


## SPEECH NORM AND ITS ALTERNATION IN OCCASIONAL NEOLOGISMS

D. Movchan, Doctor of Philosophy, Associate Professor  
G. Chulanova, Doctor of Philosophy, Associate Professor  
L. Shchyhlo, Doctor of Philosophy, Associate Professor  
O. Nazarenko, Lecturer  
Sumy State University, Ukraine

The authors present the results of the research on semantic variations in the word structure of antonyms, which are the way to develop a certain actual meaning in speech, as well as occasional antonymic meaning. The speaker applies such kinds of semantic manipulations in order to realize one of his/her communicative strategies. Antonyms are considered to be one of the most effective lexical mechanisms able to contribute to the successive communicative act.

**Keywords:** pragmatic potential, pragmatic meaning, semantic variation, occasional antonyms.

Conference participants,  
National championship in scientific analytics,  
Open European and Asian research analytics championship

 <http://dx.doi.org/10.18007/gisap:ps.v0i11.1481>

Since the late XX century the study of language became pragmatically oriented. The linguists interpret the language phenomenon not as an abstract, static system of invariant discrete units, but as a living dynamic mechanism, which operates and changes. The emphasis is made on speaking, acting in specific communicative situations. As opposed to semantics and syntax, which, as a rule, deal with the idealized, theoretical constructs, the object of interest of pragmatic researchers is described as more personal, empirical.

As a rule, semantics and pragmatics interpret the phenomenon of meaning in different ways. For semantics meaning is a clearly organized attribute of the language system. From the perspective of pragmatics, meaning appears to be a separate use of a particular linguistic unit.

We consider it appropriate to view semantics and pragmatics in their interaction. It is impossible to separate nomination from communication, just like it is impossible to consider nominative and communicative human activity outside the human cognitive activity. "Any materialisation of thinking results is focused, first of all, on the message. That is why the idea of nomination as a constant and self-sufficient component of language, and nominative activities only as creation, search, selection and simple reproduction of names turns out to be incomplete" [1, p. 8].

**The aim of our research** is to study pragmatic side of antonyms. **The object of the study presented** is antonyms in the modern German language. **Subject of**

**the research** is typical mechanisms and schemes by means of which pragmatic potential of antonyms is realized in speech.

Antonyms, as well as other separate linguistic units, are characterized by potential illocutionary force, which means that they are potential speech units. In this case, information about the anticipated interaction between the interlocutors in the communication process is presented potentially. The pragmatic characteristics of antonyms are revealed only in the act of communication with a certain person, which has a specific set of social and psychological features. A communicant in his speech uses antonyms not only to transfer factual information, but also to appeal to the mind and feelings of the listener. Due to specific features of its semantic structure and possible ways of combining with other linguistic units in the speech flow, antonyms help the speaker influence the recipient most effectively, stimulating a particular reaction in his thoughts or behaviour.

Thus, it can be argued that 1) while functioning in speech system antonyms acquire their pragmatic relevance; 2) the result of the speech adaptation of antonymic lexical meaning under the influence of internal factors (objective correlation, significative characteristics, as well as hidden pragmatic parameters) and external factors (location, time, communicative intention of the speaker) is the emergence of **pragmatic meaning of antonyms**.

The pragmatic meaning of antonyms reflects not only the opposite content

of the objects, features and phenomena of objective reality, but also contains certain additional information, indicating the addresser's attitude to the subject of speech, decodes the information about his age, gender and social status, the conditions under which the communicative act takes place and so on. The pragmatic meaning is the result of communication strategies of participants of verbal communication within a particular context and situation.

The formation of antonymic pragmatic meaning can proceed: 1) on the basis of semantics of lexicographically fixed antonymous units, and 2) as a result of secondary naming of concepts based on the variation of form and content. Let us analyze this using the following examples:

1) *Das heisst: Fifine wird Kundschaft finden, denn in der **Nacht** sind alle Katzen grau. Kapierst du nun endlich, warum es **Tag** wird?* [2, p. 184].

2) *Bessere Bilder, dachte er, wurde er nicht mehr malen, selbst wenn er **Tag und Nacht** zum Malen Zeit haben würde* [3, p.165].

3) *Heute scheinen wir keine stärkere, schmerzlichere Sehnsucht zu kennen als die, die **Tage und Nächte** jenes Sommers in uns lebendig zu erhalten* [3, p. 9].

In each certain case of using the antonyms *der Tag - die Nacht* the specification of the fixed lexical meaning of each of these words by actualisation of communicatively relevant semes takes place. "Any actualisation of meaning will be a communicative variation of meaning - its semantic variation according to their compounds" [4, p. 102].

