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THE CONCEPT
OF COMPLEX SENTENCE IN TURKISH LINGUISTICS

EL CONCEPTO DE FRASE COMPLEJA EN LA LINGÜÍSTICA TURCA

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ABSTRACT

One of the most pressing and, unfortunately, not yet unambiguously resolved theoretical problems of Turkish linguistics is the question of the theoretical explanation of a complex sentence and its interpretation in a formal and grammatical plan. It goes without saying that as the science of linguistics develops and new theoretical concepts are created, it is inevitable that the viewpoint of this and other problems will change, and the analysis approaches will be further improved. However, the problem is that the issue of determining the concept of a complex sentence in Turkish linguistics does not originate from the pluralism of opinion conditioned by such points. It turns out that at the root of this issue lies the diversity of opinions and approaches regarding the criteria for defining a complex sentence. Paradoxically at first glance, in related Turkish languages and national linguistics studying those languages, including the Azerbaijani language and linguistics, this issue is considered to be one of the problems that have generally found their theoretical solution at the level of normative grammar and have been drawn in common and general outlines in theoretical evaluations. However, Turkish linguistics presents different approaches to the issue of complex sentences due to the lack of unanimity in several theoretical issues, in particular, due to the diversity of opinions on whether the gerund, participle and infinitive components should be considered independent sentences. This paper it is analyzes the concept of complex sentences in Turkish linguistics through their various approaches.

Keywords: Turkish linguistics, Modern Turkish language, Complex sentence, Gerund, Participle, Infinitives.

RESUMEN

Uno de los problemas teóricos más urgentes y, lamentablemente, aún no resuelto de forma inequívoca de la lingüística turca es la cuestión de la explicación teórica de una oración compleja y su interpretación en un plan formal y gramatical. No hace falta decir que a medida que se desarrolla la ciencia de la lingüística y se crean nuevos conceptos teóricos, es inevitable que cambie el punto de vista de éste y otros problemas y que los enfoques de análisis mejoren aún más. Sin embargo, el problema es que la cuestión de determinar el concepto de oración compleja en la lingüística turca no surge del pluralismo de opinión condicionado por tales puntos. Resulta que en la raíz de esta cuestión radica la diversidad de opiniones y enfoques sobre los criterios para definir una oración compleja. Paradójicamente a primera vista, en las lenguas turcas afines y en la lingüística nacional que estudia esas lenguas, incluida la lengua y la lingüística azerbaiyanas, esta cuestión se considera uno de los problemas que generalmente han encontrado su solución teórica en el nivel de la gramática normativa y han sido trazados en líneas comunes y generales en las evaluaciones teóricas. Sin embargo, la lingüística turca presenta diferentes enfoques al tema de las oraciones complejas debido a la falta de unanimidad en una serie de cuestiones teóricas, en particular, debido a la diversidad de opiniones sobre si los componentes gerundio, participio e infinitivo deben considerarse oraciones independientes. En este artículo se analiza el concepto de oración compleja en la lingüística turca a través de sus diversas aproximaciones.

Palabras clave: Lingüística turca, Lengua turca moderna, Oración compleja, Gerundio, Participio, Infinitivos.

UNIVERSIDAD Y SOCIEDAD | Have Scientific of the University of Cienfuegos | ISSN: 2218-3620   Volume 16 | Number 4 | July-August, 2024

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INTRODUCTION

The study of language, a structured system of sounds, gestures, or written symbols that enables communication within a community, is fundamental for several reasons. Languages facilitate effective communication and social interaction, allowing individuals to express ideas, thoughts, and emotions clearly while fostering interpersonal relationships and social cohesion (Crystal & Robins, 2024). This ability to exchange complex information and knowledge is crucial for the development and maintenance of human societies. Moreover, language study provides invaluable insights into cultural history, traditions, and values, promoting intercultural understanding and empathy (Imai et al., 2016). By examining different languages, we gain a deeper appreciation for diverse perspectives and can bridge cultural gaps, fostering global understanding and cooperation. This aspect of language study is particularly relevant in our increasingly interconnected world. The study of language also offers significant contributions to our understanding of human cognitive processes. It provides valuable information about how the human mind works, contributing to fields such as linguistics, psychology, and education being this knowledge particularly useful in understanding language acquisition and development, which has important implications for learning and teaching methodologies (Li et al., 2024; Cheng et al., 2023). Furthermore, language study plays a crucial role in preserving linguistic and cultural diversity. By documenting and studying the unique characteristics of thousands of languages, researchers help maintain endangered languages and cultures, contributing to the preservation of human heritage and knowledge (Echeverria & Sparling, 2024). This work is essential in an era where globalization threatens to homogenize cultural expressions.

