

FROM LEXEME TO DISCOURSE: DERIVATIONAL PRAGMATICS IN FRENCH AND UZBEK

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Abstract: This article investigates the pragmatic implications of affixal derivation within discourse, particularly focusing on French and Uzbek languages. Through a comprehensive linguistic analysis, it discusses how derived morphological forms acquire pragmatic nuances within specific contexts such as media, social networks, and legal texts. Employing discursive analysis, this study illustrates how the choice of affixes directly shapes meaning, speaker intention, and audience interpretation. Examples from both languages reveal how morphological processes serve as pragmatic markers, enhancing communicative effectiveness. The study concludes by emphasizing the importance of derivational morphology as a strategic resource in discourse construction and pragmatic interaction.

Key words: Pragmatics, Derivation, Affixation, Discursive analysis, French language, Uzbek language, Media discourse, Social media language, Legal discourse.

Introduction

Language serves not merely as a vehicle for conveying messages but as an instrument capable of shaping reality. Morphological derivation, especially through affixation, is one of the most dynamic processes enabling language users to encode pragmatic meaning in discourse. Affixation involves morphological modification that produces nuanced semantic and pragmatic variations, significantly impacting discourse interpretation (Plag, 2003). When languages such as French and Uzbek, representing fusional and agglutinative typologies respectively, are examined comparatively, their pragmatic potentials become markedly evident, particularly in discursive settings.

In this paper, we explore how derivational affixes influence pragmatic meanings at the discourse level, focusing specifically on examples from media, social networks, and legal texts. The goal is to demonstrate how affixation transcends simple morphological changes, embedding itself into pragmatic practices, speaker intentions, and discourse strategies.

Derivational morphology—through affixation—has long been recognized as a powerful interface between lexicon and discourse. In both French (a predominantly fusional language)

and Uzbek (an agglutinative language), affixes negotiate not only semantic but also pragmatic values. Over the last two decades, Uzbek linguists have constructed an explicit morpho-pragmatic framework, while French scholars have approached the same phenomena from the lenses of enunciation theory and discourse analysis.

Research Methodology

To investigate the pragmatic role of derivational affixation, this research utilizes a combined methodological framework of morphological analysis and discursive pragmatics. The corpus-based methodology involves selecting authentic examples from contemporary French and Uzbek discourse drawn from digital media, social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Telegram), and legal documents. The corpus was compiled by systematically identifying derived forms exhibiting clear pragmatic implications, followed by qualitative analysis of these occurrences within their discursive contexts.

A comparative approach was used to highlight similarities and distinctions in how affixation interacts pragmatically within fusional (French) and agglutinative (Uzbek) morphological systems. Pragmatic analysis was performed according to Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2001), specifically considering how affixes influence illocutionary force and perlocutionary effects.

Theoretical Framework

Derivation, as a primary morphological process, modifies semantic categories and pragmatic interpretations of lexemes (Katamba & Stonham, 2006). Affixation not only changes lexical meanings but strategically guides speakers and listeners toward specific interpretations (Dressler, 2005). For instance, suffixation and prefixation in French and Uzbek play crucial roles in encoding attitudinal stances, politeness strategies, and ideological implications within discourse.

In French, suffixes such as *-ard* and *-eur* often carry pragmatic connotations beyond mere denotative meaning. The suffix *-ard* typically imparts negative evaluative connotations, indicating a subjective stance towards the referent (e.g., *chauffard* meaning 'reckless driver'). Similarly, the suffix *-eur* denotes agency and professionalism but can pragmatically imply admiration, authority, or even irony depending on the discourse context (e.g., *influenceur* in social media contexts).

Uzbek research begins with Pragmalingvistika ([Safarov 2008: 23]), which systematises Austin–Searle speechact categories for Uzbek affixation. [[Hakimov 2013: 72]: 72] expands

the model into a fourlevel competence grid, explicitly mapping affixes to illocutionary forces. French scholarship, by contrast, foregrounds enunciative perspectives: Ducrot's polyphonic theory (1984) and Charaudeau's contractual model of discourse (2005) implicitly treat derivational choices as markers of speaker stance rather than explicit speechact operators.

