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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**EXPONENTIAL AND SEMANTIC VARIABILITY OF
AFFIXAL MORPHEMS**

(Based on materials Italian and Azerbaijani languages)

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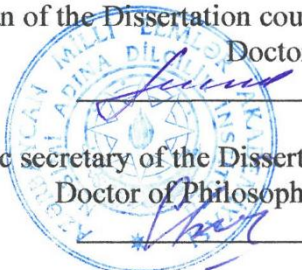
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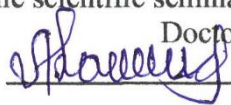


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INTRODUCTION

The actuality and the usage rate of the research work. In contemporary linguistics, interest in the comparative study of languages with different structural types has expanded considerably. As Jan Baudouin de Courtenay noted, *“We can compare languages entirely independently of their relationships and of any historical connections between them. In languages that are historically and geographically unrelated, we constantly find identical properties, identical changes, and identical historical processes.”*¹

Research devoted to the comparison of different languages demonstrates that languages and the modes of thought reflected in them exhibit both profound differences and evident similarities. *“The comparative description of two languages with different structures ... is most often characterized as comparative typology, which deals with binary comparison and identifies typological similarities among languages belonging to diverse genetic groups.”*²

In comparative studies, it is traditionally the case that one of the languages under comparison receives greater attention. In the present dissertation, the Italian language has been selected as the metalinguistic reference system, while data from the Azerbaijani language are used primarily as a comparative benchmark.

It should be noted that morphemics has recently come to be regarded as an independent branch of linguistics; however, in many works it is still treated as part of morphology or word formation. Therefore, it is essential to consider the achievements, generalizations, and findings obtained in the field of morphemic structure in both related and unrelated languages, as these will contribute to the formation of prerequisites for further research in this domain.

¹Бодуэн, де Куртенэ И. А. Избранные труды по общему языкознанию / И.А. Бодуэн де Куртенэ. Том I. – М: Изд-во Академии наук СССР, – 1963. – С.384 – 371с.

²Буранов, Д.Б. Сравнительная типология английского и тюркских языков / Д.Б. Буранов. – М: Высш. шк., – 1983. – С.268 . –55с.

From the perspective of genetic and typological characteristics, Italian and Azerbaijani belong to different language groups. Nevertheless, typological differences and similarities between these languages can be observed at various levels of the linguistic system. It should be emphasized that the traditional comparison of typologically diverse languages has largely consisted of passive descriptive studies focused on grammar. In this regard, a comprehensive comparative analysis of affixal morphemes in Italian and Azerbaijani acquires particular relevance.

A comparative analysis of word-formation processes in different languages not only penetrates the linguistic nature of derivational relations in the languages under comparison but also contributes to the development of more general problems in comparative typology. Such generalizations will undoubtedly prove useful in addressing a number of pressing issues related to language application in the future. The present dissertation reflects a comparative analysis of the productivity of affixal morphemes in word formation in two genetically unrelated and typologically distinct languages—Italian and Azerbaijani.

In recent years, the study of linguistic phenomena from an applied perspective has also attracted particular attention. From this standpoint, the dissertation highlights problems arising from affixal morphemes in Italian and Azerbaijani in the context of machine translation, which further underscores its relevance. On the other hand, considering the widespread application of cognitive and psycholinguistic approaches in contemporary linguistic research, the issue under investigation has also been approached from a conceptual perspective, which constitutes another factor determining the study's relevance.

The comparative typological study of languages with different systems, from scientific, theoretical, and practical-applied perspectives, remains one of the most pressing problems of modern linguistics. This direction has repeatedly attracted scholarly attention. The works of V.D.Arakin³, C.Buranov⁴, V.M.Solntsev⁵,

³ Аракин, В.Д. Сравнительная типология английского и русского языков / В.Д. Аракин. – 3-е изд. – М.: ФИЗМАТЛИТ, – 2005

V.N.Yartseva⁶ and others have examined the fundamental problems of comparative typological research of language systems—particularly the comparison of genetically and typologically distant languages, the application of various approaches and methods in language study, and the comparative analysis of their interactions. These studies are of particular interest both for the development of general linguistic theory and for the investigation and understanding of specific theories reflecting the developmental features of individual languages, as well as for the study of their common and distinctive characteristics.

At the same time, issues such as the variability of affixal morphemes (N.A.Katagoshina⁷), the position of affixoids in the word-formation process (N.M.Shansky⁸), the role of affixoids in the derivational system (O.V.Rusakova⁹), and the allomorphic variability of suffixes (A.Q.Antipov¹⁰) have been examined from various perspectives. It is therefore no coincidence that many recent studies have emphasized the relevance of investigating synonymy, polysemy, and variation in word formation. Although certain studies

⁴ Буранов, Д.Б. Сравнительная типология английского и тюркских языков / Д.Б. Буранов. – М.: Высшая школа, – 1983. – 268 с.

⁵ Солнцев, В.М. Язык как системно-структурное образование / В.М. Солнцев. – 2-е изд., доп. – М.: Наука, – 1977. – 341 с.

⁶ Ярцева, В.Н. Историческая морфология английского языка / В.Н. Ярцева. – М.–Л., 1960. – 194 с.

⁷ Катагощина, Н.А. К вопросу о вариативности аффиксальных морфем (на материале французского языка) // Учёные записки МГПИИЯ. – Вып. 125. – 1978. – с.153–157.

