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ON SOME ISSUES OF VERBAL SYNONYMY IN THE PERSIAN LANGUAGE

Abstract: The article deals with the issues related to the study of verbal synonymy in the Persian language. The article examines the general issues of synonymy, gives the views of various scientists - linguists on the phenomenon of synonymy, analyzes the works devoted to the coverage of the problems of synonymy in the Persian language. The article determines which of the criteria of synonymy are applicable to the verbal vocabulary of the Persian language and emphasizes that synonyms should be regarded as a synchronous phenomenon, which makes it possible to consider obsolete or out-of-use words as synonyms. Phonetic, morphological and semantic-stylistic criteria are considered to be the main criteria for distinguishing synonyms in Persian. Although phonetic variants of the same word may serve as artistic and stylistic means, they cannot be regarded as synonyms.

According to the morphological criterion, synonyms must belong to the same part of speech. The semantic-stylistic criterion is related to interchangeability. As far as the Persian verb vocabulary is concerned, interchangeability is possible given the presence in the Persian language of words with different emotional and expressive coloring, stylistic differences, and equal syntactic usage. As a result, it is concluded that the criterion of interchangeability "works" when words belong to the same lexical environment and are used in equivalent contexts.

Key words: synonymy; synonymy; synonymy criteria; Persian verbal vocabulary; phonetic, morphological, semantic and stylistic criteria; interchangeability; necessary and sufficient signs of synonymy; absolute and relative synonyms.

Language: English

Citation: Azimdjanova, D., Alimova, Kh., Akhmedova, D., & Nuriddinov, N. (2022). On some issues of verbal synonymy in the Persian language. ISJ Theoretical & Applied Science, 03 (107), 852-858.

Soi: http://s-o-i.org/1.1/TAS-03-107-63   Doi: crossref https://dx.doi.org/10.15863/TAS.2022.03.107.63

Scopus ASCC: 1203.

Introduction

Undoubtedly, the study of synonymy is of great importance. Synonyms, being one of the categories of language, are an indicator of the richness of language, create wide opportunities for speech creativity, help convey the finest shades of meaning.

The appearance of synonyms is caused by both internal and external factors. The development of science and technology, the change of socio-political formations lead to new concepts, for the expression of which new words are created, foreign words are borrowed, or old words with new inner meaning are used. All this leads to enlargement and enrichment of vocabulary of the language, complication of semantic structure of existing words and, as the result - to development and expansion of synonymic links between words.

Our study of the literature on synonymy showed that most of the researchers deal with general theoretical issues. In the less worked out field - synonymy of separate parts of speech - the preference is given to nouns and adjectives. The study of verb synonymy is of interest for us, because a verb is one of the most significant and complicated categories of language both grammatically and lexically-semantically and structurally, which in its turn affects the nature of synonymic relationships between verbs. The interest in verbal synonymy is conditioned by the structural variety of a verb in the Persian language, its semantic capacity, the richness and variety of its meanings, its lexical relations, and the presence of sociostylistic differentiation in the language. When working on verb synonyms it is also necessary to take into account emotional and expressive coloring and grammatical differences.

The study of verbal synonymy in the Persian language provides an opportunity to study the most priority ways of replenishing and developing synonymic series, to make a reasonable conclusion about the correlation of those or other ways of euphemizing certain concepts, and to detail the issue of the techniques of using verb synonyms.

As is known, the problem of synonyms is one of the oldest in the science of language. It was put forward by the ancient Greeks, who defined synonyms as words close in meaning. And nowadays the problem of synonyms attracts the attention of many scientists of linguistics [1, p.197-226]. But, despite this, most researchers, admitting the complexity and poor study of this problem, emphasize that one of the most developed concepts of modern semantics is the concept of synonymy and synonyms.

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The interest to the problem of synonymy and synonyms in Russian linguistics arose in the 17th century. Although the first works devoted to these problems had some serious drawbacks, they still contributed to the solution of these problems.

The study of synonymy problems has two aspects - theoretical and practical. And so it is only natural that the beginning of the study of the theoretical issues of synonymy gave impetus to the practical solution of this problem, which led to the appearance of synonymic dictionaries of various languages.

Despite the fact that the study of synonymy has an ancient history and has been undertaken by various scientists over the years [2, p.242], "a number of circumstances in the situation of modern synonymology may be seen as symptoms of a rupture occurring...between the separate parts of... synonymological research" [3, p.3-13].

In Iranian linguistics, the number of special works devoted to the study of synonymy of the Persian vocabulary is very limited.