Table 1 · Core Theoretical Constructs

Dimension	Uzbek lineage (key works)	French lineage (key works)	Convergence / divergence
Pragmatic anchoring	Speech-act macro-model: Safarov (2008); Hakimov (2013)	Polyphony & énonciation: Ducrot (1984); Kerbrat-Orecchioni (2005)	Divergence: direct vs. indirect pragmatic mapping
Affix- function mapping	"Affix → illocution + perlocution" matrix (Hakimov)	Implicit stance modulation via lexicalised suffixes (Fradin 2003)	Partial convergence on evaluative affixes (-ard, -eur vs -chi, -voy)
Discourse typology	Genre-specific grids (Madjidova 2023 legal; Rahmatov 2016 digital)	Contractual genres (Charaudeau 2005); interdiscursivity (Maingueneau 2012)	Convergence on genre sensitivity

In Uzbek, the suffixes -chi and -voy serve similarly significant pragmatic functions. The suffix -chi generally identifies professional affiliation or habitual activities, yet pragmatically it can invoke familiarity or ironic distancing depending on discursive contexts (e.g., *bloggerchi*, a colloquial term implying a blogger with implied familiarity or skepticism). Conversely, the diminutive suffix -voy adds emotional coloring, expressing affection, diminishment, or gentle mockery, thus shaping pragmatic implications distinctly.

Both traditions agree that affixes encode stance, but Uzbek authors articulate the mechanism more overtly via morphopragmatic matrices, reflecting the transparency of agglutinative morphology. Uzbek studies typically rely on balanced corpora of press, Telegram channels, and statutory acts, tagging every derivational morpheme manually ([Rahmatov 2016: 110]). French projects employ corpus linguistics combined with discoursehistorical analysis;

Fradin's Morphologie constructionnelle (2003) introduced a finegrained suffix database for Lexique 3 and Frantext.

Media Discourse. In media discourse, affixation is frequently employed strategically to frame public opinion and audience perception. French media often utilize derivational affixes to subtly convey evaluative judgments. For example, in discussing contentious political figures, the term *politicard* (politician + *ard*) is widely used to suggest contempt or distrust implicitly. Such affixation encodes negative evaluative stances, thus guiding readers' pragmatic interpretation.

Uzbek media similarly exploits affixation pragmatically. Terms such as *siyosatchi* (politician, derived from *siyosat* 'politics' + *chi* 'doer') subtly influence audience perception by either neutral or slightly dismissive implications, depending on usage frequency or accompanying lexical context. These subtle pragmatic choices frame political discourse effectively, enhancing or diminishing public trust. In Uzbek newspapers, the suffix **-voy** (e.g., *bekorchi-voy*) adds pejorative irony, whereas French headlines adopt **-ard** (e.g., *richard* for "rich snob"). Both signal negative evaluation but differ in morphotactics: **-voy** attaches post-lexically to an already derived form, while **-ard** fuses within a single stem.

Table 2 · Affixal Evaluation in Headlines

Language	Typical suffix	Semantic nucleus	Pragmatic load	Sample headline
Uzbek	-voy	diminutive/pejorative	irony, social distance	<i>TikTokchi-voylar jamiyatni larzaga soldi</i>
French	-ard	pejorative stereotype	disdain, moral judgement	<i>Les chauffards de l'autoroute A6 condamnés</i>

French media tends to recycle a narrow set of suffixes (-ard, -iste, -eur) with strong cultural stereotypes, whereas Uzbek outlets exhibit higher combinatorial freedom due to agglutination.

Social Media Discourse. Social media represents a fertile environment where affixation reveals intense pragmatic functions. French users actively employ derived lexemes for humorous, satirical, or critical purposes. Terms like *youtubeur*, *instagramneur* carry both functional meanings and pragmatic nuances of irony or admiration, reflecting shifting attitudes

toward digital culture. Affixation thus pragmatically conveys complex social relations and evaluative stances within digital communities.

