word order is viewed not only as a means of expressing grammatical relations but also as a mechanism for organizing semantic content and communicative intent. In some languages, word order serves as the primary grammatical marker, whereas in others it plays a secondary, supportive role.

In comparative linguistics, languages are often typologically classified according to their basic word order patterns, such as SVO, SOV, and VSO. This classification provides an essential methodological framework for comparing the syntactic systems of French and Uzbek. Linguists such as J. Lyons and B. Comrie emphasize that word order should be examined at the intersection of linguistic universals and language-specific features.

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Grammatical features of word order in French French is an analytic language in which grammatical relations are largely expressed through function words and a relatively fixed word order. The basic sentence pattern in French is SVO (Subject–Verb–Object), and deviations from this model often result in grammatical incorrectness or marked stylistic effects.

Example: Jean regarde le film. – Jean is watching the film.

In French declarative sentences, the subject typically precedes the verb, while the object follows it. A particularly strict rule concerns object pronouns, which must appear before the verb: Il lui parle. – He is talking to her/him.

Word order also plays a crucial role in interrogative and negative constructions. In yes–no questions, inversion of the subject and verb is commonly used: Parlez-vous français ? – Do you speak French?

Grammatical and morphological foundations of word order in Uzbek Uzbek is an agglutinative language in which grammatical relations are primarily expressed through affixes. As a result, word order is relatively free compared to French. The basic sentence pattern is SOV (Subject–Object–Verb), but this pattern is not rigid. Example: Talaba kitobni o‘qidi. – The student read the book. Kitobni talaba o‘qidi. – The book, the student read.

Both sentences are grammatically correct, and the difference lies in pragmatic emphasis rather than grammatical meaning. Although the verb typically appears at the end of the sentence in Uzbek, deviations from this pattern may occur in spoken and literary discourse.

Position of sentence constituents and their functional load The placement of sentence constituents in French and Uzbek carries different functional loads. In French, word order primarily serves a grammatical identification function, whereas in Uzbek it mainly fulfills pragmatic and discourse-related functions.

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Sentence element	Subject	Predicate	Object
French	Before the verb	Between subject and object	After the verb
Uzbek	Usually at the beginning	Typically at the end	Before the verb

Word order and information structure (theme–rheme) According to the theory of information structure, a sentence consists of a theme (given information) and a rheme (new information). In French, theme–rheme relations are often expressed through intonation and specific syntactic constructions: C’est le professeur qui explique la règle. – It is the teacher who explains the rule.

In Uzbek, information structure is frequently conveyed through changes in word order: Qoidani o‘qituvchi tushuntirdi. – The rule was explained by the teacher.

Word order and pragmatic factors In actual speech, word order varies depending on the speaker’s communicative intention. In Uzbek, elements receiving pragmatic emphasis are often placed at the beginning of the sentence or immediately before the verb. In French, pragmatic emphasis is typically achieved through lexical and syntactic devices rather than free rearrangement of sentence constituents.

Word order issues in translation In the process of translating from French into Uzbek, mechanical preservation of the original word order often leads to stylistic inadequacy or semantic distortion. Therefore, translators must possess a deep understanding of the syntactic principles governing both languages.

Example: Il a seulement parlé à Marie. He only spoke to Marie.

In Uzbek translation, word order must be appropriately restructured to preserve the intended meaning and emphasis.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of word order in French and Uzbek demonstrates that the syntactic systems of the two languages are closely connected to their

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typological nature. In French, word order performs a primarily grammatical function, while in Uzbek it serves mainly pragmatic and stylistic purposes. Awareness of these differences is essential for comparative linguistic research, translation studies, and language teaching practice. The results of this study may serve as a methodological foundation for further research in syntactic typology, information structure, and discourse analysis.

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