

Functional-Semantic and Structural-Derivational Features of Verb Formation in German and Uzbek (A Comparative-Typological Analysis)

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Abstract: *This study examines verb formation in German and Uzbek from a comparative-typological perspective, with particular attention to the relationship between derivational structure and the functional meanings expressed by newly formed verbs. Although the two languages differ considerably in their morphological organization, they often employ their respective word-formation resources to convey comparable meanings related to action, change of state, causation, direction, intensity, and the acquisition of a particular quality. The analysis considers German verbal prefixes, particles, suffixes, and conversion alongside the predominantly suffixal patterns characteristic of Uzbek, focusing not only on their formal composition but also on the semantic changes that arise during derivation. The comparison shows that German verb formation is characterized by considerable structural diversity and frequent interaction between morphological and lexical meaning, whereas Uzbek generally demonstrates a more sequential and morphologically transparent derivational organization. At the same time, both languages reveal productive relationships between nominal or adjectival bases and derived verbs. These findings indicate that similar communicative and semantic functions can be realized through markedly different structural mechanisms, reflecting the broader typological characteristics of German and Uzbek.*

Keywords: *Verb Formation, Derivational Morphology, Functional Semantics, German Language, Uzbek Language, Comparative Typology, Word Formation, Morphological Structure*

1. Introduction

The importance of verb formation in the lexical and grammatical organization of a language is comparable to the importance of verbs in the way that participants, results, directions, causes, and transformations are conceptualized by the speakers: when verb formations are examined in isolation from all other linguistic features, a great deal more can be learned than a set of rules for their morphological structure, particularly if the languages under consideration come from different typological traditions. German and Uzbek are an appropriate ground for a comparative analysis of their systems of word formation because they have been shaped by different structural principles, at the same time, they often manifest similar communicative goals and meanings. German is traditionally classified as a rich language of derivational devices, with prefixes, suffixes, verbal particles, conversion and combinations of these devices all playing a role in the expansion of the verbal lexicon, while the morphological system of the Turkic language Uzbek is largely agglutinative and the derived forms are created by relatively transparent sequences of adding suffixes to lexical bases [1]. But this difference should not be narrowed down to the contrast between prefixation and suffixation, since the link between form and meaning becomes much more complicated when the productivity of the affix is taken into account, as well as lexicalization, semantic change, and the grammatical properties of individual derivatives.

In German word formation, verbal derivation shows the interplay of a relatively limited number of recurring, morphological elements, each of which can combine with different bases to yield a wide variety of verb forms with varying degrees of lexical meaning. The elements *be-*, *ent-*, *ver-*, *zer-*, and *zer-*, for example, serve as part of a number of verbal formation patterns, and particle verbs with

prefixes like *an-*, *auf-*, *aus-*, and *ein-* illustrate the tight coupling of morphology, syntax and semantics in the German verb system [2]. Therefore, morphological segmentation is not the only way to explain the relationship of a basic verb and its derivative, and an apparently identifiable derivational component can have different semantic functions in the basic verb and its different uses. For this reason, a functional-semantic approach is very helpful, because it allows not only for analysing the structural properties of a verb but also for analysing what semantic modification is added to the verb by the derivation process and whether it is consistently present across all lexical groups.

The formation of verbs in the Uzbek language has a different structure, but also serves many of the same semantic requirements. Derivational suffixes can convert nominal and adjectival bases into verbs, and they can also carry such additional meanings as the process of entering a state, the process of acquiring a property, the process of causing a change or the process of participating in a particular activity; formations such as *-la*, *-lan*, *-lash* and *-lashtir* show the systematic nature of the process. The general typological literature on Turkic languages places a special focus on the central role played by the suffixes and the relatively well-transparent ordering of the morphological material, which makes Turkic derivational systems particularly useful for cross-linguistic morphological comparison [3]. Transparency, however, does not mean semantic simplicity, as formally related derivatives in Uzbek can have specialized meanings, and equivalent meanings in German can be conveyed by prefixes and particles, by conversion, by lexical verbs, or by constructions of more than one lexical element.

The comparison is therefore of particular interest when taken in conjunction with the structural derivation, rather than separately from it, and with the functional semantics. The studies of the morphology have shifted to a new emphasis in the last few decades, particularly in contemporary research where word formation is viewed as a form of relationship between formal patterns, lexical meaning, productivity and conventional usage, in such a way that a mere identification of affixes and listing of words containing them is not enough to describe it. [4] In this context, the present study considers the functional-semantic and structural-derivational properties of verb formation in German and Uzbek with regard to the ways how similar verbal meanings are created by different typological morphological means. The study aims to gain insight into the shared tendencies and language-specific strategies in both systems, as well as to provide further information on the relationship between the morphological typology and the organisation and development of the verbal lexicon in both languages, by identifying recurrent derivational models, analysing the semantic functions of these models, and comparing the extent to which certain patterns are productive and structurally transparent.