⁸ Шанский, Н.М. Аффиксоиды в словообразовательной системе современного русского литературного языка // Исследования по современному русскому языку. – М.: Изд-во Московского университета, – 1970. – с.250–260.

⁹ Шанский, Н.М. Аффиксоиды в словообразовательной системе современного русского литературного языка // Исследования по современному русскому языку. – М.: Изд-во Московского университета, – 1970. – с.250–260.

¹⁰ Антипов, А.Г. Алломорфное варьирование суффикса в словообразовательном типе (на материале русских говоров). – Томск, – 2001. – 188 с.

on morphemes in general have been conducted in Azerbaijani linguistics (S.Jafarov, A.Demirchizadeh, M.Huseynzadeh, G.Kazimov, B.Khalilov, and others), there is no fundamental research devoted specifically to the typological and comparative study of affixal morphemes. The investigation of affixal morphemes as structural elements of language, particularly in terms of the features they acquire under the influence of both internal linguistic regularities and extralinguistic factors—such as the national mindset of language speakers, their cognitive capacities, and their psychological and cultural values—also attracts considerable scholarly attention. Therefore, a comparative examination of the structural, semantic, and functional properties of affixal morphemes in typologically different languages (Italian and Azerbaijani) constitutes the relevance of the topic, possessing both theoretical and practical significance.

Object and subject of the research. The object of the study consists of affixal morphemes functioning in the Italian and Azerbaijani languages. The subject of the research encompasses the exponents and semantic properties of affixal morphemes in the languages under investigation, the comparative analysis of their functional usage, the variability of affixal morphemes, and their examination within a comparative-typological framework.

The aim and tasks of the research. The aim of the research is to identify and comparatively analyze the semantic, structural, and derivational properties of affixal morphemes in Italian and Azerbaijani, as well as issues related to their variability.

To achieve this aim, and in accordance with the object and subject of the research, the following objectives have been established:

- to analyze the theoretical aspects of comparative morphemics in typologically different languages (Indo-European and Turkic), and to review the history of morpheme research in Italian and Azerbaijani linguistics;

- to determine the functional features of affixal morphemes in Italian and Azerbaijani;

–to identify the productivity and regularity patterns of affixal morphemes in both languages;

–to determine the common and distinctive features of affix formation in the compared languages, as well as the typologically significant characteristics of the resulting word-formation series;

–to identify the types of affixal morphemes in Italian and Azerbaijani;

–to investigate the usage features of affixal morphemes in Italian and Azerbaijani from conceptual and applied perspectives.

The methods of the research. Since the study is devoted to linguistic phenomena characteristic of typologically diverse languages, a комплекс research methodology has been employed, including contrastive-typological, descriptive-analytical, and synchronic-descriptive methods. In addition, linguistic observation and description, componential analysis, and comparative analysis of language material have been used to examine the morphemic structure of words from a synchronic perspective and to determine the semantic properties of derived words. Methods of linguistic translation and functional analysis have also been applied.

The main arguments of the dissertation to be defended.

– Affixal morphemes are morphemes possessing specific qualities and properties: they are carriers of material meaning, perform a word-formation function, and exhibit systematic character;

–Both languages under comparison (Italian and Azerbaijani) make extensive use of affixal morphemes to create new words, mark grammatical relations, and modify meanings; however, due to their different typological structures, these functions are realized through different mechanisms;

–The general characteristics of the morpheme in the compared languages include: (a) the presence of an external, material, phonological plane or plane of expression; (b) the existence of an associated meaning or content plane; (c) indivisibility into smaller meaningful units;

–In terms of prefix usage, Italian demonstrates greater diversity and richness compared with Azerbaijani;

–In the use of suffixes, Azerbaijani relies more extensively than Italian on suffixation to express grammatical categories such as tense, aspect, case, and possession in individual words or constructions. Italian also employs suffixes in word formation; however, due to its different grammatical system, affixes may combine multiple meanings (e.g., tense, person, number) within a single inflectional ending;

–In Italian, affixal morphemes may be classified primarily as derivational and inflectional according to the meanings they express and the functions they perform, whereas in Azerbaijani they are classified as word-forming and form-building;

–In the compared languages, affixal morphemes may be divided, according to their formal expression, into overt/material morphemes and zero/implicit morphemes (zero affixes). In each language, affixes are further distinguished by degree of productivity as productive, semi-productive, and non-productive.

The scientific novelty of the research. The scientific novelty of the dissertation primarily lies in the fact that it represents the first attempt to provide a comprehensive comparative description of affixal morphemes in Italian and Azerbaijani. Furthermore, the study investigates the structural, semantic, and derivational specificities of affixal morphemes in typologically distinct languages, examines affixal morphemes from a functional-linguistic perspective, and conducts a classification of affixal morphemes based on their structure and semantics. The research also addresses the conceptual investigation of affixal morphemes from metalinguistic and psycholinguistic perspectives, as well as their analysis from an applied perspective.

The theoretical and practical significance of the research. The theoretical and practical significance of the study is determined by its relevance and novelty. Since this work constitutes the first research focused on the comparative analysis of affixal morphemes in Italian and Azerbaijani, its results contribute to the development of general typological theory, as well as to the theory of comparative research of languages with different structural types.

