

**ISCKMC 2020**  
**International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****SYNONYMOUS AND ANTONYMOUS RELATIONS IN THE  
LANGUAGE OF OSSETIAN NARTOVIAN EPOS**

Larisa Gatsalova (a), Larisa Parsieva (b)\*

\*Corresponding author

- (a) Vladikavkaz Scientific Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 22, Markusa str., Vladikavkaz, 362027, Russia, larabella8@mail.ru
- (a) Vladikavkaz Scientific Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 22, Markusa str., Vladikavkaz, 362027, Russia, larabella8@mail.ru

**Abstract**

The article discusses theoretical aspects of describing synonyms and antonyms in Ossetian linguistics. The novelty of the research lies in the first classification of linguistic material of the corpus of lexical-phraseological synonymous groups, systematization of lexical – phraseological synonym and antonym types according to the thematic principle, description of specific functioning of synonyms and antonyms in folklore texts on the material of Ossetian Nartovian epos. The article studies a seven volume collection of archival texts of V.I. Abaev North-Ossetian Institute for Humanitarian and Social Studies. Studying the rich language of Nartovian epos will help to draw conclusions about its origin and find parallels in similar versions in other languages of the peoples of the North Caucasus and North Black Sea regions. The authors examined the variants of color coded antonyms in modern Ossetian language and described features of their functioning in epos, studied stylistic features of synonymous and antonymous relations in an epic text. The article identifies the system of stylistic means of implementing the contrast of stylistic figures based on language antonyms and opposed in a certain context words. Contextual antonyms are found in oral folk art, where they are used to convey emotion, enhance expressiveness, and provide a text with figurativeness. Antonymic relations expressed by qualitative adjectives, differentiating between good and bad, as well as being an expressive means of folklore language, the syllable and style of which is characterized by special melody and harmony, have a special semantic and stylistic meaning in Ossetian Nartovian epos.

2357-1330 © 2021 Published by European Publisher.

*Keywords:* Ossetian language, synonyms, antonyms, antonymous relations, Nartovian epos

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

## **1. Introduction**

The study of linguistic peculiarities of Ossetian Nartovian epos is not only a necessary task of various philological schools and directions on Nartovian studies and epicology, but also possible at this stage with the publication of an academic edition of Nartovian tales in Ossetian language in a volume that is representative for obtaining objective results. Here we refer to a seven-volume collection of archival texts of North Ossetian Institute for Humanities and Social Research named after V.I. Lomonosov. The first volume was published in 2003, and the seventh one – in 2012 (Narty kaddzhytæ). The texts are accompanied by scientific comments and recordings of tales in various versions from informants. It is through these authentic folklore texts that one can trace historical changes that took place in Ossetian language, assess the richness of lexical resources and expressive means used by narrators of this epic to create vivid images of numerous characters – from heroes-goddesses to maidens of the underwater kingdom.

## **2. Problem Statement**

The study of synonymous and antonymous relations in folklore texts, stylistic functions of synonyms and antonyms is part of a complex linguistic analysis of the language of the Ossetian epos about Narts, which has not been conducted so far, and this determines the relevance of this study. This will help to draw conclusions about origins of the Nartovian epos and find parallels in similar versions in other languages of the peoples of the North Caucasus and North Black Sea region. In addition, there are still controversial issues in the theory of synonymy and antonymy regarding criteria for their identification and correlation areas.

## **3. Research Questions**

Synonymy and antonymy are linguistic universes, which explains the importance of their research for modern science in general and practical terms. A considerable number of questions of synonymy and antonymy theory belong to the topical directions in science, as they have not yet received an unambiguous interpretation in modern linguistics.

Theoretical problems of synonymy and antonymy in Ossetian linguistics have been insufficiently investigated and presented in several scientific articles concerning methodological aspects of language teaching practice (Dzusova & Gogaeva, 2016; Senko, 2019).

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze synonymous and antonymous relations and determine their stylistic function in the texts of Ossetian Nartovian epos. This required solving a number of tasks that contribute to this objective: to compare structural and semantic characteristics of synonyms and antonyms; to determine the relationship between systemic and situational (contextual) synonyms and antonyms; to analyze lexicographical reflection of synonyms and antonyms of Ossetian language, etc.

## 5. Research Methods

The study used various methods of linguistic material analysis: comparative-historical, comparative, descriptive, and a continuous sampling method.

## 6. Findings

The synonymy is characteristic for all language levels, linguists distinguish lexical, phraseological, word formation and grammatical synonyms. At the first stage of our study, we examined lexical synonymy, which implies complete or partial coincidence of the semantics of linguistic units, while maintaining certain differences in stylistic coloring and semantic shades (Senko, 2016).

