

**SCTMG 2021**  
**International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of**  
**Modern Globalism»**

**IDENTIFICATION OF COMPLEX WORDS AND SIMILAR**  
**SYNTACTIC CONSTRUCTIONS IN NAKH LANGUAGES**

Marzhan Umarovna Suleibanova (a)\*

\*Corresponding author

(a) Chechen State University, 32, A. Sheripova st., Grozny, 364024, Russia, [sulejbanova.ru@mail.ru](mailto:sulejbanova.ru@mail.ru)

**Abstract**

The language is in a state of continuous development, so it is very complicated to delimit adjoining elements without residue. Many transitional forms have always existed and exist in this matter. It is necessary to take into account that there are elements that have the characteristics of both compound words and phrases. They can have more from words and less from phrases and vice versa more from phrases and less from words in terms of the number and significance of these features. Distinguishing between compound words and their associated constructions is not a matter of theory alone. Its solution depends on how strict and ordered the spelling of compound words will be, how consistently we are able to differ compound words from syntactic constructions associated with them. Being a useful tool of the compression of semantic and syntactic information into the most compact form, it shows the complexity of relationship of multilevel elements especially clearly. The special location of a compound word in the general system of a language indicates the difficulties that arise during the determination of the status of a compound word. The theoretical considerations dictate the need to find the differences between composites and similar syntactic groups. Non-distinction of compound words which are common today leads to inadequate reflection and description of linguistic elements both in theoretical studies and dictionaries. Moreover, it raises difficulties in spelling compound words. In turn it affects the quality of teaching Chechen and Ingush in terms of spelling compound words and the syntactic elements associated with them.

2357-1330 © 2021 Published by European Publisher.

*Keywords:* Compound words, syntactic constructions, Chechen language



## 1. Introduction

It is known that compound words of the contemporary Chechen language include two and rarely three words. Other elements, consisting of two or more words that look like compound are in the language. It may be difficult to distinct compound words from syntactic groups and phraseological elements that look alike. In accordance with the laws of the Chechen language, the groups of names and verbs can present compound words and free syntactic groups therefore it is the main difficulty (Kuhn, 1998). Thus, many compound words are similar to free syntactic groups and phraseological elements in the modern Chechen language. Therefore, at the moment, identifying the differences between compound words and free syntactic elements and thus it is advisable to determine the specific traits of compound words.

## 2. Problem Statement

The need to distinct from composites and similar syntactic groups is reasoned not only by theoretical considerations. Non-distinction of compound words which are common today leads to inadequate reflection and description of linguistic elements both in theoretical studies and dictionaries. Moreover, it raises difficulties in spelling compound words. In turn it affects the quality of teaching Chechen and Ingush in terms of spelling compound words and the syntactic elements associated with them.

## 3. Research Questions

Semantic integrity, the orientation of the corresponding nonseparable shell to this or that phenomenon, to this or that object is characteristic of a compound word, like any word in general, that is, words have their integral lexical meaning. There are no meaningless words, and they cannot exist in human language, although in some cases a word can denote an object or phenomenon that does not really exist (Melikishvili, 1962). Words, in addition to a simple nomination, have a semantic content that characterizes the designated object or phenomenon. Thus, it became possible to distinct from denotative and significate meaning. Thus, the words *shabohorig* “ice cutter”, *hidokhdiirig* “water heater” have a certain similarity to a unit or a device. The words *dahnelelorig* “livestock breeder”, *hjelijozarho* “milkmaid”, *doylelorho* “horse breeder”, and etc. is similar to occupation. Meanwhile, they have characterizing data. Besides, these words, like the majority of compound words, do not originate from the meaning of individual elements, the simple combination of their meanings. Thus semantic idiomaticity is typical of a compound word.

The immobility of the elements making up the word, that is, the absence of possibility of inversion, is also included in the nonseparability concept. In other words, the elements of a compound word should follow each other in an established sequence. In other cases they turn either into free combinations or into a meaningless combination of words. For instance: *blaurhyesap* at impossible *hiesap blair*, *bosbuu-rg* – has a free combination of *boo-rg bos*.

