

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

On the rights of the manuscript

ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**PROBLEM OF SYNONYMY:
LINGUISTIC AND EXTRALINGUITIC FACTORS
REGULATING THE CHOICE OF SYNONYMS
IN THE MODERN ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Speciality: 5708.01 – German languages

Field of science: Philology

Applicant: **Narmina Arif Fataliyeva**

Baku – 2022

The work was performed at the Department of Language and Literature of Khazar University.

Scientific supervisor: Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor
Nigar Chingiz Veliyeva

Official opponents: Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor
Azad Yahya Mammadov

Doctor of Philosophy in Philology,
Associate Professor
Beyler Islamkhan Hajiyev

Doctor of Philosophy in Philology,
Associate Professor
Tamilla Oktayevna Mammadova

Dissertation council ED 2.12 of Supreme Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan operating at Azerbaijan University of Languages.

Chairman of the
Dissertation council:

Doctor of Philological Sciences,
academic
Kamal Mehdi Abdullayev

Scientific secretary of the
Dissertation council:

Doctor of Philosophy on Philology,
Associate Professor
Irada Nadir Sardarova

Chairman of the
scientific seminar:

Doctor of Philological Sciences,
Professor
Fakhraddin Yadigar Veysalli

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH

This dissertation is devoted to the study of the validity of the choice of synonyms in the English language. A special attention is paid both to the analysis of the choice of synonyms made by the sender of the message to convey his speech intention and the linguistic and extralinguistic factors affecting this intention.

Actuality of the topic and the degree of research. Currently, a new scientific paradigm is being developed – anthropocentric linguistics, the forces of which are aimed at identifying the role of not only linguistic, but also extra-linguistic factors in the formation and choice of linguistic units in a language. Modern cognitive linguistics recognizes that in addition to linguistic factors, non-linguistic factors also have a huge impact on the functioning of a language. In other words, the linguistic information that lies in the structure of the word can be found in the relation of the word to other phenomena of the language. Synonymy is a multifunctional phenomenon and covers various areas of language use. The functions of synonyms are so broad that they go beyond the usual linguistic possibilities and, with each new implementation of the choice, synonyms reveal more and more new pragmatic and cognitively directed properties.

Thus, the relevance of the topic is determined by the increased interest in the study of the cognitive and lingo pragmatic validity of word choice in modern cognitive linguistics. It is known that different aspects of the reality can be displayed in the meaning of the word. Due to this property the word becomes a bearer of extralinguistic information. The phenomenon of synonymy has been of interest to linguists, philosophers, and psychologists for decades. However, linguistics is unable to answer many questions concerning the problem of synonymy from the point of view of traditional linguistics. Until now, linguists have rejected the probability of any personal or social influences on the choice of words, focusing primarily on the study of language factors. Thus, seeking an answer to various language phenomena, they drove themselves into a dead end and, therefore, many questions remain unresolved until today.

Therefore, we focus on the close study of the interaction of linguistic-cognitive, social and pragmatic factors in the selection of synonymous units.

Recently, in modern cognitive linguistics, much attention has been paid to the individual's role in formation of different language nominations. Therefore, the dissertation also examines the role of a personality as one of the major factors in the creation of English synonymous variants.

Despite a huge number of works on the problem of synonymy, structural linguistics has not been able to give a clear definition of the proximity of meaning. The traditional consideration of the problem of synonymy, i.e. from merely theoretical considerations, was limited to the elaboration of general laws of functioning of synonyms, such as the definition and types of synonyms. This approach to the problem left many questions unanswered. Synonymy was studied by such linguists as A.Markward, L.Bloomfield, P.Palmer, N.Goodman, P.Matthews, A.Cruz, J.Lyons, and others. The initial studies were simply in nature, where the problem of synonymy was simply researched from the point of word meaning. Many of them rejected the existence of absolute synonymy. According to A.Cruse and C.Ullmann, there cannot be two synonyms *"in the language that do not have some distinctive shades in the meaning"*¹. J.Lyons² and D.A.Cruse³, for instance, noted that the *"most important criteria in determination of absolute synonymy is the criterion of interchangeability"*.

Russian linguists also studied the nature of synonymy. Among Russian scientists, who made a huge contribution to the theory of synonymy, we can mention A.I.Smurnitsky, A.V.Lagutina, S.G.Berezhan, V.I.Kodukhov, D.N.Shmelev, V.G.Vilyuman, T.S.Sorokina and others. Among the Azerbaijani linguists who have contributed to the development of the field of synonymy are

¹ Ullmann, St. Semantics. An Introduction to the Science of Meaning / Ullmann, St. –Blackwell, – Oxford, – 1967. – 119 p.

² Lyons, J. Linguistic Semantics: An Introduction / J.Lyons. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, – 1995. – p.56

³ Cruse, D.A. Lexical semantics / D.A.Cruse. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, – 1986. – p.67

I.T.Mammadov (1985), Z.N.Verdieva (1988), H.S.Hasanov (1990), R.M.Shabanov (1998), S.E.Abdullayev (2008, 2009), S.I.Zeynalova (2014) and others.

However, the study of synonyms among the above-mentioned linguists was limited only to the analysis of system relations. Therefore, despite the existence of a huge number of works, it is difficult to find a work that fully highlights the validity of the synonym choice in the English language. In this paper, an attempt is made to show that synonymy not as a closed language system, but the process of choosing synonyms, which is performed by the sender depending on a number of factors, both linguistic and extralinguistic.