Semantic synonyms can be distinguished based on semantic and stylistic differences in Ossetian language:

- meaning "to go, step, cross, walk": *cæuyn*, *uajyn*, *k"ahdzæftæ kænyn*, *sanch"ekhtæ kænyn*, and also an idiom *fændag daryn* "to make one's way to";
- meaning "to guard": *h"ah"h"ænyn*, *hizyn*, *kæsyn*, *fu-fu kænyn* (colloquial), and also idioms *arm daryn*, *bazyry byn kænyn*, *k"æm badyn næ uadzyn*, *cæsty gaguyjau h"ah"h"ænyn*, *uælnyhtyl hæssyn*.

There are examples of such synonyms in the Nartovian epos:

"*Fæh"yllist ma kodta Dzerassæ æmæ uynærg"gæ-h"ærzgæ h"ædy tug kalgæ afardæg*" (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2003) – "Zerassa cried out and ran off into the woods, bleeding to death with her moans."

This example is also interesting by hyphenating synonyms, which is very typical for the language of the Nartovian epos of Ossetians: "*Æhsærtæg dyn saumarøj-dodoj bajdydta*", "*Nyr ma cy fæuon furdy astæu?*" (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2003) – "Ahsartæg started moaning in grief: "What do I do in the middle of the ocean now?"

In dictionaries, both *saumarøj* and *dodoj* are translated as "grief", *saumarøj kænyn* and *dodoj kænyn* mean "grief".

There are contextual synonyms in the epos:

"*Æz dæ ahordtain bærgæ, bæzzydtæ myn dændag yskh"auynæn, fælæ dæ amond uyj uyd, kæj bakodtaj dæhi me uazæg, me `værinag, uyj tykhkæj dyn fæuæd hatyr, barst*" (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2003) – "I'd eat you for a sweet soul, you'd be enough for one tooth, but you're lucky to be my guest, I'm safe, so I forgive you".

In this case the lexical units *hatyr* "apology" and *barst* "forgiveness" are synonyms and are translated as "forgiveness".

Also interesting is the synonymous *allon-h"illon* and *allon-billon* pair, denoting a man by *uaigov* (giants). The first lexeme is much rarer, almost a single use, unlike the *allon-billon*, which is found seven times in the seven-volume edition, but in exactly the same meaning and context: "*Ævzær uælzæhkh huron dzyguyloj (oma zigoj), allon-h"illony tæf kuy kænys!*" (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2003). "– What are you, like a bad bird on earth, you smell like *allon-h"illon!*"; "*Ævzær hæhkhon dziglo, allon-billonny tæf kænys, dy kænys dæhi me `uazæg, ændæra dyn æz yskhos kodtain*" (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2003). "You smell like an *allon-billon*, you called yourself my guest, I wish I'd shown you somethin'".

Lexeme *dziglo* in Ossetian folklore means contemptuous, humiliating name of people given by giants (Parsieva et al., 2015).

It is typical to use the above lexeme in the digore texts of the Nartovian epos as well (remember that in Ossetian language there are two dialects – Iron and Digore Ossetian), in which this expression occurs in two variants – *allon-billon* and *allon-bellon*:

"– Nana, uf-uf-uf! Allon-billonny smag dæ cæuy, – zag"toj jæ fyrttæ.

– Cæuænty symah cæut, hættænty symah hættut, allon-billonny smag ta mænæj cæuy, nana uyn uæ hurtæj bafsæda!

– Nana, dzyrdtyl næ ma dar, allon-billonny smag dæ cæuy, æmæ nyn æj ratt, mah dzy næ mondægtæ suadzæm: ragæj nal fæh"æstæ stæm adæjmadzhy dzidzajæ" (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2004).

"– Matushka, uf-uf-uf! You smell like allon-billon! – her sons told her.

– You go camping, you wander everywhere, and I smell allon-billon, so that your mother can't rejoice at you!

– Mother, don't try to fool us, you smell allon-billon, so give it to us so that we can finally eat it: we've never eaten a human before";

"– Ci g"æla ajtæ, ci, mæ binontæ! Uæhe cæbæl g"ezæmaræj ramardtajtæ, jesge uod dær ma æj t"æri a dujnebæl? Fal uin Hucaui eunæggadæj zæg"un: allon-billoni smag mæ hædzari cæuj.

Ænc"uhæj ibæl duuæ uosi sæhe niccævunçæ:

– Allon dær du ku dæ æma billon dær" (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2004). "– What fools you are in my family! Why do you suffer as if someone else's soul is over our stove here? But I'll tell you what: I can smell an allon-billon in my house. Both women threw themselves at him: – "You're both an allon and a billon yourself.