As we can see, in the first situation, pragmatic meaning of words *der Tag - die Nacht* is realized due to the fact that the semes "light / dark time of a day" turned out to be communicatively relevant. In the second example the author draws attention to the fact of continuity, duration of process. The third case of using antonymic opposition *der Tag - die Nacht* emphasizes the importance of the events that took place at the moments marked by words *Tage* and *Nächte*.

Remaining usual by form, antonyms in different communicative situations acquire a new meaning, which is formed on the basis of their meaning in the language system, so it refers to the pragmatic variability of antonyms:

1) *In stolzem Zug, je eines der Eltern an Anfang und Ende, die fünf Jungen in genau gleichem Abstand aufgereiht, verschwand die Familie eilig hinter wildüberwucherten Insel...* [3, p. 23].

2) *Wenn es Leute gibt, denen solche Experimenten einfallen,.. und wenn es unter der Bezeichnung Wissenschaft läuft – das wäre Anfang vom Ende* [5, p. 163].

As we can see, semantic content of the same lexical units (*Anfang* and *Ende*) in different contexts may be absolutely different. In the first example, they reflect a concept of certain space segment, and in the second case they form a new concept "beginning of the end." Meaning transformation of this kind takes place due to redistribution of semes in the semantic structure of words *Anfang* and *Ende*. As a result of it, the meaning of one of the word stands out brighter than the meaning of another word. Thus, semantics of the word *Ende* overpowers the meaning of the word *Anfang* (the word *Ende* is emphasized). Due to the structural cohesion of similar structures and semantic processes of strengthening of some semes and weakening of the others, a kind of meaning updating of lexical items takes place, leading to new, unexpected perception of their contents.

It can be stated that behind the usual form of an antonym in speech stands much wider volume of information compared to the antonym in the language system. This fact is predefined by both pragmatic intentions of the speaker and internal factors: the sense of that being said will depend on the context in which

a certain antonymous pair will be used and a certain syntagmatic model:

1) *Ich hatte einfach von Geld anfangen, mit ihm darüber sprechen sollen, über das tote, abstrakte, an die Kette gelegte Geld, das für viele Menschen Leben oder Tod bedeutete* [6, p. 215] – alternative opposition.

2) *Mutter machte tatsächlich einen Versuch zu essen, sicher wollte das bedeuten: das Leben geht weiter oder etwas ähnliches, aber ich wußte genau: es stimmte nicht, nicht das Leben geht weiter, sondern der Tod* [6, p. 283] – categorical opposition of concepts.

Occurrence of occasional antonyms is a pair-wise use of words that are not antonyms officially, but can be considered such in a new, unusual, occasional situation. The basis of occurrence of antonymic units of occasional nature is the fact of coexistence of logical and expressive information in the structure of the word meaning. Seeing that feelings and emotions are the form of reflection of reality and are closely connected to mental activity of a person, they cannot but play an important role in changing the meanings of words [7, p. 319]. Emotional charge determines a kind of knockout of a word from one sphere of imagination into the other [8, p. 47].

Formation of antonyms of non-systematic nature and not subjected to regular reproducibility in speech acts, takes place due to communicative inclusion of connotative potential semes to their systematic meaning. The selection of language units which could correlate as occasional antonyms, is dictated by associations of a special nature ("associations of components of language units") [9, p. 16].

Such associations can differ by intensity and stability level. They can be constant; then one idea or image immediately causes another (in our case it will be usual form of antonymic correlations). And sometimes associations are unstable and even rather unexpected. These associations create conditions for occurrence of occasional antonyms:

...*Gehe ich vom Sein des Hundes in das Sein der Katze...* [3, p. 60].

To semantic structure of such lexemes as *der Hund* and *die Katze* potential semes "confrontation",

"hostility", "stronger", "weaker" are brought in, whereas a dog and a cat are usually considered to be hostile, irreconcilable creatures. Information of connotative plan, encoded in semantics of these lexical units, gives the possibility of image perception of concepts denoted by them.

*Dieser Paterna ist kein Arzt, sondern ein Holzhacker* [5, p. 376].

Potential semes 'professional - dilettante' acquire their pragmatic relevance, which makes it possible to perceive lexical units 'Arzt' and 'Holzhacker' as opposite in meaning.

*Der Erwählte ist ein Fabrikant aus Lübeck - nein, nicht Marzipan; im Gegenteil: Fischkonserven!* [5, p. 304].

