

## The verbs with the semantic feature “emotionality” in the contemporary German and Macedonian language

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### Abstract

*In this paper I try to give an overview and to analyze the different ways of the description of the emotional state of humans in contemporary German and Macedonian language, which can be expressed through different word classes. My purpose in this section is to implement the contrastive analysis to the verbs with the semantic feature ‘emotionality’ in contemporary German and Macedonian language. In addition, I hope that the implications of these comparisons of the Macedonian and German verbs can be applied in teaching Macedonian and German, especially when it comes to teaching DaF (Deutsch als Fremdsprache) as well as in translation and teaching material design (grammars, dictionaries, textbooks, etc.). This group of verbs with the semantic element “emotionality” in modern German and Macedonian language is presented, and an attempt is made to classify this group of verbs on morphological, semantic and syntactic level.*

**Key words:** *emotionality, comparative analysis, classification of verbs.*

### 1. Introduction

There are different ways to describe the emotional state of humans in contemporary German and Macedonian, which can be expressed through different word groups. We analyze the word class of verbs with the semantic feature “emotionality” and we do not aim to describe all verbs that express a mental state, but only one representative class from this group of verbs. It would be a massive undertaking to work with a much wider range. Our aim is to implement the contrastive analysis to these

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verbs in contemporary Macedonian and German. In addition, we hope that the implications of these comparisons of the Macedonian and German verbs can be applied in teaching Macedonian and German, as well as in translation and teaching material design (grammars, dictionaries, textbooks, etc.).

## **2. Classification of verbs that express a mental state in German and Macedonian**

In this paper we attempt to classify the reflexive verbs that express a mental state based on several criteria, such as: their syntactic, semantic and morphological characteristics.

**The syntactic level** (as well as other levels) is described in terms of the valence theory: the syntactic structure of the verb is represented by the number of noun phrases that the verb allows and their morphology. Each verb is attributed a particular valence model. As the structural center of the sentence, the verb opens a number of free spaces (vacancies). In order to realize its complementary meaning, i.e. to fill the vacancies, the verb needs a particular number and type of complements (actants, arguments). **Tesniere** (1959) uses the term *valence*, **J. Erben** "Wertigkeit", and **W. Admoni** uses the term "Fügungspotenz". When applying the valence model integrated into dependency grammar, it is necessary to separate the complements, such as: *valence - conditioned actants* (obligatory, optional) and *valence - distant elements* (free complements). The research that has been done in the field of valence is located on different levels, such as: syntactic, semantic and logical, and therefore we distinguish: *syntactic, semantic and logical valence*. *The logical valence* uses the principle according to which valence relations are motivated by ontological and denotative context. They are, in fact, extralinguistic universal relations of the objective reality. *The semantic valence* is monolingually conditioned. In order for the meaning to be realized, the verbal regulator (functor) requires certain actants, whose meaning corresponds to its complementarity, while other actants, whose meaning does not correspond to its

complementarity, are eliminated. The verb suggests the syntagmatic extension (ich fühle mich wohl-schrecklich / traurig / glücklich / ..., but it is not possible to say: \* Ich fühle mich blau, \* Die Tasche schämt sich, u.a). **The syntactic valence** is related to the implementation of the obligatory and optional actants in their categorical presentation (Gacov, 1975). The number of actants represents **the quantitative valence** and the syntactically - semantic distribution of the actants is represented with **qualitative valence**. Helbig/Buscha (1974) provide a classification of the verbs into three levels as follows:

**a) The first level** is the sum of the obligatory and optional variants, which give the maximum valence of the verb:

Er schämt sich vor seiner Freundin.      sich schämen 1+(1)

Er = obligatory actant (A1).

vor seiner Freundin = optional actant (A2).

Er befindet sich wohl in Kairo.      sich befinden 2+(1)

(with the meaning to feel)

Er = obligatory actant (A1)

wohl = obligatory actant (A2)

in Kairo = optional actant (A3)

**b) On the second level** the actants are qualitatively determined and marked with symbols such as: Sn, Adv., pS. The number of the actants must be congruent with those from the first level, regarding the obligatoriness and optionality.

*sich schämen* – Sn +Ps (A1 =Sbn, A2 =pS/A1=Subj., A2=Obj.)

*sich befinden* – Sn + Adv. +pS (A1=Sbn, A2= Adv., A3 =pS/A1 Subj.,

A2=Advbest., A3= Raumbest).

The second level can be further divided into: syntaktische Kategorien (Wortklasse, Wortgruppe, Infinitivkonstruktion, Nebensatz) and syntaktische Funktion (Subjekt-, Objektfunktion, Adverbialbestimmung).