The first among the scientific works, which in one way or another touch or cover the problems of synonymy in Persian, we should mention a famous work written in Persian, devoted specifically to synonyms in Persian. This work was prepared and published in India in the late 19th century by Mohammad Padshah and was called " فرهنگ مترادفات و اصـــطلاحات" ("Dictionary of Synonyms and Terms"). The book is a dictionary of synonyms, terms, allegories, and allegories used mainly in classical Persian poetry.

The dictionary contains about 3,600 words, arranged in nests thematically, with examples-quotes, mostly from poetry. Most of the vocabulary units are verbs. Though the dictionary has some flaws and covers a small proportion of synonyms in Persian, it is the first attempt at compiling a synonymical dictionary and is a valuable material for studying the vocabulary of Persian.

Unfortunately, despite the obvious usefulness and necessity of synonymical dictionaries, these dictionaries have not become widespread. Many explanatory dictionaries have only fragments of a synonymic dictionary, or, more precisely, a synonymic series. Each dictionary contains a certain number of synonymic vocabulary and synonymic combinations, which are scattered throughout the dictionary in their place alphabetically. In modern Iranian studies this topic has not been a subject of special research either, although some information about synonyms has been given in Persian textbooks, where the approach and analysis of this question is purely practical. Among the works, which deal with synonymy, we would like to focus on the works of the Moscow Iranian specialist L.S. Peisikov "Lexicology of modern Persian" [4, p.119] and the Baku Iranian specialist N.Z. Hatemi "Lexicon of Persian and ways to enrich it" [5, p.24-34]. In both works, synonymy is seen as one of the productive sources of enrichment and replenishment of the vocabulary. Besides, such

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related to synonymy questions as euphemistic word usage, where some materials, connected with functioning of several types of euphemisms; social and stylistic aspects of word usage, that study questions of stylistic synonymy, are studied in the work of L.S. Peysikov.

In the work of N.Z. Hatemi the reasons for the existence of synonymic words in the language are considered, the sources of synonyms in the Persian language are determined, and the ways of their formation are described in detail. Among the works, devoted to the synonymy and also of some interest is the article by the Moscow Iranian specialist M.E. Radovilsky [6, p.61-84], where the synonyms are studied as one of the stylistic means, used in the modern Persian prose. This article is interesting because it shows not only the role of synonyms, examines the individual techniques of use, but also gives their stylistic varieties and indicates the cases of their use.

The study of the literature on synonymy shows that there is no unified point of view on this phenomenon. Moreover, there is a sharp divergence of some linguists in assessing the very fact of synonymy existence and the possibility of its scientific study. They "negatively treat the problem of studying synonymy" [7, p.3] or deny its existence at all. For example, V.I. Zvegintsev wrote: "There is no synonymy as it is traditionally interpreted in the language at all. It is one of the fictions rudimentarily existing in the science of language" [8, p.127]. The majority of researchers, not denying the existence of such a phenomenon as synonymy, develop the concepts of synonymy and synonym, work out the criteria of synonymy identification, determine the limits of synonymic series, and solve a number of other problems related both to theoretical and practical aspects of the issue.

Understanding the problem of synonymy and its solution essentially depend on the definition of synonymy. The study of this phenomenon reveals the objective regularities of language and its use. However, these regularities can be studied with varying degrees of productivity, based on different views and assumptions.

Different authors in the linguistic literature have different definitions of synonyms. But even student textbooks show that "the common definition of synonyms as words with different sounds, but similar meanings or similar, close meaning suffers from imprecision and ambiguity" [9, p.5432].

This can be illustrated by several examples. For example, the Dictionary of Linguistic Terms defines synonyms as "...those members of a subject group who belong to the same part of speech and are similar in meaning, that their correct usage in speech requires exact knowledge of the distinguishing semantic shades and stylistic properties" [10, p.118]. The Dictionary of Synonyms defines synonyms as

follows: "Synonyms are words close or identical in meaning, denoting the same concept, but differing from one another in shades of meaning, or stylistic coloring, or both" [11, p.196].

According to individual scholars [12, p.63], there are two different points of view on the definition of synonyms.

