

# 'Taste' and its conceptual extensions: the example of Croatian root *kus/kuš* and Turkish root *tat*

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This paper deals with the concept of 'taste' and its importance in the formation of Croatian and Turkish lexicon. 'Taste' as one of five basic sensory concepts serves as a source domain in conceptualizing various abstract domains, mostly related to human internal sensations (Sweetser, 1990). However, within the research of perception vocabulary, lexical structures related to the concept of 'taste' have been among the least investigated areas, especially according to different parts of speech and their correlation in building of vocabulary. A comparative analysis of the taste vocabulary in two typologically different and genetically unrelated languages like Croatian and Turkish could reveal the differences and similarities in processes that come into play in building their vocabulary. This is the reason why these two languages are chosen for the analysis. According to the embodiment hypothesis within Cognitive Linguistic theoretical framework, it can be expected that Croatian and Turkish share conceptual extensions towards the same abstract domains. However, since the two languages are typologically different and immersed in different cultures, some differences in conceptual mappings are also expected. Thus, one of the main goals of the present research is to provide a more fine grained analysis of semantic extensions of the taste vocabulary in the two languages. Besides examining similarities and differences in conceptual mappings, the aim of the paper is also to see to what extent the two languages differ with respect to lexicalization patterns that influence formation of the 'taste' vocabulary.

Croatian and Turkish taste vocabularies are described with respect to the morphosemantic

structures of Croatian root *kus/kuš* "taste" and Turkish root *tat* "taste". The model of morphosemantic patterns (MP model) as developed by Raffaelli and Kerovec (2008) and Raffaelli (2013) regards the lexicon as morphologically and semantically related, i.e. each motivated lexeme is related to a root with respect to the word-formation processes and to the semantic (cognitive) processes. Moreover, the MP model regards the lexicon as a constructional continuum with no clear-cut boundaries between grammatical and lexical structures (cf. Langacker, 1987; Goldberg, 1995; Booij, 2010). It means that constructions such as *okušati se* "to try; to give it a go", *okušati se u* "to try out (a certain activity)" and *okušati se kao* "to try (out) as" are regarded as separate lexical units since they differ with respect to their usage, and exhibit differences in their meanings and their syntactic realizations. The MP model is a usage based model, thus conclusions about lexical structures and meanings are based upon a detailed analysis of lexical realizations in different contexts.

Meanings and contextual realizations of all analyzed lexical units in Croatian and in Turkish have been checked in the Croatian National Corpus, Croatian Web Corpus and METU Turkish Corpus.

As pointed out by Viberg (1984), concept of 'taste' is in general extended towards domains 'like'/'dislike'. Moreover, some cross-linguistic evidence (cf. Viberg, 1984; Evans and Wilkins 2000) shows a regular and frequent extension of taste verbs towards the meanings "to try", "to experience", "to enjoy". Although some cross-linguistic regularities of conceptual extensions of the concept 'taste' have already been established, the

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In Vito Pirrelli, Claudia Marzi, Marcello Ferro (eds.): *Word Structure and Word Usage*. Proceedings of the NetWordS Final Conference, Pisa, March 30-April 1, 2015, published at <http://ceur-ws.org>

comparative study of Croatian and Turkish taste vocabulary shows that there are some other abstract domains conceptualized by the domain of taste. Such domains are for example ‘ambience’, ‘mood’, ‘atmosphere’, ‘charm’, ‘enchantment’, that are all conceptualized by the domain of taste in Turkish, but not in Croatian, as showed in some examples below.

In Croatian the root *kus/kuš* is a basis of the verb *kušati* “to taste” that, by the process of prefixation, enabled formation of various verbs and constructions such as *pokušati* “to try; to attempt”, *iskušati/iskušavati/iskusiti* “to try; to experience”, *prokušati se* “to try; to try out”, *okušati se (u/kao)* “to try (out) (as)” that differ with respect to prefixes (and prepositions) and thus with respect to their usage and meanings. The perfective verb *okusiti* “to taste” differs from the verb *kušati* primarily in aspect, however all the others verbs cannot be used in relation with tasting food. They exclusively have abstract meanings like nouns *kušnja* and *iskušenje* “temptation”. Croatian is somehow specific with respect to the existence of two morphologically closely related nouns: *okus* “taste” and *ukus* “system of aesthetic judgement”, differing significantly according to their semantic structures. A distinction in usage and meanings of the two nouns will be analyzed and some specificities will be pointed out.