According to Shcherba L.V., a particular group can turn out to be a compound word which differs from the group only in this case it means more than the meanings of its constituent words. For instance the phrases like *general notebook*, *railroad*, *red wine* (*red* is associated with a number of wine qualities, and etc.) *toothpaste*, should be considered as compound words (as cited in Hajieva, 1979).

It is known that a compound word is a part of speech in morphological terms, and the elements of a phrase make up various parts of speech. For instance: *hIusamnana*, *pondarlokhurg* “accordionist, one who performs on any musical instrument” is a noun. *Price xIusam* is “clean, tidy home” (*tsIena* “clean, tidy” is an adverb, *xIusam* “dwelling, accommodation” is a noun). The elements of a compound word can not enter be included in syntactic links independently, and the elements of a phrase can form any other phrases. For instance: *tsIena*, *khaza xIusam* “clean, tidy home”, *haza*, *yokkha hIusam* “tidy, spacious home.”

The feature of regularity-irregularity is also one of the most essential in distinguishing compound words from free syntactic groups. A word in a language is an irregular formation, and a phrase is regular, that is, the constituent elements of a word are not repeated but phrases are repeated.

The nonseparability of the word was proposed by scientists as a criterion for determining its boundaries. Thus, Smirnitkii points out that it is a word, even a compound word that is distinguished by its integral formality which in general shows an existing semantic integrity, from a free phrase, an “idiomatic” phrase in particular, that is, the so-called phraseological unit, and etc. (as cited in Jaimoukha, 2005). Akhmanova points out the same: Vice versa, words, no matter how complex they are, always are nonseparable elements. Certainly their technical monolithicity and their nonseparability are external expressions of their semantic monolithicity (as cited in Jaimoukha, 2005).

Ganiev (as cited in Gamrekeli, 1961) distinguishes the following traits which give nonseparability to a word, in contrast to syntactic combinations that are separately formed:

1. Constituent elements of compound words designate a lexical meaning and play the role of a member in a sentence. For example, in Chechen:

*Nenanana hyome hullu muulhhachu a stega*. “Grandma is always adored by everyone”;  
*Issblarrgah dosush dara xIintsa shaderg a*. “Everything now depends on the nine.”

In the above mentioned examples, compound words *nenanana* “grandma”, *issblarrg* “nine” express a lexical meaning and play the role of a member of a sentence: words *nenana*, *issblarrg* are subject and complement, respectively, in the above sentences.

The elements of free syntactic groups express two various lexical meanings and play the role of two members of a sentence unlike compound words, for instance: *Hluma lachkyinachunna – tskhya ka*, *yaynachunna – iss ka* “To the one who stole – one sin, and to the one who lost – nine sins” (Chech. proverb). The combination members *iss ka* in this sentence show different lexical meanings and play the role of different members of the sentence: definitions and complements.

2. Elements of a compound word can not be separated by a third word that has an independent meaning, that is, they can not be distant. For instance, we can not separate the elements of a compound word *kjorakhokha* “turtledove”, *Iairzhablarrg* “furuncle”, *xIusamnana* “housewife” and others with any other word.

A compound word either falls into syntactic elements, or loses integrity and transforms into an artificial group of words without a definite meaning with a distant arrangement of elements.

Arnold (as cited in Hajieva, 1979) points out to the indivisibility of a compound word and to the absence of possibility to put another word or phrase between the members in the English language. For instance, take the word a “sunbeam”, then we can put another word between the article and the noun – “a bright sunbeam”, and “a bright and unexpected sunbeam” since the article is a separate word. Nevertheless, it is not allowed to put any word between the stems “sun” and “beam” since these are not independent words, they are morphemes.

The elements of free syntactic groups can be located at a distance, in contrast to compound words. At the same time, their combined integrity is not violated and the meaning is preserved. The syntactic phrase *siin khokha* when dividing it with a third word does not violate integrity and meaning: *Siina haza khokha bara korekh lash* “A wonderful gray dove was sitting on the windowsill.”

