

SEMANTIC PROPERTIES AND FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK VERBS

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Abstract

Verbs are the central elements of any language, conveying not only actions, states, and processes but also encoding complex semantic and syntactic information. This paper examines the semantic properties and functional roles of verbs in English and Uzbek, focusing on aspects such as agentivity, aspect, transitivity, and valency. The study highlights both cross-linguistic similarities and differences, providing examples from authentic media texts and literature. The analysis demonstrates that understanding verbs' semantic and functional characteristics is essential for linguistic research, language teaching, and effective communication in multilingual contexts.

Key Words: English verbs, Uzbek verbs, semantic properties, functional analysis, aspect and tense, agentivity, transitivity, valency, media discourse.

Introduction

Verbs play a crucial role in sentence construction and communication in all languages. They serve as the primary carriers of actions, events, and states, linking participants and circumstances within a given context. In English, verbs are often analyzed according to tense, aspect, modality, and transitivity, while Uzbek verbs, as part of an agglutinative Turkic language, employ complex suffixation, mood markers, and aspectual distinctions to convey meaning.

The semantic properties of verbs - such as agentivity, action versus state, event structure, and valency - are fundamental for understanding how languages encode meaning. Functional analysis further examines how verbs operate in discourse, including narrative structuring, pragmatic emphasis, and stylistic nuances. In media texts, for instance, verbs are not only used to describe actions but also to convey evaluation, attitude, and rhetorical effects.

The comparative study of English and Uzbek verbs is particularly interesting because these languages belong to different typological families, yet they share some semantic and functional strategies while diverging in morphology and aspectual marking. This paper aims to explore these features, providing both theoretical and practical insights into the use of verbs in English and Uzbek.

Semantic Properties of English Verbs

English verbs can be broadly categorized according to several semantic criteria:

1. **Agentivity** – whether the subject initiates the action or experiences a state (e.g., *John broke the vase* vs *John feels happy*).
2. **Aspectual properties** – distinctions between simple, progressive, and perfect aspects (e.g., *I write* vs *I am writing* vs *I have written*).
3. **Transitivity** – the capacity of verbs to take objects (transitive: *She reads a book*, intransitive: *He sleeps*).
4. **Valency** – the number and type of arguments a verb can combine with (monovalent, divalent, trivalent).
5. **Modality** – verbs may express possibility, necessity, or obligation when combined with modal auxiliaries (e.g., *must, should, can*).

These semantic properties allow English verbs to express fine-grained distinctions in meaning, sequence of events, and the relationship between participants in discourse.

Semantic Properties of Uzbek Verbs

Uzbek verbs, as agglutinative forms, rely heavily on suffixation to express tense, aspect, mood, and polarity. Semantic features include:

1. **Aspectual distinction** – continuous (*-moqda*), perfective (*-di*), habitual or iterative (*-ar*) forms.
2. **Mood and modality** – subjunctive (*-sin/-sinlar*), imperative (*-ing*), conditional (*-sa/-sa*).
3. **Transitivity and valency** – verbs indicate whether they require direct objects or complement clauses (e.g., *o'qimoq* 'to read', *o'qitmoq* 'to teach').
4. **Agentivity and experiencer roles** – marked through person and agreement suffixes, allowing nuanced semantic interpretation.

Uzbek verbs convey meaning not only lexically but also morphologically, making the understanding of suffix combinations crucial for accurate interpretation and translation.

Functional Analysis in Discourse

In both English and Uzbek, verbs play an essential role in discourse-level functions:

- **Temporal sequencing** – verbs indicate order and timing of events.
- **Pragmatic emphasis** – choice of verb forms can indicate certainty, politeness, or speaker attitude.
- **Stylistic and rhetorical effect** – media texts often select verbs to create vivid imagery or emotional impact.

Example from English media: “*The government **announced** new regulations to address the crisis.*” Here, *announced* conveys both action and official authority.

Example from Uzbek media: “*Hukumat yangi qoidalarni e’lon qildi.*” The verb *e’lon qildi* parallels English *announced* in semantic meaning and functional effect, showing how both languages structure information.

