

## RUSSIAN ADJECTIVES WITH CONFIXES FROM LINGUISTIC-DIDACTIC VIEWPOINT

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**Abstract:** The article demonstrates the possibilities of word-formative analysis use during the lessons of Russian as a foreign language when students learn adjective vocabulary. Our attention is focused on adjectives of the confix structure due to their regularity and increasing productivity in the Slavic languages. The correct assimilation of semantics and the peculiarities of this derivative vocabulary functioning is extremely important, because universal cognitive relations are objectified through it in Russian language: spatial-temporal, possessive, gradual, etc. On the other hand, our interest is conditioned by an insufficient elaboration of this linguistic material from the standpoint of Russian word formation theory, and linguistic didactics.

Since confix is a controversial concept in derivatology, the authors explain its definition and justify the relevance of its use in word formation analysis by the example of the adjectives from the word-formative category of the attribute reflecting the absence of a substance. They proposed the algorithm of confix study as morphemes in a foreign language audience. The recommendations were given to avoid unnecessary difficulties and typical mistakes when foreigners acquire this vocabulary. Besides, there are several types of tasks designed to make the learning process more effective.

The materials and conclusions presented in the article can be used in the practice of Russian teaching as a foreign language, in the preparation of training courses on lexicology and word formation, as well as in the preparation of textbooks and dictionaries.

**Key words:** Russian as a foreign language, linguistic didactics, adjective, confix, derivation, word-formation analysis.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of our article is to show the possibilities of knowledge application about Russian language word-formation system and the elements of the word-formative analysis during the classes in Russian as a foreign language when students study new vocabulary, in particular, the derivatives of confix structure adjectives.

The relevance of the accomplished research is conditioned by the underestimation of the word-formative aspect significance in the practice of Russian language teaching, and not only as a foreign language, but also as a native language. To a large extent, this state of affairs is formed by a serious gap between the theory of word formation that has moved much farther during the last half of the century and the practice of linguistic didactics. At that this gap is observed at all levels of education, including the level of higher education. The scale of the problem is eloquently evidenced by poorly developed methods of teaching foreigners to Russian word formation, the absence of special courses in many universities of Russia that introduce students to the structure of Russian language word-formation system, an insignificant number of published manuals on word formation, an episodic and often unsystematic representation of tasks for the analysis of the morphemic structure of a word and the word formation synthesis in textbooks for foreigners concerning vocabulary, grammar and speech practice. At the same time, the disproportion in the depth of the study of the word formation for various parts of speech in Russian language hinders the elimination of this gap to a considerable extent. It should be emphasized that the adjective is the least developed part of speech in this aspect. Thus, our article, apart from the solution of a number of applied issues of linguistic didactics, is intended, at least in part, to reduce the marked gap between theory and practice.

The role of word formation in the course of Russian language as a foreign one is extremely important, because, according to a fair comment by V.A. Kosova, word formation is not only the domain of formalized expression of nominative meanings, but also an important connotative-pragmatic mechanism of the linguistic system. The development of its rules contributes to the development of students' conscious attitude to language, the development of automatisms of speech activity in terms of speech perception and generation [Kosova V.A., 2012, p. 183]. Taking this into account, we adhere to the position of those

colleagues who insist that word formation should be studied throughout the period of Russian language teaching [Efremova T.F., 2005; Krasilnikova L.V., 2016; Matveeva N.N., Fatkhutdinova V.G., 2016]. Of course, at different stages of language learning, the approaches to work on the materials of word formation must be different. At the initial and the basic stages of training, the methodists recommend to prefer a semasiological approach to the analysis of word production phenomena, whereas they recommend to prefer onomasiological approach on the continuing and advanced level [Kosova V.A., 2012, p. 184]. A consistent use of these principles is the requirement of the system-functional approach to Russian word formation, the prospective of which is confirmed by the practice of teaching RAF and the results of scientific searches of scholars from the Kazan Linguistic School (see [Akhmerova L., Gilazetdinova G., 2015, Galeev T., Solovyev V., 2015; Makleeva E. et al., 2016; Spiridonov A., Khabibulina E., 2016]).

## 2. METHODS

The selection of materials for the study during the classes with foreigners, as well as for the preparation of assignments, was made by us from four explanatory dictionaries of the Russian language (edited by 1) Ozhegov S. I., Shvedova N.Yu.; 2) Ushakov D.N.; 3) Efremova T.F.; 4) Kuznetsov S.A.). The verification of word-formative type definition correctness and the attribution of specific derivatives to them was carried out using the "Explanatory dictionary of the word-forming units of Russian language" by T.F. Efremova and "The dictionary of Russian language morphemes" by A.I. Kuznetsova and T.F. Efremova. Since we aimed to answer the question on the ways of the most effective introduction of students to the basics of word formation and, in particular, to the concept of "confix" as our main task, then in this article the semasiological approach to word formation turned out to be the leading one. The formulation of recommendations on the work with the confixed types of Russian adjectives in a foreign-language audience, as well as the development of tasks to work out the knowledge acquired by students, were carried out taking into account the results of derivational, morphemic, semantic, morphological and phonological analysis of selected linguistic material.

