

Classification Of Motion Verbs In Russian And Uzbek Languages

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Abstract: This article explores the classification of motion verbs in Russian and Uzbek, focusing on semantic, aspectual, and morphological criteria. Motion verbs are central in expressing direction, manner, and the temporal structure of movement. In Russian, motion verbs are traditionally classified as unidirectional vs multidirectional, perfective vs imperfective, and single vs iterative. In Uzbek, classification relies on directional suffixes, serial verb constructions, and aspectual markers, reflecting the agglutinative nature of the language. Comparative analysis highlights both typological differences and functional similarities in how motion is represented across Slavic and Turkic languages.

Keywords: Russian, Uzbek, verbs of motion, classification, unidirectional, multidirectional, aspect, serial verbs, agglutination.

Introduction: Verbs of motion constitute one of the most complex and systematically organized categories in natural languages, as they encode not only physical movement but also direction, manner, temporal development, and aspectual structure. The study of motion verbs has long attracted the attention of linguists due to their central role in human cognition and communication. Classifying motion verbs allows scholars to reveal how languages conceptualize space, movement, and time, and how these concepts are grammaticalized through different linguistic mechanisms.

In Russian linguistics, motion verbs occupy a particularly prominent position because of their rich semantic and grammatical distinctions. Russian traditionally classifies motion verbs according to directionality (unidirectional vs. multidirectional), aspectual opposition (perfective vs. imperfective), and iterative or habitual meaning. For instance, verbs such as *идти* (to go on foot in one direction) and *ходить* (to go habitually or in various directions) represent a fundamental contrast that has no direct one-to-one equivalent in many other languages. Prefixation further

expands the system by introducing additional nuances of direction, completion, or graduality (*войти, выйти, подойти*), making Russian motion verbs a highly structured and productive class.

In Uzbek, a Turkic agglutinative language, the system of motion verbs is organized according to different principles. While Uzbek does not display the same unidirectional–multidirectional opposition as Russian, it employs a wide range of derivational suffixes, aspectual markers, and serial verb constructions to express direction, repetition, and completion of movement. Verbs such as *bormoq* (to go), *kelmoq* (to come), and constructions like *borib kelmoq* (to go and return) illustrate how motion is classified through lexical meaning and syntactic combination rather than strict aspectual pairing. Reduplication (*yura-yura*) and adverbial modifiers further contribute to expressing habitual, iterative, or prolonged movement.

A comparative analysis of Russian and Uzbek motion verbs is particularly valuable from a typological perspective. Russian represents a fusional language, where grammatical meanings are often expressed through internal morphological changes and prefixes,

whereas Uzbek exemplifies an agglutinative language, where meanings are added through clearly segmented suffixes and serial constructions. Despite these structural differences, both languages aim to encode similar semantic parameters: direction, path, repetition, duration, and completion of motion. This functional overlap makes their comparison especially insightful for understanding universal and language-specific patterns in motion verb classification.

The main objective of this article is to classify motion verbs in Russian and Uzbek based on semantic, morphological, and aspectual criteria, and to identify the key similarities and differences between the two systems. The study seeks to demonstrate how each language organizes motion verbs according to its typological characteristics, while fulfilling comparable communicative and cognitive functions. The findings of this research are relevant not only for theoretical linguistics and typology but also for applied fields such as language teaching, translation studies, and contrastive grammar.

By examining motion verbs through a comparative lens, this article argues that the classification of motion verbs reflects deeper cognitive models of movement and space, and that both Russian and Uzbek offer systematic yet distinct ways of representing these models in language.

METHOD

One of the most fundamental criteria for classifying motion verbs is directionality, that is, whether the movement is oriented toward a single direction or occurs in multiple, repeated, or non-specific directions. In Russian, directionality forms the core of motion verb classification. Motion verbs are traditionally divided into unidirectional and multidirectional verbs. Unidirectional verbs, such as *идти* (to go on foot in one direction), *бежать* (to run in one direction), and *ехать* (to go by vehicle in one direction), denote movement toward a specific destination at a particular moment. These verbs are typically used to describe concrete, ongoing motion. In contrast, multidirectional verbs, including *ходить* (to go habitually or in various directions), *бегать* (to run repeatedly), and *ездить* (to travel regularly), express habitual, repeated, or non-directional movement. This distinction is grammaticalized and obligatory in Russian, making

directionality a key classificatory feature.

In Uzbek, motion verbs are not divided into a strict unidirectional–multidirectional opposition. Instead, directionality is expressed lexically and syntactically. Verbs such as *bormoq* (to go) and *kelmoq* (to come) inherently encode direction relative to the speaker. More complex directional meanings are conveyed through serial verb constructions, such as *borib kelmoq* (to go and return), which indicate round-trip or completed motion. Thus, while Russian encodes directionality morphologically, Uzbek relies more on lexical meaning and syntactic combinations.

Aspectual meaning plays a crucial role in the classification of motion verbs, especially in Russian.

In Russian, motion verbs are closely connected to the perfective–imperfective aspectual opposition. Imperfective forms (*идти, ходить*) focus on the process, duration, or repetition of movement, whereas perfective forms (*пойти, прийти, добежать*) emphasize the completion or result of motion. Prefixation serves as a primary mechanism for forming perfective motion verbs and adds additional semantic nuances such as entering (*войти*), exiting (*выйти*), approaching (*подойти*), or crossing (*перейти*). As a result, Russian motion verbs can be classified according to their aspectual completeness and temporal boundaries.

