

**THE IMPLICATION OF PARADIGMATIC AND SYNTAGMATIC  
RELATIONS IN MORPHOLOGY TO LANGUAGE TEACHING AND  
LEARNING: A SYSTEMATIC OVERVIEW**

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**Abstract:** English Language has many unique properties among which are words; the most tangible elements of a language. Morphology has an impact on Language learners' ability to both listen and speak efficiently in English. Indeed, the most serious problems of teaching English have to do with the quality of the teachers available for teaching the language as nearly all such teachers are L2 speakers. The paper aims to broaden the scope and knowledge of students and their teachers on word use and word formation through paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations. Accordingly, the possibility of effecting appreciable improvement in the quality of the English spoken in the country as a whole would appear very remote if the study of words and their relationships continue to be neglected in schools. The paper recommends the training of teachers in Contrastive Linguistics who are unable to understand and consequently devise effective pedagogical strategies for combating the mostly mother-tongue-induced kinds of learners' errors that recur in students' written and oral performances in the language.

**Keywords:** language teaching and learning, morphology, paradigmatic, syntagmatic

**INTRODUCTION**

The ability to decode the morphemic structure of words and further analyze them has been improved by a range of morphological paradigm research

during the past ten years. The relationships between paradigms and syntagms have some significance for learning the English language in terms of not only comprehending word

meanings but also identifying various morphological forms and patterns of the same words. Learning, however, is not a solitary, personal cognitive activity.

Yokozuka et al. (2021) claimed that verbal communication is the current crisis in Indonesian education. If educational standards have fallen or are falling, a key factor in this is the inability of popular, non-elitist public schools to effectively manipulate verbal communication. Paradigmatic and syntagmatic linkages are two ways that language teachers can use to help pupils grasp terminology and improve comprehension (Brown & Golston, 2004; Hasan et al., 2022). Both teachers and students need to understand the

fundamental construction of words and how they interact to generate coherent sentences.

The internal structure of words and the connections between them are studied by the branch of linguistics known as morphology, according to Gerngross et al. (2007). It is the study of morphemes and how they are combined to make words; then, Pawlak (2018), words are the most obvious components of a language. A language unit enters intonations of two different types: paradigmatic and syntagmatic links (Anggrawan et al., 2019; Azar, 2007; Martin et al., 2023).

The Greek words paradigmatic and syntagmatic, which mean "pattern" and "arrange together," respectively, are the source of these two words (Gerot

& Wignell, 1994; Lavid et al., 2010). These were contrasting terms in structural linguistics and were procedures introduced by the Swiss Linguist, Ferdinand De Saussure (Bynon, 1977; Harris & Campbell, 1995).

Given that English is the second language in Indonesia and that there are more and more people learning it around the world, it is unusual to see language learners who are unable to use the language effectively and efficiently. It is also becoming clear that language teachers, who are expected to assist these language learners in recognizing and using new words, are unable to do so. The significance of this study is: to increase both the learner's and teacher's understanding of word relationships that are syntagmatic and paradigmatic. Implementation of this

knowledge when using English better when speaking and writing. Especially for English teachers who can deepen their mastery of morphology.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research methodology to show how a scenario relates to an indicator or the present condition of the findings in the field. A qualitative research process is the creation of descriptive data from people or observed behaviors as written or spoken words (Fraenkle et al., 2012; Kerryn Dixon et al., 2018).

To gather data and information for this study, some theories from experts are implicated in the process of applying learning of the pertinent

data sources were the methods employed.

This study draws on library research, which accumulates in-depth information on one or more topics. In this inquiry, primary and secondary sources are both utilized. The reason it is referred to as "library research" is that the data or materials needed to complete the research can be found in books, journals, documents, magazines, and other items available in libraries (Aronoff & Fudeman, 2011). The readings utilized for this study can roughly be divided into two groups, namely: Textbooks, encyclopedias, monographs, and other wide sources of reference that frequently include general notions and concepts; Journals, research

bulletins, theses, and other sources can be used as specific references.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Paradigmatic Relations**

Paradigmatic relation is the choice or relations of similarity and differences between signs, meaning, and internal and external structures. According to Xu, (2018), 'paradigmatic relations are between units that could (potentially) occur in the same slot, and co-exist only in the lexicon, as well as the substitution of those units.

The concept of paradigm is generally restricted to representing patterns or relationships among inflected words, however, the role of paradigm in morphological operations is independent of whether the process involved is inflectional or derivational, but

rather, a series of changes in the shape of linguistic forms which matches a series of changes in positions; (Alfoudari et al., 2021; Hidayatullah, 2022). The paradigmatic description is word-based, paying much attention to resemblances among words in the lexicon' (Hamad, 2007; Oktaviani & S.E. Nugroho, 2015). Paradigmatic relations are indicated in a vertical pattern and can be illustrated in the following examples.