From a practical standpoint, proficiency in language studies opens up numerous professional opportunities, it creates pathways in international business, diplomacy, translation, interpretation, and language education. The ability to communicate effectively across linguistic and cultural boundaries is increasingly valued in our globalized economy. In addition to these benefits, language study enhances cognitive development since it improves critical thinking, problem-solving skills, memory, and mental flexibility (Goñi-Cervera & Jacinto, 2024). The process of learning and analyzing languages supports the development of metacognitive abilities, which are valuable in various aspects of life and learning. Language is also fundamental to literary and artistic expression, enabling the creation and appreciation of literature, poetry, and various art forms that rely on linguistic creativity (Mirzayev, 2019).

Within language studies, relevant topics are related to complex sentences. A complex sentence is a sentence that contains at least one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. Independent clauses can stand alone as complete sentences, while dependent clauses cannot and must be attached to an independent clause. Complex sentences allow for the expression of more sophisticated ideas and relationships between ideas, and they are more grammatically sophisticated than simple sentences, which contain only one independent clause (Carstairs-McCarthy, 1999). Examples of complex sentences include: a) "Although it was raining, we decided to go for a walk", b) "The student who studied hard passed the exam" and c) "I will not attend the party unless you come with me". Its study is relevant for many reasons, for example, children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI) often have difficulties producing and comprehending complex sentences due to underlying syntactic deficits. Effective interventions for these children focus on explicitly teaching the structures and rules governing complex sentence formation (Montgomery & Evans, 2009).

Before proceeding to the problem of the interaction between verbal compositions and subordinate clauses in Turkish linguistics, it is necessary to dwell on the problem of defining a complex sentence. This problem is closely related to the issue of verbal compositions and subordinate clauses. In Turkish linguistics, the concept of a complex sentence is referred to by different linguists with various terms. Linguists such as M. Ergin and T. Banguoglu use the term "birleşik cümle" (compound sentence), while researchers such as T. N. Gencan, V. Hatipoglu, and H. Dizdaroglu use the term "birleşik tümce" (compound sentence) to name a complex sentence. In Turkish linguistics, a sentence structure consisting of one principal and one (or several) subordinate clauses, containing more than one predicate, is considered a complex sentence. M. Gece interprets the structure of the sentence called "fused sentence" in Turkish linguistics as follows: "Structurally complex sentences are syntactic units consisting of two or more sentences containing several ideas with a single intonation. Such types of sentences are made up of sentences with a simple structure and their combination in different ways" (Gece, 1998, p. 334). The general idea is that in Turkish, the main clause comes at the end and the subordinate clause at the beginning. It is clear from this that the concept of a complex sentence in Turkish linguistics is quite different from the concept of a complex sentence in Azerbaijani linguistics. In other words, the concept of a compound sentence in Azerbaijani linguistics is broader than the concept of "compound sentence" in Turkish linguistics. This concept corresponds to a certain extent to the concept of "subordinate complex

sentence" in Azerbaijani linguistics. Taking into account the above, this paper aims to analyze the concept of the complex sentence in Turkish linguistics, contrasting it with the variations and/or classifications present in Azerbaijani linguistics.

DEVELOPMENT

1. Different approaches of Azerbaijani and Turkish linguists on the issue of complex sentences

1.1. Theoretical premises leading to differences in approach

Many sentence types related to complex sentence structure in Azerbaijani linguistics are studied in Turkish linguistics under other names ("sequential sentence", and "compound sentence"). Of course, at this time, it cannot be said that the concepts of "compound sentence" and "sequential sentence" in Turkish linguistics correspond to the concept of "complex sentence" in Azerbaijani linguistics. For example, M. Gece, who specially studied the problem of connected sentences in the Turkish language, shows the sentences "The tears dry up, the groans stop, the pits are filled, the fires are extinguished, the graves collapse, the ruins rejoice; it is thought that everything is over" and "When we were fifty or sixty steps away from the palace, the famous commander of the guards rode forward, rearing his red horse, came right in front of the ambassador, and greeted him" as examples of compound sentences (Gece, 1998, p. 338). The first sentence is considered a complex sentence in Azerbaijani linguistics. The second sentence is a simple sentence expanded with homogeneous parts. Therefore, the concept of a "compound sentence" is completely different from the concept of a complex sentence. It is enough to note that L. Karahan refers to the type of sentence appearing with the conjunction ki as a compound sentence (Karahan, 1999, p. 66).

