

SINÔNIMOS MORFOLÓGICOS NO ENSINO DO RUSSO COMO LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA

SINÓNIMOS MORFOLÓGICOS EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL RUSO COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

MORPHOLOGICAL SYNONYMS IN TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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RESUMO: O artigo trata do papel do uso de sinonímia morfológica no processo de recepção e produção da fala durante as aulas de Russo como língua estrangeira, e procura sistematizar e classificar "matizes" - várias diferenças semânticas e estilísticas entre morfológicas sinônimos. Os autores do artigo tiram as seguintes conclusões: a compreensão da sinonímia morfológica (e mais amplamente - sintática) e sua aplicação na leitura, fala, escrita e escuta desempenha as seguintes funções: enriquece o vocabulário ativo e passivo dos alunos; facilita a paráfrase quando a informação é transmitida de um texto educacional e científico ou de ciência popular; desenvolve habilidades de comunicação com falantes nativos que variam facilmente a apresentação de informações. Um estrangeiro começa a dominar a habilidade de fala no processo de estudo de unidades lexicais apenas em conjunto com meios gramaticais - por isso é tão importante focar apropriadamente em sinônimos morfológicos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Russo como língua estrangeira. Sinônimos morfológicos. Parônimos. Paráfrase. Interferência. Adaptação.

RESUMEN: *El artículo trata sobre el papel del uso de la sinonimia morfológica en el proceso de recepción y producción del habla durante las lecciones de ruso como lengua extranjera, y se intenta sistematizar y clasificar "matices" - varias diferencias semánticas y estilísticas entre morfológicas sinónimos. Los autores del artículo extraen las siguientes conclusiones: comprender la sinonimia morfológica (y más ampliamente sintáctica) y su aplicación en la lectura, el habla, la escritura y la comprensión auditiva desempeña las siguientes funciones: enriquece el vocabulario activo y pasivo de los estudiantes; facilita la paráfrasis cuando la información se transmite desde un texto educativo y científico o de divulgación científica; Desarrolla habilidades de comunicación con hablantes nativos que varían fácilmente la presentación de la información. Un extranjero comienza a dominar la habilidad de hablar en el proceso de estudiar unidades léxicas solo en conjunto con los medios gramaticales; por eso es tan importante enfocarse adecuadamente en los sinónimos morfológicos.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Ruso como lengua extranjera. Sinónimos morfológicos. Parónimos. Paráfrasis. Interferencia. Adaptación.*

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ABSTRACT: *The article deals with the role of using morphological synonymy in the process of speech reception and production during the lessons of Russian as a foreign language, and an attempt is made to systematize and classify "shades" – various semantic and stylistic differences between morphological synonyms. The authors of the article draw the following conclusions: understanding morphological (and more broadly – syntactic) synonymy and its application in reading, speaking, writing, and listening performs the following functions: enriches the students' active and passive vocabulary; facilitates paraphrasing when information is conveyed from an educational and scientific or popular science text; develops communication skills with native speakers who easily vary the presentation of information. A foreigner begins to master the speaking skill in the process of studying lexical units only in conjunction with grammatical means – that is why it is so important to properly focus on morphological synonyms.*

KEYWORDS: *Russian as a foreign language. Morphological synonyms. Paronyms. Paraphrasing. Interference. Adaptation.*

Introduction

One of the primary tasks that the teacher of Russian as a foreign language (RFL) faces is the enrichment of the active and passive vocabulary of foreign students at the initial stage of education and the promotion of their ability for monologic and dialogic speech. Foreign students at the pre-university program who have been studying Russian for only a few months find it difficult to express an idea clearly and accurately. Expanding the students' active vocabulary is one of the priority areas of teaching RFL since the student begins to master the speaking skill in the process of studying lexical units together with grammatical means. That is why it is so important to properly focus on morphological synonyms.

