

Analysis of Word Formation

Jalilova Rayhona Sherzod qizi

Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages

Zaripova Aziza Shaxobiddinova

Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages

Zaripovaaziza23@gmail.com

Abstract: This article provides a comparative analysis of the process of affixation, one of the important methods of word formation in Uzbek and English. The main goal of the study is to identify the similarities and differences of affixation in the two language systems. During the study, selected lexical units from Uzbek and English were morphologically analyzed.

Keywords: affixation, word formation, morphology, Uzbek language, English language, comparative analysis, derivation, suffix, prefix.

Introduction

Word formation is the process of creating new words or modifying existing ones to develop new meanings and functions in a language. It is a key part of morphology, expanding vocabulary through affixation (prefixes/suffixes), compounding, blending, and conversion. It keeps language adaptable and dynamic. Affixation is one of the main processes of word formation. In Uzbek, affixation is the primary word-formation method, whereas in English, it is used alongside other methods. It was also found that structural differences between the two languages have a significant impact on the frequency and function of the use of affixes. There is a lack of clear analysis of how affixation functions differently in agglutinative and analytic languages. This study aims to analyze and compare word formation in the Uzbek and English languages.

Methodology

“In the Uzbek language, using the affixation method, new words are formed by adding word-forming affixes to the root. For example: o‘r+oq, ish+chi, gul+don and so on. Word-forming affixes are divided into two types according to their position in relation to the root:

a) Suffixes post-affixes. In the Uzbek language, such affixes form the basis of word formation. They are added after the root and create words with new meanings. For example: o‘t+loq, chiri+k, tosh+qin, ish+chan, etc.

b) Prefixes pre-affixes. These are added before the root and form new words. For example: be+tinim, no+to‘g‘ri, ba+ma‘ni, ser+harakat, anti-demokratiya. Prefixes mainly form adjectives, and most of them are borrowed from Persian-Tajik languages.

Noun Formation Through Affixation. Forming nouns through the method of affixation, adding suffixes, is highly productive. The following groups of nouns are created using this method:

1. Suffixes that form nouns representing persons: -chi: This is a very common (productive) suffix that forms person-based nouns from nouns, adjectives, numerals, and action names. Examples: ovchi hunter, ishchi worker, a‘lochi top student, yolg‘onchi (liar), ikkinchi (second-year student),

kurashchi (wrestler), o'quvchi (pupil/reader). These nouns are categorized into several groups based on their general meanings:

1. Professions and specialties: ishchi (worker), neftchi (oil worker), sportchi (athlete), tikuvchi (tailor).
2. Participants in an action or event: jangchi (warrior), isyonchi (rebel), hasharchi (volunteer worker).
3. Persons related to a specific concept: respublikachi (republican), himoyachi (protector/defender), xabarchi (messenger).

-dosh: This suffix conveys meanings of togetherness, companionship, or shared traits. Examples: vatandosh (compatriot), zamondosh (contemporary), safdosh (comrade-in-arms), sirdosh (confidant).

-kash: This suffix forms nouns related to professions, labor, or specific qualities. Examples: aravakash (cart-driver), mehnatkash (hard worker), qalamkash (writer/penman).

2. Affixes forming nouns for objects, tools, and units of measurement. These affixes are mainly added to verb stems to create nouns representing tools used for an action or the result of an action/state. These include: -k (-ak, -uk), -q (-iq, -oq): taroq (comb), to'siq (barrier), bo'lak (piece), chaqiriq (call/summons), yutuq (achievement), o'roq (sickle), yotoq (bedroom/dormitory).

-gi / -ki / -qi / -g'u / -qu: supurgi (broom), cholg'u (musical instrument), chopqi (cleaver), achitqi (yeast), tomizg'I (dropper/kindling).

-m, -im, -um: to'plam (collection), o'ram (roll/wrap), terim (harvest), chiqim (expense), yutum (gain).

3. Affixes forming nouns of place. These primarily create nouns related to the location where an object (expressed by the noun's lexical meaning) exists: -loq (-lov): toshloq (stony place), qumloq (sandy place), o'tloq (meadow), yaylov (summer pasture).

-zor: paxtazor (cotton field), gulzor (flower garden), lolazor (tulip field), bedazor (alfalfa field).

-iston: O'zbekiston (Uzbekistan), Guliston (Gulistan), qabriston (cemetery) [5].