The *allon* component can be attributed to the ethnonym of Alans, which was explained quite argumentatively in the scientific literature. Abaev (1949) writes: It is not true that the term Alan has disappeared from Ossetian. It has been preserved. It has been preserved in folklore, in fairy tales. Whenever an ogre speaks about "Russian spirit" in Russian fairy tales, Ossetian ones invariably include "allon (alan) spirit" or "spirit of allon-billon". Here "allon" can only mean "Ossetians", because people naturally think of fairy tale heroes as Ossetians. If these heroes in these fairy tales are called allon, it is obvious that this allon was in the past a name of Ossetians. It disappeared from everyday life, and as it often happens, it has been preserved in folklore (p. 108).

Stylistic synonyms differ in the sphere of functioning, expressiveness, degree of expressiveness: *amardi*, *fæzian is*, *fæhurh is*, *adarg' i*, *jæ ud sista*, *je æcæg dunemæ acyd*; *apparyn*, *fekhsyn*, *nyzzyvvytt kænyn*, *nyvzilyn*. In lexicographical publications it is necessary to provide such variants with notes about stylistic references:

- meaning "cheater," "liar," "trickster," etc.: *sajæg*, *sajægoj*, *fælitoj*, *cæstfældahæg*.

Semantic and stylistic synonyms are the most different:

- *balhænyn*, *rajsyn*, *sfæræz kænyn*, *fæhælof kænyn*;
- *hyl kænyn*, *zag"d kænyn*, *ura kænyn*;
- *hæryn*, *æmpulyn*, *ævdærzyn*, *ævgænyn*, *æft"æryn*;
- *najyn*, *c"æpp-c"æpp kænyn*, *c"ybar-c"ybur kænyn*;

- apparyn, fekhsyn, nyzzyvvytt kænyn, nyvzilyn;
- uadzyn, uæg"d kænyn, særibar kænyn and others.

There are examples of using synonyms of the same kind that existed in Ossetian before Russian language borrowings entered the epos. For example, the second synonymous series is represented in the Nartov epos by only two lexical units – hyl (kænyn) and zag"d (kænyn), which are semantic-stylistic synonyms:

"Æz sæm rudzyndzhy ædde bajh"uyston, æmæ chyzg æmæ mad hyl kodtoj. Hyl kodtoj uuyl, æmæ mah farastæj k"æjtæ næ uydystæm» (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2010). "I overheard them through the window, my daughter and mother were arguing. They were arguing about how we weren't nine pairs each."

"Zag"d syn bacajdag" uæguytæn histærdzinadyl, æmæ 6ylæj kærædzijy rakalldtoj æmæ nymmardysty (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2007). "The waigs were scolding for seniority, and they threw each other off a cliff where they died."

Antonymy is a linguistic universal, which is based on the opposition of concepts. Antonymous relations between words suggest a binary opposition, for example: uazal (cold) – tævd (hot); bærzond (high) – nyllæg (low); færstytæ (questions) – dzuappytæ (answers); bon (day) – æhsæv (night), urs (white) – sau (black), etc.

Synonymous and antonymous relations are most characteristic of qualitative adjectives, which is conditioned by their semantics defining qualitative, temporal, spatial, sensual properties of the object. One can distinguish anthroponymic, parametrical, social and modal-valued lexical-semantic groups of qualitative adjectives. The most productive in this aspect are anthroponymic and parametrical adjective names. The lexical-semantic group of anthroponymic adjectives includes words that denote a person's physical and mental qualities, positive or negative moral qualities, feelings and emotional states, for example:

h"æzdyg – mæguyr: «H"æzdyg læg jæ fyngæg hæcy, mæguyr læg – jæ bærzægæ»;

ædyly-zonddzhyn: «Ædyly sylgojmag zonddzhyn nælgojmadzhy dær jæhi huyzæn kænyn».

The group of parametrical ones includes adjectives characterizing the objects by size, age and value: chysyl – styr: «Chysyl lægæn styr zærdæ væjy»;

expressing space-time relations, temperature, color, for example, sau – urs: «Sau læppu urs læppujy jæ dzyppy dær ahæsdzænis», etc.

In the Nartovian epos of Ossetians, storytellers aptly described the antonymous pair sau / urs (black and white):

«Iæhi jæm hæstæg balasta æmæ jæ færsy:

– Cymæ dæ kard urs færink u, ævi sau færink u?» (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2004, p. 329) "He came up to him and asked: – "I wonder if your sabre is white or black."