'paralleled formal and semantic

(a) **Paradigms of verbal forms**

Dance	dances	danced	dancing	danced
Sing	sings	sang	singing	sang
Write	writes	wrote	writing	written

(b) **Paradigms of noun forms (also known as declensions)**

Boy	boy's	boys
Man	man's	men
Horse	Horse's	Horses

(c) **Paradigms for two English Nouns Singular**

**Singular**

Common	Farmer	Garden
Possessive	Farmer's	Garden's

**Plural**

Common	Farmers	Gardens
Possessive	Farmers	Gardens'

From the knowledge of the above paradigms, L2 learners become consciously aware of the morphemic structure of words and their ability to reflect on and manipulate that structure” (Agustinasari et al., 2022; Purwanto & Agustin, 2022). Therefore, the explicit knowledge of the smallest meaningful units of language, including derivational

(e.g., -er/-or, -tion, un-, ing, re-)

In the same vein, most English nouns have singular and plural forms which are related by the addition of ‘s’ to mark plurality while the singular is unmarked. Similarly, the contrast or relationship with adjectives is that of the use of ‘er’ ‘est or an adverb as is the case with the example below;

(d) **Paradigm of Adjectives**

young	younger	youngest	very young	too young
new	newer	newest	very new	too new
red	redder	reddest	very red	too red

In the above paradigms (a, b, and c), the morphemic variations correspond with a parallel system of variation in a particular linguistic environment. For instance, the verbs (sing, dance, write) can co-exist in identical

linguistic environments and can be substituted in a frame. Look at the following examples derived from the verbs (sing, dance, write).

- She can sing well.
- She can dance all night.
- She can write her name.

The verbs in the above example appear in identical linguistic environments as they occupy the third position of the grammatically substituted sentence, after which other words or verbal elements can follow. If other forms of the verbs (danced, dancing) are subjected to the above structure, the same patterning will be derived; for instance, the past participle (danced, sang, written) can be used in the same grammatical environment as in:

#### **Paradigmatic Relations in Derivational Words**

The word schema can be used to show paradigmatic relations in derivational words. The word **'aggression'** for instance has a paradigmatic relationship with such words as **attraction,**

She has danced today  
She has sung a new song  
She has written the letter

The same is applied to the nouns and adjective paradigms. Thus, members of all the verbs listed in the examples are closely related and are said to be in paradigmatic relationship with one another, and words that show parallel patterns of related forms belong to the same category either as nouns, verbs, or adjective (Kamil, 2019; Wilson, 2010).

**suggestion, prohibition, and discussion** and can be represented as follows;

/X ion/<sub>N</sub>

action of doing

Also, the word **unjust, and acceptable** and is  
**‘unacceptable’** is described thus;  
paradigmatically related to words  
such as **uncommon, unhappy,**

/X/<sub>A</sub>

/un-X/<sub>A</sub>

Having quality ↔ ‘not having quality’<sub>s</sub>

Another contrast is noted in like **eatable, receivable, and**  
the word **‘agreeable’** which has **deliverable** and can be represented  
paradigmatic relations with words as:

/X/<sub>v</sub> ↔  
Agree

/X able/<sub>A</sub>  
capable of being done<sub>x</sub>.

However, a linguistic unit can be marked or unmarked depending on its usage. For instance, the word ‘dog’ and ‘bitch’ are paradigmatically related because they can be constituted in a particular context, but can be contrasted as marked or unmarked units. The word ‘dog’ is unmarked because it is general while ‘bitch’ is marked because it is specific, talking about a particular sex; a female dog.

However, morphemes (i.e., suffixes and prefixes) and inflectional (e.g., -ed, -s, -ing, -est) markers (i.e., suffixes) can better help learners understand the morphemic structure of words and thereafter reflect upon as well as

manipulate this word structure to have a greater understanding of the overall meaning of the word. Unfortunately, learners of English in Indonesia are not able to use

### **Syntagmatic Relations**

The syntagmatic approach to morphology gained prominence among linguistics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is one of the dimensions by which structural linguists treat words as interrelated systems rather than ordinary aggregates of individuals. According to Cahyono & Widiati (2011), ‘syntagmatic relations are between units that (potentially) follow each other in speech’, and also the segmentation of words into morphemes within the environment in which they occur’. This relation also relates to linguistic ‘glue’, combinatory

inflections and derivations efficiently to determine their meaning. There are still very many errors and confusion in relating their meaning and use.

relations, and creates larger signs from smaller signs. For example, nouns and verbs are glued or joined together as subjects and predicates of sentences. When this happens, the words are said to be syntagmatically related. Examples can be derived from the linguistic levels of phonology, morphology, and syntax.