One should not postpone learning synonymous grammatical structures since their communicative role is great and determines the "flexibility and maneuverability" (GELIVERA, 2010, p. 152) of oral speech. First-year foreign students at technical universities struggle, on the one hand, with understanding the information read in a textbook or heard at a lecture, on the other hand, with remembering and repeating it without distorting the meaning. If one gradually guides students towards understanding grammatical synonymy, then the students will correctly convey the essence of what they have read or heard, avoiding structures of the scientific style of speech, in the grammar of which can be confusing at the middle stage of learning. Undoubtedly, it is easier for foreigners to use paraphrasing of what they have read to understand, discuss and apply information. Understanding the interchangeability of synonymous structures and being able to use them will help foreign students to express their thoughts precisely, avoid

repeating the same words and similar expressions in speech. To enrich the active vocabulary of foreign students, it is necessary to offer them tasks in practical classes aimed at comprehending and understanding the semantics of synonymous words and synonymous grammatical structures.

Methods

A.M. Peshkovsky, who was the first to use the term "grammatical synonyms", divided them into two groups: 1) morphological; 2) syntactic. Morphological synonyms are the synonyms of non-syntactic forms which usually have different suffixes, prefixes, and inflections, and, as the scholar believed, are "limited" in the Russian language (PESHKOVSKY, 1927, p. 56). I.I. Kovtunova describes syntactic synonyms as "structures that represent full grammatical parallelism and differ only in those elements express a particular grammatical meaning" (KOVTUNOVA, 1955, p. 37). Linguistic structures that have identical or similar semantics and can be interchangeable in a certain context can be considered syntactic synonyms. Yu.D. Apresyan believes that "only those vocabulary units that are used in the same meaning in at least one common structure and have partially overlapping collocation can be interchangeable and, therefore, synonymous" (APRESYAN, 1957, p. 87).

Results and discussion

In teaching a foreign language, working on synonyms stimulates a bidirectional process. On the one hand, familiarity with grammatical synonyms helps to simplify the structures used in the scientific style in oral and written speech (*proiskhodit kipenie – kipit* [boiling occurs – boils]) and understand the literary text ("*ne radi slavy, radi zhizni na zemle*" [not for the sake of fame, for the sake of life on earth]) (TVARDOVSKY, 1944, p. 13), A. Tvardovsky, *radi = dlya* [for the sake of = for]; especially anacoluthons and solecisms ("*voi sobaki slilsya v krik utraty*" [the howl of a dog blended into a cry of loss]) (YESENIN, 2005, p. 156), from S. Yesenin's story "At White Water", *blended into = blended with*). On the other hand, communication in the official style (necessary for everyone, including a foreigner, both when negotiating and when filling out documents) involves the use of clichés in written and oral speech (which one, of course, works to eliminate) and a focus on the necessary unification and classification of administrative and legal documents. From the first days of stay in another country, a foreigner is faced with the standardized language of questionnaires, forms, records, where the template

looks like a formalized text, and the wording should be supplemented with personal information (the same for tables which usually contain abbreviations, clipped compounds and graphic abbreviations in the column headings and side headers).

One should learn grammatical synonyms at the beginning stage of training (A1) when the ideas of the gender and declension of nouns are formed, and some words found in texts and exercises do not fit the paradigm. In the initial lessons, a foreigner learns the substantivized words that are common in both Slavic and Romano-Germanic languages, denoting professions: *uchenyi*, *pozharnyi*, *politseiskii*, *voennyi*, *shtatskii*, *patrulnyi* [scientist, firefighter, policeman, military, civilian, patrolman]. The same is true for the designation of positions (according to the nomenclature): the substantivized words *sluzhashchii*, *zaveduyushchii*, *ispolnyayushchii* *obyazannosti*, *podchinennyi* [employee, manager, acting, subordinate]. One can add that even with a superficial, introductory reading of the extremely adapted Russian classical fiction of the 19th–20th centuries a foreigner can come across the substantivized words *stolbovoi* [of distinguished descent] (in the novel "Prince Serebrenni" by A. Tolstoy), *chasovoi* [sentry] (in the story "At Night on Sentry Duty" by A. Gaidar), *shtabnoi* [administrative officer] (in the novel "War and Peace" by L. Tolstoy), *polovoi* [waiter] (in the story "Man from the Restaurant" by I. Shmelyov), *gorodovoi* [policeman] (in the novel "Crime and Punishment" by F. Dostoevsky, A. Kuprin's story "The Pit"). There is also a group of substantivized words denoting the degrees of kinship and acquaintance that are more common, constant in everyday colloquial speech: *prokhozhi*, *znakomye*, *rodnye*, *blizkie*, *lyubimaya*, *krestnaya*, *pomolvlennye*, *zhenatye*, *razvedennye*, *kholostye*, *zamuzhnie*, *nezamuzhnie*, *maloi* [passer-by, acquaintances, relatives, loved ones, beloved, godmother, engaged, married, divorced, single, married, unmarried, little one] (colloquial, compare with the name of the story about teenagers by A. Afanasyev and others "Moi maloi" [My little one]). From the first days in Russia, students can hear such designations of age groups as *mladshii*, *starshii*, *sovershennoletnie*, *nesovershennoletnie*, *vzroslye* [junior, senior, of age, minors, adults], and foreigners can hear the substantivized word *priezzhi* [newcomers] about themselves. In the international department, one can ask questions about the status using substantivized words such as *ochnyi/zaochnyi*, *byudzhetniy/kommercheskii* [full-time/part-time, publicly funded/commercial]. Forms of business documentation include *obyasnitelnye*, *soprovoditelnye*, *nakladnye* [explanatory notes, covering notes, invoices]. A textbook example: the dining room offers *pervoe*, *vtoroe* and *trete*; *goryachee* and *sladkoe*,