It is known that the words we choose to convey a message depend on certain factors. In linguistics, the first works carried out to identify the situational and social variety of the language belong to E.Goffman. He believed that *“a person plays a certain communicative role that easily changes depending on the formality of the situation, the type of audience and relationships we have with other communicants”*⁴. However, this topic was not sufficiently studied, since in his work, E.Goffman does not focus on the actual use of language means.

More recent studies aimed at identifying the dependence of the use of language units on the factors of social character belong to D.Hyams, who is considered the founder of sociolinguistics. In his opinion, each speech act, in addition to taking into account social attitudes, should also take into account who the communicants themselves are and what the goals of their relationships are⁵. However, as J.Forgas writes, *“D.Hyams covers the problem not from the point of view of the use of words, but rather focuses more on the very nature of such relationships”*⁶. D.Hyams, P.Brown, S.Freiherr, and J.Forgas made new attempts to identify the impact of the situation on the speech acts held between interlocutors. However,

⁴ Goffman, E. The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. Garden City / E.Goffman. – NY: Doubleday, – 1959. – p. 9

⁵ Hymes, D. Foundations of Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach / D.Hymes. – Philadelphia: Univ. Penn. Press, – 1974. – p. 34

⁶ Forgas, J.P. Language and Social Situations / J.P.Forgas. – New York: Springer, – 1985. Vol.9, – p. 64

these approaches were also focused on the relationships, rather than on the word use problem.

The first attempts to study the language variation and the use of different language variants using empirical data were made by W.Labov, who formed a new approach to the use of language. The data collected by him are based on various sociolinguistic interviews, public speeches, and radio programs and serve as real facts for examining the functioning of the language in specific situations⁷.

However, the above works are aimed at identifying the validity of language variation in general and did not consider the choice of synonymous variants.

An important contribution to linguistics was the study of various social models to identify the validity of the choice of various language units. The first attempts in this area belong to W.Labov. In his works, he was able to show that the choice of similar language forms cannot be limited only by language means. The use of linguistic means is also influenced by various social factors, such as the age, gender, socio-economic status of the speaker, dialect, his perception of the situation (both formal and informal) or tone⁸.

Despite many studies the influence of various factors on the lexical choice has not been sufficiently investigated. One of the new attempts to study lexical choice is considered to be an anthropocentric approach, which places the speaker in the center of language phenomena. This enables the sender to make use of synonyms by including new lexical units in common semantic fields as he wishes. We believe that this would allow us to delve deeper into the study of synonymy and establish its dynamic nature.

The object and subject of the research. The object of the dissertation is synonymy in Modern English. are chosen for the study of the work.

⁷ Labov, W. Sociolinguistic Patterns / W.Labov. – Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, – 1972. – p.10-11

⁸ Labov, W. Sociolinguistic Patterns / W.Labov. – Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, – 1972. – p.10-11

The subject of research is the generalization and systematization of linguistic and extralinguistic factors that regulate the choice of synonyms in this language.

The goal and objectives of the research. The main goal of this research is to identify and study the factors that determine the choice of synonymous units in the English language. The study of these factors will help to better understand the validity of the choice of a particular synonym in the social context, the motivation of the sender to use a particular synonym, and will reveal the specifics of the processes of synonymizing in modern English as a whole.

To achieve the main goal, the following tasks have been put:

- to identify the linguistic and cognitive bases of the nomination of language units;
- to consider the lingo-cognitive features of the choice of alternative units;
- to study of the role of multiple nominations in the choice of synonymous units;
- to consider synonymy from the point of view of the anthropocentric approach as an open system governed by the criteria "for me, here and now";
- to determine the dependence of the choice of language units on socio-demographic parameters;
- to analyze class dialects as a variety of synonymy and identify the dependence of dialect choice on the social differentiation of society;
- to identify the impact of socio-social changes on the borrowing of foreign vocabulary as synonymous with the native one;
- to establish the dependence of the synonym choice on socio-cultural parameters on the base of euphemism study;
- to show synonymy as a "communicative-pragmatic activity", regulated by the sender's intention factor;
- to reveal the dependence of the synonym choice on the stylistic and pragmatic aspects in the media discourse;
- to establish the "misleading" status of synonymy as one of possible ways of veiling the facts of reality in both media and political discourses.

The research methods. The multidimensional nature of the object of study required a combination of different methods of analysis, and therefore, the tasks are solved at the intersection of such areas of knowledge as cognitive linguistics, sociolinguistics, the culture of speech and language, the language of political discourse and the media. In accordance with the goals and objectives of the study, the following methods were chosen: complex theoretical analysis, the method of cognitive analysis, corpus analysis, the method of analyzing dictionary definitions, the method of linguistic observation and description, the method of contextual and interpretative analysis.

The main provisions for defense are:

– the anthropocentric approach to the study of synonymy based on the principle of "synonymic attraction" allows us to reveal the extralinguistic determinism of the choice of synonyms in the English language much more fully than traditional linguistics, which studies synonymy as a closed, ordered system;

– cognitive mechanism involved in the study of synonymy gives reliable grounds to interpret synonymy not only just a linguistic phenomenon but as a mental-linguistic category;

– as a special kind of synonyms, the choice of synonyms-sociolects is the main marker of the social belonging of the speakers in the UK;

– synonyms used in the text have a meaning-reducing function: thanks to a chain of words that are similar in meaning in the text, the sender removes responsibility for what is said, giving the recipient freedom in interpretation;

– political figures make use of synonyms because of their misleading function – as a way to control the ideology of recipients;

– synonymy is one of the popular methods of hiding socio-political actions in political discourse.