It should be noted that in Turkish linguistics, the concept of a sequential sentence is also interpreted differently. While some Turkish language researchers consider sequential sentences in the composition of a complex sentence (fused sentence), others consider it a separate type of sentence. According to V. Hatipoglu, semantically close sentences are called sequential sentences (Hatipoğlu, 1972, pp. 154–158). T. Banguoglu interprets the sequential sentence as follows: "A sequential sentence is a sentence formed by two clauses with different semantic relations using one connection". According to the researcher, a sequential sentence is a type of "completely fused sentence" (Banguoglu, 1998, pp. 554–558). H. Ediskun considers sequential sentences not in the sentence classification in terms of structure, but in

the sentence classification according to their forms. H. Dizdaroglu also does not consider ordinal sentences to be a type of sentence in terms of structure and studies them under the heading "Sentence Types According to Their Connections" (Dizdaroglu, 1976, pp. 223–247). According to M. Fidanci, who researched the problem of sequential sentences, there is no definitive idea whether or not there are sequential sentences in Turkish linguistics. Therefore, there is insufficient information about this type of sentence. Some researchers have attributed sequential sentences to complex sentences, which made solving the sequential sentence problem even more difficult. Most of the researchers who consider sequential sentences as a separate sentence type have tried to classify these sentences not in terms of structure, but in terms of meaning. This is a confusion of classification criteria (Fidancıı, 1995, pp. 1315–1324).

1.2. The factor of recognition of infinitive, gerund, and participle components as an independent sentence unit

The majority of Turkish linguists include sentences containing infinitives, gerunds, and participles ("actional") in complex sentences. Such sentence types are sometimes referred to as "complex sentences" (Banguoglu, 1998, pp. 26–51, 562). However, in Azerbaijani linguistics, sentences with such a structure are considered simple sentences. The variety of sentences studied outside the complex sentence structure under the name of "indirect and direct speech" in Azerbaijani linguistics is studied within the complex sentence in Turkish linguistics, as a structural type of the complex sentence.

It is for this reason that the problem of determining the boundaries of complex sentences in the Turkish language is considered one of the most complex issues in Turkish linguistics. One of the issues that complicates the problem is the different methodological approaches applied by researchers to define the sentence in research works on the syntax of the Turkish language, as well as the confusion of terms. It can be said that when classifying sentences, researchers use different criteria and express different concepts with one term, just as they call the same concepts by different terms.

2. The problem of classification of complex sentences in terms of structure in Turkish linguistics

2.1. Relation to the factor of the method of connecting sentences in Turkish linguistics

One of the problems related to complex sentences in Turkish linguistics, which remains controversial, is the classification of sentences in the Turkish language in

terms of structure. It should be noted from the beginning that some linguists do not consider it acceptable to classify sentences in terms of structure and oppose such a division (Karahan, 2004, p. 66) Sometimes a researcher who holds one position for a long time can change their opinion after a certain period. For example, L. Karahan, a well-known researcher on Turkish language syntax, previously defended the idea of the possibility of classifying Turkish language sentences in terms of structure, and classified Turkish sentences in the following way: simple, fused (conditional fused, nested fused) (Comp: "If he had listened to my words a month ago, this disaster would not have happened to him; they say 'they have the secret of death' for the East"), sequential (Comp: "The hair of the yellow flower is plucked, soaked in blood"), compound (Comp: "Watch the red weather that it's evening; the weather was cloudy and the hill we're standing on was windy") (Banguoglu, 1998, pp. 61–67).

Unlike other Turkish linguists (for example, T.N. Gencan, R. Shimshek, etc.), the author considers sentences containing gerunds, participles, and infinitives to be simple sentences rather than complex sentences. Comp: "Those who fled to the seaside, the countryside, and the hills to spend the hot summer months are now returning to their winter homes one by one." However, later the researcher changed his mind and classified Turkish sentences according to connecting methods. According to him, sentences in the Turkish language can be classified according to the means of connection as follows: Sentences connected by linking particles, sentences connected by common sentence elements, sentences connected by common mood/personal suffixes, and sentences connected by semantic relationships (Karahan, 2004, pp. 85–95). In general, the majority of Turkish language researchers consider the classification of sentences in terms of structure to be acceptable. For example, M. Ergin divides sentences in the Turkish language into two parts under the names "simple" and "compound" according to their structure (Ergin, 1987, p.382). We also encountered the same classification in Dizdaroglu (1976, p. 187) and Banguoglu (1998, p. 523).