### 3. RESULTS

Our experience of teaching Russian as a foreign language shows that the development of confixed models by foreigners is easier with the level of language mastery not lower than the basic one (B1), although for the first time they can meet with the words of a similar structure earlier. At advanced stages of learning, the gained knowledge about the confix is expanded due to the student need to immerse themselves in various areas of special knowledge.

We propose the following algorithm of work with confixed derivatives during RAF lessons:

1. The presentation of language material by students for comparison;
2. The explanation of the lexical semantics in respect of compared units;
3. The formulation of the generalized word-formation value, expressed by the means of word-formation type;
4. The demonstration and the discussion of examples concerning the functioning of derived words of a given structure in speech;
5. The simulation of words of the same structure by students according to a given scheme;
6. The repetition of the material by performing various communicatively oriented tasks.

The ways of organizing the work on a lesson in accordance with the abovementioned algorithm will be shown on the example of the adjectives with the confix без-...-н- / бес-...-н-, as they are highly productive in modern Russian language.

First of all, a teacher should carefully approach the selection of language units offered for the consideration by students during an introductory lesson. And here our main recommendations concerning the adjectives with без-...-н-, are the following ones:

#### 3.1 To select derived units with unique motivation.

This warning is related to the fact that an adjective is characterized by the development of poymotivation. Thus, the adjectives with the confix без-...-н- can be motivated 1) by a noun (of

concrete and abstract semantics): дом – бездомный, право – бесправный, including verbal ones: беззащитный > защит(а) > защищать; 2) by an adjective: беззастенчивый > застенчив(ый) 3) by a verb (rarely): беспробудный > пробудить. To get acquainted with the confix без-...-н- it is preferable to choose the adjectives with an indisputable motivation by a noun.

#### 3.2 To comment on morphological phenomena in a word basis.

It is necessary to resort to linguistic commenting if we encounter different kinds of alternations at the junction of a base and a formant: безыдейный > идея; беспорядочный > порядок; бессемейный > семья. A commentary will help to avoid the mechanical application of word-building models by students without taking into account the phonological features of Russian language.

#### 3.3 Do not involve archaic and stylistically marked vocabulary.

The indicated restriction refers to the initial stage of the study of confixal word-formation types, since the use of obsolete derivatives with erased motivation or stylistically colored derivative requires additional time to explain their origin, structural features, semantics and functioning in the present and in the past, which can distract the attention of students from the main material. For example, it is necessary to temporarily overlook such derivatives, as бесприветный > приветный > привет; беспоместный > (поместный) > поместье; бесчинный > чинн(ый) > чин ('order'); беспорточный > портк(и) ('pants').

Then, we offer you to look through several tasks that you can use during the study of adjectives with без-...-н-.

Task 1. Try to form the adjectives from the following nouns: корова, лошадь, дом, имя, род, бог, принцип, право, вина, совесть. Try to make phrases with these adjectives.

The goal of this exercise is the actualization of knowledge about the ways of adjective word-formation already known to students.

Task 2. Do you know how you can call a person in Russian who does not have a home, a horse, rights, a passport, honor, fame?

The supposed reaction of students to this issues will be the attempt to form the phrases with a particle не, нечестный, неславный. Further, students are informed that the semantics of an attribute, by the absence of what is called a producing word, is represented in Russian by the confix без-...-н-,

Table 1. Adjectives with the confix без-...-н-

Без дома – бездомный 'a homeless person'	<p>!!! Remember. There are no adjectives without <i>конфиг</i> in Russian such as <i>домный, лошадный, правный</i></p> <p>БЕЗ- - the base with an initial voiced consonant</p> <p>БЕС- - the base with an initial deaf consonant</p>
Без лошади – безлошадный 'a horseless person'	
Без права – бесправный 'a person who has no rights'	
Без паспорта – беспаспортный 'a person who has no passport'	
Без чести – бесчестный 'a dishonest person'	

The next three tasks are devoted to the working out of the word-production of adjectives on the considered model, as well as to determine the features of their lexical compatibility and functioning in the speech of Russian speakers.

Task 3. Using the model без-...-н- / бес-...-н-, give the definition to a person who does not have a cow, name, gender, god, principles, conscience. Make short dialogues with these adjectives.

Task 4. Form an antonym by adding confix без-/ бес- to the following adjectives: хлебный, сильный, властный, законный, контрольный, паспортный, фамильный. Explain the semantics of the obtained derivatives, make sentences with them.

Task 5. Evaluate whether it is possible to replace an adjective with an antonym with без-...-н- / бес-...- their works they prefer to talk about confix-suffixal way of word formation.