The practical significance of the study lies in the fact that the propositions and conclusions derived from the analysis of the collected material can be applied in the active learning and teaching of Italian and Azerbaijani, as well as in translation practice. The factual data and the outcomes of its analysis can serve for the development of core and specialized courses in morphemics and word formation, the compilation of Italian–Azerbaijani and Azerbaijani–Italian terminological dictionaries for morphemics, preparation of teaching aids, and related applications. In addition, the scientific propositions presented in the dissertation are important for reconsidering existing theoretical views on the productivity of affixal morphemes and for forming alternative approaches in the typologically comparative study of affixal morphemes.

The approbation and the applying of the work. 17 articles and theses related to the topic of the dissertation have been published in various scientific journals both within the country and abroad.

The name of the organization where the dissertation has been accomplished. The dissertation was carried out at the Department of Indo-European Languages, Institute of Linguistics named after Nasimi of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences.

The volume of the structural sections of dissertation separately and the general volume with the sign. The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and a list of references. Introduction - 6 pages, first chapter - 36 pages (66.898 sign), second chapter - 46 pages (80.174 sign), third chapter - 32 pages (57.667 sign), conclusion - 2 pages (2.463 sign), references - 25 pages (32.592 sign). In total, the dissertation has 149 pages, 217.546 characters.

THE MAIN CONTENT OF THE RESEARCH

The actuality and the usage of content is based, the object, the subject of research is appointed, the aim and the tasks, the method and ways of the research are defined, the material is chosen, the hypotheses are given, the methodological bases of the research are shown, the scientific novelty, the theoretical and practical importance of the work is commented, the basic provisions giving to the defense are noted, the information about the approbation of the work, the structure of dissertation is given in the part of “**Introduction**” of the dissertation.

The I Chapter of the dissertation is called “**Theoretical problems in the study of affixal morphemes.**” This chapter examines issues related to the concept of the morpheme, affixal morphemes, and their semantic, morphological, and syntactic properties, emphasizing a comprehensive approach to their study. In the subsection titled “*Affixal morphemes as elements of the grammatical system,*” the position of morphemes within the language structure is analyzed, and differing theoretical perspectives are critically evaluated.

The analysis of the morphemic structure of words should rely not on the subjective linguistic intuition of speakers, but on the objective facts of the contemporary language. Incorrect segmentation of words into morphemes may lead to erroneous etymological interpretations. When analyzing the significant components of a word, it is necessary to consider the specific structural features of words in general, as well as their assignment to particular parts of speech. The identification of distinct national features in different languages is of enduring interest, as language is considered “*the primary, most vivid, and most stable indicator of an ethnic group.*”¹¹

Italian belongs to the Romance language family. Word formation in Romance languages is characterized by both general typological features common to languages with well-developed word-formation systems and features specific to the Romance group.

¹¹Толстой, Н. И. Избранные труды / Н. И. Толстой. – М.: "Языки русской культуры", – 1997. Т 53. – С. 520. – 34с.

Among the former are the availability of diverse word-formation methods, derivational meanings, derivational categories, and simple and complex units of the derivational system.

Typological studies comparing individual aspects of word formation across two or more Romance languages remain relatively scarce.¹² The development of Romance languages from synthetic to analytic structures has resulted in word-formation methods such as conversion and abbreviation.

As predominantly analytic languages, Romance languages are also characterized by the presence of prepositional constructions in addition to affixal combinations. This phenomenon has been mainly studied with reference to French¹³, but similar patterns are also observed in Italian¹⁴. Research indicates that, as a rule, such constructions are not synonymous with corresponding derivational forms and therefore retain their functional load. It can be assumed that the two tendencies described by Sh.Balli regarding French—progressive and regressive sequences—may also be applicable to other Romance languages.

Variability in word formation exhibits an intermediate character and may manifest at both morphological and lexical levels.

Morphemics is the branch of linguistics that studies the system of morphemes, the morphemic structure of words, and their forms. Various definitions of the terms “morpheme” and “morphemics” exist. For instance, the *Linguistic Encyclopedic Dictionary* (1990)

¹²Диасиамидзе, В.Г. Словообразовательные модели имён существительных во французском и испанском языках / В.Г. Диасиамидзе.- М: изд. иностранной литературы, – 1950.– С. 164. – 32с. ;Овчинникова, Г.В. Сопоставительный анализ признаков слов во французском, итальянском и русском языках / Г.В.Овчинникова. – Тула: – Тульский государственный педагогический университет им. Л.Н. Толстого, –1999. – 250 с.

¹³Гак, В.Г. Сопоставительная лексикология (на материале французского и русского языков) / В.Г. Гак. - Изд. 2.- М.: Книжный дом 'ЛИБРОКОМ', -2010. -264 с.;Цыбова, И.А. О современных исследованиях словообразования во французском языке// Научные доклады высшей школы. Филологический факультет. – 1987, № 1 – с. 47-53.

