

METHODS OF PARADIGMATIC AND SYNTAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF GRADATIONAL UNITS

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ABSTRACT: This article analyzes the study of the phenomenon of gradation based on paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations from the perspective of modern linguistic methodologies. It explores the communicative and stylistic potential of gradation based on interrelations within the language system, systematic units, and their expressive features. The evolution of paradigmatic and syntagmatic approaches in linguistics based on structural and functional methods, as well as the role of gradational units in English and Uzbek linguistics, is examined using scientific sources. The article also evaluates the formation process of systematicity, integrity, and associative and combinatorial relations among linguistic units.

Keywords: gradation, paradigmatic relation, syntagmatic relation, system, linguistics, functional approach, linguistic units.

In modern linguistics, the study of the relationship between language and thinking, language and consciousness, has led to the formation of the anthropocentric paradigm. From this perspective, structural approaches based on the interrelation of language elements are gaining increasing significance. Studying paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations among linguistic units, in particular, identifying the mechanisms of formation and functional possibilities of gradational units, becomes essential.

The concepts of paradigm and syntagm are among the core categories in linguistics, denoting the relationship among language elements and their combinations. From this standpoint, gradation—the sequence of language units arranged by increasing or decreasing intensity—represents a specific manifestation of these two linguistic principles.

F. de Saussure is one of the first scholars to introduce the concepts of paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations into modern linguistics. He viewed language as a system, emphasizing that all elements within this system are interconnected. This structural characteristic of language lays the groundwork for the in-depth study of semantic, syntactic, and functional relations.

Paradigmatic relations are vertical links among substitutable units. For example, adjectives such as "big," "great," and "grand" form a paradigmatic series characterized by varying degrees of intensity. Syntagmatic relations, on the other hand, arise from the horizontal sequence and combination of units, as in the phrase "a very big problem," where "very" and "big" are syntagmatically connected.

These approaches, based on systematic analysis, became dominant methodologies in linguistics in the 20th century and have since been enriched by functional and communicative perspectives. According to M.A.K. Halliday's systemic-functional linguistics, each linguistic unit occupies a systematic position and carries semantic and pragmatic weight in context.

Gradational units—linguistic means expressing varying degrees of intensity—are typical examples of paradigmatic structures. In English, the sequence "big – huge – enormous," and in Uzbek, "katta – behad katta – osmondek katta," are organized based on paradigmatic relations, where each unit conveys a stronger semantic load than the previous one.

Paradigmatic gradations are especially used in literary texts to enhance imagery and increase emotional-psychological impact. They fulfill the expressive and poetic functions of language. Such gradational series are closely linked to synonymic series, providing intensified meaning based on context.

In syntagmatic relations, gradation is typically realized through intensifiers (such as "very," "extremely," "utterly"), synonyms, antonyms, or metaphorical units. For instance, in expressions like "very cold weather" or "extremely beautiful girl," gradation is constructed syntagmatically. Additionally, the sequential arrangement of language units, intonational emphasis, and contextual indicators also reveal syntagmatic gradation. Constructions such as "He is not just smart, he is a genius" in English, or "Bu ish faqat yaxshi emas, ajoyib bo'ldi" in Uzbek, exemplify syntagmatic gradation.

The language system is organized as an ideal system through the interrelation of its elements, a view developed by scholars such as I.A. Baudouin de Courtenay, Saussure, Guillaume, and M.K. Halliday. The phenomenon of gradation clearly demonstrates the systematic nature of language, forming on the basis of paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations.

In Uzbek linguistics, this approach has been supported by scholars such as A. Nurmonov, N. Mahmudov, Sh. Shahobiddinova, and H. Ne'matov. Studying gradation on these two levels—paradigmatic (semantic) and syntagmatic (structural)—provides insights into the essence of linguistic phenomena.

Gradational units not only possess structural but also stylistic and pragmatic value. They enhance communicative effectiveness by expressing ideas in intensified or weakened forms. Particularly in literary and journalistic texts, these units serve as key tools for amplifying aesthetic impact.

For example, the phrase "This event affected me" compared to "This event shook me to the core" demonstrates stronger gradation. Similarly, in Uzbek, there is a significant stylistic difference between "Xursand bo'ldi" ("was happy") and "O'sha kuni baxtdan yuragi to'lib ketdi" ("that day, his heart overflowed with happiness").

In conclusion, the phenomenon of gradation relies on the basic systemic relations of language—paradigmatic and syntagmatic connections. Although the methods of expressing this phenomenon differ in English and Uzbek, the general semantic basis—indicating degrees of increase or decrease—remains the same. Studying gradation from these two perspectives reveals the relationship between linguistic structure and meaning, while also providing an opportunity to analyze the communicative, expressive, and cultural characteristics of language.

The paradigmatic and syntagmatic analysis of gradation serves as one of the key methods in modern linguistics, particularly within cognitive, functional, and cultural linguistics. This article presents theoretical concepts that uncover the internal dynamics of the language system, offering a solid foundation for comparative studies of Uzbek and English.

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