Functional Semantic Field and Cognitive Status of Inchoativeness

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Abstract. *This article explores the functional-semantic field and cognitive status of inchoativeness in Uzbek and English languages. It examines the theoretical foundations of inchoativeness, analyzing how this linguistic category is expressed in both languages and its functional and cognitive significance in speech. Differences and similarities between Uzbek and English are highlighted through linguistic examples, emphasizing the role of inchoativeness in structuring meaning and thought in communication. The study provides insights into the interaction of semantics and cognition, contributing to comparative linguistic studies.*

Key words: *Inchoativeness, functional-semantic field, cognitive linguistics, Uzbek language, English language, comparative analysis.*

The concept of inchoativeness, referring to the initiation or beginning of an action or state, occupies a significant place in linguistic studies. Understanding how this category is expressed in different languages reveals the intricate ways in which semantics and cognition interact in shaping communication. While inchoativeness has been extensively studied in Indo-European languages, there is limited research comparing its manifestation in English and Uzbek. This study aims to fill that gap by analyzing the functional-semantic and cognitive dimensions of inchoativeness in these two languages.[1]

Inchoativeness is a semantic category that marks the transition from one state to another or the initiation of an action. In English, this is often expressed through verbs such as begin, start, become, and certain constructions like get + adjective (e.g., get tired). Uzbek, on the other hand, employs suffixes such as -a boshladi and -ib qoldi, as well as lexical expressions like boshlamoq (to begin).

The functional-semantic field of inchoativeness is not limited to specific grammatical markers; it extends to a variety of linguistic elements that contribute to expressing this notion. These include modal verbs, adverbs, and contextual cues that signal the onset of an action or state. Comparative Analysis of Uzbek and English Inchoativeness: In English, inchoativeness is largely lexical.[2] For example:

He started working.

She became anxious.

In Uzbek, inchoativeness is often expressed morphologically through suffixes:

[1] Bybee, J. L., & Dahl, Ö. (1989). The creation of tense and aspect systems in the languages of the world. Studies in Language, 13(1), 51–103.

[2] Comrie, B. (1985). Tense. Cambridge University Press.

Ishlay boshladi (He started working).

U asabiy bo'lib qoldi (She became anxious).

The Uzbek language relies more on suffixation and auxiliary verbs to mark the beginning of an action, whereas English often uses standalone verbs or multi-word constructions. Inchoativeness reflects a cognitive process that involves perceiving and conceptualizing transitions or changes. In English, the cognitive focus is often on the agent initiating the action (e.g., He started running). In Uzbek, the emphasis may shift to the event's natural progression or external circumstances (e.g., Yomg'ir yog'a boshladi – "It started raining"). This difference reflects broader typological distinctions between English as a subject-prominent language and Uzbek as an event-oriented language. These cognitive variations influence how speakers of each language perceive and describe dynamic processes.[3]

The comparative analysis of inchoativeness in Uzbek and English highlights significant linguistic and cognitive distinctions rooted in typological and cultural differences. These distinctions offer insights into how speakers of each language conceptualize and communicate the beginning of actions or states. In English, the inchoative meaning is predominantly conveyed through lexical choices or auxiliary constructions such as start and begin. These verbs, in combination with infinitives or gerunds, clearly signal the onset of an event. For instance, He began to sing explicitly marks the beginning of the action. The absence of morphological inflection for inchoativeness reflects the language's reliance on syntax and lexicon for expressing such meanings.

Aspect	English	Uzbek	Remarks
Primary Expression	Lexical verbs (begin, start, become), auxiliary constructions	Morphological markers (-a boshladi, -ib qoldi), auxiliary verbs (boshlamoq)	**English relies on standalone verbs, such as begin and start, to express inchoativeness** **Uzbek uses affixation and auxiliary verbs like boshlamoq, which integrate the meaning of beginning into the verb itself**
Grammatical Structure	Subject-prominent	Event-oriented	**English emphasizes the agent or subject initiating the action, aligning with its subject-prominent nature.** **Uzbek focuses on the event or process, reflecting its event-oriented grammatical structure.**

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[3] Croft, W. (2001). Radical Construction Grammar: Syntactic Theory in Typological Perspective. Oxford University Press.

