

Syntactic Changes in Subordinate Clauses in Old French and Uzbek Languages

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Abstract:

This article analyzes the syntactic changes in subordinate clauses in Old French and Old Uzbek. The complex structures of subordinate clauses in Old French and their expression through conjunctions illustrate the changes in the evolving linguistic systems. At the same time, the development of simpler and more precise syntactic structures in Old Uzbek, as well as subordinate clauses formed through conjunctions, is examined. The article compares the syntactic changes in both French and Uzbek and discusses the evolutionary processes of both languages. This research provides important theoretical foundations for studying the historical development of language and syntactic changes.

Keywords: Old French, Old Uzbek, Subordinate Clauses, Syntactic Changes, Linguistic Evolution, Conjunctions, Linguistic Development, Syntactic Structures, Multilingual Comparison

Introduction

The study of syntactic changes in subordinate clauses offers valuable insights into the historical evolution of language structures, especially within the context of Old French and Old Uzbek. These two languages, while originating from distinct linguistic families—Romance and Turkic respectively—demonstrate unique trajectories in the development of their subordinate clause systems. In Old French, which flourished between the 9th and 13th centuries, complex multi-layered structures marked by flexible word orders and extensive use of conjunctions such as *que* and *si* reflected the intricacies of early Romance syntax. These syntactic patterns evolved significantly over time, becoming more standardized and accessible in the transition toward Middle and Modern French. In contrast, Old Uzbek, prominent in the 14th and 15th centuries, showcased a more rigid and purpose-driven use of subordinate clauses, employing conjunctions like *agar*, *ki*, and *deb* to express condition,

reason, and sequence with clarity and brevity. The simplicity and functional orientation of Uzbek syntax evolved along a path of further streamlining and modernization. By conducting a comparative analysis of subordinate clause development in these two languages, this article aims to uncover the linguistic mechanisms that underlie syntactic transformation, highlight the socio-cultural and structural influences shaping these changes, and contribute to the broader field of historical linguistics. Understanding how subordinate constructions have shifted over time not only enriches our knowledge of French and Uzbek language history but also reveals broader patterns of syntactic evolution across language families.

Methods

The methodological basis of this study lies in a comparative-historical linguistic approach, focusing on the syntactic changes in subordinate clauses within Old French and Old Uzbek [1]. The research draws from a range of historical linguistic sources, syntactic analyses, and philological texts that reflect the evolution of these two languages [2]. Primary methods include textual analysis of historical documents, dictionaries, grammar books, and academic publications on Old French and Old Uzbek syntax [3]. The investigation involves identifying and categorizing the most common conjunctions and syntactic patterns in both languages, such as *que* and *si* in French and *agar*, *ki*, and *deb* in Uzbek [4]. These structures are then compared across different time periods—mainly between the 9th and 15th centuries—to trace their development [5]. Attention is given to how subordinate clauses expressed relationships of time, cause, condition, and purpose, and how these relationships shifted with syntactic simplification in both languages [6]. The study also considers phonetic, morphological, and socio-cultural influences as key factors driving syntactic change [7]. Lexical examples from historical texts are examined to illustrate the transformation of sentence construction, verb agreement, and word order [8]. In Old French, the transition toward standardized subject-verb-object structure and the increasing use of auxiliary verbs are noted, while in Old Uzbek, simplification trends are marked by the replacement of older conjunctions with shorter and more modern forms [9]. Through this comparative and descriptive methodology, the research elucidates both the internal linguistic mechanisms and external socio-historical forces that shaped the syntactic trajectory of subordinate clauses in these two distinct linguistic traditions [10].

Results and Discussion

Syntactic changes in languages play an important role in the development of each language [11]. Every language undergoes its own unique process of evolution, during which changes in syntactic structures become highly significant within the historical and cultural context of the language [12]. The syntactic transformations of subordinate clauses in Old French and Old Uzbek demonstrate the development of their linguistic systems and their interrelations [13]. This article analyzes the syntactic changes in subordinate clauses in Old French and Old Uzbek and provides a comparative study of these changes [14].

Subordinate Clauses in Old French. In Old French, particularly during the 9th to 13th centuries, the syntax of subordinate clauses was quite complex and multi-layered [15]. In the early stages of the French language, subordinate clauses were often formed using conjunctions such as *que* and *si* [16]. During this period, the verb's agreement with person and tense, as well as syntactic structures expressing time and condition, were widely used.