The first: synonyms are different words, but close in meaning, expressing the same concept. The second point of view is to define synonyms as different words, but similar in their meaning. The different approach to the understanding of synonyms is due to "the assumption or denial of the possibility of shades of meaning in synonymous words" [13, p.64]. It follows that one of the main points in solving the problem of determining synonyms is the definition of "shades of meaning". There is no unity of views here either. A number of scientists think that in the study of synonyms should be abandoned the concept of "shade of meaning". The reason for this approach is that "a connotation of meaning" as a linguistic unit has not been adequately defined, and this concept has not been invested with a generally recognized meaning. It is believed that "the problem of shades of meaning seems particularly important for understanding the phenomenon of synonymy [14, p.101] and the shade of meaning is not "fiction, ... but a naturally occurring differentiating sign in the meaning of the word [15, p.11], so the problem of the shade of meaning of synonymic words is a problem of qualitative evaluation of synonyms. "Shades of meaning determine different combinability, expand synonymic rows, allow us to convey gradation in the expression of thoughts, feelings, characteristics of things and phenomena. Therefore, "the smoothing and sometimes destruction of shades in the meaning of words leads to the distortion of the social character of language, to its impoverishment, to the neutralization of lexical richness, to the mixing of language and code", because "every shade in the meaning of words reflects our thoughts, feelings, moods, perception of the world".

Before determining which definition of synonymy, in our opinion, is the most complete and accurate, it is necessary to find out which of the existing criteria of synonymy are primary and which are secondary. Various criteria for synonymy have been put forward at different times by different scholars. According to some scholars [16, p.36], it is possible to distinguish the following 9 differential prisms, one way or another reflected in the definitions of synonyms:

1. closeness in meaning:
2. relatedness to one concept;
3. relatedness to one contextual denotation;
4. phonetic and
5. morphological affinity;
6. commonality of distribution;
7. belonging to one and the same stylistic sphere;

8. functional commonality;

9. interchangeability.

The analysis of most of the above attributes allows us to agree with the opinion that "the existing initial positions for synonyms determination are not universally recognized, neither sufficiently reliable, nor quite real, and they "do not allow to define real words-synonyms precisely and objectively and to distinguish words of different affinity from proper synonyms" [17, p.42].

However, it is considered more justified to choose those scholars who take semantic identity as the basis of synonymy, but for the principle of semantic identity to become a reliable criterion of synonymy of lexical units, it must be refined accordingly" [18, p.44]. S. G. Berejan - one of the leading linguists, studying synonyms of the Moldavian language, narrowing down the notion of "lexical-semantic variant", put forward by V. A. Zvegintsev [4, p.125-126] offered the notion of "semantic variant" /SV/ and, relying on this concept, worked out his "only possible sign of synonymy" [20, p.45] and suggests that when considering the relations of synonymy "... operate not with words, but with separate CB words" [21, p.49]. Further the author concludes that "if we represent the semantic structure of a word in the form of a set of NEs, then synonyms will be those lexical units close in meaning, which possess... at least one equivalent CB" [22, p.49]. On this basis, the definition of synonymy as "complete equivalence of separate structural elements of meanings" [23, p.49] is given. The coincidence of semantic variants of the meanings of words is considered by the author as the main attribute of synonymy, and the coincidence of the categorial grammatical meaning is considered as an additional attribute. These two features are a necessary and sufficient condition for establishing synonymy between two words. The other listed attributes are not rejected by the author; they appear "as derivative methods of checking synonymy" [24, p.49]. Naturally, not all the proposed criteria are sufficient to define synonym words. Having examined the existing criteria of synonymy on a concrete material, the author singles out the necessary and sufficient attributes of synonymy, which are the differences in the components of meaning and partial interchangeability.

Which of the above criteria are applicable to the vocabulary of the Persian language and correspond to the regularities of the vocabulary of the language?

First of all, synonyms should be seen as a synchronic phenomenon. That is, synonyms can be words and phrases included in the vocabulary of the Persian language at a given stage of its development, with its inherent functional and stylistic features and emotional and expressive vocabulary. This does not mean, however, that this list does not include obsolete words, or words that have fallen out of use. Such words are known to be part of the vocabulary and, as a rule, are subjected to lexicographical treatment and entered into the dictionaries of modern Persian.

Taking into account the fact that the basis for distinguishing synonyms as a linguistic phenomenon should be the features of the word as the smallest lexical-semantic unit, we distinguish the following as the main criteria for distinguishing synonyms in the Persian language:

a/ phonetic criterion:

According to this criterion, synonyms must differ in their sound composition. Here we are confronted with the fact of the presence of sound variants of the word in the language: خوابیدن *xābidan* - خفتن *xoftan* - خسبیدن *hosbidan* "to sleep"; خشکیدن *hoškidan*- خوشیدن *xušidan* "to dry, to dry out"; نوشتن *neveštan*- نیشتن *nebeštan* "to write, to write"; گسلیدن گسلاندن *gosalāndan*; گسلیدن *gosalidan* - گسیختن *gosixtan* "tear, tear"; فزودن *fozudan* - افزودن *afzudan* "increase, add to" etc.

