

On the Lexical Combinability of Adverbs Expressing Full Degree with Verbs (Based on the German Language)

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Annotation *This article examines the lexical combinability of adverbs expressing a full degree with verbs in the German language. Particular attention is paid to the semantic, lexical, and contextual factors that determine the compatibility of degree adverbs with different classes of verbs. The study considers adverbs that express the meanings of completeness, intensity, maximum degree, and exhaustion, and analyzes their ability to combine with action, state, process, and resultative verbs. The research demonstrates that the combinability of such adverbs is not determined solely by grammatical compatibility but is also closely related to the lexical-semantic characteristics of the verb, its aspectual meaning, argument structure, and contextual interpretation. It is established that adverbs expressing a full degree tend to combine more naturally with verbs denoting measurable, bounded, or result-oriented situations, while their combination with stative and unbounded verbs may require specific contextual conditions. The article also identifies the role of semantic compatibility and contextual modification in determining the degree of naturalness of verb-adverb combinations. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of German lexical combinatorics and may be useful for the study of German vocabulary, phraseology, semantics, and practical language teaching.*

Keywords: *adverbs of full degree, lexical combinability, verb semantics, lexical-semantic subgroup, the adverb ganz*

Introduction

The desire to study the laws governing various types of word combinability can be found in the works of linguists from the very beginning of the development of the science of language [1]. Individual observations that the problem of word combinability is closely connected with their semantic properties have now received further development in numerous works devoted to the problem of word combinability based on various languages [2].

An analysis of the works available to us concerning the problem of word combinability based on the German language shows that most researchers focus primarily on the syntactic combinability of words. At the same time, the study of lexical combinability is no less important for a practical foreign-language teacher, since “mastering a particular language ultimately comes down to mastering the norms of lexical combinability of words” [3].

Methodology

The aim of this article is to show the specific features of the lexical combinability of adverbs belonging to one lexical-semantic subgroup of quantitative adverbs of degree and measure [4] with verbs in the modern German language.

The lexical-semantic subgroup selected consists of adverbs expressing full degree: ganz, gänzlich, gar, glatt, durchaus, absolut, rein, restlos, völlig, vollkommen, vollständig, vollauf, vollends.

In identifying the adverbs belonging to this lexical-semantic subgroup, we relied on lexicographic

data and the method of lexical transformation proposed by I. V. Arnold [5].

Results and Discussion

In order to avoid simply listing verbs when identifying the lexical combinability of the adverbs in this lexical-semantic subgroup, it is first necessary to provide their semantic classification. It should be noted that the linguistic literature contains a considerable number of works [6] proposing numerous classifications of verbs based on different criteria. However, none of these classifications is fully suitable for our study. Therefore, the semantic series of verbs were identified by us as a result of analyzing the lexical content of verb combinations with quantitative adverbs of degree and measure. Depending on the greater or lesser similarity of their meanings, all verbs encountered in the combinations were grouped into semantic series:[7]

1. Verbs expressing various physical states, changes of state, or bringing about a physical state: erschöpfen, frieren, hungern, sich erkälten, etc.
2. Verbs expressing an internal mental state or emotional attitude, as well as bringing about a mental or emotional state: lieben, sich ärgern, beruhigen, belustigen, etc.
3. Verbs denoting particular actions connected with the sphere of feelings: lachen, weinen, schlucken, grinsen, etc.[8]
4. Verbs expressing an evaluation of an action or object: schimpfen, schätzen, schmecken, passen, etc.
5. Verbs expressing internal action: striving, passionate desire, expectation, request or necessity, command or demand, prohibition or permission: streben, wünschen, erwarten, verlangen, etc.
6. Verbs expressing various specific types of activity: bauen, backen, schreiben, malen, etc.[9]
7. Verbs of speech: sprechen, erzählen, diskutieren, erklären, etc.
8. Verbs expressing perception: emprinnden, sehen, hören, fühlen, etc.
9. Verbs expressing mental activity: denken, kennen, verstehen, erfahren, etc.
10. Verbs expressing a change in the position of an object or its movement in space: sich ducken, sich lehnen, sich aufrichten, aufstehen, etc.
11. Verbs expressing movement: gehen, laufen, eilen, sich bewegen, etc.[10]

A systematic examination of the combinability of the adverbs in this lexical-semantic subgroup with verbs from the identified semantic series showed that the adverbs under study possess not only common features but also individual features in lexical combinability. Since the length of the article does not permit us to describe the lexical combinability of each individual adverb in the lexical-semantic subgroup expressing full degree, we shall consider in greater detail the lexical-combinability features of its most characteristic representative—the adverb ganz. The adverb ganz is widely used and stylistically neutral; it expresses in the most abstract way the meaning shared by the adverbs of the lexical-semantic subgroup under study.