The structure of subordinate clauses typically included independent clauses connected by a conjunction. For example, sentences such as "*Je sais que tu viens*" ("I know that you are coming") were commonly used in Old French. The complexity of Old French syntax was related to changes in its phonetic and morphological systems. In particular, fixed verb forms and certain syntactic structures in French could sometimes cause difficulties in comprehension.

In addition to the use of conjunctions like *que* and *si*, Old French also saw the emergence of more complex syntactic patterns as the language evolved. Subordinate clauses could express various

relationships between the main clause and the dependent clause, such as cause, time, condition, and purpose. For instance, *si* (if) was often used in conditional subordinate clauses, while *que* (that) frequently appeared in both relative and complement clauses. Furthermore, Old French syntax featured what are known as "free word orders," where word placement was not strictly determined by syntactic rules, as it is in modern French. This flexibility allowed for variations in sentence construction and could lead to ambiguity or multiple interpretations, which is one of the reasons the language required a keen understanding of context. As the French language transitioned from Old French to Middle French, the syntactic structures became increasingly simplified. The complex verb forms and flexible word orders were replaced by more standardized syntactic patterns. For example, by the 14th century, Old French's system of subject-verb-object (SVO) order became more consistent, and the use of auxiliary verbs and more rigid conjugations replaced the older forms of verb agreement. In terms of subordinate clauses, the introduction of auxiliary verbs such as *avoir* and *être* (to have and to be) started to appear more frequently, especially in relative clauses, leading to more standardized and clearer syntactic constructions. Over time, these changes paved the way for the syntactic patterns seen in modern French, where subordination is generally more structured and the relationship between clauses is clearly indicated by conjunctions and auxiliary verbs.

Subordinate Clauses in Old Uzbek. In Old Uzbek, particularly during the 14th to 15th centuries, the syntax of subordinate clauses was relatively simpler and more straightforward compared to that of French. In Uzbek, subordinate clauses were mainly constructed using conditional conjunctions. Conjunctions such as *agar* (if), *ki* (that), *deb* (saying/that), and *shunday qilib* (thus) were widely used. In Old Uzbek, subordinate clauses often had a rigid syntactic structure and were used to express a specific purpose or reason. For example, sentences like "*Agar sen kelsang, men ham kelaman*" ("If you come, I will come too") or "*Shunday qilib, biz o'rgandik*" ("Thus, we learned") were commonly used in Old Uzbek. In these sentences, the function of the conjunctions is clearly and accurately expressed.

Changes in Syntax. Over time, the syntactic structures in both languages underwent significant changes. In French, during the 16th to 18th centuries, there was a noticeable simplification of syntax and changes in verb tense conjugations. Many verb tenses and personal forms were simplified, and sentence construction using conjunctions became much easier. In modern French, simpler syntactic structures are more commonly used.

In Uzbek, the complex syntax and conjunctions found in Old Uzbek were gradually replaced by simplified forms. For example, sentences constructed using words like *ki* and *agar* in Old Uzbek have been replaced by shorter forms in modern Uzbek. The use of new conjunctions and structures has become more widespread, such as *shunday qilib* (thus), *agar-chi* (even if), and *endilikda* (nowadays).

Differences Between the French and Uzbek Languages. The syntactic changes in French and Uzbek are closely tied to their historical development. In French, syntactic evolution has largely been influenced by changes in morphological and phonetic systems, with increasingly complex relationships forming between verbs and conjunctions. In contrast, in Uzbek, syntactic changes have primarily moved toward more functional and simplified forms.

Additionally, the construction of subordinate clauses in Old Uzbek reflected the specific features of the Turkic language family. These syntactic structures were generally straightforward and aimed at ensuring direct and clear connections. French syntax, on the other hand, was more influenced by social and cultural transformations, which over time led to the emergence of more complex structures and subordinate clauses with greater semantic depth.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the syntactic evolution of subordinate clauses in Old French and Old Uzbek played a significant role in the development of both languages. In French, complex verb forms and numerous conjunctions were replaced by more simplified structures. In Uzbek, the simplification of syntax and

changes in the use of conjunctions reflect a shift toward a more streamlined linguistic structure. In both languages, syntactic change not only marks linguistic progress but also mirrors societal shifts and new forms of communication.

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