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COMPOUNDING IN THE UZBEK LANGUAGE

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Abstract. This article examines the linguistic nature, classification, and methods of formation of compound words in the Uzbek language. While compound words have long remained an understudied phenomenon in Turkic linguistics, their wide usage in modern Uzbek has increased scholarly interest. By analyzing the views of major Uzbek linguists, the study reveals two contrasting interpretations of what constitutes a compound word—either a combination of words or the merging of bases. The paper supports the latter view, emphasizing that components of compound words function as bases rather than independent words. The article further identifies three main methods of compound formation in Uzbek: syntactic-lexical, syntactic-morphological, and morphological. Each method is described and exemplified. Finally, the study compares these processes with those found in English and concludes that despite differences in classification, the fundamental mechanisms of compounding in both languages exhibit notable similarities.

Keywords: Uzbek linguistics, compounding, compound words, word formation, syntactic-lexical method, syntactic-morphological method, morphological method, lexical semantics, grammatical structure.

Introduction. Compound words have remained an insufficiently studied aspect not only in the linguistics of the Uzbek language, but also within all Turkic

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languages. As for modern Uzbek, the widespread use of compound words in spoken language, folklore, fiction, and various fields of scientific literature has attracted the attention of many linguists.

The researchers of compound words in Uzbek include V. Reshetov, A. Khodzhiev, G. A. Abdurakhmanov, B. Mamadaliev, and M. Mamatov. After studying the works of these authors, we found that there are two viewpoints in Uzbek lexicology and grammar regarding the question “what is a compound word composed of?”

Some scholars, such as G. A. Abdurakhmanov and B. Mamadaliev (1972), believe that a compound word is an interrelation of two words. Others, including V. V. Reshetov, A. Khodzhiev, and N. Mamatov, claim that a compound word is not a connection of two words, but rather a word consisting of two or more bases. For example: *tog‘olcha*, *tog‘ilon*, *soddadil*.

We consider the view of Abdurakhmanov and Mamadaliev (1972) to be incorrect and fully support the opinion of Reshetov, Khodzhiev (1989), and Mamatov (1982), because the components of a compound word are bases, not words.

It would be incorrect to classify the following words as compound: *gulbeor*, *mingoyoq*, *tog‘uzum*, *orambaxsh*, since simple words can also be divided into parts, such as root and affix. In words like *gulbeor*, *mingoyoq*, the parts of the word are bases. We also consider it incorrect to classify words formed by comparison as compound, because in words like *qovun-tarvuz*, *ko‘rpa-yostiq*, *qing‘ir-qiyshiq*, both components retain their meanings, and there is no unified meaning in these formations. For example: *qovun-tarvuz* – *melon and watermelon*, *ko‘rpa-yostiq* – *blanket and pillow*. We consider such formations as paired words. Compound words, unlike simple words, have a unified meaning. For example: *bilak-uzuk* – *bracelet*, *sotib olmoq* – *to buy*, *olib kelmoq* – *to bring*.

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Following Mamatov, we define a compound word as a grammatical unit consisting of more than one base, having no syntactic connection between its components, possessing a single stress, and functioning in speech as a single word.

In the Uzbek language, there are also different views about the methods of forming compound words. G. A. Abdurakhmanov (1975) believes that the method of composition is more acceptable. He explains that composition is a way of word formation in which a compound word is formed by joining two or more words. However, we know that joining two or more words forms a phrase, not a compound word. Abdurakhmanov does not differentiate between the formation of word combinations and the formation of compound words from such combinations through prolonged usage.

Another researcher, B. Mamadaliev, argues that compound words are formed syntactically (1972). We do not agree with this opinion, because syntactic joining according to grammatical rules results in a phrase, not a compound word. Such a phrase may become fully integrated grammatically and phonetically over time, resulting in a compound word. However, the process of forming a phrase and the process of developing a compound word from that phrase remain distinct phenomena.

In short, there is no purely compositional or purely syntactic method in Uzbek. We consider N. Mamatov's (1982) view is correct, according to which there are **three methods** of forming compound words in Uzbek:

1. **Syntactic-lexical method**
2. **Syntactic-morphological method**
3. **Morphological method**

In our view, these three methods best reflect the patterns of Uzbek word formation.

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I. In the syntactic-lexical method, word combinations, through the evolution of the language and without any changes or derivational suffixes, form a compound word. The meanings of the components of the word combination merge into a single semantic center.

Losing their separate lexical meanings, the phrases become grammatically and phonetically unified. Examples: *oshpichoq*, *qo‘qongul*, *dalamudir*, *g‘allasovod*, *kaltafaxm*. We classify such words as compounds formed by the syntactic-lexical method because:

- First, they originated from phrases formed by joining two or more words according to grammatical rules (syntactic aspect).
- Second, their meanings changed, and the phrase transformed into a compound word (lexical aspect). Combining these two aspects, we call the method syntactic-lexical.

II. In the syntactic-morphological method, a compound word is formed by adding a derivational affix to a phrase. Example: *bash yillik*, *mingkilogrammi*. This method is “syntactic-morphological” for two reasons: Firstly, part of the compound word (*bash yil*) was originally a phrase of the type “modifier + modified” (syntactic aspect). Secondly, with the addition of the affix *-lik* to the phrase *bash yil*, the compound word *bash yillik* was formed. This is the morphological aspect. By combining these two aspects again, we call this method syntactic-morphological.

III. Morphological method. In the Uzbek language, there are compound words whose formation differs from those created by adding an affix to a word combination. These compound words are formed through base-joining. For example: *ko‘ziqorin*, *qizilishton*. We cannot consider such words as formed from

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word combinations, because bases are morphemes, and when morphemes join, they create a word, not a phrase. So, this method is called the morphological method.

Comparing the methods of forming compound words in English and Uzbek, we conclude that they largely coincide, although Uzbek distinguishes three methods, while English distinguishes two. Since English forms compound words from phrases through compression (similar to the syntactic-morphological method), the systems are parallel. The compounding method in English and the morphological method in Uzbek completely coincide.

Conclusion. The study of compound words in Uzbek demonstrates that their formation involves complex interactions between lexical, morphological, and syntactic processes. After analyzing existing linguistic theories, the research supports the view that the elements of a compound word function not as independent words but as bases that together create a unified semantic and grammatical unit. The three methods identified by N.Mamatov—syntactic-lexical, syntactic-morphological, and morphological—most accurately capture the mechanisms of Uzbek compounding. Moreover, comparison with English reveals that, despite differences in terminology and categorization, the fundamental processes of compound formation in both languages align closely. This indicates that compounding is a universal linguistic phenomenon shaped by language-specific morphological structures and historical development. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of Uzbek word-formation patterns and highlight the need for further research into the typological features of compounding across Turkic languages.

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