WORD-COMBINATIONS AND THEIR TYPES IN MODERN ENGLISH

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Annotation: This article examines the linguistic nature of word-combinations in Modern English and presents a systematic classification of their main types. Word-combinations occupy an intermediate position between isolated words and complete sentences, functioning as essential units of syntactic organization. The study focuses on the structural, semantic, and functional characteristics of word-combinations, highlighting their role in expressing complex meanings through grammatical and lexical relations. Both traditional grammatical approaches and modern linguistic perspectives are considered in order to provide a clear and comprehensive understanding of how word-combinations operate in English. The aim of the article is to clarify the concept of word-combinations, outline their main types, and demonstrate their significance in linguistic analysis and language learning.

Key words: word-combination, phrase, syntactic relation, head and dependent, coordination, subordination, predication, grammatical structure, Modern English syntax.

Word-combinations occupy a central place in the grammatical structure of Modern English, as they represent the basic means through which words are organized into larger meaningful units. Unlike isolated lexical items, word-combinations reveal how language operates through systematic relations between words. At the same time, they differ from sentences in that they do not normally express a complete communicative act. This intermediate status makes word-combinations a key object of syntactic analysis and an important link between morphology and syntax.

In linguistic theory, a word-combination is understood as a group of two or more words that are grammatically connected and form a unified semantic whole. The defining feature of a word-combination is the presence of a syntactic relation between its components. These relations are governed by the grammatical rules of the language and reflect how speakers conceptualize actions, qualities, and objects. In English, where inflection is relatively limited, such relations are primarily expressed through word order, prepositions, and functional words.

Most word-combinations are structured around a head word, which determines the grammatical nature of the entire unit. The dependent element modifies, specifies, or complements the meaning of the head. For example, in combinations such as *write a letter* or *very important*, the verb *write* and the adjective *important* function as heads, while the accompanying elements depend on them. This head–dependent structure ensures internal cohesion and distinguishes word-combinations from random word sequences. According to the type of syntactic relation between components, word-combinations in Modern English are commonly classified into subordinate, coordinate, and predicative types. Subordinate word-combinations are based on relations of dependence, where one element dominates the other. This type is the most widespread in English and includes combinations such as *a difficult task*,

to speak fluently, and *interested in linguistics*. Subordination allows speakers to express detailed semantic relationships, including qualification, object relations, and adverbial modification. Coordinate word-combinations are formed through the relation of coordination, in which the components are grammatically equal. Typical examples include *men and women*, *slow but careful*, and *read and write*. In such combinations, neither element depends on the other; instead, they are linked by conjunctions or intonation. Coordination reflects the logical relations of addition, contrast, or alternation and contributes to the expansion of meaning within a sentence. Predicative word-combinations are characterized by a subject-predicate relation between their components, although they do not constitute full sentences. Constructions such as *him speaking loudly* or *the door being open* illustrate this type. These combinations resemble sentences structurally but lack finite verb forms, which prevents them from functioning as independent communicative units. Nevertheless, predicative word-combinations play an important role in complex syntactic constructions.

From a semantic perspective, word-combinations may be either free or stable. Free word-combinations allow for a wide range of substitutions and are created freely in speech, as in *read a book* or *open the window*. Stable word-combinations show limited variability and often develop conventional meanings, approaching idiomatic expressions. The distinction between free and stable combinations highlights the interaction between grammar and vocabulary in the language system. The study of word-combinations demonstrates that grammatical meaning in English emerges not only from individual words but also from their patterned combination. Through word-combinations, speakers organize information, express relationships between concepts, and build larger syntactic structures. As a result, word-combinations represent a fundamental mechanism of meaning formation and play a crucial role in both linguistic theory and practical language use.

In this respect, word-combinations can be viewed as dynamic units that reflect both the stability of grammatical rules and the flexibility of actual language use. Their internal organization demonstrates how English compensates for limited morphological marking by relying on syntactic structure and fixed patterns of combination. Through the interaction of head words and dependent elements, word-combinations encode relations of action, quality, quantity, and circumstance, thereby serving as the primary building blocks of larger syntactic constructions. Furthermore, the classification of word-combinations into subordinate, coordinate, and predicative types reveal that syntactic relations in English are not uniform but functionally differentiated. Each type contributes to meaning formation in a distinct way, allowing speakers to present information as modified, combined, or conditionally related. This diversity of structural patterns confirms that word-combinations are not merely mechanical groupings of words, but linguistically motivated units shaped by semantic intent and communicative needs. The distinction between free and stable word-combinations also highlights the gradual transition from grammar to lexis within the language system. While free combinations reflect productive grammatical models, stable combinations demonstrate how repeated usage leads to conventionalization and semantic fixation.

Taken together, these observations show that word-combinations play a decisive role in organizing meaning in Modern English. They provide a framework through which speakers structure thought, maintain coherence, and expand expression beyond isolated lexical items. A thorough understanding of word-combinations therefore deepens insight into the grammatical

system of English and contributes to more accurate linguistic analysis as well as more effective language use.

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