¹⁴Rainer, F. I nomi di qualità nel italiano contemporaneo. Wiener romanische Arbeiten, Bd. 16, Wien: –1983 – 444 s.

provides the following explanation: “*Morphemics is the morphemic structure of a language, the totality of isolated morphemes in words and their types; it is the branch of linguistics that studies the types and structure of morphemes, their interrelations, and their relationship to the word as a whole. The main object of morphemics is the morpheme, its formal modifications—morphs—and their linear combinations.*”¹⁵”

Thus, the morpheme is the smallest meaningful linguistic unit, which can exist either as an independent form or word, or as part of more complex linguistic units. Morphemes play a fundamental role in the formation of both the lexical and grammatical meaning of words, as well as in the word-formation process through which new words are created. Morphology, as the science of morphemes, studies their structure, functions, and role within language. The significance of the morpheme as a structural unit of language is determined by its ability to interact with other levels of the language, such as phonology, syntax, and semantics.

In the second subsection of the I Chapter, titled “The fundamental principles of morphological exponentiation and the concept of exponent and semantic variability of morphemes,” the term *exponent* as applied to morphemes is explained. In Latin, the translation of *exponent* conveys the meanings “representative,” “to show; to demonstrate,” as well as “a participant in an exhibition or someone displaying something.” In linguistic terminology, an *exponent* refers to the phonetic and graphemic form of a linguistic sign. Y.S.Maslov provides a particularly clear explanation of the concept: “*All signs sometimes have a ‘form’ that is called ‘indicating’ and is perceived sensitively, but we will call this the ‘exponent of the sign.’ In our examples, exponents (the raised or lowered arm of a semaphore, the red, green, or yellow light of a traffic signal, various images on a tin sheet) are accessible to visual perception. In other cases, the exponent is perceived auditorily (e.g., continuous low-pitched signal on the phone, frequently high-pitched*

¹⁵ Лингвистический энциклопедический словарь. Главный редактор. В. Н. Ярцева. – Москва: «Советская энциклопедия» –1990. – С. 683.– 313с.

signal), by touch (letters in Braille for the visually impaired); in principle, systems using smell or taste are also possible. The only requirement is that the exponent must be accessible to human perception (or to the machine's 'perception' substituting for it), i.e., the exponent must be material." ¹⁶

Allomorphy reflects the theoretical notion, derivable from morphological theory, that multiple exponents may exist for a given feature. An *allomorph* (from Ancient Greek ἄλλος "other, different" + μορφή "form, appearance") refers to a variant of a morpheme that is semantically identical but differs in phonemic composition. Suffixal allomorphs differ only stylistically. If a morpheme is represented by a single morph, it is considered the sole allomorph. Generally, two conditions are necessary for recognizing formants as allomorphs: 1) identity of meaning, and 2) complementary distribution.

The development of semantic distinctions among coexisting variants of a morpheme is entirely natural, as expressive differences lead to differences in content. The idea of non-standard allomorphy is also supported in the works of American descriptive linguists. Issues such as morpheme identification, boundaries of morphemes, and the distinction between an allomorph and an independent morpheme were actively discussed in the earliest works on allomorphy by Y.Naida, Z.Harris, and C.Hockett in the 1940s. ¹⁷

Another significant issue concerns syntagmatic zero exponentiation. Zero affixes, or syntagmatic zero exponents, remain one of the most debated topics in theoretical morphology, partly due to terminological confusion. In particular, the treatment of zero affixes as empty elements at the morphological, phonological, or phonetic level is often ambiguous. A suffix may carry phonological

¹⁶Маслов, Ю.С. Введение в языкознание/Ю.С.Маслов.–Москва.: Высшая школа, –1975, – С. 272. – 24с.

¹⁷ Nida, E. The identification of morphemes // Language. Vol. 24, No. 4. (Oct. - Dec., 1948), – pp. 414-441– .s.428; Harris, Z.S. Morpheme alternants in linguistic analysis // Language. Vol. 18, No. 3 (Jul. - Sep., 1942), – pp. 169-180; Hockett, C.F. Problems of morphemic analysis // Language. Vol. 23, No. 4 (Oct. - Dec., 1947), – pp. 321-343.

content yet be phonetically null. As noted by G.Kazimov: *“Sometimes grammatical meaning is expressed in a word, but the morpheme itself is not realized. For example, in the sentence sən gəl (‘come, please’), the second person marker is absent; in uşaq gülür (‘the child laughs’), the third person singular marker is absent. Nevertheless, it is understood that the sentences are in the second and third person singular, respectively. Such morphemes are called zero morphemes.”*¹⁸

As mere examples of semantic functions, the meanings of grammatical morphemes such as “plurality,” “intensified degree of quality,” “superiority,” “simultaneity,” “speaker’s attitude,” “cause,” “purpose,” and so on can be illustrated.

It is considered that *“variability is generally a natural phenomenon of language ... at any stage of its development.”*¹⁹ In the field of word formation, the issue of variability, as well as morpheme variants, remains a debated topic in linguistics. Some scholars²⁰ regard the variants of word formation (alongside morphological, phonetic, syntactic, etc., variants) as an objective reality of language.

Formal variants in a language system are preserved only on the condition of their functional difference. The distinction of affix variants from synonymous affixes is also among the current issues.

Another topic addressed in this chapter is the phenomenon of affixoids. Dynamic phenomena in the language system, generated by

¹⁸ Kazimov, Q.Ş. Müasir Azərbaycan dili. Morfologiya / Q.Ş. Kazimov. – Bakı: – “Nurlan”, –2010, – 400 s. – s.27.

¹⁹ Даниленко, В. П. Русская терминология: опыт лингвистического описания / В П. Даниленко. – М.: Наука, – 1977. – С 246.– 96 с.