However, these authors interpret simple and complex sentences in different ways. M. Ergin divides complex sentences into three parts: a) conditional complex sentences (Comp: "If the weather is fine, we will go for a walk tomorrow"); b) complex sentences with ki (Comp: "I see that you are not working; I see that you are not coming"); c) nested complex sentences (Comp: "He said, come here; Prepare as if you will go tomorrow; When the sun goes down, he sleeps; He cries whether he comes or not") (Ergin, 1987, pp. 381–384).

T. Banguoglu classifies complex sentences as follows: 1. In terms of meaning (fused side by side and fused below); 2. In terms of form: completely fused and complex fused. According to the researcher's opinion, completely fused sentences are divided into three categories - conditional, relative, and context sentences. Complex compound sentences also consist of noun-verb, adjective-verb, and adverb-verb sentences (Banguoglu, 1998, pp. 523–586). It is clear from this that T. Banguoglu studies the types of sentences that other researchers consider separately under the names of connected and sequential sentences as part of a fused sentence. Additionally, he separates the conjunctions ki and hani from other conjunctions, examining the type of sentence that appears with their help under the name "complement relative pronoun sentence".

Ediskun (1999, p. 379) divides Turkish sentences into four parts under the names "simple, fused, series, compound", while V. Hatipoglu uses the names "simple, compound, introductory, sequential". He shows that the type of sentence he calls "fused sentence" is divided into the following types according to how the subordinate sentence is connected to the main sentence: conjunction, subjunctive, conditional, prepositional, negation conjunction, interrogative, reduplicative, formulaic, intermediate clause, complex, sequential (Hatipo lu, 1972, pp. 145–172). Therefore, V. Hatipoglu refers to all types of connectives, sequential, nested, and introductory sentences without any distinction and analyzes them within the framework of a complex sentence.

According to T. N. Gencan, Turkish sentences should be classified in terms of structure as follows: simple sentences (consisting of one clause, such as "The lights could be seen in fragments as if at our feet"), sentences combined from independent propositions (formed with conjunctions or punctuation marks, for example, "Unfortunate coincidences are a thousand times more than useful coincidences: a wise person does not expect good from coincidence. He neither gives away his daughter nor offends in-laws"), and compound sentences (including main clauses, subordinate clauses, introductory clauses, and intermediate clauses). Gencan's compound sentence category includes sentences containing participles, gerunds, infinitives, and conditional clauses, as illustrated by "Big Ali staggered to his feet; If the weather is nice and you are not busy, let's go to the countryside" (Gencan, 2001, pp. 146–166).

R. Shimshek, on the other hand, classifies Turkish sentences into five categories: simple (one-clause sentences, such as "Konya is the perfect child of the steppe"), compound (including initiated, fused, and conditional sentences, as well as those with participle, gerund, and infinitive

components, exemplified by "It is a privilege to enter the tomb; Oh, let me run away from here, I said"), sequential (formed with conjunctions or punctuation marks, like "Finally they reached the house, the old lady opened the door, there was a tense atmosphere in the house"), truncated (incomplete sentences, for instance, "You, orphaned country, you!... Loving mother!"), and intermediate sentences (such as "If the world falls, be sure, this front will not be shaken"). Shimshek's compound category also incorporates what M. Ergin refers to as "nested compound sentences" (Shimshek, 1987, pp. 243–320). These classifications highlight the complexity and variety of sentence structures in the Turkish language, as well as the different approaches taken by linguists in categorizing them.

2.2. Criterion difference in determining the complex sentence in Turkish linguistics

The classification of Turkish sentences in terms of structure varies significantly among researchers, with no two linguists providing identical categorizations. This diversity in approach is evident in the work of several prominent Turkish linguists. S. Gunesh, for instance, proposes a classification system that includes simple sentences, fused sentences (which he further subdivides into sequential, compound, sequential-compound, conditional, intricate, nested, and complex), and digression sentences (Gunesh, 2003, pp. 351–355). This comprehensive categorization attempts to capture the nuanced structural variations in Turkish syntax. Y. Yoruk offers a different perspective, classifying Turkish sentences as simple and fused, with the latter category encompassing joined, conditional, serial-connected, and nested sentences. Karaors (1993, p. 43) presents a similar but more condensed classification, identifying simple sentences and fused sentences, with the fused category including conditional, sentences with ki, and nested structures.