The scientific novelty of the research lies in an attempt to remove from the synonymy the status of a "frozen system", devoid of natural functioning in speech, and to try to interpret it not as a combination of two or several isolated words, but as a communicative-pragmatic activity. Since traditional linguistics

studied synonymy as a purely linguistic phenomenon, many questions have not found their explanations yet. To consider the dependence of the choice of synonymous units on lingo pragmatic, cognitive and socio-cultural factors, a large amount of the latest empirical material is involved in the analysis. The results, obtained in the course of the study show, that synonymy is a mental-linguistic phenomenon brought about by cognitive processes. Thus, the scientific novelty of this study also lies in the fact that it considers the "personality" factor as the main producing element of synonyms, the choice of which is directly dependent on the criteria "*for me, now and here*"⁹.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research. The work shows that taking into account the personal synonymic attraction in the study of the synonym choice can shed light on questions that still remain unanswered. Also, the main conclusions drawn from the current study may serve as a basis for further development of the theory of synonymy.

The practical significance of the work lies in the fact that the obtained data can be used at practical classes in lexicology, semasiology, pragmatics, stylistics of the English language, General linguistics, as well as in the creation of both dictionaries of synonyms and explanatory dictionaries. Certain provisions of the study may also be of interest to specialists in the field of sociolinguistics and pragmatics. Considering the growing interest in intercultural communication, the materials of the dissertation can also be used by specialists in speech science. Additionally, the examples, given with the purpose of studying the ways politicians make use of the content-pragmatic side of the message conveyed, may be useful for journalists and political language researchers.

Approbation and application. This work has been carried out at the Department of English Language and Literature of Khazar University. The main provisions of the dissertation were published in the form of articles, theses and reports in both republican and foreign scientific journals, as well as presented by the applicant at various

⁹ Кривко, И.П. Специфика синонимической аттракции в лексиконе индивида: синергетический подход: / Дис. ... канд. филол. наук. / – Курск, 2010. с. – 67

national and international scientific conferences.

Materials for the dissertation have been taken from the UK Mass media. More than a hundred electronic texts, published between 2005 and 2016 in such prestigious journals as The Guardian, The Times, The Economist, The Daily Telegraph and The Daily Mail, have been analyzed in the current work. Also, some materials have been obtained from the web sites of the BBC and CNN news agencies. In addition, in order to work with dictionary definitions, various dictionaries of synonyms as well as the British National Corpus have been used in the current work.

Name of the organization where the dissertation work is performed. The work was performed at Department of English Language and Literature at Khazar University.

The structure of the dissertation with a sign including a separate volume of the structural units of the dissertation. The dissertation consists of an Introduction (8 pages, 12956 characters), three Chapters (Chapter I – 5 sub-chapters, 42 pages, 68787 characters, Chapter II – 4 sub-chapters, 40 pages, 64753, conclusion (3 pages, 3874 characters), and references. The dissertation consists of 203415 characters excluding the list of used literature.

THE CONTENT OF RESEARCH

In the *Introduction* to the thesis the relevance of the topic, the object and subject of the research work, the purpose and objectives, the hypothesis, the material, background of the thesis, the scientific novelty, methodology, theoretical and practical significance of the research, are presented.

Chapter I of the research work, which is called “**Linguistic-cognitive foundations of proximity of meaning and their role in the choice of synonymous means**”, consists of five sections. The first section, “*Linguistic and cognitive foundations of the nomination of language units*”, examines the foundations of the nomination of language units from the point of view of cognitive linguistics. Here the connection that exists between the personality and the language is revealed. It is shown that access to internal cognitive structures is gained precisely through language activity,

and the concept is considered to be the unit of the mental lexicon, with the help of which a conceptual picture of the world is built.

Human contribution to the system of language cannot be rejected. In general, language is a special structure that reflects not only the functioning of language units, but also the life and creativity of the person himself. In this section, it is revealed that the selection process consists of 2 major factors: the factor of intelligence and the factor of the language mechanism. In the conclusion of this chapter it becomes evident that lexical choice is not just a choice of words to express one's thoughts, but also a strong indicator of the speaker's personality, behavior, and mental performance. The choice evokes a certain reaction of the recipient or dictates his behavior as a response to the interpretation or understanding of the communication situation. Thus, newly made nominations are the final product of the mental activity and their choice depends on the certain world representation the addressee obtains.

In the second and third sections of this chapter, traditional and modern approaches are discussed.

The main interpretations of the concepts of "*synonymy*" and "*synonymy*" are given. This chapter critically examines the opinions of Azerbaijani and foreign linguists, concludes that there is no single generally accepted definition of synonymy, and suggests a definition based on the definitions proposed by S.Ullman, J.Lyons, and D.Cruz. According to S.Ullman, "*there are very few words in the language that are completely synonymous in the sense of interchangeability. Therefore, depending on the context synonyms may slightly change their meanings*"¹⁰ (in terms of the nominative, emotional or evocative).