Examples of Use	He started working. (subject + verb + gerund/infinitive)	U ishlay boshladi. (subject + verb + affix)	**Both languages express the beginning of an action, but English employs a combination of verbs and gerunds/infinitives, while Uzbek incorporates affixes directly into the verb**
Adverbial Reinforcement	Suddenly, the rain began	Birdaniga yomg'ir yog'a boshladi	**Both languages use adverbs to emphasize the onset of an event, such as suddenly in English and birdaniga in Uzbek**
Cognitive Focus	Initiator or agent (She started reading a book.)	Natural progression or event (Kitob o'qiy boshladi.)	**English foregrounds the initiator or agent, showcasing an individual-focused perspective** **Uzbek highlights natural progression or events, prioritizing the occurrence over the individual**
Typological Features	Analytical (lexical and syntactic constructions dominate)	Agglutinative (morphological markers dominate)	**English's analytical nature results in separate words and constructions to express inchoativeness** **Uzbek's agglutinative structure makes use of affixes to embed meaning compactly within the verb**
Translation Challenges	**Overuse of auxiliary constructions by Uzbek speakers learning English**	**Difficulty adapting to standalone verbs by English speakers learning Uzbek**	**Language learners face challenges adapting to these differences. Uzbek speakers may overuse auxiliary constructions in English, while English speakers may struggle with**

			Uzbek's affixation system

In Uzbek, morphological markers like -a boshladi and -ib qoldi are essential tools for expressing inchoativeness. This reliance on morphology aligns with Uzbek's agglutinative structure, where affixes play a significant role in modifying root words to convey grammatical and semantic nuances. For example, Ishlay boshladi embeds the notion of beginning within the verb itself, showcasing a compact and efficient expression of inchoativeness. The cognitive differences between English and Uzbek reflect distinct ways of structuring events in thought and communication.[4] English tends to focus on the agent or subject initiating the action. This aligns with its subject-prominent structure, emphasizing who performs the action. For example, She started reading foregrounds the subject, she, as the initiator.

In contrast, Uzbek often places emphasis on the event or the circumstances surrounding it, rather than the agent. For instance, in Yomg'ir yog'a boshladi ("It started raining"), the focus shifts to the natural occurrence of the rain, downplaying any specific agent. This event-oriented approach aligns with Uzbek speakers' broader cognitive framework, which often prioritizes processes and contexts over individual actors.

These findings underline the importance of understanding language-specific strategies for expressing universal concepts like inchoativeness. For language learners and translators, recognizing these differences is crucial. An English speaker learning Uzbek may find the morphological markers unfamiliar and may need to adjust to expressing inchoativeness within the verb itself. Conversely, an Uzbek speaker learning English might initially overuse auxiliary constructions, as they seek to replicate the morphological compactness of their native language.[5]

The cognitive and linguistic patterns of inchoativeness in Uzbek and English also have implications for broader linguistic theory. They exemplify how language reflects thought processes and cultural priorities, with English favoring explicit agentivity and Uzbek focusing on event-oriented perspectives. These patterns contribute to ongoing discussions in cognitive linguistics and typology regarding how languages encode and prioritize semantic categories. Ultimately, the study of inchoativeness serves as a window into the interplay between language structure, meaning, and cognition. Both English and Uzbek provide unique strategies for conceptualizing and communicating beginnings, demonstrating the richness and diversity of human language.

The study of inchoativeness in Uzbek and English reveals significant functional-semantic and cognitive differences and similarities. While English relies on lexical and multi-word constructions, Uzbek predominantly employs morphological markers. Cognitively, English tends to focus on agents, whereas Uzbek emphasizes events. These findings enrich our understanding of language structure and use, offering valuable perspectives for linguistic and cognitive studies.

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