

Discussions on the ways of word formation in agglutinative languages

*typological linguistics, agglutinative languages, affixes,
word formation*

The topic included in the title of this article worried linguists back in the middle of the 20th century, but there are still “white spots” in it that require the active intervention of specialists. For example, speaking about the norms of the functioning of affixes in the Azerbaijani language, scientists note their diversity. F.A. Ganiyev symptomatically expands this issue with the capture of many languages of the Turkic group into his orbit, arguing that the diversity of suffixes or affixes in them “separates the opinions of modern linguists about word formation in general” [Ганиев 2005: 14]. Following him, we could note that word- and phonetic formation in the Azerbaijani language is essentially an independent discipline with its own problems.

It is characteristic that discrepancies are also observed in the aspect of correlating the problem we have posed. For example, some scientists refer them to the field of “pure” lexicology, others to the category of purely morphology. There are also researchers who combine these two scientific disciplines. This is the world-famous turkologist N. A. Baskakov, who refers both word- and form formation to “lexical morphology”. He also believes that in these phenomena, the “set of morphemes” should be put at the forefront, moreover, those that, according to his assumption, are associated precisely with the “stock, but not the structural morphological level” [Baskakov 1979: 57].

It is significant that F. Fortunatov, A. Potebnya joined the discussion at the time, and after them other, more modern linguists, who were mainly interested in the following question: is there a fundamental difference between the forms of word formation and inflection? If so, then within what specific limits? Which terminology is most suitable for both the first and second language phenomenon? Nowadays, most scientists agree that the main watershed runs between individual lexemes outside of their connection with the whole phrase/sentence (forms of word formation), as opposed to a related phenomenon when such a connection is visible (inflection).

Nowadays, most of the Turkic scientists, discussing affixes in agglutinative languages, include word formation in morphology, more precisely, in

grammar. This is the most common point of view. By the way, in Azerbaijani, as well as Turkish, word formation is studied most often from morphological position, including suffixes in inflectional languages and the semantics of affixes in agglutinative ones in the semantic field of research. Moreover, unlike the Azerbaijani language, Turkish, which is largely related to it, nevertheless suffixes are divided into separate groups (classes) depending on the attribution of a particular lexeme to the generating or arbitrary basis of verbs or names.

Modern Turkology dictates its own rules and requirements for them. Namely, word formation is analyzed together with inflection. But this is the position of some scientists (A. Baskakov, F. Fortunatov), who considered this situation almost a panacea for such a focus of research. Others (V. Guzev, G. Melnikov), on the contrary, advocate the differentiation of these concepts and therefore quite naturally separate word formation from inflection. Therefore, their study should be separate.

If we take into account the factor according to which categorical judgments (with rare exceptions) almost always abhor the clarification of scientific truth, then personally we also tend to consider the second point of view more correct.

At least, it is more reliable and appropriate. Indeed, a number of linguistic norms can be interpreted in different ways. So in our case, one form can be correlated with word formation, and the other with word modification, respectively. For example, in the agglutinative Tatar language there is the word “tengere”, which, loosely translated into Russian, sounds like the sacred expression “воспарить в небо” or more mundane: “находящийся в небе”. Linguist O. Betling, focusing on the suffix “-gi” in its composition, considers this form to be word-formative from the original form – the infinitive “находиться”. In contrast, V. Guzev considers it inflectional.

The discussion in modern cognitive linguistics is by no means idle, because in some cases the methods of word formation are not only purely grammatical, but also lexico-semantic. The essence of the matter lies in the fact that suffixes or affixes in agglutinative languages, on the one hand, are capable of changing the grammatical form, and on the other hand, they make certain changes in the lexical order. It is not difficult to prove this by appealing at least to the above example.

Thus, the infinitive “находить” (or with the reflexive particle “находиться”) refers to verbs with a place specification. The present participle formed from it is abstract and not only complicates the form itself, but also, with a certain enrichment, strengthens its meaning. Let’s put it this way, it is being modified towards a lexical and semantic meaning. Thus, the

grammar and semantics of the word follow as if in a single fairway. One feature organically complements the other.

The discussion in this vein is noticeably complicated by the presence of the opposite phenomenon described in our theses. A. H. Girfanova gives a typical example in one of his articles. She writes about the so-called collateral suffixes, which give impetus to the lexical meaning on its initial basis. As an example, she cites some lexemes from the group of Turkic languages, when the collateral forms of affixes or suffixes combine features of both word-formation, grammatical, lexical, and inflectional. Four signs in one composition, which might seem to overload traditional approaches to word and form formations, but nevertheless present in individual lexemes as a fact, a given.

It turns out that this phenomenon is sometimes observed in some modern agglutinative languages. Namely, as A. H. Girfanova points out, in "Turkology" "algulu" means "to bring down", "irgulu" - "to throw", or "to rush". At the same time, the suffix "-n" in a similar combinatorics to "sizgirinu" is "whistling", "koenu" is "bathing", "çişenu" is "undressing", "kaginu" is "flapping a wing" [Гирфанова 2022: 3–4].

It is not difficult to see how big the semantic "spread" of words in their semantics is here. The same suffixes "-il-" and "-n-" with the help of almost identical collateral forms make significant changes to both grammar and vocabulary, each time denoting a different lexeme. In turn, the recognition of the examples given by A. H. Girfanova of several interconnected four signs (we pointed them out above), in our opinion, aims modern linguists not only at their unification, but also separation. In other words, they can and should be analyzed separately, in each case highlighting individual and specific features.

It is clear that this is a modern view of this problem. But it is significant that more than half a century ago, N. A. Baskakov, mentioned by us, guided scientists to this kind of decision and discussion. He was one of the first to pay close attention to the need to "establish acceptable boundaries between inflection, formalization and word formation" [Баскаков 1979: 7]. As you can see, the foundation was laid back in the 1970s, but the issue remains important and relevant today.

References

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