

**PEHPP 2019****Pedagogical Education: History, Present Time, Perspectives****THE N1+N2 CONSTRUCTION IN THE COURSE OF TEACHING  
FRENCH GRAMMAR**

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*Abstract*

This article is devoted to one of the peculiar questions of French grammar namely the N1 + N2 ("noun + noun") construction. The constructions of the type timbre-poste or employé modèle are not new to the French language: collocations based on such a structure occurred in the dictionaries of the first half of the XIX th century. The increasing productivity of this model has been noted by researchers since the second half of the 20th century. This trend continues to be observed in the recent decades, particularly in the language of the press and advertising. The article discusses both general theoretical issues and practical issues of the use of such structures, among which the linguistic status of this structure and its constituent components as well as the classification of such structures. Special attention is paid to the semantic, syntactic and stylistic aspects of the description of N1 + N2 structures and their codification features. Similar formations can be considered from the perspective of teaching French grammar. In this connection, a number of tasks are being developed based on the N1 + N2 structure for students who study the French language for professional purposes. The proposed tasks contribute to the development of grammatical competence for the effective use of a foreign language as a means of communication and training.

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## **1. Introduction**

No matter what methodological approaches teachers of foreign languages adhere to in their work; none of them doubt the need for grammatical knowledge which helps master a foreign language. Grammar is the foundation, a kind of framework on which the development of any foreign language is based. Communicative competence cannot be imagined without its grammatical component, therefore, it is increasingly being said that good grammar skills are necessary for successful communication in a foreign language (Defays, 2003; Fougerouse, 2001; Puren, 2001). In this regard, it is essential to find new opportunities to maintain students' motivation when studying the grammatical structure of a foreign language.

## **2. Problem Statement**

The N1 + N2 ("noun + noun") construction on the material of the French language presents some interest both in terms of theoretical and practical grammar. Despite the sufficient knowledge about such structures in the French language, the question of their linguistic status continues to be clarified nowadays. The productivity of such constructions is explained not only by linguistic (systemic), but also by speech reasons, including the analyticism of the French language, the requirements of the contemporary language practice, the influence of the English language, etc. The novelty of the work lies in an attempt to build an algorithm for working with a similar cluster within the framework of the grammar teaching methodology based on the French language material.

## **3. Research Questions**

**3.1.** What does this construction present and what are the main approaches to its description in grammar?

**3.2.** How can this construction be used when teaching French grammar?

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The aim is to describe the possibilities of using this construction in teaching theoretical and practical grammar of the French language.

## **5. Research Methods**

To achieve this goal, descriptive and comparative methods, analysis and synthesis are used.

## **6. Findings**

The units constructed according to the N1 + N2 model were recorded in the French dictionaries in the first half of the 19th century, but its increasing productivity has been noted by researchers since the second half of the 20th century. This trend continues to be observed at the beginning of the 21st century, particularly in the language of the press (including women's one) and advertising (for example, clothes,

cosmetics, etc.), that is, where it is necessary to attract the reader's attention, create a brief and at the same time capacious phrase that is easy to remember and reproduce (Aleksandrova, 2012).

Initially, such constructions were considered to belong to special languages (almost the same as terminology) and were distinguished by stylistic marking (Barysheva, 1979). Gradually, such words came into wide national use, becoming stylistically neutral. The use of only a few nouns in such a function is still recognized as colloquial (*monstre*, *bidon*).

The group of words and phrases that are built according to the described model is far from being unified, which complicates their classification. According to Gak (2004), in particular, the N1+N2 construction can be interpreted as follows:

- as a phrase where 1) N2 – an adjective, 2) N2 – a noun in the appositive function (for example, *mains amies / employé modèle*);
- as a word, 1) a compound or 2) a derivative where N 2 is a suffix (for example, *timbre-poste*).

In this article, we restrict ourselves to considering simple phrases that are built according to the N1 + N2 model, where the second element is a transposed adjective or noun in the role of apposition. We also adhere to the point of view when the presence or absence of a hyphen draws a distinction between a word and a phrase (N1+N2) (Gak, 2004). However, practical language material offers different options: *industries-pilotes* and *rôle pilote*.