Meshkov refers the nature of syntactic links to the external traits of inseparability of a compound word. The researcher writes: “It is known that the elements of compound words can not get into independent syntactic links: for instance, both full-valued words can be defined in the phrases “(a factory) financed by the state”: “a factory that is generously financed by the government of Great Britain”. In this case of this compound word “state-financed”, none of its elements can be extended. We can not say “generously state-financed.” The expansion of the first element is possible only through the formation of a three-element compound word: “Labor-state-finance” (as cited in Gamrekeli, 1961). Accordingly, the elements of a compound word can get into syntactic links not independently, but as a part of the whole compound word.

Cherkasskaia (as cited in Hajieva, 1979) gives an example: “a good schoolgirl” where good does not refer to the first or second element but to the whole combination.

In Chechen, a defining word can be attached to a compound word with the first adjective element, for example, *khyarsakhyach*, but *tslien khyarsakhyach* “red cherry plum”, *beha lairzhakhach* “long prune”, and etc. These definitions will be applied to the whole group. If the first part in a phrase is an adjective, the defining word can play the role of a homogeneous element next to the first part of the phrase – an adjective. For instance: *kena yokkha kuotam* “old big chicken”, *dokkha bursa zhajla* and “big scary dog”, and others.

This criterion is extremely important, especially in relation to the composites of verb, the elements of which are less monolithic. As a result, the question of whether the defining word is attached to the first part of the verbal composite or to the whole complex of the composite has a significant distinctive meaning. For example, adjective-adverb *hlorla* “strong, strongly” in terms of the composite *muohtuoha* “shout” (“scream to hit”) has the meaning of an adverb (results of the action course): *hlorla muohtuoha* “shout loudly” – and, as a result, it is referred to the whole complex, and not to one (first) element – the noun as a qualitative adjective-definition. We can say the same for the following groups: *dika satuokha* “endure well”, *wuo катуоhа* “catch badly”, and etc. If the defining words are attached not to the whole complex of verbs, but only to one first element – the name as being defined, we would get separately formed groups of the type of complement + predicate and not a composite which has an integral form.

Besides, a phrase as a nominative element has a meaning in a sentence. That is, its nominative function depends on the context, while the similar function of a complex word does not depend on the context.

The difference between nominal complex words and the corresponding phrases is seen when we answer a question *xlyn?* (what?) or *mila?* (who?). In this case, the whole complex word is called, while only the main (usually the second defined) word is taken from the combination for this answer.

For instance, compound words: *Xlyn yu iza?* – “What is this?” *X'arsakhyach bar iza-m* “This is cherry-plum”, *Buochablar dara iza-m* “This is walnut”, *Klaldittta dara iza-m*. “This is cheese (cottage cheese) with butter (name of the dish).”

This criterion is also used for all other types of nominal verb composites answering the same question.

We pose the question differently in relation to composites of verbs and corresponding phrases. When we answer the question: *Xlyn dan?* “What to do?” the first element will not be omitted in a phrase like a complex verb, for example: *Ahh xlyn up?* “What are you doing?” – *glaz tukhu* “I am hitting with a stick”, and etc.

We express any specific action in this way in the Nakh languages. The verb will be used in a non-specific meaning, and we will omit the object-name: *Xlyn dan?* “What to do?” – *tuoha* “to hit”, *khuossa* “throw”, and etc. Thus, it may be impossible to determine a criterion to distinguish a complex verb and the corresponding phrase according to this method, since the use of a verb with an object name to denote a specific action in the Nakh languages is a usual phenomenon (Suleibanova, 2013).

In contrast to the composition of a compound word, the composition of a phrase can also vary and maintain the same main or secondary term – *klai kuotam* “white chicken”, *klai c1a* “white house” or *lairzha kuotam* “black chicken”, *lairzha c1a* “black house” (the second part varies); *tlulg khuossa* “to throw a stone”, *lazz khuossa* “to throw an apple” (the first part varies)” (Gamrekeli, 1961).

3. Interdependence and interpenetration exist between the elements of compound words, because of which it is impossible to omit any element and preserve the meaning and integrity of a word. For instance, the integrity and meaning of the words *xIusamnana* “housewife” and *nenanana* “grandmother” in Chechen and the words “schoolgirl” and “toothbrush” in English are violated by omitting any element.