2. Methodology

The study aimed to analyze and compare the internal structure of derived verbs in the two languages, German and Uzbek, in terms of the meaning level that is generated by the derivation process, rather than merely listing the affixes which are present in the two languages. The material comprised lexical items that were already established as verbal lexemes in both present-day German and present-day Uzbek, and these were chosen from existing dictionaries, written grammars, and from texts that are useful in describing lexemes in their natural context, because the use of material from an isolated researcher intuition can lead to the misunderstanding of differences between theoretically possible word formations and their actual occurrence in language use; in contrast, material from dictionaries and corpora can serve as a better foundation for studying the behavior of derivations [5]. In the first phase, the data of each language were analysed separately, to ensure that the categories of one language would in no way be imposed on the other, but then structurally or functionally similar groups were collated for cross-linguistic interpretation.

The selected verbs were broken down into their appropriate derivational components, including: lexical base, word class the base belongs to, element that was added to the base, and the relationship

between the base's meaning and the added verb's meaning. Such procedure is especially necessary in Uzbek since the morphological organization of UZbek allows the occurrence of derivational elements in relatively transparent sequence and the description of the UZbek morphology considers derivation as a separate domain, including the creation of verbs, in addition to the main lexical classes [6]. This meant that it was not only the fact that *ishamoq* became *ishlamoq*, *shod* became *shodlanmoq* and *bir* became *birlashmoq* that were seen as mere examples of the addition of a suffix; the analysis also included the implications of the addition of a derivational element on the categorial properties of the base and on the meanings associated with the activity, state, or particular relation that now became possible. The approach to German formations was similar, but with a distinction between prefixation, particle-based formations, suffixation, and conversion where they resulted in structurally different types of derived verbs.

The functional-semantic stage of the analysis went beyond morphological segmentation and combined the analysed verbs into classes of verbs grouped on the basis of the semantic relationships between the analysed verbs and the verbs in which they are derived, such as activity, change of state, acquisition of a quality, causation, direction, completion, and other frequent modifications of the meaning of the analysed verbs. This is done because derivational morphology goes beyond the formal level and also encompasses systematic relationships between structure and lexical meaning, which an exclusively formal account cannot explain [7]. Special consideration was therefore given to cases where German and Uzbek used formal resources to express a relatively analogous function, as such contrasts are typologically more substantial than simple similarities among the individual words.

Last but not least the identified formations were compared based on their productive and transparent structure, their grammatical category of the base, their place and role of derivational material, and how they relate to the meaning of a derived verb in terms of the meaning of their components. The interpretation was built upon the concept of form and meaning, which involves recognizing recurring morphological patterns as links between a language's structural pattern and a range of linguistic functions: this approach was particularly suitable for the comparison of languages which have a widely different surface morphology [8]. As it was not assumed that German and Uzbek have homonymous morphs, the comparison attempted to find functional correspondences and typological differences, both to illustrate how similar semantic tasks can be realized in different ways (derivational strategies) and to reveal how the typological structure of the two languages influences the creation and understanding of new verbal lexemes.

3. Results

The comparative analysis showed a significant difference between the two languages in the structure of the verb system, while the semantic functions often coincided in the two languages. In the German material, the pattern characterized by prefixation and the formation by particles was particularly diverse, because, for example, elements like *be-*, *ent-*, *ver-*, *er-* and *zer-* could modify an existing verbal basis or be used in the formation of verbs whose meaning was no longer completely predictable from the elements themselves. Forms like *kommen* → *bekommen*, *kaufen* → *verkaufen* and *stören* → *zerstören* show that similar structural operations yield very different semantic relationships; separable formations like *ankommen*, *aufmachen* and *ausgehen* also illustrate how the process of German verb formation is closely linked to the interplay between lexical meaning and grammatical function [9]. This structural diversity reflects the overall structure of German morphology, which allows multiple mechanisms for word formation to coexist in an interactive fashion, without being the main one [10].

The Uzbek data, on the other hand, exhibited a higher tendency towards suffixal organization, while the morphology of a lexical base and an affixed verb was generally more transparent. The ability

to string derivational material on the end of a noun and adjective in succession without compromising the internal structure of the word was seen in *faollashmoq*, *faollashtirmoq* and *toza*, *tozalamoq*, *shod*, *shodlanmoq*, and *bir*, *birlashmoq*. This corresponds to the general agglutinative structure of the Uzbeki language, as well as other Turkic languages, in which sequences of suffixes are used in a major way to convey lexical and grammatical relationships [11].