Such sound variants are orthographic and phonetic manifestations of the same word, one of which is more popular and legalized at this stage of language development. Such words are not of particular value for lexical synonymy, although the use of a phonetic variant of a verb can serve as an artistic and stylistic means.

b/ morphological criterion:

According to the morphological criterion of synonymity, synonyms must belong to the same parts of speech, that is, the necessary prerequisite for synonymy is the requirement of belonging to the same part of speech.

c/ The semantic and stylistic criterion:

The main criterion for distinguishing lexical synonyms is their semantic and stylistic functions. The semantic and stylistic functions of a word are what determine the relationships between words with identical or related meanings and the place of such words in the lexical language system. Ultimately, the main criterion for synonymy is the meaning of a word, i.e. the semantic similarity or closeness of two or more words.

As a criterion of synonymy, related to the meaning of a word, interchangeability is also considered. Let us consider to what extent the criterion of interchangeability is necessary to distinguish verbal synonyms in Persian.

The possibility of interchangeability of synonyms is basically put by specialists in dependence on their realization in equivalent contexts, i.e. their use in the same syntactic construction, in the same lexical environment.

As for the verbal synonyms of the Persian language this question should be considered taking into account: firstly, the presence in the modern Persian language of synonyms with shades of meaning, having different emotional and expressive coloring: حالی کردن *hāli kardan* "to push, explain"

/sin. فهمـانـدن *fahmādan,* کپه کردن *kappe kardan* "to sleep" /syn. خوابیدن *xābidan;* خواب کردن *xāb kardan* "to sleep"; کـوفـت کـردن *kuft kardan* "to crack, burst" /syn. خـوردن *xordan;* تـمـرگیـدن *tamargidan* "sit" syn. نشـسـتن *nešastan;* ترکمونزدن *terekmun zadan* "to give birth" syn. زاییدن *zāyidan,* etc.

Second, stylistic differences: سپردن - دادن *dādan - sepordan* "give", "present"; گذاشــتن نهـادن- *gozāštan nehādan* "put", "lay down"; بخشیدن مرحمت - *baxšidan marhamat kardan* کردن "give", "pardon"; رفتن *raftan -* تشــریف بردن *tašrif bordan* "to leave", "to be able to leave (leave)"; شــب پیمودن - بیدار ماندن *bidār māndan - šab peymudan* "awake"; گوش کردن- نیوشیدن *guš kardan- niyšidan* "listen", "heed" etc. etc..

Thirdly, syntactic usage. A number of compound verbs are used in the form of a frame structure, i.e., the noun and verb parts are distant. Replacing a frame construction with a non-frame construction can affect the character and style of a statement, compare: غم خوردن *γam xordan* "to be sad, to be sad" and in the frame construction غم کسـی را *γam- e kas-i rā xordan* "to sympathize with someone, pity someone"; کباده چیزی را کشیدن *kabbāde-ye čiz-i rā kešidan* "to strive for something", "to claim something"; and کباده کشیدن *kabbāde kešidan* "to train with kyabadeh"(Iranian sporting apparatus); دست کسی را خواندن *dast-e kas-i rā xāndan* "to unravel one's plans, intentions" and دست خواندن *dast xāndan* "to guess, read by hand" etc.

The interchangeability of synonyms becomes virtually impossible in cases where words do not differ in shades of meaning, but differ in their stylistic use. This includes cases related to the social and property-class status of speakers and writers, social and legal norms, etc.

Some partial interchangeability is possible when the necessary prerequisite for synonymy is the commonality of word meanings and stylistic and emotional-expressive differences are not taken into account. It is especially vivid when synonyms are used in pairs, when similar verbs are used to avoid repetition, for example:

و با آن زبان ها در وسط علمی گیر کرده بودند که به یك ... کلمه حرف کسی را می فهمیدند ونه کسی از زبان آنها سر در میاورد *va bā ān zabānhā da vasat- e 'alam - i gir karde budand ke be yek kaleme harf-e kas-i rā mifahmidand va na kas-i az zabān-e ānhā sar dar miyāvarad...* [25, p.187-251].

"...And with these languages... they lingered in the middle of the universe and understood someone's speech with one word, and no one could understand their language".

Thus, the criterion of interchangeability "works" when synonym words belong to the same lexical environment of the literary language and are used in absolutely equivalent contexts. Therefore, if we consider interchangeability as a criterion of synonymy, in this case it makes more sense to talk about partial interchangeability. As a rule, the closer the synonyms are in their meanings, the higher the degree of their interchangeability, and, on the contrary, the greater the difference in lexical meanings, the more difficult it is to replace one synonym with another.