Hence, ideographic synonyms possess more value for the language in the sense that they always differ from one another in shades of meaning and, consequently, create the opportunity to convey the most subtle shades of thought when necessary. These sections also touch on the topic of absolute synonyms in scientific and technical terminology by drawing conclusion that such language

¹⁰ Ullmann, St. Semantics. An Introduction to the Science of Meaning / St.Ullmann. – Oxford: Basic Blackwell, – 1967. – p.141

units are not beneficial from a pragmatic point of view, since only the availability of a certain difference between synonyms determines their choice. Furthermore, in this chapter, the main criteria by which words can be called synonyms are highlighted. It is established that synonyms must necessarily have certain collocative and selective restrictions, and each time the sender makes a choice of a synonym, he must take into account the presence of a linguopragmatic component in it. Also, it should be based on or justified by the sender's own idea giving a way to creation of both occasional and contextual synonyms.

In general, synonymy is a process that covers not only the activities of linguistic units, but also reflects the life and creativity of the person who acts as a sender of the message. Therefore, modern linguists study the problem of synonymy, lexical attraction and synonymic attraction in a different way, namely from the point of view of the anthropocentric approach, where the personality is placed in the center of linguistic phenomena.

In linguistics, the term “*synonymic attraction*” is associated with the name of S.Ullman, who believed that “*objects that are of greater importance to society attract a greater number of synonyms*”¹¹. According to S.Lebedeva “*for a person synonyms are most often words which are for whatever reason are associated with a word-stimulus. The basis of such sense similarity is determined by the individual himself*”¹². Can be concluded that the frequency of the use of synonyms is an indicator of the popularity of a particular concept. At the same time, if the number of language means naming the same concept is high, then this can be perceived as a fact of its relevance in this society. To obtain accurate results, we determined the frequency of use of various synonyms for the word *recession* in American society (from 1990 to 2011). Among the frequently used synonyms for the word *recession* were *depression, de-cline, collapse, downturn, slump, stagnation*. The highest frequency of use of these

¹¹ Ullmann, St. Semantics. An Introduction to the Science of Meaning / St.Ullmann. – Oxford: Basic Blackwell, – 1967. – p.141

¹² Лебедева, С.В. Близость значения слов в индивидуальном сознании: / Дис. доктора филологических наук/ – Тверь, 2002. – с.12

synonyms occurs during the period when the United States was gripped by economic downturns.

The next section of chapter I focuses on the significance of identification and consideration of semantic and stylistic criteria among synonyms when transmitting a message. It is suggested here that the success of communication greatly depends on the correct use of semantic and stylistic synonyms in the context. On the base of the synonymic row of "bribe", "bait", "pay-off" and "kickback", the semantic differences between them have been found out. It is shown that in the choice of synonyms, in addition to the connotative aspect, it is also important to take into account the speech or language style, or formality of the context. Therefore, a necessary condition for choosing synonyms is the ability of the sender to adequately assess the current communication situation and use synonyms in accordance with the requirements of the style of speech and language (this will be discussed in the third chapter). Some synonyms have "combinability" constraints. They can be called "combinatorially non-identical synonyms"¹³. R.Khazieva considers that these synonyms "coincide in their dictionary meanings, but not in terms of their "combinability" meanings. They have different compatibility and cannot replace one another in all similar contexts."¹⁴

Combinatorial constraints can be lexical, semantic, or referential. As an example, the English synonymous row with the meaning "piece". So, in the synonymous row such synonyms as *piece, morsel, lump, slice, chunk*, the word *piece* has the widest range of compatibility, while the others can be combined only with a limited number of words: *a morsel of bread (meat), a slice of cheese (sausage), a lump of sugar, a chunk of wood*¹⁵.

Therefore, each synonym is used only with a certain range of words. In other words, synonyms can not always be used one instead

¹³ Хазијева, Р.М. Синонимические ряды глаголов в английском языке / Р.М.Хазијева. – М., – 2012. – с. 22

¹⁴ Хазијева, Р.М. Синонимические ряды глаголов в английском языке / Р.М.Хазијева. – М., – 2012. – с. 22

¹⁵ Хазијева, Р.М. Синонимические ряды глаголов в английском языке / Р.М.Хазијева. – М., – 2012. – с. 23

of the other, without disrupting the grammatical integrity of the sentence.

In the next section, synonyms are analyzed in terms of their functioning. For a better understanding of the laws of the functioning of synonyms and identifying their communicative and pragmatic purpose, they are considered in different contexts. As the analysis shows, the system of synonyms is characterized by its open character. It exchanges information with the environment, so all changes that occur in the system of synonymy are primarily due to extralinguistic factors. It is also important to note that each speaker perceives the surrounding reality in his own way, and each focuses his attention on specific properties of the reality, ignoring others. The choice can also be made depending on the relationship of the sender to the recipient. Therefore, such factors as the sender's intention, the situation in which the message is being sent, etc. are involved in the current analysis. (more closely they will be discussed in the third chapter).

The **second chapter** of the dissertation, which is called **“Sociolinguistic factors influencing the choice of synonymous units”**, includes four sections. The first section of this chapter is devoted to identifying the dependence of the choice of synonyms on such socio-demographic parameters as gender, age, social status of the speaker, his profession, occupation.

The language we use is continuously influenced by a person, both his personal and social growth. Linguists also support the view that the proximity of the meaning of verbal units in an individual's mind is determined by a certain order such parameters as the age, individual perception of the world by the individual, his experience, knowledge, and psycho-emotional state, and in accordance with this, the choice of the sender is realized. Gender is another criterion that has a huge impact on the choice of synonyms. It is believed that women have a greater desire to make up new synonymous words. According to W.Labov, *“women more than men are the initiators of linguistic changes.”*¹⁶ According to O.Jespersen, women select

¹⁶ Labov, W. Sociolinguistic Patterns / W.Labov. – Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, – 1972. – p. 243

lexical units carefully and prefer to choose those synonyms whose content can meet the requirements of politeness more deliberately than others. Having identified the main features of female speech behavior, he argues that the phenomenon of euphemia is mainly associated with the linguistic preferences of women¹⁷, *hell как the other place, a very hot или a very uncomfortable place*. According to him, such euphemistic substitutions for the word “hell” as “the other place, a very hot or a very uncomfortable place” are mostly coined by women.