With regard to functional semantics, however, the difference between the languages was not as clear-cut as the structural difference had led one to believe. Resources for expressing activity, for transition to a different state, for acquisition of a property, for causation, and for modification of an existing action were found in both systems, though these meanings may not have been formally equivalent in the two systems. German had a prefix with a tendency to use other derivational patterns, while Uzbek had a suffix or a series of suffixes, so functional correspondence was more apparent than morphological. The results confirm the typological view that languages can have the same semantic categories but realize these categories differently in their formal structure, which is in line with findings from cross-linguistic research where the relationship between morphology and meaning has been found to vary greatly from language to language [12].

4. Discussion

According to the results of the present comparison, the most important difference between German and Uzbek verb formation is not the set of meanings which derived verbs are able to express, but rather the different morphological means of organization of these meanings: Both languages have resources for the expression of activity, change, causation and acquisition of a quality, and modification of an existing process is organized in a different way. German has a system of verbal prefixes, particles, suffixes and lexical bases such that the semantic contribution of a derivational element can vary quite widely depending on the base with which it co-occurs: the forms containing *ver-* or *be-* cannot always be represented by a stable semantic formula. This morphological process–lexical process relation corresponds to the general phenomenon of word formation in German that productive processes are combined with a high degree of lexicalization [13].

In contrast, suffixed verbs in Uzbek tend to make the internal structure of the derived verb more obvious, as in the case of nominal or adjectival bases, which are followed by *-la*, *-lan*, *-lash*, or longer sequences of causative morphology. However, it is not to be assumed that the meaning of a derived form is determined entirely by the meaning of the individual suffix; the meaning of the derived form is affected not only by the meaning of the suffix but also by the meaning of the base word and by convention. This is in keeping with the descriptions of Turkic morphology, where agglutinative morphology is related to relatively well-defined morpheme boundaries, but the meaning(s) conveyed by the morpheme sequences are still diverse semantically [14].

One important implication of the comparison is that equivalence of two languages does not have to represent structural equivalence. For example, the Uzbekistan verb *go‘zallashtirmoq* can express a meaning that is very similar to *verschönern* in German, despite the fact that the route that is taken—grammatical in the case of *verschönern*, and suffixal in the case of *go‘zallashtirmoq*—is very different. An example of this sort serves to make the point that cross-linguistic derivational analysis cannot be restricted to the recognition of formally similar affixes because languages often allocate similar meanings to different affix-level categories and constructions [15].

Such differences do not only have implications for the morphological description but are also relevant for German–Uzbek translation and foreign-language teaching, as learners might try to apply familiar derivational patterns from one language to the other even if there is no clear structural connection between the two. A better interpretation would thus demand one's attention to the relationship between base meaning, derivational structure, lexical convention, and context—even

though a one-to-one correspondence is not assumed between the individual morphemes. With regard to this, the results corroborate the usage-sensitive view of morphology [16] that productive patterns are in parallel to conventionalized lexical patterns and are influenced by the frequent experiences of language use.

5. Conclusion

The comparative examination of German and Uzbek verb formation demonstrates that the two languages, despite belonging to different linguistic families and representing different morphological types, share a number of functional-semantic tendencies while relying on noticeably different structural resources to realize them. German verb formation is characterized by the interaction of prefixes, particles, suffixes, conversion, and lexicalized patterns, which creates considerable structural diversity but also makes the relationship between form and meaning less predictable in certain derivatives, whereas Uzbek relies much more consistently on suffixal derivation, allowing several derivational elements to be added successively and making the morphological composition of many verbs comparatively transparent. Nevertheless, the analysis has shown that structural transparency does not necessarily result in complete semantic predictability, because the interpretation of a derived verb in either language continues to depend on the lexical meaning of its base, the function of the derivational element, established usage, and the context in which the verb occurs.

What becomes particularly important from a comparative perspective is that similar meanings do not require identical morphological structures, since concepts such as change of state, causation, acquisition of a quality, activity, or modification of an action can be expressed through quite different derivational pathways. German may employ a prefix or particle where Uzbek uses one or several suffixes, yet the resulting verbs can perform closely related communicative functions. Therefore, the comparison confirms that verb formation should be approached as an interaction between structure and meaning rather than as a mechanical process of affixation, while the identified similarities and differences may also provide a useful linguistic basis for comparative grammar, translation practice, lexicographic description, and the teaching of German and Uzbek as foreign languages.

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