In the Ossetian heroic epos, antonymous relations expressed by qualitative adjectives carry a special semantic and stylistic load, not only emphasizing good and bad forces, differentiating between good and evil, good and bad, but also being an expressive means of language of a folklore work, the syllable and style of which is distinguished by certain melody and harmony. Very often this role in epos is played by Black Mountain and White Mountain, for example:

"Æmæ læppu jæhi aivæzta avdæny midæg æmæ jæ iu farsy fæjnæg appærsta, æmæ dendzhyz sæmbældis, æmæ dendzhyz hærz huysk" baxis; jæ innæ farsy fæjnæg sauh"ædyl sæmbældis, æmæ c"æh art suag"ta; jæ nyværzæny fæjnæg Sau hohyl sæmbældis, æmæ Sau hoh læbyrdytæ fæcis; jæ dælfædy fæjnæg Urs hohyl sæmbæld, æmæ uyj dær læbyrdytæ fæcis" (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2005). "And the boy in the cradle reached out, and threw down the board on one side, and it went into the sea, and the sea dried up; from the headboard the board went to Black Mountain, and Black Mountain fell apart; so the board went to White Mountain, and it got split up".

"Bon-izærmæ syn fatdzau nyllæuuydi. Kuy baizær, uæd, iu chi u, uyj jæ fat cælvæsta Sau hohmæ. Sau hoh zæjbyntæ æmæ suangsærtæ uymæn nycci. Innæ ta jæ Urs hohmæ cælvæsta. rs hoh lægætbyntæ, huyryzg"ælæntæ uymæj nycci" (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2004). "From morning to night, he fired arrows at them. In the evening, he hit Black Mountain with an arrow. So there are landslides and clefts on Black Mountain. And another arrow hit the White Mountain. That's why on White Mountain there are caves and rockfalls".

Some Nartovian texts do not mention White Mountain in parallel with Black Mountain, but mention a white deer grazing on Black Mountain. It is known that a white deer is a sacral symbol, and the black color of the mountain enhances this quality: "Cardi aftæ k"ord bonty Acæmæz. Iu bon ta hærz radzhy Sau hohmæ acydi cuan kænynmæ. Hohy sær urs sadzhy suyda æmæ jæ fekhsta" (Narty kaddzhytæ, 2005). "Atsamaz lived like this for several days. One morning he left early to hunt the Black Mountain. At the top of the mountain he saw a white deer and shot him".

In Ossetian language adjectives enter antonymous relations in certain lexico-semantic variants, and the meaning of an adjective is revealed by the name of a noun.

In Ossetian language adjectives enter antonymous relations in certain lexico-semantic variants, and the meaning of an adjective is revealed by the name of a noun. In Ossetian language an opposition is possible by adding an affix giving opposite meaning to a word with the same root, i.e. without using a word of another root: uæzdandzinad – ænæuæzdandzinad; uæg"dibar – ænæuæg"dibar etc. In other words, we can distinguish structurally different root and single root antonyms.

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, we have examined semantic and stylistic features of synonyms and antonyms of Ossetian language, relations of symmetry and asymmetry on the basis of folklore texts of the seven-volume academic edition on Ossetian Nartovian epos. Further study of antonyms and synonyms functioning in a text will be of special importance for expanding lexicographical representation of synonymous and antonymous complexes not only for Ossetian linguistics, but also for translation dictionaries of other languages. Antonymy can be contextual as well as language-specific, just like synonymy. Contextual antonyms are most often used in fiction, in which they are used to convey emotion, enhance expressiveness, and provide a text with figurativeness.

## References

- Abaev, V. I. (1949) *Osetian language and epos*. Lingvistika.
- Dzusoova, B. T., & Gogaeva, Z. A. (2016). Use of antonyms in works of fiction in creativity of S. Gadiev. *Modern sci. bull.*, 5(1), 263–264.
- Narty kaddzhytæ (2003). *Narty kaddzhytæ. Vol. 1*. Iryston, 590 p.
- Narty kaddzhytæ (2004). *Narty kaddzhytæ. Vol. 2*. Publ. and Polygraphic Enterprise named after V. Gassiyev.
- Narty kaddzhytæ (2005). *Narty kaddzhytæ. Vol. 3*. Publ. and Polygraphic Enterprise named after V. Gassiyev.
- Narty kaddzhytæ (2007). *Narty kaddzhytæ. Vol. 4*. Publ. and Polygraphic Enterprise named after V. Gassiyev.
- Narty kaddzhytæ (2010). *Narty kaddzhytæ. Vol. 5*. ISO SIGNI.
- Parsieva, L. K., Gatsalova, L. B., Kusov, T. E., & Tuaeva, T. Yu. (2015) Theoretical and practical problems of reforms of Russian pension systems. *Actual Problems of Humanities and Sciences*, 10-5, 1-4.
- Senko, E. V. (2016). Dynamics of the concept. New word in Russian lexicological tradition. *Issues of cognit. Linguist.*, 4(49), 104–109.
- Senko, E. V. (2019). Functional dynamism of modern Ossetian vocabulary. *Tomsk J. of Linguistic and Anthropol. Stud.*, 4(26), 39–47.