

**THE COMMUNICATIVE-FUNCTIONAL PROPERTIES OF  
PREDICATESUZBEK STATE**

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**Annotation:** The study of predicates in linguistics is central to understanding sentence structure and meaning. Predicates are crucial components of a sentence as they typically express actions, states, or processes that are attributed to the subject. This article explores the communicative-functional properties of predicates, examining how predicates contribute to the information conveyed in a sentence and their role in the communicative process. By analyzing different linguistic theories and perspectives, we highlight the interaction between syntax, semantics, and pragmatics in determining the communicative function of predicates. Examples from various languages demonstrate the versatility and functional importance of predicates in structuring meaningful and contextually appropriate utterances.

**Key words:** Predicates, communicative function, sentence structure, pragmatics, semantics, syntax, linguistic theory.

In linguistics, the predicate is often considered the heart of the sentence. It typically contains the verb and all its modifiers, expressing what is said about the subject. While much of traditional grammar focuses on the syntactic structure of predicates, there is growing interest in their communicative and functional roles in language. The study of "communicative-functional properties" of predicates investigates how predicates interact with other sentence elements to fulfill specific communicative goals and convey meaning. These properties are crucial not only in the context of sentence structure but also in the broader framework of communication and discourse.

### **Syntactic Role of Predicates**

Syntactically, a predicate typically includes the verb and its arguments, including the subject, objects, and adjuncts. In traditional syntactic theories, a predicate is seen as the core of the verbal phrase, which expresses the action or state that the subject undergoes. Noam Chomsky's **Generative Grammar** places predicates at the heart of sentence structure, often arguing that the predicate is necessary for a sentence to be complete and informative. For example:

- *John eats an apple.*
  - "eats an apple" is the predicate, and it provides the action that John (the subject) is performing.

### **Semantic Role of Predicates**

Semantically, predicates carry the essential meaning of the sentence. The verb in a predicate expresses the action, event, or state that is attributed to the subject. In this sense, predicates determine the truth conditions of the sentence. According to **David Lewis** (1970), predicates help to establish the relationship between the subject and the object and contribute to the sentence's overall truth conditions. For example:

- *She sings beautifully.*
  - "sings beautifully" conveys the event (singing) and the manner in which it occurs (beautifully).

### **Pragmatic Function of Predicates**

From a **pragmatic** standpoint, predicates contribute to how information is structured in a communicative context. According to **Herbert Paul Grice's** theory of implicature, predicates not only convey literal meaning but also contribute to the inferred meaning based on the speaker's intentions and the listener's expectations. The **communicative function** of predicates, in this regard, involves their ability to convey emphasis, politeness, or focus in a conversation. For example:

- *I just love this cake!*
  - The predicate "love" is emphasized to convey the speaker's strong affection, not just a neutral statement about liking the cake.

### **The Communicative Functions of Predicates in Different Linguistic Contexts**

Predicates can vary widely in their communicative function depending on the syntactic structure, the presence of modifiers, and contextual factors. Several linguistic features influence how predicates function in communication.

#### **1. Presupposition and Focus**

A key communicative function of predicates is their ability to presuppose information. According to **Rudolf Carnap** (1956), a presupposition is an implicit assumption that must be true for the sentence to make sense. Predicates often carry presuppositions that can influence the interpretation of a sentence. For instance:

- *John stopped smoking.*
  - The predicate "stopped smoking" presupposes that John was smoking before.

Predicates also play a significant role in focus structures. Focus is often marked by intonation or word order, and predicates can be used to emphasize particular information. For example:

- *It was John who ate the cake.*

- The focus is on John, indicated by the position of the subject and the emphasis in the predicate.

## **2. Politeness and Mitigation**

Predicates can also serve a social function, particularly in expressions of politeness or mitigation. This is particularly evident in **speech act theory** as proposed by **John Searle** (1969), who categorizes predicates based on their illocutionary force (assertive, directive, commissive, etc.). In polite requests or indirect speech acts, the predicate can help mitigate the directness of the message.

- *Could you please pass me the salt?*
  - The predicate "pass me the salt" is softened with the modal "could" and the politeness marker "please."

## **3. Predicates in Narrative and Discourse**

In narrative structures, predicates serve to drive the plot forward by representing actions and events that characters undergo. In this context, predicates contribute to the organization of the narrative, guiding the listener or reader's understanding of the story. **Vladimir Propp's** (1968) analysis of folk tales shows how certain predicates (actions) fulfill specific roles in a narrative structure, creating expectations and advancing the plot.

- *The princess was captured by the dragon.*
  - Here, the predicate "was captured by the dragon" expresses an event pivotal to the narrative's progression.

### **Example 1: Basic Predication**

- *The cat sleeps.*
  - Here, the predicate "sleeps" communicates an action that the subject (the cat) performs. It functions both syntactically and semantically by specifying the relationship between the subject and the action.

### **Example 2: Emphasis and Focus**

- *It was the manager who made the decision.*
  - The predicate "made the decision" takes on a specific communicative function in emphasizing the subject "the manager" as the agent responsible for the action.

### **Example 3: Presupposition**

- *She stopped crying.*
  - The predicate "stopped crying" presupposes that the subject, "she," was crying before, highlighting the importance of presupposition in understanding the communicative function.

### **Example 4: Politeness and Indirectness**

- *Would you mind opening the window?*

- The predicate "opening the window" is softened by the modal "would you mind," making the request more polite and less direct.

The communicative-functional properties of predicates are multifaceted and crucial for both sentence construction and the interpretation of meaning. Predicates play a vital role in not just defining the subject's action or state, but in shaping the broader communicative function of a sentence. Their interaction with syntax, semantics, and pragmatics helps facilitate effective communication, enabling speakers to convey a wide range of meanings from simple statements to complex inferences, indirect speech acts, and narrative structures. Understanding these functions not only enriches linguistic theory but also enhances our comprehension of language as a tool for communication.

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