The study of speech activity features by male and female speakers suggests that there are certain differences in their choice of synonymous means of language. According to J.Holmes, *social factors can influence vocabulary or word choice, pronunciation, syntax, and morphology*¹⁸.

Some linguists suggest that the vocabulary of women contains words belonging to both the upper and lower class. As an example, we can consider the following synonymous pairs: loo/toilet, sorry/pardon, sofa/settee, sitting room/lounge. The first words belong to the upper class, and the second synonymous pair belongs to vocabulary of the lower layer. According to M. Martinen, “*men are more likely to use synonyms of the upper class than women, for example, loo, sorry, lunch, sofa and sitting room*”¹⁹.

Thus, synonyms, like no other linguistic unit, are an accurate marker of the speaker's gender, age, social status, profession, and education.

This chapter examines the dependence of social differentiation of the British society on the choice of synonymous units. Here, class dialects are involved in the analysis. It is hypothesized that the language preferences of English speakers depend on the social differentiation of British society, and class dialects can be considered

¹⁷ Jespersen, O. *Growth and Structure of the English Language* / O.Jespersen. – Oxford: Basil Blackwell, – 1982. – p. 48

¹⁸ Holmes, J. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* / J.Holmes. – Harlow: Longman, – 2001. – p.4

¹⁹ Martinen, M. *U or non-U?: A study on social factors and word choices in contemporary British English* / M.Martinen. – Finland: University of Jyväskylä, – 2010. – p.30

as one of the linguistic indicators of the class division of society. By “*class dialects*” we mean synonymous pairs that arise regardless of the territorial localization, and are dependent on the social class of native speakers. The analysis shows that English in the UK, more than in any other English-speaking country, can convey accurate information about the culture, education and social class of its native speaker. The ability of a person to use language means is a kind of link between the situations of life and his spiritual experience, representing his inner world in the meanings of language units.

Sociality can be considered one of the most important attributes of personality in the theory of speech activity. As K.Fox, notes “*social class can be instantly deciphered, as soon as the speaker begins to speak*”²⁰. In order to verify this, the dissertation examines the “*seven deadly sins*”, originally developed by A.Ross in contemporary coverage, with the use of examples taken from the British National Corpus. The focus was made on the following pairs: *loo/ toilet, sorry/pardon, napkin/ serviette, lunch/luncheon, sofa/settee, sitting room/lounge, and pudding/ dessert*. The first word in each pair refers to the highest class, and the second to the lowest. They can be called U-words and Non-U words, respectively. Despite the fact that over time there have been significant changes in the choice of the above-mentioned synonyms, they still remain the main markers of the social class to which speakers in the UK belong.²¹

However, the analysis may also have drawbacks, primarily related to the characteristics of the British National Corps. First, one of the important disadvantages of such corpora is that they do not take into account all existing styles of speech, and they cannot cover the vast masses of speakers. In addition, possible dialect differences are not taken into account either. That is why for more reliable results in the future, these synonyms should once again be subjected to such an analysis.

²⁰ Fox, K. *Watching the English: The Hidden rules of the English Behaviour* / K.Fox. – London: Hodder&Stoughton, – 2004. – p.15-16

²¹ The British National Corpus Oxford Learner’s Thesaurus, BNC Corpus: [Electronic resource] – Oxford: Oxford University Press, URL: <https://cutt.ly/abnWazJ>

This chapter also addresses the impact of widely accepted social principles on the choice of synonyms. Here, the choice is considered on the level of euphemisms.

It is known that the main function of synonyms is interchangeability. And euphemistic substitutions are widely used for the purpose of substitution, without changing the general content of the utterance, but used as alternatives, replacing rude expressions with more polite ones.

One of the tasks set in this section was to identify the main areas of taboo in the English language by studying the motives for choosing euphemisms. This analysis also helped to determine the correlations between social and mental factors and the linguistic validity of the choice of synonymous words and expressions.

The choice of a euphemistic nomination among the available synonymic constructions of the language is most likely caused by extralinguistic preferences; the appearance of euphemisms is somehow caused by prohibitions or established restrictions in social behavior. It turned out that as a result of changes and modifications in the social, political and economic spheres, synonymous means still continue to compete. They are either gradually displaced from the language, or under the influence of the forces of the external environment are replaced by new and more relevant units.

In this chapter, the choice of synonyms is also studied on the level of borrowing. The article analyzes the new borrowings that have entered the English language as a result of globalization processes of society, the growth of economic, political and scientific ties. It is established that the choice of synonyms in the language is influenced by both linguistic and sociolinguistic factors.

In the **third chapter** of the dissertation work – **“Study of the influence of lingua-pragmatic factors on the choice of synonyms”** – the emphasis is placed on the study of the linguistic-pragmatic validity of the choice of synonyms. Here synonymy is considered from the stylistic and communicative aspects. The choice of political and economic euphemisms for the analysis is justified by the fact that it is in these areas that the role of synonymy as a tool for regulating public consciousness is strongly felt.