In Uzbek social media, the suffix *-chi* intensifies relational pragmatics among users. The label *tiktokchi* identifies someone frequently posting on TikTok but pragmatically may imply affection, neutrality, or critique, dependent entirely on surrounding textual cues and interactive contexts. Users thus strategically harness affixes pragmatically to build rapport or subtly critique peers, demonstrating affixation's potent pragmatic utility.

[[Rahmatov 2016: 110]: 110] shows that Uzbek Telegram users create nonce forms like *serialchi*, *bloggerchi*, leveraging *chi* to craft communal identity. French influencers invent hybrids such as *instagrameur* or *youtubeuse*, where *eur/euse* carries a lightly ironic selfbranding tone documented by Kerleroux (2016).

A noteworthy contrast lies in morphological productivity: Uzbek **-chi** freely attaches to international roots, whereas French **-eur** must respect gender/number fusional agreement, limiting spontaneous derivation.

Legal Discourse. Legal language is another domain illustrating pragmatic influences of derivation clearly. French legal texts demonstrate strategic pragmatic employment of terms with suffixes such as *-eur*, indicating authoritative professional status (*procureur*, *jugeur*), reinforcing legitimacy and seriousness pragmatically. Such affixation inherently carries pragmatic implications of authority, accuracy, and solemnity in legal interactions.

Similarly, Uzbek legal discourse prominently features suffixation strategies to pragmatically enhance formality or procedural neutrality. For instance, the affix *-chi* used in *huquqshunoschi* (literally ‘lawyer-specialist’) pragmatically signals specialization, professionalism, and expertise, effectively shaping perceptions and expectations within judicial discourse.

[[Madjidova 2023: 195]: 195] demonstrates that Uzbek legal statutes alternate *dor* and *chi*: the former codifies responsibility (*mas’uliyatdor shaxs*), the latter actional roles (*nazoratchi organ*). French legalese relies on fixed professional nouns (*procureur*, *rapporteur*) where *eur* implies authority. [[Maingueneau 2012: 101]: 101] notes that such suffixes naturalise institutional ethos, foregrounding the speaker’s legitimacy.

Affixation, thus, profoundly affects pragmatic interpretation across diverse discourses by guiding listener inferences, speaker intentions, and communicative efficiency. Pragmatic marking via affixation allows speakers to position themselves socially, encode emotions,

attitudes, and create specific illocutionary effects, enhancing communicative clarity and precision within complex social interactions.

In media and social media, affixation shapes user interactions, guiding emotional responses and ideological positioning. In legal texts, derivational affixes pragmatically uphold institutional authority, procedural accuracy, and professional legitimacy. Hence, affixation transcends morphological boundaries, embedding deeply into pragmatic mechanisms of effective communication.

The comparative evidence underscores three trends:

1. **Affixal economy vs. redundancy.** Agglutinative Uzbek compresses multiple pragmatic cues into a single morpheme; French distributes them across agreement morphology and lexical context.
2. **Genre calibration.** Both traditions show that suffix choice is genre-sensitive—more playful in digital registers, more codified in legal discourse.
3. **Theoretical articulation.** Uzbek linguists explicitly integrate affixation into speech-act theory, while French researchers often treat it as a peripheral marker of enunciation, indicating a research gap on the French side.

Conclusion

Although rooted in distinct typological and theoretical backgrounds, Uzbek and French scholarship converge on one central insight: derivational morphology is a pragmatic workhorse that shapes evaluative stance and discursive roles. The Uzbek tradition offers a ready-made morpho-pragmatic matrix valuable for cross-linguistic transfer, whereas French enunciative frameworks add depth to speaker-stance modeling. Future work should cross-fertilise these models, perhaps through a joint corpus of Franco-Uzbek bilingual media, to refine universal vs. language-specific principles of affixal pragmatics.

This study demonstrates how derivational affixation significantly contributes to pragmatic enrichment within French and Uzbek discourse, especially in media, social media, and legal contexts. By strategically employing affixation, speakers and writers pragmatically encode attitudes, positions, and nuanced meanings beyond mere lexical semantics. This pragmatic encoding is particularly evident in contexts where subtlety and strategic communication are paramount. Future research might explore deeper cross-linguistic pragmatic patterns within other discourse contexts to further elucidate this intricate linguistic phenomenon.

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