²⁰ Смирницкий, А. И. Лексикология английского языка / А. И. Смирницкий. – М.: Изд. лит. на иностр. яз., - 1956. – 260 с.; Гущина, Л. Н. К вопросу об аффиксоидах // Журнал Гродненского государственного медицинского университета. - 2003. No 2. - С. 19–24; Лемов, А. В. Система, структура и функционирование научного термина (на материале русской лингвистической терминологии) / А. В. Лемов. – Саранск: Изд-во Мордов. ун-та, –2000. – 192 с.

social factors, manifest themselves at different levels. Word formation is no exception in this regard; on the contrary, it is particularly open to such changes. Derivation, manifested through various combinations of root and affix morphemes, also facilitates the emergence of transitional phenomena as a process.

The transition of linguistic phenomena into one another allows us to determine that the development of language occurs systematically and that the transitional phenomenon takes place not only at a single level of language but across all its levels. However, issues concerning semantic transition and functional-semantic transition that encompass content shifts remain underexplored.

Language is a constantly changing structure. The primary forms of word formation are affixation, compounding, conversion, and abbreviation.

Affixation is the method of forming new words by adding a prefix or suffix, which in many cases also changes the part of speech. Derived words formed through affixation may result from the application of one or several rules of word formation. Derived words built on simple stems and formed using a single derivational affix are characterized as first-degree derivatives. Derived words created through two successive stages of word formation possess a second-degree derivative status. Studying numerous suffix and prefix derivations allows for the identification of significant differences among them and the establishment of specific regularities. For example, researchers note that in Modern English, suffixes are mainly characteristic for the formation of nouns and adjectives, while prefixes are typical for verbs. The distinction also relies on the role that different semantic types play within the semantic structure of suffixes and prefixes. The part-of-speech meaning is generally more important in suffixes than in prefixes. Consequently, a prefix may be restricted to a particular part of speech. It should be noted that a suffix, which is closely linked with the stem, usually forms a compound while preserving less independence compared to a semantically more autonomous prefix.

Prefixation refers to word formation using prefixes. The interpretation of the firmly established term *prefix* in linguistic

literature has undergone a certain evolutionary path. For example, until recently, linguists considered the prefix to be part of the expression. The relatively greater semantic independence of prefixes compared to suffixes led linguists to equate prefixes with the first component of a complex word. Today, most scholars regard prefixes as derivational affixes, which are significantly different from both root morphemes and non-derivational morphemes, and consider prefixation an integral part of word formation. Opinions on the functional status of separate morpheme groups functioning as the first components of words sometimes vary. Unlike a suffix, which is usually more closely linked to the paradigm of a specific part of speech, a prefix is considered more neutral. It should also be noted that in linguistic literature, derivational suffixes are always classified as noun-forming, adjective-forming, etc., whereas prefixes are interpreted differently. These differences are reflected in studies conducted on various languages.

The comparative study of languages with different structures has become one of the central directions in linguistics only since the mid XX century, as a result of accumulating knowledge about the typology of diverse languages. The development of this direction is also characterized by the emergence of new ideas in the field of word formation.

The II Chapter is entitled **“Characteristic features of affixal morphemes in Azerbaijani and Italian”**. In the first subchapter, “The character of affixal morphemes from the perspective of language typology”, the features observed in the functioning of affixal morphemes from a typological perspective are analyzed. The idea of applying comparison to genetically unrelated languages was first proposed by V.A.Bogoroditsky in his Course in Comparative Grammar of Indo-European Languages: *“Comparison can be not only based on genetic or language relationship but also analogical; that is, it is possible to compare similar phenomena in unrelated languages.”*²¹

²¹ Богородицкий, В.А. Курс сравнительной грамматики индоевропейских языков/В.А.Богородицкий.–Казань: [Б. и.], – 1890-1907.– с.203.

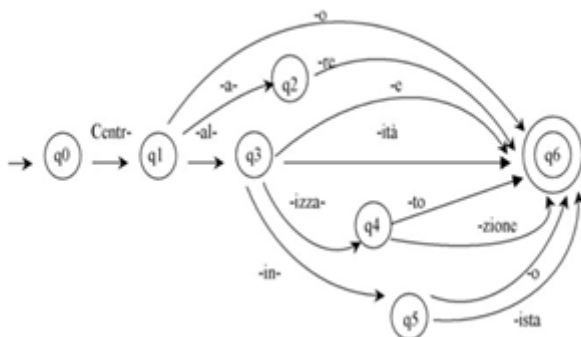
Thus, the essence of comparative typological research lies in identifying the most characteristic similarities and differences in the language structure of the languages under comparison. The creation of a general theory of word formation based on the analysis of languages with different structures remains an issue to be resolved.

Affixation, as a method of word formation, is among the oldest methods in both Italian and Azerbaijani. The derivational use of affixes is a technique that generates new words from any material units of a language, establishing word-formation relations among them.

In both languages, affixes, despite their structural differences, are undoubtedly the most productive and stable means of word formation. Affixes not only create new words but also determine the corresponding part of speech and, in some cases, specify the nature of its grammatical variations. Compared to other methods of word formation, creating words through affixes is more closely linked with morphology. Affixation serves as a mediating — or regulatory — link between the lexicon and morphology.