As it has become clear from the previous chapters, when considering the influence of various factors on the implementation of the choice of linguistic units in communication, social and cognitive-pragmatic factors play an important role. In this regard, A.Mammadov notes that *“this happens due to the fact that the language as a whole, as well as its elements, perform an important social task, such as to ensure communication between members of social groups by the transmission of information through ordinary signs”*²².

When transmitting information, one of the main goals is the desire to influence the interlocutor. This is the pragmatics of the linguistic unit. Its ability to influence the listener. Therefore, pragmatics is always cognitively directed. *“Synonymy is initially programmed for the most accurate embodiment of the speaker’s communicative intentions. A language user, on the one hand, seeks to express himself as much as possible, when making his lexical choice, however, on the other hand, he takes into account the rights of a particular addressee. And this is possible due to the knowledge of pragmatic information, which is assigned to words in the language”*²³.

According to N.Ch.Veliyeva, *“different situations, interests, occupations or social roles require different use of language”*²⁴. All this indicates that a language cannot be studied in isolation from specific conditions, which cause functional variability in the use of linguistic means.

Considering the nature of pragmatics, Yu.S.Stepanov writes that *“pragmatics deals with the same issues as traditional stylistics and even more ancient rhetoric; the choice of linguistic means from the available repertoire for the best expression of one’s thoughts or*

²² Mammadov, A. Discourse and translation: Functional-cognitive approach / A.Mammadov, L.Ziyadova.– Baku: Letterpress, – 2012. – p.14-15

²³ Заботкина, В.И. Когнитивно прагматический подход к неологии. Когнитивно-прагматические аспекты лингвистических исследований / В.И.Заботкина. – Калининград: Калининградский университет, – 1999. – с.3

²⁴ Vəliyeva, N.Ç. Dil tipologiyasının aktual problemləri / N.Ç.Vəliyeva. – Bakı: Elm və təhsil, – 2011. –s.220

feelings, expressing the most accurate, or the most beautiful, or most appropriate to the circumstances”²⁵.

In modern linguistics, a great attention is paid to the language that functions from the point of view of communicants of a definite speech act. The choice of linguistic means for communication, as well as the given social context and the effect that communicants produce on each other in the process of communication become central issues in the study of modern functionalism.

According to N.Ch.Velievaya, the meaning of a word or expression is created not only due to the formal side of the language, that is the semantics of meaning. It is very important to take this into account, especially for successful understanding of the whole essence, the transmitted meaning by the interlocutor and interaction with him. All these happen due to the perception of the essence of pragmatic theories, discourse²⁶.

The main factors of a pragmatic nature that affect the choice of synonyms are: the situation of communication, the communicative intention or intention of the sender and the communicative-pragmatic strategy.

It should be noted that to identify the features of a speech act, it is not enough to focus only on the participants of the communicative act. A speech act cannot be isolated either from the time when it occurs, or from space. It is very important to take into account such factors as *“the subject of speech and the temporal and spatial localization of the reported fact”*²⁷.

The addressee factor is the main factor influencing the embodiment of the communicative intention. The development of the communicative act and its quality depends entirely on the means that

²⁵ Степанов, Ю.С. В трехмерном пространстве языка. Семиотические проблемы лингвистики, философии и искусства / Ю.С.Степанов. – М.: Наука, – 1985. – с.15

²⁶ Vəliyeva, N.Ç. Dil tipologiyasının aktual problemləri / N.Ç.Vəliyeva. – Bakı: Elm və təhsil, – 2011. – s.200

²⁷ Арсланова, Е.Р. Общая характеристика дейксиса и тейктических средств в немецком языке. Когнитология как новая парадигма 21 века // Тезисы III Международной научной конференции, – Челябинск: – 27–28 апреля, – 2006, – с.3

communicators use to verbalize their speech.

Exploring the situational and pragmatic factors that determine the choice of words, E.Goffman believes that *“people play different roles depending on the situation of communication. Studying various groups of speakers, he noted that the language of communication always changes and depends on the formality of the situation, the nature of the audience, on the extent to which the sender of the message is in relationship with other participants in the communication”*²⁸.

N.F.Alefirenko writes that *“in the concrete speech use of the word, the lexical meaning is enriched with new semantic nuances, as if it absorbs the communicative intentions of the speaker, and his relationship with specific or imaginary addressees, and speech-situational circumstances, and the stylistic climate of the era and many very different adherent-associative and inherent-associative formations”*²⁹.

In the process of choosing a linguistic means, the language user becomes the most essential part of the process of transmitting the message. In this regard, it is important to note that *“since the interpretation of the semantic content depends on the peculiarities of the thought processes of a particular linguistic personality, it is advisable to include in the model pragmatic factors that may be responsible for the modification of the initial (invariant) meaning in each specific case. We are talking about focusing on the dominant of the synonymous series or the choice of a synonym or synonyms that adequately represent the situation of extra-linguistic reality, manifesting itself in a variant, actualization of the model”*³⁰.

The specific use of the meanings of some synonyms strongly depends on the context. Each new context imposes certain restrictions on the choice of a specific synonym from a whole synonymous series. Pragmatics, studying the choice and use of

²⁸ Goffman, E. The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. Garden City / E.Goffman, – NY: Doubleday, – 1959. – p.37

²⁹ Алефиренко, Н.Ф. Спорные вопросы семантики / Н.Ф.Алефиренко. – М.: Гнозис, – 2005. – с.68

³⁰ Пешковский, А.М. Избранные труды / А.М.Пешковский. – М.: Учпедгиз, 1959. – с.95

linguistic forms in communication, also presupposes the presence of a certain speech situation or context.

