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INCOMPLETE SENTENCES AS A LANGUAGE PHENOMENON

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Abstract

This article analyzes the role of incomplete sentences in linguistics and their features as a language phenomenon. The article highlights the reasons for their formation (language economy, the need for quick communication), the main types (ellipses, nominal sentences, sentences with reduced parts of the predicate), the features of their use in oral and dialogic speech, and their pragmatic functions.

Keywords: incomplete sentences, ellipsis, syntax, pragmatics, communication, context, linguistic phenomenon, linguistic economy, dialogical speech, Uzbek language.

TO‘LIQSIZ GAPLAR LINGVISTIK HODISA SIFATIDA

Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqolada to‘liqsiz gaplarning tilshunoslikdagi o‘rni va ularning lingvistik hodisa sifatidagi xususiyatlari tahlil etiladi. Maqolada ularning shakllanish sabablari (til iqtisodiyligi, tez muloqot ehtiyoji), asosiy turlari (ellips, nominal gaplar, predikativ bo‘laklari tushirilgan gaplar), og‘zaki va dialogik nutqdagi qo‘llanilish xususiyatlari hamda pragmatik funksiyalari yoritiladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: to‘liqsiz gaplar, ellips, sintaksis, pragmatika, muloqot, kontekst, lingvistik hodisa, til iqtisodiyligi, dialogik nutq, o‘zbek tili.

As one of the central branches of linguistics, syntax has a long-standing tradition as the discipline that studies the laws governing the mutual combination of words, their functional relations within sentences and phrases, and the structure of communicative units. It occupies an important place not only in describing the grammatical structure of language but also in analyzing, explaining, and modeling it. Syntax is one of the most complex and multifaceted levels of linguistics, in which it is not merely the simple aggregate of word forms that is examined, but rather their semantic-logical, grammatical, and pragmatic compatibility, ordering, and functions.

Whereas morphology investigates the internal structure of the word, the means of form-building, and the changes occurring in word classes, syntax determines the external combination of these forms, their mutual relations at the sentence level, and their role in expressing a complete thought. It is precisely through syntax that language realizes its primary communicative function – enabling humans to convey their thoughts clearly, fluently, logically, and in accordance with their communicative intentions. Sentence structure depends not only on grammatical rules but also on the speech situation (context), purpose, and communicative intent. Therefore, treating syntax not merely as a formal structure but as a functional and pragmatic phenomenon constitutes one of the essential requirements of modern linguistics. The syntactic laws of each language clearly reflect its national-cultural specificity, the people's style of thinking, and their model of perceiving the world. For example, word order in Uzbek (typically subject-object-predicate), the expression of subordination and coordination, and the categories of predicativity and modality manifest the distinctive features of national thinking and speech culture. In this respect, syntax serves as an important source for linguoculturology and cognitive linguistics in studying the interaction between language and culture.

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In contemporary linguistics, the theoretical significance of syntax has grown even greater. Generative grammar theory, developed by Noam Chomsky, has fundamentally renewed syntactic analysis by examining language's innate generative capacity based on innate rules, deep and surface structures, and transformational rules. Valency theory, founded by Lucien Tesnière, places the verb's capacity to combine with actants (complements) at the center, thereby opening new possibilities for understanding the semantic-syntactic structure of the sentence. Discourse analysis, for its part, elevates syntax beyond the sentence level to the levels of text and speech, necessitating the study of cohesion, coherence, pragmatic relations, and communicative strategies. These theories raise syntactic analysis from a merely descriptive level to an explanatory and predictive one.

A profound study of syntactic rules today serves as a key factor in achieving significant advances in such fields as artificial intelligence (AI), machine translation, automatic text analysis (NLP – Natural Language Processing), and computer modeling of language. Syntactic parsers, dependency grammars, and transformer models (for example, BERT and the GPT family) rely directly on syntactic knowledge. Furthermore, syntax plays an important role in observing the diachronic (historical) development of language: changes in sentence structure (such as tendencies toward a shift from synthetic to analytic constructions or the emergence of new connective devices) are among the most accurate indicators of a language's overall evolution.

Syntax is also an indispensable instrument in language teaching methodology, the formation of speech culture, and the enrichment of written and oral discourse. Syntactic knowledge occupies a central position in developing grammatical competence, ensuring stylistic appropriateness, and forming communicative skills. In general, syntax studies the process whereby independent naming units (words and word forms) combine to produce speech units. Through subordinate linkage (hypotaxis), a phrase (as a nominative unit) and a sentence (as a communicative unit) come into being. Incomplete (elliptical) sentences are likewise accepted as communicative units, since they are capable of expressing complete meaning within a speech situation while preserving the feature of predicativity.