**c) On the third level** the actants are semantically determined. At this level, in fact, we talk about sememes. For example, the monovalent verb *sich schämen*

binds a subject that contains the semantic mark *hum* (living being, human or parts of the human body). This means that every possible subject is something alive, countable (one man/many people...). In this combination animals could take the subject position (mostly with indirect meaning, e.g.: Die Katze / der Hund schämt sich ...), where there is no correspondence of the combined lexical units. This violates the principle of semantic valence (deviation from the semantic norms) and this can be used as a means for special communication effects, which is of special interest for pragmatics and poetology.

According to Helbig/Buscha (1996), semantic sentence patterns result from the semantic valence of the verb (i.e. from the ability of the lexicalized predicate through its semantic structure to open spaces that can or should be filled with semantic case). The meaning of the predicate is important, from which it will depend how many and which semantic cases will enter into the combination. Verbs in German that express state of perceiving (sehen, hören, empfinden, fühlen, spüren / **Wahrnehmungsprädikate**, **Empfindungsprädikate**), of knowledge (kennen, wissen, glauben, meinen, verstehen, vermissen / **Kognitionsprädikate**) and of relations (hassen, lieben, beneiden / **emotive Prädikate**), behave partially as verbs that express action (e.g., in the formation of the passive voice), but partially match the meaning of verbs that express state. According to Helbig-Buscha (1996), their subject is not an agent (and that's why the predicate cannot be proverbalized), but is **Demiagens (Wahrnehmungsträger, Erkenntnisträger, Verhältnissträger)** and on a syntactic level it partially acts as an agent. Some of these verbs can build Passiv, Typ 1, although the subject is not Agens, but Demi-Agens. Thus, it explains the slight deviation shown in the following sentences (the semantic difference of the verb variants is reflected on the different levels of the grammaticality while forming the passive):

*Wir haben die Sonnenfinsternis gesehen.* (= beobachten; Subjekt ist Agens).

- *Die Sonnenfinsternis ist von uns gesehen worden.*

***Wir haben den Unfall gesehen.*** (*zufällig wahrnehmen; Subjekt ist Demi-Agens*).

- *Der Unfall ist von uns gesehen worden.*

(*Helbig/ Buscha, 1996, S.170*).

In the Duden grammar (1984), the impersonal verbs (Impersonalia) that express physical and spiritual sense (Es friert mich / mich friert; Es dürstet; Es hungert mich; mich hungert, etc.) are a separate group of verbs. Some of them require other complements (Es verlangt mich nach dir/mich verlangt nach dir; Es gelüstet ihn nach Geld / ihn gelüstet nach Geld). Many of these expressions are now archaic and have Biblical or partly poetic character. Today the expressions (with personal pronouns) are much more preferred, such as: Ich habe Hunger / Ich bin hungrig.

According to the number of case relations, we distinguish sentence models with one semantic case (determinating sentences like P (x) and sentences that have more than one semantic case (relative sentences of the type P (x, y) or P (x, y, z). The sentences: *Das Kind fürchtet sich vor dem Gewitter; Ich fühle mich wohl; Ich behme mich gut; Ich befinde mich schrecklich*, etc. are relative sentences and besides the predicate they have two cases, and hence a semantic structure of the type P (x, y).

The reflexive pronoun *sich* in these verbs is interpreted differently. The reflexive pronoun is considered as an actant only in reflexive constructions, which can be replaced by a noun (in the accusative or dative). E.g.: Er fühlt sich wohl/die Wärme. If a replacement is not possible, then *sich* is considered as a lexicalized part of the predicate and is an integral part of the verb (Er schämt sich). The reflexive pronoun *sich* in the verbs: *sich schämen, sich bedanken, sich besinnen, sich entsinnen* etc. cannot be replaced with a semantic word that will serve as an object and cannot be considered as an object. E.g.:

*Die Frau schämt sich.*

\* *Die Frau schämt das Kind.*

Here, the reflexive pronoun is part of the verb as a lexical part of the predicate, which means the verb can occur only in the reflexive form. In this context, Helbig/Buscha (1996) wrote about reflexive verbs (in a more narrow sense). The basic classification of reflexive verbs that Helbig/Buscha (1996) provide consists of the classification of the verbs into several groups, such as, *reflexive constructions, reflexive verbs (in a more narrow sense), Reflexiva tantum variants of the reflexive verbs, reflexive constructions and verbs with reciprocal meaning, as well as reflexive forms with a passive meaning*. The group of reflexive verbs that are obligatorily related with the reflexive pronoun in accusative (*Reflexiva tantum*) includes the verbs: *sich schämen, sich erholen, sich sehnen, sich besinnen, sich gedulden, sich verirren etc.* The following verbs occur as variants of the reflexive verbs: (*sich/ärgern, sich / fürchten, / sich / freuen, sich / täuschen, / sich / wundern, / sich / zieren ...*). Some of them may occur within the reflexive constructions. E.g.:

*Ich habe mich über mich (selbst) geärgert.*

*Ich wundere mich manchmal über mich selbst.*

With the verbs: *sich freuen, sich ärgern, sich begeistern, sich erfreuen, sich interessieren, sich wundern etc.* the subject and object can change places and form non-reflexive variants. E.g.:

*Ich freue mich über deinen Erfolg.*

*Dein Erfolg freut mich.*

With the reflexive pronoun **sich** in dative, the following verbs are used **sich denken, sich einbilden, sich trauen, sich wünschen etc.** They can be used with an accusative object, dependent clause or infinitive construction. E.g.:

*Ich denke mir etwas.*

*ich denke mir, dass etwas passiert ist.*

*ich bilde mir ein, zu Hause zu sein.*

A small part of these verbs (*/ sich / ausruhen, / sich / irren, / sich / ausdenken*) contain the optional reflexive pronoun *sich* and it can be omitted. The optional character is perceived in that the reflexive pronoun in this type of

verbs is not a part of a sentence and does not represent a semantic case, it is only lexically conditioned (Halbig / Buscha, 1996, S. 208-221).

Reflexive verbs that express a mental state in Macedonian and German have *a common semantic field*. This type of verbs is associated with common semantic features. Since there is no overlapping of syntactic and semantic function, a separate description of the syntactic and semantic function is necessary. The semantic feature is described as a semantic case and is in connection with the semantic roles (Agens, Patiens, Lokativ, Instrumental, Resultat etc.). Reflexive verbs also require certain semantic arguments, that fulfill certain semantic roles. For example, in the sentence: Ich wasche mir die Hände, *ich* appears in the role of an agent, while in the sentence *ich schäme mich*, "ich" appears in the role of experiencer (Experienzer).

*The semantic case* involves semantic relations, functions that are determined by the lexical meaning of the predicate, i.e. by the bindings of the logically- semantic predicate with its arguments. The subject and object are semantically unspecified sentence parts and cannot be directly traced to the meaning. Namely, the same semantic case can be presented through different sentence parts. The following table (1) represents the main semantic functions (in the form of a semantic case) of sentence parts, in connection with the reflexive verbs that express a mental state.

Table (1)

<i>Semantische Funktion</i>	<i>Subjekt</i>	<i>Objekt</i>
<i>Träger psychischer Prozesse</i>	Der Spieler ärgert sich über die Niederlage.	Die Niederlage ärgert den Spieler.
	Das Kind fürchtet sich vor dem Gewitter.	Das Gewitter erschreckt das Kind.
Gegenstand (und Auslöser) psychischer Prozesse	Das Gewitter erschreckt das Kind.	Er freut sich über den Erfolg der Tochter.
	Die Niederlage ärgert den Spieler.	Der Spieler ärgert sich über die Niederlage.

The relationship between the largest number of pairs of reflexive and non-reflexive verbs is unquestionable, but the situation is not clear in every example.

There are pairs that formally coincide, but semantically are more distant (*однесува/се однесува*). Scarcely ever, in Macedonian, the reflexive verb is a verb derived from the non-reflexive one, and vice versa (*се смее > смее некого, се срами > срами некого*). These examples differ in German. The verb *lachen* can occur as intransitive (**Das Glück lachte ihm**), and it can be used with prepositions as an intransitive verb (**Er lachte über das ganze Gesicht**), or with the prefix **be-** it can form a transitive verb (**belachen**). The verb **sich schämen**, as an intransitive verb can be used with prepositional object or genitive object, but with the prefix *be-* it forms a transitive verb (**beschämen**).

### 3. Conclusion

Through the analysis of the verbs that express a mental state of humans in German and Macedonian, we present the classification of verbs with the semantic feature "emotionality" in standard German and Macedonian. We consider the verbs that express mental states, such as verbs that express *love, hate, wonder, doubt, grief, shame, joy, fear, anger* and other emotional states in humans. This group of verbs includes: *се/сака (/sich/ lieben), се/мразу (hassen), се/чуду (/sich/ wundern), се сомнева (zweifeln), /се/ жали (trauern), /се/ сраму (/sich/ schämen), се радува (/sich/ freuen), /се/ плашу (/sich/ fürchten), /се/ лути (/sich/ ärgern)* and others. The verbs that express a mental state in German and Macedonian were reviewed on morpho-syntactic, sememe-structural and psycholinguistic level. The possible semantic characteristics of these verbs in connection with various types of meaning, such as: lexically - paradigmatic, grammatical, referential, associative, perceptive, connotative, affective, situational, stylistic, contextual, as well as the methods of sememe-analysis - we place them as basis for a deeper and more comprehensive linguistic analysis.



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