



DETERMINANTS – THE PREFACE TO NEW SYNTACTIC INTERPRETATIONS

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Annotation

In the article “Determinants as Sentence Expansers,” unlike previous studies of this issue in Uzbek linguistics, which were mainly based on speech phenomena, criteria for defining and distinguishing adverbial modifiers and complements in the structure of the Uzbek sentence are developed. It is stated that the new understanding of the status of determinants in sentence structure is the result of a consistent and gradual study by linguists of the valency features of linguistic units and minimal sentence models.

Key words: sentence expansion, determinants, valency, word expansion, status of complement, status of adverbial modifier, differentiation of secondary sentence parts.

The functioning of secondary sentence elements that independently determine the predicative group in sentence structure is recognized both in Uzbek linguistics and in certain Turkological studies.[1] Although this phenomenon has been studied in Uzbek linguistics as a special research object, it has not yet been introduced into teaching practice. Only limited materials have been devoted to this issue. Even in these studies, determination and determinant elements are interpreted according to different principles. Two main approaches can be observed:

An attempt to interpret determinant elements as part of the theory of actual division of the sentence; An attempt to justify determinant elements as a category related to the grammatical division of the sentence. The first approach is reflected in



K. Hayitmetov's article "Determinants in the Aspect of Actual Sentence Division." In this work, he attempts to interpret these elements as components of actual sentence division. According to him, in actual sentence division, an independent component—usually performing the function of theme—is the main factor determining whether a linguistic form appears as a determinant or not. In forming this conclusion, he relies on the views of O.A. Krylov. However, the author does not consistently apply this principle. While discussing the features of determinant elements, he also includes other grammatical properties as their main characteristics. He writes that the main features of determinants are being an independent component in actual sentence division, often functioning as theme; being a secondary element that belongs entirely to the sentence and expands it as a whole; frequently having a prepositive position, i.e., occurring at the beginning of the sentence.

The researcher's claims such as "determinants are rare in two-member sentences" or "almost absent in verbal sentences" do not correspond to linguistic facts (he mostly considers one-member nominal sentences). Moreover, although the author aims to establish determinants as an independent syntactic category, he sometimes contradicts this intention. For example, in sentences like "Qo'llarida xurjuncha" ("A small bag in their hands"), he classifies "qo'llarida" as a determinant, but at the same time states that it is connected to an implicitly assumed predicative element such as "is," "held," or "is holding." Thus, he ultimately interprets such constructions as elliptical sentences against his own intention. When their full form is restored, these elements form combinations with verbs like "is," "held," or "is holding." In this case, they become equivalent to ordinary secondary sentence parts. Such interpretation may cause the determinant to lose its status as an independent syntactic category.[2]

In the scholar's works, the issue of determinants is often solved in connection with nominative sentences. It is noted that "sentences containing secondary parts



expressing adverbial and object meanings (determinants) are structurally complete.” It is further argued that “in such sentences, inserting an omitted verb is artificial and changes their functional nature.” In his works, determinants are understood as truly independent elements that are not mentally linked to any other sentence component. Their differentiation is carried out on the basis of grammatical criteria.

The interpretation of determinants as a grammatical phenomenon is also evident in the works of A. Ghulomov. In the textbook *Modern Uzbek Literary Language. Syntax* (1987), co-authored with M. Asqarova, determinants are identified as an independent syntactic category and presented under a separate heading. According to A. Ghulomov, in recent times, based on the functional characteristics of secondary sentence parts, they have been divided into two types: secondary parts that expand a specific element of the sentence (traditional objects, attributes, and adverbials in their usual function); secondary parts that expand the entire sentence (objects and adverbials used in a non-standard way), i.e., determinants.[3]

Modern syntactic theory increasingly interprets sentence structure not as a static arrangement of grammatical constituents, but as a dynamic system governed by valency relations, functional expansion mechanisms, and discourse-level organization. Within this framework, the concept of determinants requires reconsideration as a distinct type of sentence-level modifier that operates beyond traditional dependency relations. Unlike canonical secondary sentence parts such as objects, attributes, and adverbials, determinants exhibit a higher degree of syntactic independence. They are not strictly governed by a single lexical head but rather relate to the entire predicative core of the sentence. This structural behavior allows determinants to function as global sentence expanders rather than local modifiers. As a result, they occupy an intermediate position between sentence grammar and discourse organization.



From the perspective of functional syntax, determinants may be interpreted as frame-setting elements that establish the situational, temporal, spatial, or contextual background of the proposition. In this sense, they contribute not only to the grammatical completeness of the sentence but also to its pragmatic interpretation. Temporal determinants define the time frame of the event, locative determinants establish its spatial orientation, while situational determinants provide broader contextual information such as manner, condition, or accompanying circumstances. This classification corresponds closely to the principles of frame semantics, according to which linguistic expressions activate cognitive structures of situational understanding.

In terms of information structure, determinants play an essential role in organizing the thematic progression of discourse. Sentence-initial determinants frequently function as thematic anchors, establishing the topic or contextual frame before the introduction of the rheme, or core informational focus. This positioning enhances textual coherence and ensures continuity across sentences. Therefore, determinants should be considered not only syntactic units but also discourse-regulating elements that contribute to the overall information architecture of a text. Cross-linguistic evidence supports the universality of determinant-like constructions. Similar syntactic patterns are observed in English, Russian, Turkish, and many other languages, where sentence-initial adverbial or circumstantial phrases function as global modifiers of the proposition. For instance, constructions such as “In the village...”, “In the morning...”, or “Under difficult conditions...” demonstrate that determinants are not restricted to Uzbek or Turkic linguistic systems but represent a broader typological phenomenon. This universality further strengthens the argument for treating determinants as a cross-linguistic syntactic category. From a pedagogical perspective, incorporating determinants into syntactic instruction significantly enhances learners’ analytical competence. Traditional



grammar often limits students to identifying sentence parts based on formal syntactic roles.

The interpretation of determinants as a grammatical phenomenon is also observed in S.V. Saidahmedov's comparative study of determinant-based nominative sentences in German and Uzbek. However, the author adopts a specific position: determinants are interpreted only as elements characteristic of one-member nominative sentences expressing existence. This is clearly reflected in his definition, where determinants are described as "concretizers" of the grammatical base of the sentence, although they do not enter into any syntactic relation with it.

Indeed, when such sentence components are analyzed within the framework of word combinations or sentence parts, new interpretations emerge in syntax. This approach shifts traditional sentence parsing toward a more functional-syntactic analysis. It requires examining sentence elements in terms of valency theory. Traditional classification of sentence parts raises the issue of distinguishing the core structure of the sentence and its extensions. This, in turn, strengthens the connection between syntax and other linguistic levels, especially lexicology and morphology.

In our opinion, the time has come to study and teach determinant elements within the framework of sentence theory. Such an approach would positively influence learners' thinking abilities and expand their lexical competence through the study of semantic potential of words. Modern linguistics should not deny the existence of such syntactic relations but instead analyze their distinctive features compared to other relations. The recognition of such syntactic-semantic relations in textbooks and educational materials is one of the most urgent theoretical tasks of contemporary linguistics.

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