Despite the ongoing discussion that hampers the distribution of the concept of "confix" in academic works and its penetration into linguistic-didactical literature, it is necessary to recognize that the confixal adjectives of Russian language as a whole have been well studied in a semasiological perspective due to the active research work of Kazan derivative experts (see [Markov V. M., 2001; Nikolaev G. A., 2006; Balalykina E. A., 2007]). Following the colleagues, we define confix as a morpheme, performing the functions of a suffix and a prefix simultaneously, "that is, serving as the material of a single act of morphological word-production" [Markov V. M., 2001, p. 104; Nikolaev G. A., 2006, p. 117]. The simultaneity of the

or a proposition без or the adjective with a prefix не- like неправый

which is an intermittent morpheme, complicating the base simultaneously in pre- and postposition. Then the work with the materials of the table is offered.

н- in these phrases. Note the way of adjective meaning change:

- хлебный магазин – хлебный регион,
- сильный мужчина – сильное давление,
- властный человек – властное управление,
- паспортный стол – паспортный контроль.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

In Russian linguistics, the concept of "confix" and the confixal way of word formation are not recognized by all experts. This creates the main difficulty in the introduction of this theoretical material into the practice of word formation study at school, university and language courses.

The scholars of Kazan Linguistic School, in the depths of which this notion was born, defend the right to the existence of confix as a morpheme, giving reasoned arguments on the basis of a deep synchronous and diachronic analysis of Slavic confixal derivatives. The representatives of the Moscow linguistic school deny the concept of confix and in

producing basis complication by the word-forming formant and the uniqueness of a new word emergence with its help are the main arguments for us in favor of confix recognition as an independent word formation tool.

Attempting to introduce confix into the practice of Russian language study as a foreign one, we proceed from several theoretical grounds. First of all, confixation is a universal way of word formation in the Slavic languages. It arose at a certain stage of language abstraction development among native speakers due to the suffixation of prepositional and case forms and the further rearrangement of the derivatives thus created. Secondly, the number of confixal structures in the Slavic languages towards the present increases, in particular, confixation is the most active way of

word-production in the sphere of nominal parts of speech in Russian language [Nikolaev G. A., 2006].

The choice of confixing names of adjectives as an object of the study was conditioned, on the one hand, to a lesser study of this part of speech as compared with a noun and a verb (see [Bubekova L., Chupryakova O., 2014]), and on the other by a wide variety of its confixational word-formative types. In this case, the specificity of confix in the sphere of adjective is its specialization in the expression of quite definite semantics:

- various types of space-time relations - 18 word-formation models: вне-...-н- (внебюджетный), внутри-...-н- (внутривенный), за-...-н- (залесный) / за-...-ск- (заморский), меж- (между-) ...-н- (междугородный, межкостный) / меж- (между-) ... -ск- (межзаводский), на-...-н- (наружный) / на-...-енн- (набедренный), над-...-н- (надлѐдный), около-...-н- (околоплодный), по-...-н- (поречный) / по-...-ск- (поморский), под-...-н- (подъязычный), пред-...-н- (предполѐтный), при-...-н- (пригородный) / при-...-ск- (приморский), среди-...-н- (средиземный), через-/черес-...-н- (чересплечный);

- An excessive manifestation of a feature - 1 model: за-...-енн- (закустаренный) / за-...-ованн- (закамышованный);

- Indication of the origin or other relations - 3 models: от-...-н- (отглагольный), по-...-н- (поквартирный), со-...-енн- (соименный);

- Designation of an attribute by the indication a substance absence - 24 models, including 7 productive and regular ones in modern language: без-...-н- (безвольный) / бес-...-н- (бессонный), не-...-им- (непобедимый), не-...-ичн- (нетипичный), не-...-н- (неизбежный, неутешный), не-...-ем- (несмолкаемый) / не- ...-ом- (невесомый).

Most of the derivational types represented in the first three groups are productive only in the terminology of various sciences. In this regard, it is better to start studying not the confix as a morpheme and a confixed word-production in Russian classes, but the stylistically neutral and highly productive types that make up the fourth group. It makes sense to refer to this material also because it allows to acquaint foreign students with one interesting Slavic cognitive mechanism of marking socially important for the ethnos of values

by pointing out the absence of the reality which symbolizes them [Ukhanova T.V., Kosova V.A., 2016]. In Russian, the word-forming category of the attribute reflecting the absence of a substance is used for this purpose.

## 5. SUMMARY

The results of our study showed that the adjectives of a word-formative category of an attribute reflecting the absence of a substance have a wide linguistic didactic potential in the practice of teaching Russian as a foreign language. We are convinced that the use of the concept of "confix" during the explaining of studied lexical unit origin, structure and semantics will help foreigners to understand and master better the cognitive models and their speech formulas used by Russian speakers in everyday communication.

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