In Uzbek, aspect is not grammaticalized in the same way but is expressed through suffixes, auxiliary verbs, and contextual markers. Suffixes such as *-ib, -a,* and *-ar* indicate continuity, repetition, or habitual action. For example, *yurib ketdi* implies completed motion, while *yurib yuradi* expresses habitual movement. Temporal structure is further clarified through adverbs and auxiliary constructions. Thus, Uzbek classifies motion verbs based on temporal development and completion through agglutinative strategies rather than aspectual pairs.

Another important criterion in classifying motion verbs is iteration, which refers to repeated or habitual movement.

In Russian, iterative meaning is strongly associated with multidirectional motion verbs. Verbs like *ходить* and *ездить* naturally express habitual or repeated actions, often accompanied by temporal adverbs such as *каждый день* (every day) or *часто* (often). This makes

iteration an inherent grammatical property of certain motion verbs rather than an optional feature.

In Uzbek, iteration and habituality are expressed through reduplication, serial verbs, and temporal adverbs. Constructions such as *yura-yura* (walking repeatedly or gradually) and *har kuni borib keladi* (goes and comes every day) illustrate how repetition is encoded syntactically and lexically. Consequently, Uzbek motion verbs are classified according to whether they denote single, repeated, or habitual movement through additional morphological or syntactic markers.

Motion verbs can also be classified according to the manner of movement, such as walking, running, or traveling by vehicle.

In Russian, manner is often lexically encoded in the verb itself: *идти* (to walk), *бежать* (to run), *плыть* (to swim), *лететь* (to fly). These verbs form systematic pairs based on directionality and aspect. Prefixation further refines manner and direction simultaneously.

In Uzbek, manner is similarly expressed lexically (*yurmoq* – to walk, *yugurmoq* – to run, *uchmoq* – to fly), but classification relies less on grammatical pairing and more on lexical semantics. Additional information about duration or repetition is supplied by suffixes and adverbs rather than verb pairs.

From a comparative perspective, the classification of motion verbs in Russian and Uzbek reflects their typological differences. Russian, as a fusional language, encodes directionality, aspect, and iteration within the verb system itself through grammatical oppositions and prefixation. Uzbek, as an agglutinative language, distributes these meanings across suffixes, serial constructions, and contextual elements.

Despite these differences, both languages classify motion verbs according to similar semantic parameters: direction, completion, repetition, and manner. This demonstrates that while the formal mechanisms differ, the underlying cognitive and communicative needs remain largely universal. The classification systems in both languages provide speakers with efficient tools to conceptualize and describe movement in space and time.

CONCLUSION

This article has examined the classification of motion verbs in Russian and Uzbek from semantic,

morphological, and typological perspectives. The analysis demonstrates that motion verbs constitute a highly organized and functionally significant verbal category in both languages, serving to encode not only physical movement but also direction, manner, temporal structure, iteration, and completion. Despite belonging to different language families and typological groups, Russian and Uzbek show systematic approaches to categorizing motion verbs based on shared semantic parameters.

In Russian, the classification of motion verbs is primarily structured around the grammatical opposition of unidirectional versus multidirectional verbs, which forms the core of the system. This distinction allows speakers to clearly differentiate between single, goal-oriented movement and repeated or habitual motion. In addition, the perfective–imperfective aspectual opposition, combined with extensive prefixation, enables Russian to encode fine-grained distinctions related to the beginning, completion, direction, and gradual development of movement. As a result, Russian motion verbs represent a highly grammaticalized and morphologically rich system in which classification is embedded directly in the verb form.

In contrast, Uzbek classifies motion verbs through lexical meaning, agglutinative suffixation, and serial verb constructions rather than strict grammatical oppositions. Directionality is typically expressed through basic motion verbs such as *bormoq* and *kelmoq*, while repetition, completion, and habituality are conveyed through suffixes, reduplication, auxiliary verbs, and syntactic combinations such as *borib kelmoq*. This flexible and transparent structure reflects the agglutinative nature of Uzbek and allows speakers to construct complex motion meanings through the accumulation of clearly segmented morphemes.

The comparative analysis reveals that while the formal mechanisms of classification differ, the functional goals are remarkably similar in both languages. Russian and Uzbek both classify motion verbs according to direction, temporal development, repetition, and manner of movement, reflecting universal cognitive patterns in the conceptualization of motion. These similarities suggest that motion verb classification is grounded in shared human experiences of space and movement, even though languages employ different

grammatical strategies to encode them.

The findings of this study contribute to comparative and typological linguistics by highlighting how fusional and agglutinative languages organize the same semantic domain in structurally distinct ways. They are also relevant for language pedagogy and translation studies, as understanding the classification systems of motion verbs can help learners and translators avoid errors arising from cross-linguistic differences. In particular, the absence of a direct unidirectional–multidirectional opposition in Uzbek poses challenges for Uzbek learners of Russian, while Russian learners of Uzbek must adapt to a more analytic and construction-based system.

In conclusion, the classification of motion verbs in Russian and Uzbek reflects the interaction between linguistic structure, semantic categorization, and cognitive perception of movement. The study confirms that motion verbs are not only a grammatical category but also a key linguistic tool for organizing and expressing human experience, making their classification a crucial area for further cross-linguistic and theoretical research.

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