Comparative Analysis: English vs Uzbek Verbs

Despite typological differences, English and Uzbek verbs share common semantic functions:

1. Conveying actions, events, and states.
2. Marking aspectual distinctions to indicate event progression.
3. Expressing agentivity, experiencer roles, and transitivity.

Differences include:

1. Morphological strategies – English relies on auxiliaries and word order, Uzbek uses suffixation extensively.
2. Aspectual expression – Uzbek verbs encode aspect morphologically, while English uses auxiliary constructions.
3. Mood and modality – Uzbek suffixes directly mark mood, whereas English often uses auxiliary verbs.

This comparative approach highlights how different languages encode similar communicative intentions through distinct morphosyntactic strategies.

The comparative semantic and functional analysis of English and Uzbek verbs demonstrates that, despite the typological differences between these languages, verbs play a universally central role in communication. Verbs do not merely indicate actions or states; they carry complex semantic information, convey temporal and aspectual nuances, encode agentivity, and structure relationships between participants in events. Understanding these properties is crucial for linguists, translators, language learners, and educators, as verbs form the backbone of sentence construction and discourse coherence.

In English, verbs rely heavily on auxiliary constructions, word order, and syntactic strategies to express tense, aspect, and mood. For instance, distinctions between simple, progressive, and perfect aspects enable speakers to convey subtle temporal nuances and event progression. Modal verbs such as *can*, *must*, and *should* further enrich the expressive and functional capacity of verbs by indicating possibility, necessity, or obligation. English verbs thus combine lexical meaning with syntactic and pragmatic cues to achieve precise communication, especially in media texts, literature, and formal discourse.

In contrast, Uzbek verbs, as part of an agglutinative language system, convey semantic and functional information predominantly through morphological means. Suffixes encode tense, aspect, mood, and polarity, allowing a single verb form to carry rich semantic content. Aspectual markers such as *-moqda* (continuous), *-di* (perfective), and habitual forms like *-ar* provide clarity regarding the nature and

duration of events. Mood markers, conditional suffixes, and imperative endings allow Uzbek verbs to express modality and speaker attitude efficiently within a single verbal unit. The morphological richness of Uzbek verbs enables speakers to combine multiple semantic and functional nuances compactly, which differs from the analytic strategies of English.

Functionally, verbs in both languages fulfill multiple roles beyond denoting actions. They are essential for temporal sequencing, narrative cohesion, stylistic emphasis, and pragmatic modulation. Media texts provide clear examples of this multifunctionality. In English news reports, verbs such as announced, claimed, or urged not only describe events but also communicate authority, evaluation, or attitude. Similarly, in Uzbek media, verbs like *e'lon qildi*, *ta'kidladi*, or *so'radi* perform analogous functions while relying on morphosyntactic markers to encode nuance. Both languages utilize verbs as tools for engaging the audience, shaping perception, and emphasizing key points, albeit through different linguistic mechanisms.

The analysis also underscores the importance of agentivity, transitivity, and valency in understanding verb function. English verbs often require specific argument structures and rely on word order to indicate relationships between subjects, objects, and complements. Uzbek verbs, in contrast, use person and agreement suffixes to encode participant roles, providing semantic clarity without rigid reliance on word order. Despite these differences, both languages share the common goal of conveying clear and precise meaning while maintaining stylistic and pragmatic effectiveness.

Finally, the study demonstrates that examining the semantic properties and functional roles of verbs has practical implications. For language teaching, it informs pedagogical strategies by highlighting contrastive features between English and Uzbek verbs, aiding learners in mastering tense, aspect, and modality. For translation, it reveals potential pitfalls in conveying nuance across typologically distinct languages. For linguistic research, it contributes to our understanding of cross-linguistic patterns in verb semantics and function, illustrating how different languages achieve similar communicative goals using distinct structural strategies.

In conclusion, English and Uzbek verbs, despite their morphological and typological differences, are central to effective communication. Their semantic richness, functional versatility, and discourse-level impact make them indispensable in both everyday and specialized contexts. A thorough understanding of these properties enhances language acquisition, translation, media analysis, and general linguistic competence, highlighting the universal significance of verbs in human language.

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