A notable contribution to this discourse comes from A. Akchatash, who dedicated two special articles to this problem, providing a detailed analysis. Akchatash (2007, pp. 7–19) introduces the term "sentence group" to describe sentences with connected and sequential structures. He classifies these sentence groups using semantic categories such as "cause-effect, explanation, example, purpose, comparison, condition, contrast". Furthermore, Akchatash divides these "sentence group" structures into two main categories: dependent and independent. These varied approaches to sentence classification in Turkish linguistics underscore the complexity of the language's syntactic structures and the ongoing scholarly debate surrounding their categorization. The diversity of classifications reflects the multifaceted nature of Turkish sentence structures and the different analytical frameworks employed by researchers in their attempts to systematize these linguistic phenomena.

One of the latest classifications of sentence structures in Turkish linguistics belongs to H.I. Delice. Abandoning his previous ideas about sentence structures, the author gives the classification of sentences in Turkish in terms of structure and usage as follows (Delice, 2012):

A. Sentences according to their structure:

1. Simple sentence. This includes participles, gerunds, infinitives, as well as compounds formed with their help, and sentences without internal clauses. Comp: "Ahmet will bring his brother to school tomorrow."

2. Complex sentence. This includes participles, gerunds, infinitives, as well as the compounds formed with their help, and sentences with internal clauses. The complex sentence itself is divided into several groups:

a) Complex fused sentence. Sentences containing participles, gerunds, infinitives, as well as compounds formed with their help belong to this group. Comp: "Ahmet was the one in the lead. What I got from Hasan was not better. Give a blanket to those who will sleep here."

b) Nested compound sentence. Structures with sentences, which are a part of the word, belong here. Comp: "He said in a voice that everyone could hear, 'Whatever God says will happen.'"

c) Complex fused sentence. Sentences containing participles, gerunds, infinitives, as well as compounds formed with their help, and sentences with an internal clause belong here. Comp: "'Give blankets to those who will sleep here,' he shouted loudly."

B. Sentences according to usage:

1. Sequential sentences. This is a structure that shows the formation of sentences connected by time and sequence relationships with participial conjunctions or punctuation marks. In terms of having a common member or not, two types are distinguished:

a) Independent sequential clauses. This is the name for the connection of two sentences that do not have a common member. Comp: "Why does he never visit us? Did we do something to him?"

b) Dependent sequential clauses. This is the name for the connection of two sentences with a time relationship that has a common member. Comp: "Hasan was looking at me; he was giggling. I did everything; he owned it."

2. Compound sentences. This is the name of the sentence structure in which sentences with different structures are connected with the help of subordinate clauses. Comp:

"Work hard so that you can win. They couldn't play because it rained"

It is clear from this that I. Delice tried to combine the classification of sentences in the Turkish language according to two principles (according to their structure and according to their use). As we mentioned above, some of the Turkish language researchers (for example, L. Karahan) do not accept the classification of sentences in terms of structure and consider it more appropriate to classify sentences only according to usage. I. Delice tries to reconcile these two opposing approaches.

In addition, R. Rustamov is one of the researchers who classified sentences in modern Turkish in terms of structure. According to the researcher, sentences in Turkish can be divided into two parts in terms of structure - simple and complex sentences. Complex sentences, in turn, are divided into subordinate (dependent compound clauses) and independent (independent compound clauses) complex sentences (Rustamov, 2012, p. 126). With this, the linguist applied the complex sentence determination criteria of Azerbaijani linguistics to the Turkish language and managed to reveal a fairly regular division.

CONCLUSIONS

The complex sentence problem in Turkish linguistics is far from a complete and unambiguous solution. The fact that it is almost impossible to find two researchers who agree on this issue in Turkish linguistics ultimately makes it difficult to create a common normative grammar. One of the most important and relevant points is defining the sentence's criteria. Failure to establish a common approach to the criterion problem can lead to the definition of a complex sentence in a different format due to the participation of participles, gerunds, and infinitives. At the same time, the definition of criteria for the classification of complex sentences according to the format of linking them together by different authors reveals a completely different classification. In Turkish linguistics, the point of classifying complex sentences according to their structural differences and functional features can be distinguished, which, as a result, can contrast formal grammatical analysis with functional-communicative analysis. All these listed points prove that modern Turkish linguistics is still far from solving the complex sentence problem. In this matter, the first thing to be solved is related to obtaining a common criterion and a common approach to classification principles.

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