4. Phonetic-prosodic differences are found in compound words and free syntactic groups. Firstly, there are two independent stresses that look like compound words in free syntactic combinations. Only one independent power stress is observed in compound words that resemble free syntactic groups, except for paired words, while the first element may have an auxiliary stress. For instance, the compound word *nenanana* “grandma” has a single stress that falls on the first syllable of the first element. A completely different picture can be observed in prosodic terms if we look at a phrase similar to this compound word. It means that this phrase will have two independent stresses (*iss ka* “nine sins”), or three independent stresses: *siina haza khokha* “blue (light blue) beautiful pigeon.” Secondly, there is no pause between the elements of a complex word, which we find between individual words that form a syntactic phrase. The absence of a verbal pause is a differentiating trait of a compound word and a syntactic phrase. For example, the complex word *korkhokha* “turtledove” does not have any noticeable pause which occurs in a phrase which has the same elements: *siina haza khokha*.

The morphological trait also takes place in the Chechen language. This trait is applied to proper compound words, the first element of which does not preserve the derivational affix of the adjective, for instance: *xIusamnana* (hIusaman nana) – “housewife”, *devasha* (den vasha) – “uncle (on father’s side)”, *denana* (den nana) – “grandma (on father’s side)”, *maryisha* “sister-in-law”, *marshich* (maran shicha) – “cousin, husband’s cousin”, *nenanana* (nenan nana) – “grandma (on mother’s side)”, and etc. The first element of such composites is formed in the genitive case and in Ingush: *da-da* “grandfather (on father’s side, spel. father’s father)», *da-nana* “grandma (on father’s side), spel. father’s mother”, *mar-da* “father-in-law”, *mar-iisha* “sister-in-law”, *marvasha* “brother-in-law”, *mar-ioI* “stepdaughter”, *ust-vosha* “brother-in-law”, *ust-da* “father-in-law”, *ust-iisha* “sister-in-law”, *ust-nana* “mother-in-law” (Suleibanova, 2013).

#### 4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is:

1. To continue a scientific discussion on the identification of compound words and similar syntactic combinations in the Nakh languages and in the Iberian-Caucasian languages, in particular.
2. To draw the attention of researchers to this problem and call for more active engagement in the study.

#### 5. Research Methods

In the course of the research the following methods were used: the method of classification, the linguistic analysis, widely used by all researchers who studied the material of specific languages or linguistic groups.

#### 6. Findings

According to the above mentioned aspects, we can name the following traits of the compound word inseparability in the Nakh languages:

1. Elements of compound words have one lexical meaning and paly the role of one member in a sentence.
2. Compound word can not be separated, it is impossible to put another word or phrase between the elements of a compound word.
3. Structural unity and inseparability of a compound word depends on the stress unity.
4. Unity of a complex word is formed by a single and general meaning.
5. Derivative suffixes can serve as indicators of the inseparability of a compound word.
6. Unity and inseparability of a compound word also depends on the order of the compound word elements and the nature of its elements compatibility.

## 7. Conclusion

Distinguishing between compound words and their associated constructions is not a matter of theory alone. Its solution depends on how strict and ordered the spelling of compound words will be, how consistently we are able to differ compound words from syntactic constructions associated with them.

Different researchers put forward many features as criteria used in order to distinct from compound words and phrases. In our opinion, the basic are those listed above, which essentially boil down to the features of semantic, nominative, morphological, phonetic and functional (syntactic) integrity, impenetrability and stability. Therefore, compound words are a reflection of the “diversity of linguistic activity.” Thus, one or several traits are sometimes not enough to determine the identity of a compound word. Occasionally, it is impossible since some elements correspond to all the traits while others do not.

## References

- Gamrekeli, V. N. (1961). *Dvala and Dvaletia in the I-XV centuries AD e.* GeogPubl.
- Hajieva V. G. (1979). *Description of countries and peoples between Astrakhan and the Kura River located.* Mysl.
- Jaimoukha, A. (2005). *The Chechens: A Handbook.* Oxon.
- Kuhn, T. (1998). Density matrix theory of coherent ultrafast dynamics. In *Theory of Transport Properties of Semiconductor Nanostructures.* (Vol. 4): *Electronic Materials* (pp. 173–214). Chapman and Hall.
- Melikishvili, G. A. (1962). *To the study of ancient East Maloasian ethnonymy.* VDI.