Subjective emotional and evaluative attitude of the speaker to the subject of speech is transmitted through inclusion of connotative semes 'delicious, sweet, delicate taste - banal, rude' to the semantic structures of 'Marzipan - Fischkonserven'. Such a process helps to create the effect of semantic saturation of the utterance.

*Boris Becker meinte, er spiele Tennis und Steffi Graf spiele Damentennis* [10, p.11].

The first element of the opposition *Tennis – Damentennis* is emotionally and stylistically neutral. It hardly presupposes an antipode. However, in colloquial speech the word is capable of forming antonymous opposition with *Damentennis*, the semantics of which includes an emotional nuance of irony or contempt. Motivational basis of the onomasiological structure of the occasionalism *Damentennis* is the stereotype that women cannot play tennis good, be good drivers, etc.

- *Hast du gestern Fußball gesehen?*

- *Fußball nennst du das? Es war aber Antifußball* [10, p. 11].

The pragmatic importance of the antonymous pair *Fußball - Antifußball* is formed on the basis of negative subjective evaluation, which is achieved by presence of the derivational prefix *anti-*. The speaker tries to emphasize the low level of the football game, using the nominative unit *Antifußball*, atypical in terms of semantic relevance.

Thus, both usual and occasional changes in the structure of antonyms are always motivated: they adapt

traditional form and meaning to a certain communication situation. Following the principle of functionalism in our study, we came to a conclusion that antonyms are characterized by certain pragmatic potential. The meaning created as the result of functioning of antonymic units can be considered pragmatic meaning of antonyms. This phenomenon is of individual and creative nature.

**References:**

1. Stepanov Yu.S. In Search of Pragmatics. (Problem of subject), Yu.S. Stepanov., AS USSR. Ser. lit. and lang. – 1981., Vol. 40., No. 4., pp. 325–332.
2. 4. Valmy M. Der verzauberte Tag (eine wundervoll altmodische Geschichte), M. Valmy. – München., Goldmann Verlag, 1987. – 211 p.
3. Wolf Chr. Sommerstück., Chr. Wolf. – München., Luchterhand Verlag, 1989. – 215 p. [crossref https://doi.org/10.2307/40145610](https://doi.org/10.2307/40145610)
4. Sternin I.A. Lexical Meaning

of Word in Speech., I.A. Sternin. – Voronezh., Publishing house of Voronezh university, 1985. – 172 p.

5. Konsalik H.G. Promenadendeck., H.G. Konsalik. – München., Branvalet Verlag, 1985. – 480 p.

6. Böll H. Ansichten eines Clowns., H. Böll. – Köln., Kiepenheuer und Witsch Verlag, 1963. – 307 p. [crossref https://doi.org/10.2307/40118656](https://doi.org/10.2307/40118656)

7. Levytskyi V.V. Semaseology., V.V. Levytskyi – Vynnytsia., New book, 2006. – 512 p.

8. Sperber H. Einführung in die Bedeutungslehre., H. Sperber. – Bonn., Leipzig, 1923. – 47 p. [crossref https://doi.org/10.1515/if-1926-s107](https://doi.org/10.1515/if-1926-s107)

9. Komlev N.H. Components of Informative Structure of the Word., N.H. Komlev – [ed. 2, stereotypic]. – Moscow., Editorial URSS, 2003. – 192 p. [crossref https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110900538](https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110900538)

10. Müller W. Das Gegenwart-Wörterbuch: ein Kontrastwörterbuch mit

Gebrauchshinweisen., W. Müller. – Unveränd. Nachdr. der Ausg. von 1998. – Berlin; New York., de Gruyter, 2000. – 580 p. [crossref https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110827248](https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110827248)

**Information about author:**

1. Diana Movchan - Doctor of Philosophy, Associate Professor, Sumy State University, Ukraine; address: Ukraine, Sumy city; e-mail: [d\\_movchan@i.ua](mailto:d_movchan@i.ua)
2. Galyna Chulanova - Doctor of Philosophy, Associate Professor, Sumy State University, Ukraine; address: Ukraine, Sumy city; e-mail: [d\\_movchan@i.ua](mailto:d_movchan@i.ua)
3. Larysa Shchyhlo - Doctor of Philosophy, Associate Professor, Sumy State University, Ukraine; address: Ukraine, Sumy city; e-mail: [d\\_movchan@i.ua](mailto:d_movchan@i.ua)
4. Olena Nazarenko - Lecturer, Sumy State University, Ukraine; address: Ukraine, Sumy city; e-mail: [hapushka@rambler.ru](mailto:hapushka@rambler.ru)