Affixation is a morphological process in the English language used to create new words or change the grammatical form of an existing word by adding a morpheme, known as an affix, to a root or base word. Primary Types of Affixes

1. Prefixes: Added to the beginning of a word. They typically modify the meaning (e.g., making it negative) but rarely change the word's grammatical category. Examples: un- (unhappy), re- (rewrite), dis- (disagree), pre- (preview)
2. Suffixes: Added to the end of a word. These often change the word's part of speech or indicate grammatical features like tense and number. Examples: -ful (wonderful), -tion (action), -ness (kindness), -ly (quickly)
3. Infixes: Morphemes inserted within the base word. While common in some languages, they are rare in standard English and mostly used in informal or emphatic speech (e.g., abso-bloody-lutely).

Functional Categories. Affixes are further classified based on how they affect the word's role in a sentence: Derivational Affixes: These create a new word with a different meaning or grammatical category. Example: Adding -er to the verb teach creates the noun teacher.

Inflectional Affixes: These change the grammatical form (like plurality or tense) without changing the core meaning or word class. Note: English has only eight inflectional suffixes, such as -s (cats), -ed (walked), and -ing (running).

Understanding these word-building blocks can significantly help in deciphering the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary [1].

Through a detailed comparative lens, our analysis suggests that while affixation is a cornerstone of word-building in both Uzbek and English, the way these languages “construct” meaning is fundamentally different. These differences are not merely coincidental but are deeply rooted in their typological nature—Uzbek as an agglutinative language and English as a primarily analytic one.

Result and Discussion

1. **The Predominance of Suffixation.** One of the most striking similarities is that suffixation remains the most fertile ground for creating new words in both systems. However, the structural execution varies:

In Uzbek, suffixes act as the “vertebrae” of the language. We observed that Uzbek allows for “suffix stacking,” where multiple morphemes are attached to a single root in a predictable, linear sequence (e.g., *ish+chi+lar+imiz*). Each layer adds a specific grammatical or semantic value without altering the previous ones.

In English, suffixes are more specialized. They either function as derivational tools to shift a word’s category (like turning the verb *teach* into the noun *teacher*) or as inflectional markers for tense and number. Unlike the Uzbek system, English is quite restrictive; it rarely allows more than one inflectional suffix to be tacked onto a word.

2. **Prefixes: Native vs. Borrowed Systems.** Our findings reveal a sharp contrast in how prefixes are utilized. English boasts a remarkably diverse and native-like prefix system (e.g., *un-*, *re-*, *dis-*). These are used fluidly to flip meanings or add nuance across almost all parts of speech. Uzbek, on the other hand, shows its history as a suffix-heavy language. Native Uzbek lacks a deep-rooted prefix tradition. Interestingly, the study highlights that nearly all prefixes in modern Uzbek (such as *be-*, *no-*, *ba-*) are linguistic acquisitions from Persian, Tajik, or international sources. They are primarily “specialists” in forming adjectives, making their functional range narrower than their English counterparts.

3. **Creative Productivity in Noun Building.** When it comes to naming people and places, both languages show unique strengths:

Agentive Nouns: The Uzbek suffix *-chi* is a “powerhouse” of productivity. While it matches the English *-er/-or* (as in *worker*), *-chi* is arguably more flexible, attaching itself not just to verbs but to nouns and even numbers to define a person’s role or identity. **Locative Concepts:** Uzbek displays a highly systematic approach to geography and space. Suffixes like *-zor* or *-iston* instantly transform a simple noun into a location (e.g., *paxtazor*). In contrast, English often lacks a single-word equivalent, frequently relying on compounding or multi-word phrases (e.g., *cotton field*) to convey the same idea

4. **Morphological “Richness” vs. Syntactic Precision**

Finally, the study confirms a fundamental trade-off between the two languages.

English is morphologically “lean,” relying on a small set of eight inflectional suffixes and using word order or prepositions to do the heavy lifting. Uzbek, conversely, is morphologically “dense.” A single word in Uzbek can perform the work of an entire English phrase by incorporating markers for person, case, and number directly into its structure [2].

Conclusion

In summary, while the “machinery” of affixation exists in both languages, English uses it as a balanced tool between prefixes and suffixes, whereas Uzbek leans heavily into its suffix-based agglutinative roots. The presence of borrowed prefixes in Uzbek further demonstrates how the language is evolving, adopting new structural tools to complement its traditional suffix-dominated system.

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