

A THEORETICAL AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF VERB VALENCY IN ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola fe'ning valentligi tushunchasini o'rganadi; bu fe'li olishi mumkin bo'lgan dalillar soniga ishora qiladi. Ushbu maqola 1959-yilda Lyusen Tesner tomonidan taqdim etilgan valentlik nazariyasi tarixini bayon qiladi. Shuningdek, maqolada ingliz va rus tillarining valentlik tizimlari qarama-qarshi qo'yilgan bo'lib, bu ikki til o'rtasidagi strukturaviy va tipologik tafovutlarga e'tibor qaratiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: fe'li valentligi, aktantlar va holatlar, valentlik nazariyasi, qiyosiy tilshunoslik.

Annotation: This article explores the concept of verb valency, which refers to the number of arguments a verb can take. It outlines the history of valency theory presented by Lucien Tesnière in 1959. The article also contrasts the valency systems of English and Russian, highlighting the structural and typological distinctions between the two languages.

Keywords: verb valency, actants and circumstances, valency theory, comparative linguistics

Аннотация: В этой статье рассматривается концепция валентности глагола, которая относится к числу аргументов, которые может иметь глагол. В ней излагается история теории валентности, представленной Люсьеном Тесньером в 1959 году. Также в статье сопоставляются системы валентности английского и русского языков, подчеркивая структурные и типологические различия между двумя языками.

Ключевые слова: валентность глагола, актанты и обстоятельства, теория валентности, сравнительная лингвистика.

Verb valency is a fundamental concept in linguistic theory, referring to the number of arguments a verb can take. Valency was first examined in the context of

dependency grammar by Tesnière in 1959. Lucien Tesnière was the first to introduce the concept of valency, which defines the verb as the centre of sentence structure and its capacity to govern a specific number of arguments, known as actants [1]. Tesnière claimed that verbs work similarly, calculating the number of actants required for a grammatically complete sentence [1]. Based on this, he classified verbs into three main types:

1. Monovalent verbs, which require only one actant, typically the subject (e.g., "*He sleeps*") [1].
2. Bivalent verbs, which require two actants, typically a subject and a direct object (e.g., "*She reads a book*") [1].
3. Trivalent verbs, which require three actants, such as a subject, a direct object, and an indirect object (e.g., "*He gave her a gift*") [1].

Tesnière made a distinction between circumstants, which are optional parts that contribute information but are not controlled by the verb, and actants, which are necessary participants that the verb requires [1]. In the sentence "*She gave him a book yesterday*," for example, the verb "gave" governs three actants: "She" as the subject, "him" as the indirect object, and "a book" as the direct object. Yesterday, on the other hand, is a circumstant that adds temporal information without changing the sentence's grammaticality.

Valency theory has been developed differently in English and Russian linguistics due to structural and typological differences between the two languages. While both traditions recognize valency as the capacity of a verb to govern a specific number of arguments, they differ in their theoretical approaches, syntactic realization, and classification of valency types [2], [3], [4].

In English linguistics, valency theory is influenced by Tesnière's structuralist framework and later developments by Helbig and Schenkel and Herbst [2], [5]. The focus is on distinguishing arguments, which are required by the verb, from adjuncts, which provide optional information. Argument structure theories in generative grammar and subcategorization frames in lexicography and computational linguistics are intimately related to English valency [6].

In contrast, Russian linguistics integrates valency theory with case government and semantic roles [3], [4]. Since Russian is an inflectional language with a rich case system, valency classification often centers on which cases verbs require for their arguments, rather than strict word order [7]. Russian linguistic traditions also consider lexical functions within Meaning-Text Theory, which emphasizes the interaction between syntax and semantics [4].

A key distinction between English and Russian verb valency lies in how verb arguments are marked:

1. English relies on word order and prepositions, making syntactic structure central to valency classification [2]. For example, “*She gave him a book*” (fixed SVO order, indirect object precedes direct object).

2. Russian relies on morphological case endings, meaning case government is crucial for valency [3]. For example, “*Она дала ему книгу*” (She gave him a book.) – Dative (ему) and Accusative (книгу) mark the object roles.

Since Russian allows greater word order flexibility, verbs are classified based on case-marked dependents rather than positional constraints [4].

Verb valency, which connects syntax, semantics, and cognitive linguistics, is still a crucial topic in linguistic research. Both universal principles and language-specific variances are revealed by comparing valency across languages. Future research should continue to integrate theoretical and empirical insights to refine our understanding of how valency shapes sentence structure.

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