

**THE PROBLEM OF BOUNDARIES BETWEEN SIMPLE AND COMPLEX
SENTENCES IN MODERN RUSSIAN**

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Abstract

This article examines the distinction between simple and complex sentences in modern Russian from the perspective of structural, semantic, and functional approaches. Particular attention is paid to linguistic criteria for distinction, typological difficulties in determining the status of complicating components, and an analysis of controversial syntactic constructions. Factors contributing to the blurring of boundaries between these sentence types are identified and current trends in the development of the syntactic system are demonstrated.

Keywords

simple sentence, complex sentence, syntax, predicativity, secondary predication, syntactic structure.

Introduction

In modern Russian linguistics, the problem of distinguishing between simple and complex sentences occupies an important place, as it is linked to fundamental issues of syntactic theory—the concept of predicativity, the structural organization of the sentence, and the relationship between form and content. Traditional grammar offers fairly clear criteria, but linguistic practice demonstrates a multitude of transitional and hybrid constructions.

A particular challenge is the fact that a complex sentence does not go beyond the simple sentence in formal terms (the presence of a single predicative center), but significantly expands its semantic and communicative structure. This leads to the emergence of constructions with elements of secondary predication, which occupy an intermediate position between simple and complex sentences.

The relevance of this study stems from the need for a systematic understanding of the criteria for distinguishing between them, as well as the need for their clarification in the context of the dynamic development of the modern Russian language.

1. Linguistic criteria for distinguishing between simple and complex sentences

The distinction between simple and complex sentences is based on a set of interrelated criteria.

Structural criterion

The main formal characteristic of a simple sentence is the presence of a single grammatical base. A complex sentence also retains a single base, but includes additional syntactic components:

- isolated definitions and adverbial modifiers
- clarifying constructions
- introductory words and clauses
- addresses
- conjunctive elements

Thus, complexity is manifested not in an increase in the number of predicative centers, but in the expansion of the internal structure of the sentence.

Semantic criterion the semantic organization of a complex sentence is characterized by its multifaceted nature. It implements additional semantic relationships:

- Causal

- temporal
- conditional
- concomitant

Example: He left without saying a word. Here, not only the main action is expressed, but also an additional one—with a hint of cause or condition.

Intonation Criterion Intonation plays an important role in distinguishing sentence types.

Complicated constructions are characterized by:

- pauses
- logical stress
- intonational division

Intonation often serves as an indicator of isolation and semantic

Functional Criterion

Complicated sentences perform more complex communicative tasks:

- clarification of information
- expression of the speaker's attitude
- structuring of the utterance

Thus, complication is associated with the pragmatics of speech.

Typological difficulties in determining the status of complicating components

Typological difficulties are due to the ambiguous nature of complicating elements, many of which have features of secondary predication.

Adverbial participial phrases

Adverbial participial constructions express an additional action, correlated with the main action:

He walked, smiling.

On the one hand, it is an adverbial modifier of manner, and on the other, an independent predicative feature. This allows us to speak of "hidden predication."

Participial phrases

Participial constructions: The students who prepared the report spoke. Formally, they act as attributes, but contain an action, which makes them closer to predicative structures.

Clarifying constructions. Clarifying concretizes the meaning: We will meet in the evening, at about seven o'clock.

Here, predicativity is absent, but semantic detail is enhanced.

Introductory elements. Introductory constructions: Unfortunately, he didn't come.

They are not part of the sentence, but perform an important modal-evaluative function.

Attachment constructions: I did everything, and most importantly, on time.

Such elements can resemble complex sentences, which complicates their classification.

Analysis of controversial examples in modern Russian studies

Modern research demonstrates the lack of a unified approach to a number of syntactic phenomena. Participial phrase: complication or secondary predication

He left, slamming the door.

Interpretations:

- complicated simple sentence
- construction with hidden predication

Homogeneous predicates. He approached and spoke.

Formally, it's a simple sentence, but its logical and semantic relationships may make it resemble a compound sentence.

Constructions with an infinitive. He can't escape.

Such structures are sometimes considered a special type of predicativity.

Unionless transitive constructions. Say a word, and everything will change.

They possess the characteristics of:

- a complex sentence (two situations)
- a simple sentence (intonation integrity)

Hybrid syntactic models. He looked at me—tired but calm.

Such constructions combine the characteristics of complication and predicativity.

Conclusion

The problem of distinguishing between simple and complex sentences in modern Russian is complex and multifaceted. Its complexity is due to:

- the presence of transitional syntactic forms
- the development of secondary predication
- the increasing role of intonation and pragmatics

A complex sentence is an intermediate phenomenon between a simple and a complex one. The criteria for distinction should be considered as a whole, not in isolation.

Modern syntax is characterized by a tendency toward hybridization of structures. Distinguishing between sentence types requires taking into account not only formal but also functional and semantic factors. Prospects for further research are related to the study of the role of secondary predication, as well as the analysis of syntactic processes in the context of digital communication.

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