

GRADIENCE IN VERB HYPONYMY: WHAT IS A “PROTOTYPICAL” VERB?

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Academic Supervisor:

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17745999>

Abstract. The hierarchical structure of verb hyponymy shows general verbs as superordinates which have specific verbs as their hyponyms. The categories of verbs exist as flexible systems which maintain variable boundaries between their members. The perception of prototypical verbs emerges from prototype theory because these words serve as reference points to understand related vocabulary. The degree of semantic specificity together with contextual factors and usage patterns and word frequency determines the level of gradience which exists in both English and Uzbek verb systems. Research on word meaning structures becomes possible through central verb identification in semantic systems which also allows language comparison.

Key words: verb hyponymy, gradience, prototypical verbs, semantic hierarchy, English verbs, Uzbek verbs, lexical categories, prototype theory, verb meaning, cross-linguistic semantics

Introduction. The concept of verb hyponymy establishes a hierarchical system which uses general verbs as superordinate terms while specific verbs function as their hyponyms. The semantic fields of motion and manipulation and communication follow this pattern of organization. Recent research shows that these hierarchical systems remain adaptable. The categories of verbs exist with adaptable borders which include different levels of central membership for their members. The pattern demonstrates that lexical category gradience functions as an actual linguistic pattern. The structural pattern appears in both English and Uzbek languages. The core actions of a field find representation through specific verbs which distinguish them from other verbs that describe more specific actions. Research on motion verbs in English and Uzbek demonstrates that speakers choose verbs based on semantic elements which include direction and manner and path. The central position of particular verbs within their category emerges from Prototype theory. Research indicates that people and language learners select the most representative example of an action to understand related terms. L2 verb learning occurs when learners base their verb category

development on prototypes which they use to organize and expand their vocabulary [3]. Research indicates that semantic meaning develops through the combination of linguistic elements and non-linguistic information. The research on trajectories demonstrates that physical experiences enable people to develop patterns which guide their verb meaning interpretations [4]. Research on hyponymy demonstrates that category relationships exist at different levels of strength which supports the concept of continuous rather than absolute boundaries [2]. Studies of spatial terminology across different languages demonstrate that words in a language follow complex organizational patterns through multiple lexical categories. The research evidence supports the theory that prototypicality emerges from semantic properties and usage patterns and cultural norms and mental attention levels [5].

Verb Hyponymy as a Semantic Hierarchy. The hierarchical structure of verbs in verb hyponymy demonstrates that general verbs act as superordinate terms which specific verbs serve as their subordinates. A superordinate verb in a category functions as the broadest verb to describe a wide action but subordinate verbs limit this action to create more specific meanings. The three fields of motion and manipulation and communication in English and Uzbek languages follow a hierarchical pattern which uses general verbs to describe complete actions and specific verbs to add details about direction and intensity and manner. The central position of general verbs [*“go”* - *“bormoq”*] in English and Uzbek motion verb studies exists because these words work in multiple situations yet specific verbs like [*“stroll”*- *“yugurib bormoq”*] describe particular circumstances [1]. Studies of lexical relations demonstrate that these hierarchical systems maintain their structural flexibility. The strength of category expression in verbs enables a smooth transition between general and specific meaning [2]. The semantic fields show a step-by-step organizational structure which supports the theory that verb hyponymy develops through the combination of semantic elements and contextual factors.

Gradiance in Verb Meaning. The meaning of verbs exists between fixed points because they create continuous ranges of specificity and intensity and manner which produce smooth transitions instead of defined limits. Research shows that speakers use a continuous scale to evaluate verb similarity which allows them to link general verbs to particular verbs based on situational elements [2]. The same verb requires varying levels of detail to achieve effective meaning transmission between different situations. The number of times words appear in speech determines their functional flexibility level. The research



findings demonstrate English and Uzbek verb fields consist of multiple forms because speakers use these forms to construct different conceptual frameworks [1].

Prototypical verbs. A prototypical verb functions as the basic unit which establishes the central meaning of a semantic set. The theory of prototypes shows that every collection of related verbs includes a core verb which functions as the basis for interpreting all other members of the group. The three fundamental elements which determine prototypical status consist of semantic centrality and general applicability and cognitive salience. Research findings show that people tend to choose central verbs for action organization and interpretation tasks [3]. The entire category shares its core meaning through prototypical verbs. The main verbs in a category show no aspectual bias while using their most common unadorned grammatical forms. The position of these verbs in verb categories emerges from their common use in everyday speech and their ability to fit into various sentence patterns [5]. **Conclusion.** The structured system of verb hyponymy explains why different verbs show their actions at different levels of detail. The Comparative Analysis of Verbs of Motion in Uzbek and English demonstrates that verbs create adaptable networks which emerge from language usage patterns and specific contexts and semantic precision levels [1]. The research by Saji supports this perspective through prototype theory because speakers depend on common verbs as mental references to understand related word meanings [3]. The core semantic structure of central verbs serves as the foundation which directs the organization of verb categories and their specific relationships. The structured nature of verb meaning becomes more evident through this understanding which applies to both individual language systems and their interconnections.

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