Even if synonyms have a close meaning, this does not mean that they will have exactly the same contextual use. Each time we make a choice of a word in a certain context, we endow it with a specific meaning. At the same time, being used in a different context, this word can acquire a completely different meaning.

Therefore, when choosing synonyms, the role of context is very important. It is in the context that incomplete synonyms can converge. As the analysis of the speech of politicians that was used as the material showed, it is very important for politicians to monitor the choice of synonyms, so as not to cause misunderstanding or provoke the recipient's aggression. As a result of the conducted analysis, special strategies that politicians use along with the choice of certain synonyms-euphemisms were also identified. It turned out that the main purpose of such a choice is the sender's attempt to influence the worldview of the mass audience and change its thoughts about the essence of social, economic and political situations, as well as to convince the recipient of the benefits of the actions performed.

The peculiarity of the nature of language signs is the main reason for the emergence of language conflict markers. A person has unlimited power over words; he is able to influence words or even change their purpose. A person can change the word he needs in his own way, attributing new obligations, new meanings to it. When saying that the speaker has expressed an ambiguous idea is, in fact, a property of the language itself.

Ambiguity can be perceived at all levels of the language. The ambiguity of the utterance is one of the main sources of the effectiveness of the language and is widely used at the level of synonymy. We analyzed this phenomenon on the basis of the language of Doublespeak in political discourse and the language of the media. We have also used euphemisms, which represent a special kind of synonymous substitution.

One of the most prominent features of synonymy in political discourse is its ideological orientation: synonyms can influence the

perception of the recipient of the message. The analysis of euphemisms taken from media texts has shown that the camouflage of the direct meaning of words is a widespread phenomenon in modern media. Due to the skillful use of synonymous means, politicians and journalists strive for political correctness in order to soften the designation of the events and phenomena described. We have established a suggestive orientation of the choice of synonymous expressions in political discourse, implemented through euphemistic substitution. This consideration of political discourse is due to the fact that it *“has a significant pragmatic potential, containing both explicit and implicit intentions of a political figure, designed to influence the listener in order to manipulate his consciousness”*³¹.

As N.Fairclough stated, *“ideologies are born in texts”* and *“the text is open to different interpretations”*³². Therefore, politicians should consider the diversity of audiences in front of which they speak and structure their speech based on this knowledge. The correct selection of synonyms from the general semantic field undoubtedly helps to avoid communicative failures and conflicts of interest.

A comprehensive study of the validity of the choice of synonyms in modern English has shown that the choice is not an isolated process, but is the final product of cognitive, social, sociolinguistic and pragmatic factors. It has been found out that words, used in an ambiguous way, are selected in order to enhance the enforcing effect of the transmitted message and making the recipient interpret the message the way he/she perceives. Whereas, synonyms of euphemistic nature, those used instead of direct names, help to reduce the intensity of the utterance, evade actual interpretation of events and thus remove responsibility from the speaker³³.

³¹ Шапочкин, Д.В. Политический дискурс: когнитивный аспект: / монография / – Тюмень: Издательство Тюменского государственного университета, – 2012. – с.80

³² Fairclough, N. Critical discourse Analysis: The critical study of language / – N.Fairclough. – London: Longman, – 1995. – p.37

³³ Филатова, Е.А. Лексико-стилистические средства реализации непрямого речевого воздействия (на материале англоязычного политического дискурса)

On the base of synonymy study, the practical importance of knowing the validity of the synonym choice was established. It was proved that it is essential not only in colloquial speech, but also in media and political discourse.

Thus, the language gives the sender a wide range of language units to choose from. But the choice that the sender makes depends on the situation, social context, or on the intention of the sender himself.

A comprehensive approach to synonymy study has made it possible to combine the theoretical knowledge available in linguistics with the new results obtained in the course of this study on the nature of synonyms. It can then make it possible in future to establish the patterns and principles of automatic selection of synonyms in the English language.

The **Conclusion** summarizes the results of the research, generalizes the main theoretical provisions and outlines the prospects for their further development.

Thus, the dissertation research is devoted to a comprehensive analysis of synonymy, taking into account the factors governing the choice between them in modern English. The work considered how one and the same denotative content can be expressed in other alternative ways with an emphasis on an attempt to identify the factors influencing the choice of these alternatives of units. At the same time, we tried as much as possible to adhere to the similarity of meaning as the main criterion when choosing a replacement word, which helped us, in addition to synonyms, to involve in the analysis such linguistic units as euphemisms, synonyms-borrowings, class dialects and others.

To obtain the most reliable results, within the framework of a single work, the study of various factors in the choice of synonymous language means, namely, cognitive, social and linguo-pragmatic ones, was combined. As it turned out, the sender's speech is always focused; with each use of words, he expects an adequate understanding of the recipient. We have followed how cognitive linguistics gives complete freedom to the human mind to

// – Иваново: Теория и практика иностранного языка в высшей школе, – 2014. № 22, – с. 147

independently establish a connection between synonyms and information stored in memory.

Thus, the study carried out confirmed the hypothesis that was put forward at the initial stage of the work: words united by the generality of the category can be included in synonymous series, regardless of the principle of interchangeability. It was also possible to prove that the problem of choice is not an isolated process, but is the final product of taking cognitive, social, sociolinguistic and pragmatic factors into account. As it turned out, modern coverage of the problem necessarily presupposes, first of all, consideration of the processes of categorization, which are the basis of human cognitive activity, which we adhered to in our work.