The second subchapter of the II Chapter, “*Characteristic features of affixal morphemes in Azerbaijani and Italian*”, highlights that there are conflicting views regarding the semantic scope of morphemes. In the linguistic literature, one can find claims ranging from considering these units purely as connective grammatical elements to recognizing their lexical independence and distinct semantic structure. The different perspectives on the semantic and functional properties of morphemes become particularly evident during the comparative study of morphemic structures in different languages. This phenomenon is also apparent in the analysis of morphemes in Azerbaijani and Italian.

It should also be noted that the study of derivational semantics remains far from comprehensive. A more nuanced and extensive analysis could lead to a deeper understanding of the semantic paths traced by affixal combinations. To visually observe the derivational possibilities of affixation in Italian, let us consider the word *centro* (“center”) and its derivational potential:



Centro (center): al centro (to the center), centrale (central), centralità (centrality), centralizzato (centralized), centralizzazione (centralization), centralino (switchboard), centralinista (switchboard operator).

In Italian, verbs are conjugated according to tense, person, and number. For example, in the present tense, parlare (to speak) becomes parlo (I speak), parli (you speak), parla (he/she speaks). Nouns and adjectives are inflected for gender (masculine or feminine) and number (singular or plural). For instance, amico (friend) becomes amici (friends) in the plural. Italian has a rich derivational morphology, frequently using prefixes and suffixes to create new words. For example, bella (beautiful) can become bellezza (beauty).

The comparative morphological typology of Italian and Azerbaijani highlights significant differences in how each language manages grammatical relationships. Italian, with its Latin roots, relies particularly on inflection for verbs, nouns, and adjectives. In contrast, Azerbaijani employs agglutination, adding affixes to roots to convey complex meanings, including tense, case, and number. Despite these differences, both languages exhibit rich morphological structures that are central to their linguistic identity.

The third subchapter of the II Chapter, “*Analysis of affixes used with different parts of speech — nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs in Azerbaijani and Italian*”, addresses the role of affixal morphemes in word formation. Affixes (prefixes, suffixes, infixes,

and circumfixes) combine with roots or word stems to form new words, and in doing so, may vary in form and function. This variability can be influenced by several factors, including phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic conditions. Both languages under comparison (Italian and Azerbaijani) extensively use affixal morphemes to create new words, mark grammatical relationships, and modify meanings, although they do so in typologically different ways.

In Italian, noun formation through affixal morphemes is particularly productive and rich. Among the most common derivational suffixes are those that indicate gender: masculine nouns end in *-o*, feminine nouns in *-a*: *la donna* (woman), *la bambina* (girl), *un libro* (book), *il bambino* (child).

Many nouns, especially those with the suffixes *-ante*, *-ente*, *-ese*, *-ista*, *-ega*, have the same form for both genders; the article indicates the gender: *il/la cantante* (singer), *il/la giornalista* (journalist).

The following suffixes are highly productive in noun formation: *-aggio*: *blindare* (to armor) → *blindaggio* (armor); *lavare* (to wash) → *lavaggio* (washing process); *gonfiare* (to inflate) → *gonfiaggio* (inflation); *montare* (to assemble) → *montaggio* (assembly), etc.

An interesting feature of Italian affixal noun formation is how derivational processes reflect dynamic aspects of language use, such as in the suffix *-issimo/-issima*, which creates adjectives expressing the superlative degree. For example: *bella* (beautiful) → *bellissima* (very beautiful); *grande* (big) → *grandissimo/a* (very big, largest). This suffix is widely used in modern contexts such as advertising, sports, television, and radio: *canzonissima* (great song — music program), *campionissimo* (champion), *finalissima* (grand finale), *caseissima* (homely, domestic), etc.

In Italian, suffixal morphemes are well-developed and are applied across various parts of speech.

The formation of plural adjectives (*Formazione del plurale degli aggettivi*) in Italian is a noteworthy aspect. Adjectives ending in

-co, -go, -ca, -ga take the plural endings *-chi, -ghi, -che, -ghe*: *bianco* → *bianchi*, *bianca* → *bianche*.

It should be noted that in Italian, the most productive word formation is related to adjectives. Denominal derivation is also productive in Italian, especially when expressing animate objects and personal names.

Morphemes in the language carry significant potential for emotional and expressive functions. Adjectives are formed from nouns using suffixes such as *-oso*, and less commonly *-eo, -ivo, -ile, -ale*: *polveroso* (dusty), *bronzeo* (bronze-colored), *estivo* (summer-related), *cordiale* (friendly).

In Italian, verbs are classified into three conjugation classes, each with its own ending:

I. *-are* (e.g., *lavorare* — to work)

II. *-ere* (e.g., *prendere* — to take)

III. *-ire* (e.g., *partire* — to depart)

A series of suffixes is used to derive verbs from nouns or adjectives: *-are, -ire, -ere* (general verb endings, not always considered derivational, but essential in verb formation). For example: *Amare* (to love) is derived from *amore* (love) *Educare* (to educate) is derived from *educazione* (education) *Creare* (to create) is derived from *creazione* (creation)

-eggiare / -egiare / -icciare (indicating repetition or intensification) — creates verbs from nouns: *bisticciare* (to argue) from *bisticcio* (argument); *guerra* (war) → *guerreggiare* (to wage war, to fight with someone); *amore* (love) → *amoreggiare* (to flirt), etc.