### **Phonological Level**

At phonological levels, consonants and vowels are glued together as syllables, following the phonological rules, example, in the word ‘come’ /k ʌ m/ where /k/ and /m/ are consonants and / ʌ / is a vowel coming together in a

structural bond to form the monosyllabic word /k ʌ m/. The three phonemes /k, ʌ and m/ are in syntagmatic relations because they are structurally joined together to give the phonetic shape of the word to give meaning. It should be noted that the phonological rule will ordinarily not allow the formation of a word with the sound's arrangement patterning

like /ʌ k m/. It is a meaningless succession of sounds in an utterance, not joined in a recognized structural bond and, therefore are not in a syntagmatic relationship with each other.

At the morphological level, the following conditions are noted:

- a) Lexical morphemes and affixes are bound or glued together to derive new words.

#### Examples

i)	un + desire + able	}	=	undesirable
ii)	book + ish		=	bookish
iii)	nation + al		=	nationals

b) Stems are bonded together into compound stems; examples: bookstore, laptop, headset, typewriter, bedroom, classroom, phone call. Though these are two words combined to form compound stems, they have one meaningful part each.

bonded together into words.

Examples can be derived from the following words ending with 's' 'es' or 'ed' as in; teaches, plays, and dancing.

The morphemes – s, 'es', or 'ed' are joined together in a structural bond to derive the words.

c) Stems and inflections are

### **Syntactic Level**

At this level, words or groups of words are joined together following grammatical rules to derive meaning. These grammatical rules have constituted a lot of problems for L2 learners of English who often would over-generalize as the case may be. According to Yule & Brown (2010), 'the English Language has strict rules for combining words into phrases. For instance, the following sentence can be said to be grammatically correct 'The girl is here' because it is 'syntactically well-formed', Richard & Renandya (2022); ungrammatical and unacceptable when it is 'here is girl the'. Lyon also noted that any combination of elements or units of a given language that is not well-formed in terms of the rules

of the language is ill-formed.

Husnawati (2017) further described the English Language as a 'Language with what is commonly called fixed word order consisting of a subject, verb and object' that is also difficult for learners to comprehend and internalize; for example;

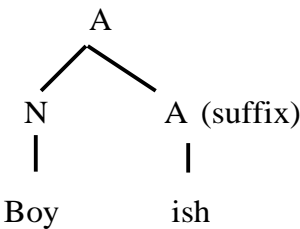
- He hit (kick) - has to be followed by a noun object. We can have
- He hit (kick) the wall; and not 'He hit'

However, the verb sleep/doze does not normally follow the above syntactic pattern, thus we will have 'Peter slept' and not 'Peter slept the bed'

The syntagmatic description is morpheme-based and can be used to show constituent relations (ie) the relationship between the

base and the affixes. For instance, the suffix – ish is mostly attached to nouns changing their word class. Thus, boyish becomes an

adjective as is seen in the following tree diagram.



Syntagmatic relations can be in syntactic sequence of class constructions as noted in Nikolov (2002). The sequences include;

1. Adjective plus noun,  
e.g., redlight, sunglass,  
blackboard
2. Noun plus noun  
e.g., classroom, boardroom.  
Torchlight
3. Verbal plus noun

e.g., Dinning-hall

Syntagmatic relations can also be observed in words that collocate in the English language which are based mainly on idiomatic usage (ie) the way English is used whether or not it contradicts strict grammatical rules. These examples can be noted in the following prepositional idioms;

Absolve	from	(blame)
Accompanied	by	(a lady (person))
Accompanied	with	(Applause (a thing))

Annoyed	by	(The noise (a thing))
Annoyed	with	(The child (a person))

According to Yelvita (2022), every linguistic unit is restricted concerning the context in which it can occur. Paradigmatic relation is a condition where all the related units can occur in the same context while syntagmatic relation is between other units of the same level with which it occurs and which constitute its context.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study of word patterns and the pragmatic and syntagmatic relationships between them aims to expand both the teacher's and the student's knowledge and comprehension. As we've already shown, grammaticality and acceptability are derived through

interpretation at every level of linguistic description, and paradigmatic and syntagmatic links are pertinent at each level. This results in an interdependence between paradigmatic and syntagmatic links at all levels of language structure. In postsecondary institutions, many people truly start to meaningfully speak, read, write and appreciate literature in the many languages. If language instruction is to take up its "core" place in the 6-3-3-4 formation, the trend must be reversed. Every linguistic unit has limitations on the contexts in which it can be used. Syntagmatic relation is between other units of the same level with whom it appears and which define its context, whereas paradigmatic relation is a condition where all associated units

can exist in the same context.

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