The adverb ganz, when combined with verbs, characterizes an action in terms of the completeness of its manifestation or coverage, emphasizing, as it were, the exhaustion of the action and its limit.[11]

Verb combinations with the adverb ganz contain verbs from many of the identified semantic series. These are:

- a) verbs of the first semantic series: erfrieren, sich vertiefen, sich entwickeln, sich entfernen, verändern, verdunkeln, erneuern, for example: Der Hut veränderte sie ganz. (Döblin).
- b) verbs of the second semantic series: belustigen, überraschen, befriedigen, beruhigen, betäuben, verwirren, erschüttern, erfreuen, verblüffen, for example: Ich will meinem Glück und dem Leben ganz_ vertrauen. (Noll)

c) verbs of the fourth semantic series: genügen, reichen, stimmen, entsprechen, verlieren, nutzen, ausnützen, schaden, verpassen, verlieren, verfehlen, gelingen, for example: Aber die Datierung stimmt nicht ganz (Kant).

d) verbs of the sixth semantic series: aufessen, auskochen, zubereiten, aufbauen, renovieren, öffnen, zerschlagen, zertreten, zerreißen, zerbrechen, for example: Nimm es ernst, gib dich nicht auf, den Kuchen muss man ganz aufessen. (Neue Berliner_Illustrierte).[12]

e) as well as verbs of the ninth semantic series: erkennen, vergessen, verstehen, begreifen, erraten, for example: ...- er hatte ganz vergessen, dass sie erwartet wurde. (Kellermann).

An analysis of combinations of the V + Adv type shows that most of the verbs from the semantic series listed above with which the adverb ganz combines are telic. However, not all telic verbs can combine with the adverb ganz. There are certain restrictions: often, the meaning of completeness of the action is connected with the actual properties of the actions themselves denoted by the verbs.[13]

As an expression of the completeness and completion of a verbal action, the adverb ganz is also connected with the subject or object, since the feature of completeness attributed to the action does not exist independently of the subject or object. And the adverb ganz, when combined with telic transitive verbs, indicates complete coverage of the object by the action:

1. Ich schloss die Schranktür ganz und stand im Dunkeln (Remarque).

2. Ich bezahlte die Möbel ganz (Neue Berliner Illustrierte).[14]

When combined with telic intransitive verbs, the adverb indicates complete coverage of the subject by the action: Erst im Kuss erwachte sie ganz (Frank).[15]

Conclusion

The adverb ganz cannot combine with atelic intransitive verbs, for example: schlafen, liegen, stehen, sitzen, fahren, gehen, schwimmen, fliegen, reden, lachen, because the atelic nature of intransitive verbs is incompatible with the idea of the result or complete exhaustion of the action. Very rarely, the adverb ganz can combine with atelic transitive verbs (in the material studied, only 3 examples of such combinations were recorded in 10,060 pages of literary text). In all these combinations, the adverb ganz neutralizes the atelic nature of the verbs, which become telic. Examples:

1. Peter trank dieses Gesoff ganz. (Beitl);

2.manchmal kannten sie (die Bäuerinnen) die Grammatik nicht ganz. (Brezan);

3. Nun barg sie ihn ganz, schützte ihn, und er gehörte ihr. (Brezan).

On the basis of the foregoing, it can be concluded that the adverbs of the lexical-semantic subgroup expressing full degree have fairly broad combinability with verbs from the identified semantic series. When combining with verbs, adverbs expressing full degree generally select semantic series of verbs whose meanings correspond to the semantic content of the adverbs. In combination with verbs, the adverbs of this lexical-semantic subgroup characterize an action or state in terms of the completeness of its manifestation and may also indicate the complete coverage of the subject or object by the action.

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