In the linguistic literature, there is a certain terminological inconsistency, which testifies to the controversy in the description of the N1 + N2 construction and its components. Thus, in the *Le nouveau Petit Robert* dictionary one can come across the following examples related to the described model (to the N2 noun, to be exact):

- *par appos.* (*par apposition*) – is used in the function of an apposition;
- *appos.* (*apposition*) – is an apposition;
- *ellipt.* (*elliptiquement*) – part of an elliptical structure;
- *deuxième élément de subst. (substantif) compl. (complément)* – is a second noun element in the function of an object
- *avec une valeur d'adj. (adjectif)* – used as an adjective;
- *adj. (adjectif) inv. (invariable)* – is an invariable adjective;
- *adj. (adjectif)* – is an adjective;
  - *adjectivement (emploi en valeur d'adjectif d'un mot qui ne l'est pas normalement)* – the word is used as an adjective though it is not the one (*Le nouveau Petit Robert*, 2009).

In general, as we see, all attempts to describe the structure under analysis fit into the scheme proposed by V.G. Gak. Nowadays, the description of this construction resorts to morphological and syntactic approaches. The second element (N2) is considered to be the result of the transposition (conversion) of the noun into the adjective or compounding. The morphological method of word formation is the most productive way of coining new words and updating the vocabulary in the French language. In the syntactic approach, the second element (N2) is analyzed from the point of view of its syntactic function

performed in this construction (Salles, 2004). Different authors give this structure the following names: if it comes to compounds, it is named *mots composés* (P. Arnaud); if phrases are meant, then *séquences syntaxiques* (P. Arnaud). If the functions of N2 are described, then *substantif épithète* (M. Noailly, T. Nurminen) or *noms adjectivés* (P. Arnaud) (Arnaud, 2003) and so on.

In the framework of the first approach, the degree of adjectivity of the transposed element is analyzed. Traditionally, 3 degrees of adjectivity are distinguished: 1) N2 does not acquire categorical features of an adjective, that is, indicators of gender and number; 2) it is possible to use an intensifier with N2; 3) N2 has indicators of both gender and number, that is, it becomes a full adjective. At the same time, N2 can be used in a comparative construction, in the attributive function along with the adjective (syntactic homogeneity), the appearance of a figurative meaning in N2, which allows it to join a wide range of nouns (Aleksandrova, 2012; Gak, 2004; Sokolova, 1973).

It should be noted that the interest to the problems of adjectivization on the material of French and other languages is quite high in modern science, as evidenced by the International Seminar held at the Sorbonne in 2017.

The combination of independent nouns into a united construction, which occurs, according to many linguists, as a result of compression, can be built according to the following models:

- N2 describes the form of N1 *une jupe soleil, cloche, culotte; un papier ministre, des bijoux fantaisie*
- N2 – a type, a variety of N1 *une tarte maison, un bifteck minute, un café nature;*
- N2 – the direction, style, application of N1 *une robe hippy, une ensemble ville, le style empire, rococo; un robinet mélangeur, des pneus neige;*
- N2 – the spatial orientation for N1 *une façade sud, nord; un côté soleil, fenêtre, couloirs;*
- N2 – a proper name connected with N1 *l'institut Pasteur, un mobilier Louis XIV, la loi Jules Ferry, le potage Condé;*
- N2 – the category, rating, quality of N1 *des objets types, un boxe amateur, un appartement modèle, une dimension standard, des couleurs esthètes, des gens chic;*
- N2 – the colour of N1 *des robes fraise, chocolat; des chaussures marron;*
- N2 – the material of N1 *un chapeau paille, des bas nylon, une étoffe laine* (Arnaud, 2018, p. 10; Chekalina & Ushakova, 2007; Tsybova, 2008).

We propose the following algorithm for working with similar clusters:

- under the teacher's guidance, students become acquainted with the linguistic terminology necessary to describe this construction ;
- students get acquainted with the controversial questions of the description of this structure;
- students analyze the variety of clusters built on this model (both compounds and phrases) based on the material of the French language;
- students by continuous sampling from texts of various subjects select word combinations that correspond to the analyzed model;

- students classify and analyze the selected language material, while the analysis can be carried out both in terms of synchrony and diachrony;
- students analyze this structure in a comparative aspect on the material of the Russian and French languages;
- students analyze and describe the possible ways to translate N1 + N2 constructions from French into Russian.

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, the construction N1 + N2 is of undoubted interest in working with students majoring in the French language. According to the proposed algorithm, students will be able to analyze and describe the linguistic status of the structure as a whole and its constituent elements; to consider the construction in its relation to the linguistic norm, whether it is stylistically marked or neutral; to trace the formation of the norm (on the material of the French language dictionaries); to determine the reasons for the appearance of such a structure and its distribution in the modern language practice (systemic (linguistic) and / or speech reasons); analyze the possibilities of its use in the texts of different functional styles and genres. The analysis can go beyond the framework of the Russian and French languages and can also be carried out attracting the material from other languages.

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