So, as a result of the analysis, we come to the following conclusions:

- the approach to the study of synonymy on the principle of "synonymous attraction" allowed us to reveal the linguistic and extralinguistic determinism of the choice of synonyms in the English language, much more fully than traditional linguistics, which studies synonymy as a closed, ordered system;

- the cognitive mechanism included in the study of synonymy gave us grounds to interpret synonymy more than a linguistic phenomenon, namely, as a mental-linguistic category;

- synonymy is one of the main linguistic markers indicating the social status of the sender of the message in British society;

- synonyms used in the text have a meaning-generating function: thanks to the selection of a chain of double-sounding words in the text that are close in meaning, the sender disclaims responsibility for what was said, giving the recipient complete freedom in interpreting the transmitted message;

- thanks to the analysis of synonyms from the point of view of the sender's intention, the suggestive function of synonyms was established, which is widely used by politicians as a way to control the recipient's ideology;

- analysis of the choice of synonyms in political discourse on the basis of euphemistic synonyms gave us grounds to interpret

synonymy as one of the popular methods of hiding social and political actions in political discourse.

Thus, the analysis carried out in this dissertation research clearly demonstrated the complex nature of the problem under study. As it turned out, if earlier in the study of synonymy linguists paid more attention to the features of the nominative and stylistic functions of synonyms, then in modern linguistics cognitive-pragmatic factors should be perceived as no less important.

In our opinion, it is precisely the consideration of individual synonymous attraction in the study of the choice of synonyms with access to pragmatic-functional supports that could shed more light on the questions that still remain unanswered.

In conclusion, it can be argued that this study fully reflects the basic principles of the validity of the choice of synonymous units in the Modern English language. Moreover, the voluminous material presented in the work can serve as a basis for conducting a similar study in the future in order to establish the patterns and principles of automatic selection of synonyms in Modern English.

On the topic of the dissertation, the following works have been published:

1. Когнитивно-прагматическая обусловленность выбора языковых единиц // – Bakı: BDU, Dil və Ədəbiyyat, – 2014. № 2(90), – s. 115-118;
2. Чему служат эвфемизмы в современном английском языке? // – Bakı: ADU, Dil və Ədəbiyyat, – 2014. № 2, – s. 54-58;
3. О факторах, влияющих на выбор употребление слов // – Bakı: Azərbaycan Məktəbi, – 2014. Sentyabr-Oktyabr. № 5(663), – s. 84-90;
4. Социально когнитивная обусловленность использования эвфемизмов в английском языке // Современные проблемы обучения языкам в высшей школе. X Межвузовская Конференция, – Bakı: Memarlıq və İnşaat Universiteti, – 2014, – s. 103-106;
5. Синонимия как процесс отражающий меняющуюся языковую картину мира // XXI Century Cultural Paradigm in Multicultural

- Aspect, Materials of Republic Scientific-Practical Conference, – Baku, ADU, – 25-26 November, – 2014, – с. 138-139;
6. Роль социальной дифференциации общества в выборе синонимических единиц // – Bakı: ADU, Dil və Ədəbiyyat, – 2015. № 6, – s.69-73;
 7. О лингвистических факторах, детерминирующих выбор синонимических единиц в английском языке // – Bakı: Tağıyev Oxuları. –2015. № 2, – s. 85-90;
 8. Social and Cognitive Implications of Using Euphemisms in English // – Canada: International Journal of English Linguistics, Canadian Center of Science and Education, – 2015. Vol. 5, No. 6, – p. 88-91;
 9. Роль языкового разнообразия в сохранении культурного наследия человечества. Сравнительное литературоведение и культура: Критерии начала национальной литературы и культуры // 6-сı Beynəlxalq Elmi Konfrans, – Bakı: Mütərcim, – 27-28 November, – 2015, – с. 66-67;
 10. Освещение проблемы синонимии с точки зрения антропоцентризма // – Qafqaz University, 4th International Scientific Conference of Young Researchers, – Bakı: Qafqaz University, – 29-30 April, – 2016, – p. 1276-1277;
 11. Синонимия как объект изучения когнитивной лингвистики // Международная Научная конференция по Актуальным проблемам когнитивной и прикладной лингвистики, Баку: Мютарджим, – 20-21 октября, –2016, – s. 230-232;
 12. Выбор лексических вариантов отправителем сообщения как следствие вариативности языка // Religion, Religiosity, Philosophy and the Humanities in the Modern Information Space: National and International Aspects. Collection of scientific works (based on materials of the XXIII International scientific and practical conference. – December 24-25, – 2021. Issue 12, – с.37-40;
 13. Роль эвфемизмов в английском языке: от смягчения передаваемого сообщения до его вуалирования в политическом дискурсе // – Bakı: Elm və təhsil, Filologiya məsələləri, – 2021. №14, – с.62-72.

The defense will be held on 24 February 2022 at Mamat the meeting of the Dissertation council ED 2.12 of Supreme Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan operating at Azerbaijan University of Languages.

Address: AZ 1014, Baku, Rashid Behbudov Street, 134.

Dissertation is accessible at the Azerbaijan University of Languages Library.

Electronic versions of dissertation and its abstract are available on the official website of the Azerbaijan University of Languages.

Abstract was sent to the required addresses on 24 January 2022.



Signed for print: 24.01.2022

Paper format: 60x84 1/16

Volume: 37 922 characters

Number of hard copies: 20