The IV subsection of the II chapter is titled “*Diminutive affixes used in Italian.*” Subjective-evaluative suffixes are among the most frequent stylistic devices in Italian. With their help, it is possible to express emotions, and therefore these suffixes are called emotionally expressive suffixes. When added to nouns, adjectives, and adverbs, these suffixes produce corresponding emotionally and expressively colored forms, thus indicating the speaker’s attitude toward the referent, its quality, or characteristic.

The most commonly encountered suffixes are: *-ino / -ano, -etto / -etta*: *strada* (street) → *stradina / stradetta* (small street). Nouns can be used with both suffixes.

As noted, just as in a number of languages, Italian has augmentative (*accrescitivi*), diminutive and endearing (*diminutivi vezzeggiativi*), and pejorative (*peggiorativi* or *dispregiativi*) suffixes. Observations show that in Italian, such suffixes are more numerous than in many other languages (e.g., Russian, according to B.A.) and compared to Azerbaijani. Different points are also observed in their application depending on the parts of speech to which they attach.

The III Chapter is titled **“Conceptual and applied analysis of affixal morphemes in Italian and Azerbaijani.”** The first subsection, *“Derivational features of affixal morphemes in the framework of generative grammar,”* considers the activity of affixal morphemes in the language system from the perspective of generative grammar. In the framework of generative grammar, when examining the word-formation process, especially the derivational possibilities of affixal morphemes, the growth characteristics of affixal morphemes as exponent units should be highlighted.

The second subsection, *“Cognitive foundations of the functionality of affixal morphemes,”* emphasizes the necessity of understanding morphological categories and forms at a conceptual level, in the context of the underlying cognitive processes. From a cognitive perspective, it is possible to study how affixes change functionally. Some morphemes (for example, tense categories) tend to maintain more predictable forms because they express grammatical relationships directly linked to conceptual distinctions such as time or number.

Word formation in Italian using affixal morphemes based on content reflecting the behavioral characteristics of various living beings is particularly noteworthy. The suffixes mainly used to create this type of derived nouns include: *-mento, -ata, -tore, -eccio, -ino / -ina, -one, -aio, -etto, -olume, -eria*.

One of the most productive suffixes in this group is *-aio*, which is used both to name habitats and to indicate plurality, primarily participating in the creation of new words from the names of certain

animals: *cimiciaio* (bug nest), *formicaio* (ant nest), *formicolaio* (ant nest), *moscaio* (swarm of flies), *pulciaio* (flea nest), *vespaiost* (wasp nest).

Using the example of the metaphor *moscaio* (swarm of flies), let us examine the stages of word formation and semantic derivation. This word's productive base is the noun *mosca* (fly), from which the nomination *moscaio* (place full of flies) is formed. Then, based on the connotations of "large quantity," "rapid movement," and "annoying buzzing," the nomination is reconsidered metaphorically — *moscaio* develops the figurative metaphor of "a group of people creating haste, agitation, and confusion."²² The next stage of the lexeme's development is the formation of a metaphor associated with "chaotic movement," "annoying buzzing," and, associatively, the meanings of "disturbance"²³ and "strong agitation."

The third subsection of the III chapter is titled "*Metalinguistic and psycholinguistic approaches to affixal morphemes*." As with other levels of language, a metalinguistic approach plays a special role in clarifying many aspects at the grammatical level.

The metalinguistic role of affixes is an important aspect that allows for in-depth analysis of language and the communication process. The linguo-cognitive characteristics of affixes demonstrate how the structure of language is interconnected not only in syntactic and morphological terms but also in cognitive and cultural dimensions. This helps to understand how both the simple and complex aspects of language correspond to human thought and cognition.

The metalinguistic role of affixes is manifested in the following aspects:

–Changing word meaning: Affixes can direct a word from its general meaning to a specific or different meaning. For example, the affix *-çi* added to the word *dəmir* (iron) forms *dəmirçi* (blacksmith),

²²Dizionario Italiano Sabatini Coletti. – Milano: –2005. –3104 p.–p.1603.

²³Zingarelli, N. Vocabolario della lingua italiana / N.Zingarelli. –Bologna: – 2007. - 2304 p. - p.1181

providing information about a social group associated with a profession or activity.

–Expressing grammatical functions: Affixes change the grammatical category of a word. For instance, person and tense markers or case suffixes are expressed through affixes. This forms the language’s metalinguistic function, indicating which person, tense, or situation the speaker is conveying.

–Providing information about the language: Affixes reflect information about the structure of the language and help understand its organization. For example, the affix *-lıq* performs a metalinguistic function by indicating that an object or property belongs to a specific category (e.g., *dostluq* – the state of being a friend).

–Expressing meaning related to word forms or certain aspects: Affixes also indicate how the language is used and how a word may function in context. For example, a past-tense affix may show that an action is completed but still relevant to the time of discourse.

–Indicating social and cultural context: Some affixes are used only in specific geographic or social contexts, thus revealing the social aspect of language and cultural codes. For instance, adding a region-specific affix may display a local or informal form of the language.

–Changing meaning: Affixes (prefixes, suffixes, infixes) are added to base words to change meaning. They may express tense, person, or other grammatical features, but their metalinguistic significance is revealed by how words function in context. Adding an affix helps the speaker or listener interpret the word at a higher level of abstraction.