Based on the considered criteria of synonymy and the definition of synonymy, it is necessary to distinguish the types of synonyms that exist in Persian. In order to study synonymy, it is very important to distinguish between synonyms. To have a proper idea of the types of synonyms in Persian, let us look at the existing points of view on this problem.

Various kinds of synonyms are distinguished by different scholars. Assuming that the classification of synonyms has to be hierarchical and multidimensional, the most common types are lexical and grammatical (syntactic) synonyms. But, taking into account that general laws of language are shown and exist in speech, we distinguish linguistic synonyms that have strongly entered lexical-semantic system and speech synonyms, that is all kinds of variants replaced in those or other context conditions. "We can distinguish such facts, lexical and grammatical, which belong to language and speech, that is, it will be all that is traditional, both in grammar and in the dictionary, which is reproduced by speech. At the same time, it is possible to identify facts of the lexical and grammatical order in speech which are not traditional, linguistic, and therefore belong exclusively to speech" [26, p.49]. It can be explained by the social event with which such words are related, the influence of the press or a certain group of people, bright imagery, the freshness of the name, cultural, ethical and other norms. The change of socio-political situation, replacement of norms by new ones caused by socio-economic development or revolution leads to lexical movements, convergence and divergence of word meanings based on new functions. In other words, "synonym... In individual - author's understanding it can break free from common usage and give new semantic "sprouts", getting nearer with other synonymic rows or even being in antonymic opposition" [27, p.108].

Among the lexical synonyms proper language scholars distinguish ideographic and stylistic synonyms. The proponents of such classification believe that synonyms differ in shades of meaning and when selecting ideographic synonyms they analyze these shades of meaning. A number of linguists do not distinguish between ideographic and stylistic synonyms. This is explained by the failure to distinguish the functions of the semantic basis of stylistic and ideographic synonyms. "The semantic basis of stylistic synonyms is not different from the same basis of ideographic synonyms: the latter perform the same functions as stylistic synonyms: it divides the words" [28, p.143]. Besides, the purposes with which synonyms are used are stylistic in general. Therefore, taking the stylistic factor as "common

denominator" in all kinds of synonyms we distinguish complete (i.e. with completely similar semantic structures) and partial (with partial similar structures) synonyms [29, p.81], which corresponds to the grouping of synonyms into absolute and relative [30, p.1-12], [31], [32].

In our opinion this classification is the most acceptable as both types of synonyms have necessary and sufficient synonymic features, i.e. difference in meaning components and partial interchangeability.

We find the study of the above mentioned problems of synonymy useful and interesting in the context of studying synonymy in Persian vocabulary, especially verb, because verb in Persian is one of the most interesting and complicated grammatical categories both in lexico-semantic sense and in the context of researching the development of synonymic relations [33, p.231-240], [34, p.121-125], [35, p.48-51], [36, p.5443-5450], [37, p.1-10], [38, p.1-18], [39, p.634-639;], [40, p.65-69], [41, p.170-177], [42, p. 71].

Conclusion.

Thus, the following conclusions can be drawn from the above:

1) As applied to the verbal vocabulary of the Persian language, we distinguish phonetic criterion, morphological criterion, semantic and stylistic criterion as the main criteria for distinguishing synonyms in the Persian language.

2) Although sound variants are orthographic or phonetic manifestations of the same word and do not represent any special value for the lexical synonymy, their use can serve as an artistic and stylistic means.

3) According to the morphological criterion of synonymy the synonyms should belong to the same parts of speech, that is the necessary prerequisite for synonymy is the requirement to belong to the same part of speech.

4) The main criterion for singling out lexical synonyms is their semantic and stylistic functions. Interchangeability is also considered as a criterion of synonymy, related to the meaning of the word. As applied to verbal synonyms in the Persian language, this question should be considered taking into account the presence of synonyms with shades of meaning in the modern Persian language with different emotional and expressive coloring, as well as their stylistic use.

5) The purposes for which synonyms are used are taken into account when determining the types of synonyms. The purposes for which they are used are, in general, stylistic, which is taken into account in all types of synonyms.

6) In our opinion, the classification of synonyms into complete (i.e. with completely coinciding semantic structures) and partial (with partially coinciding structures), corresponding to the grouping of synonyms into absolute and relative, is most acceptable for the verbal vocabulary of the Persian language, since both types of synonyms possess the necessary and sufficient attributes of synonymy, i.e. the difference in meaning components and partial interchangeability.

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