Morphosemantic field of the Turkish root *tat* exhibits some similarities and some differences in comparison to the morphosemantic field of the Croatian root *kuš/kus*. *Tat* “taste” is a noun used as a basis in the formation of the verb *tatmak* “to taste” and of the phrasal verbs *tadını görmek* “to taste” (lit. “to see the taste of”) and *tadına bakmak* “to taste” (lit. “to look at the taste of”). This means that, unlike in Croatian, verbs for visual perception are used for lexicalization of taste experience and taste activity. Similarly to Croatian, all three verbs relate to the domain of food as well as to the abstract domain of experience (e.g. *hayat*

*tadını görmek* “to taste/experience life”, (lit. “to see the taste of life”). Turkish verbs do not extend their meanings to all abstract domains Croatian prefixed verbs do: they do not share meanings with Croatian verbs *pokušati* “to try; to attempt”, *okušati se*, *okušati se u*, *okušati se kao* “to try (out) (as)”, nor can they be related to the abstract domain of temptation (as with Croatian *iskušavati* “to tempt; to test”, *iskušenje* ‘temptation’, *kušnja* ‘temptation; crucible’). Similarly, Turkish root *tat* cannot relate to the domain of aesthetic judgement (Croatian *ukus*), but when morphologically extended by suffixes *-li* “with” or *-siz* “without”, it extends to some domains Croatian root does not: *tatlı* (lit. „with taste“) does not mean “tasty”, but “sweet”. Accordingly, *tatlı* relates to a variety of pleasant experiences (feelings, climate, activities), while *tatsız* means “untasty”, but also “unpleasant”, “irritating”, “disturbing”, “annoying” etc. In addition, Croatian root *kus/kuš* cannot be used to express “enjoying” as Turkish root *tat* can (e.g. *tatilin tadını çıkarmak* “to enjoy holidays”, lit. “to extract the taste of holidays”). As far as contextual realizations are concerned, one of the most prominent differences between Croatian and Turkish is that Turkish root *tat*, besides verbs for visual perception, combines with verbs expressing motion (*Paris’in tadına varmak* “to experience the spirit/charm of Paris“, lit. “to come to the taste of Paris”), taking (*tadını almak* “to taste”, “to experience”, “to enjoy”, lit. “to take the taste of”; *tadını çıkarmak* “to enjoy”, lit. “to extract the taste of”), and cognitive activity (*tadını bilmek* “to experience”, lit. “to learn/to know the taste of”; *tadını tanımak* “to experience”, lit. “to get to know the taste of”), which is not the case in Croatian. Combining nouns and verbs derived from the same root is also characteristic for Turkish but not for Croatian (*tadını tatmak* “to taste the taste of”).

Thus, it could be claimed that Croatian verbs with extended abstract meanings are mostly realized in constructions such as [pref – V<sub>kus/kuš</sub> – prep] as *okušati se u* “to try out”,

whereas Turkish verbs with extended meanings mostly appear in construction such as [N<sub>tat</sub> – V] in which verbs within a construction often refer to concrete domains based in human experience, like for example motion.

The aim of this paper is: a) to provide an exhaustive description of the structure of the taste vocabulary related to the roots *kuš/kus* in Croatian and *tat* in Turkish, b) to point to some similarities and differences in the conceptual extensions of the concept ‘taste’ in the two languages and thus in the organization of their vocabularies, c) to implement the MP model in the description of lexical structures of non IE languages, and thus demonstrate its applicability in the lexical analysis of typologically different languages, pointing to regular and specific lexicalization patterns in the two languages.

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