–Creating word classes: Derivational affixes change the word class of the base word, often converting it into a different grammatical category, e.g., from a verb to a noun, or from an adjective to an adverb. This metalinguistic transformation helps classify words within a sentence or discourse.

–Nominalization: Some affixes create nouns from verbs or adjectives. Converting a verb or adjective into a noun changes its syntactic and semantic role, signaling a transition from an action or quality to a conceptual entity.

–Indicating relations and dependencies: In addition to serving grammatical purposes such as number, case, or tense, in inflectional languages affixes help indicate the relationships between words in a sentence, thereby contributing to metalinguistic clarity.

–Conveying nuances of meaning: Some affixes convey subtle shades of meaning, enabling speakers to create more precise and nuanced communication and to mark distinctions at a deeper level.

The fourth subsection of the III chapter is titled “*Practical challenges in the use of affixal morphemes.*” The Presidential Decree of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated March 19, 2025, on the approval of the “Artificial Intelligence Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2025–2028” aims to accelerate the development of artificial intelligence in Azerbaijan, promote research in this area, improve information technologies related to AI and their management mechanisms, ensure infrastructure accessibility, and strengthen qualified personnel capacity.

Affixal morphemes play a decisive role in machine translation because they affect the syntactic and semantic structure of words in both source and target languages.

Some machine translation systems attempt to simplify or normalize morphology to reduce complexity, but this can lead to the loss of meaning nuances. To prevent such losses and ensure more natural and accurate translations, it is essential to express affixes more precisely.

Research and practical application concerning the machine translation of morphemes is important because affixes influence both the meaning and grammatical structure of words. Correct representation of affixes across different languages is necessary for producing precise and natural translations.

Thus, for machine translation, affixal morphemes need to be specifically categorized and encoded, which is particularly challenging when working with languages of different typologies. To achieve translations with the highest possible accuracy, MT systems must be capable of recognizing, segmenting, and translating affixes appropriately. Advances in machine learning and natural language processing allow MT systems to better handle affixal morphemes,

but challenges remain, especially with languages that have diverse morphological structures.

The scientific conclusions obtained in the “**Conclusion**” part of the dissertation work are summarized as follows:

1. Affixal morphemes play a central role as a key structural unit of language in the processes of word formation and transformation. Since they are closely connected with other levels of language, such as phonology, syntax, and semantics, their functions encompass lexical, grammatical, word-formation, and syntactic dimensions.

2. Compared languages (Italian and Azerbaijani) belong to different morpho-typological systems, and as a result, the usage characteristics of affixal morphemes exhibit both universal features and language-specific distinctions.

3. In both languages, affixes can change both the meaning and the grammatical category of a word, transforming it from one part of speech to another, e.g., from a noun to a verb, adjective, or adverb. This allows linguistic productivity, enabling the creation of numerous new words and forms.

4. Regarding the use of prefixes, Italian demonstrates greater diversity and richness compared to Azerbaijani. These prefixes serve specific functions, such as expressing opposition or direction.

5. Azerbaijani relies more heavily on affixes for grammatical markers such as tense, aspect, case, and possession, which are expressed through separate words or constructions in Italian. While Italian also uses affixes for word formation, its grammatical system differs: in Azerbaijani, a broad sequence of affixes is applied to change the root of a word, whereas in Italian, as a fusional language, a single affix can convey multiple grammatical meanings (e.g., tense, person, number).

6. Italian demonstrates particularly productive use of augmentative (accrescitivi), diminutive and endearing (diminutivi vezzeggiativi), and pejorative (peggiorativi or dispregiativi) affixes. Observations indicate that such affixes are more abundant in Italian than in many other languages (e.g., Russian – Б.Ә.) and Azerbaijani.

7. From a cognitive perspective, the variability of affixal morphemes is closely related to human cognition, including conceptualization, analogy, and embodied experience. The meanings and forms of affixal morphemes are shaped both by universal cognitive processes and language-specific conventions. The dynamic interaction of conceptual metaphor, mental imagery, and categorization produces rich variability in affixal morphemes, reflecting the flexibility and creative nature of language.

8. The practical application of affixal morphemes must be considered, particularly in machine translation. They need to be systematically categorized and encoded, which is a complex and crucial issue when working with languages of different typologies. To achieve translations with the highest possible accuracy, MT systems must be capable of properly recognizing, segmenting, and translating affixes.

The main content of the research is reflected in the following published thesis articles:

1. Azərbaycan və italyan dillərində isim düzəldən şəkilçilər // Terminologiya məsələləri, – Bakı: – 2010. –s.43-49.

2. İtalyan və Azərbaycan dillərində işlənən zərflərin müqayisəli təsnifatı və işlənmə xüsusiyyətləri // ADU, Elmi xəbərlər, – Bakı: – 2010. – s.72-77.

3. Azərbaycan və italyan dillərində işlənən sayların yaranma yolları və xüsusiyyətləri // ADU, Elmi xəbərlər, – Bakı: – 2011. – s.122- 126.

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5. İtalyan dilində söz yaradıcılığı // ADU, “Dil və mədəniyyət” Respublika elmi-praktik konfransı. – Bakı: –8-9 oktyabr. – 2015.– s.109 -111.

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- J. B. -

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