Although sources on syntax in our national linguistics have a long history (for instance, Mahmud Kashgari's eleventh-century work *Javohir un-nahv fi lugotit-turk*), the separation of syntax as an independent discipline and its systematic investigation began in the early twentieth century. During this period, Fitrat raised syntactic issues under the term *nahv*. Later, the *nahv* section received separate treatment in the *Grammatika* by H.Qayumiy and S.Dolimov. In the mid- and late twentieth century, G.Abdurahmonov and M.Asqarova studied the syntax of compound sentences; N.Mahmudov investigated content-form asymmetry in simple sentences and semantic syntax; while A.Nurmonov conducted in-depth research on syntax within theoretical grammar. In the 1980s–1990s, systemic-structural approaches developed extensively under the leadership of H.Ne'matov, N.Mahmudov, and A.Nurmonov. Contemporary research is dominated by semantic, functional, cognitive, and linguopragmatic orientations. These approaches have substantially enriched the theoretical analysis of syntax and contributed to the improvement of the general methodology of linguistics. Thus, syntax remains not only an integral but also a central component of linguistics – the principal key to understanding the essence of language, applying it effectively, and modeling it in modern technologies.

The formation of linguistics as an independent scientific discipline, the division of its internal structure into levels such as phonetics, morphology, lexicology, and syntax, and the precise definition of the units belonging to each level owe an unparalleled debt to Abdulrauf Fitrat. In the second book – *Nahv* – of his fundamental work *An Experiment on the Rules of the Uzbek Language*, the scholar systematically elucidated, for the first time, the syntactic possibilities of linguistic units, the laws of their interconnection, and the functional characteristics of sentence structure. This work marked an important stage in establishing the theoretical foundations of syntax in Uzbek linguistics in the early

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twentieth century. Fitrat sought not merely to classify linguistic units but also to analyze their communicative potential. His particular attention to the issue of incomplete (elliptical) sentences among sentence types demonstrates the modernity of his scholarly approach.

Fitrat defines incompleteness as "the omission of sentence parts" and closely links this phenomenon to the speech situation (context). According to the scholar, although a sentence may contain two principal words (subject and predicate) and eight complement words, it is natural for half of them to remain unexpressed when they can be understood through information perceived by the participants via hearing and sight. This explanation aligns with the modern linguistic concepts of "situational ellipsis" or "exophoric reference": the meaning of the omitted parts is reconstructed directly from the speech situation or from preceding speech units. Thus, Fitrat is recognized as one of the first Uzbek linguists to analyze incomplete sentences not only from a formal-structural perspective but also from communicative and pragmatic standpoints. He reinforces this view with concrete examples. For instance, he cites responses such as "Karim" or "Tosh" to questions like "Who came?" or "What fell?" In such cases, the units serving as answers are not complete sentences but elliptical constructions in which the predicate (or predicator) has been omitted because it was already present in the preceding interrogative sentence. An important point here is that the participants in the communication can easily reconstruct the predicate from the previous sentence. Although Fitrat does not employ the term "incomplete sentences" directly, he essentially analyzed precisely this type of elliptical unit and revealed the mechanism of its formation. This approach later served as the initial theoretical foundation for the classification of incomplete sentences in Uzbek syntax (for example, division into types with omitted subject, omitted predicate, or both omitted).

Indeed, Fitrat's *Nahv* is regarded as an event that created a fundamental turning point in the history of Uzbek linguistics. At the time the work was produced, the content of Uzbek syntax had not yet been fully delineated, and the terminology expressing syntactic concepts had not been systematized. The scholar's identification of the predicate as the central element of the sentence, his analysis of the functional roles of sentence parts, and his linkage of complex phenomena such as incompleteness to the speech situation laid a solid foundation for subsequent research by A.G'ulomov, G.Abdurahmonov, N.Mahmudov, and others. For this reason, the appearance of the *Nahv* work is recognized as a major event in the history of Uzbek linguistics. The work became not only a textbook but also an important stage in the formation of national grammatical theory[1]. In general, Fitrat's syntactic views – particularly his analyses concerning incomplete sentences – are valued as early examples of the pragmatic approach in Uzbek linguistics. He regarded the sentence not merely as a grammatical structure but as a communicative unit, explaining its complete or incomplete forms in relation to the speech situation. This approach resonates with directions such as discourse analysis, pragmatics, and cognitive syntax in modern linguistics. Thus, Fitrat's *Nahv* continues to hold its place as one of the principal sources in the formation of Uzbek syntax theory and in subsequent research[2].

FOYDALANILGAN ADABIYOTLAR RO'YXATI:

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