morozhenoe [the first, second and third courses; hot meals and dessert, ice cream] and, of course, *spirtnoe, goryachitelnoe* [alcoholic beverages, strong drinks]. An apartment has *detskaya, gostinaya, dushevaya, vannaya, kladovaya* [nursery, living room, shower room, bathroom, pantry], a house also has *boilernaya, podsobnaya, topochnaya* [boiler room, utility room, furnace room], and the dormitory has a *stolovaya, servernaya, igrovaya, and prokhodnaya* [dining hall, server room, playroom, security area]. In repair and construction organizations, there can be *moechnye, svarochnye* [washing areas, welding areas]; in hospitals there are always *bolnye, statsionarnye, ne ambulatornye, priemnye, operatsionnye, perevyazochnye* [patients, inpatients, non-outpatients, waiting rooms, operating theaters, surgical dressing rooms]; the doctor can prescribe *snotvornoe, slabitelnoe, zharoponizhayushchee, obezbolivayushchee, naruzhnoe* [sleeping pills, laxatives, antifebrile medications, anesthetics, medications for external application]. Nowadays, much less common of the city's infrastructure are *parikmacherskie* [hairdressing salons] (replaced by international expressions such as salons and barbershops), *bulochnye* and *prachechnye* [bakeries and laundries], and *dezhurnyi* [duty officer] is replaced by *okhrannik* [guard (or security)]. If the student remembers that adjectival nouns are grammatical synonyms of adjectival substantivized phrases, then the student will be able to communicate more freely and naturally, especially since the phrases *prokhozhe/znakomye/rodnye lyudi* [passers-by/acquaintances/relatives] and many other synonyms of substantivized words already seem to be specifically constructed, unnatural.

As for the clichés of the formal style, the problem here is solved ambiguously. For example, V. Pakhomov proposes to get rid of outdated clichés in the podcast "Doctor, I have officialese: how does the lingo of laws and documents permeate spoken language?" (PAKHOMOV, 2019) by replacing both the split predicate and the "strung" (repeated) cases in substantivized phrases with verbs. However, until linguistic and administrative trends correspond completely, a foreigner will have to understand such grammatical synonyms as *obratitsya s prosboi* [make a request] instead of *poprosit* [request], *sdelat zayavlenie* [make a statement] instead of *zayavit* [state], *vydat zarplatu/stipendiyu* [give a paycheck/scholarship] instead of *vyplatit* [pay], *provodit issledovaniya* [conduct studies] instead of *issledovat* [study], *provesti remontnye raboty* [carry out repairs] instead of *otremontirovat* [repair], *osushchestvlyat podderzhku* [provide support] instead of *podderzhivat* [support], *okazyvat vliyanie/davlenie* [exert influence/pressure] instead of *vliyat/davit* [influence/pressure], *podvergnut*

sokrashcheniyu [make redundant] instead of *sokratit* [let go], *dostignut operezheniya* [achieve leading position] – *operedit* [lead], *osushchestvlyat rukovodstvo* [carry out management] – *rukovodit* [manage], *proizvodit posev* [carry out sowing] – *seyat* [sow], *imet terpenie* [have patience] (usually imperative) – *terpet* [withstand], *proyavit trusost* [show cowardice] – *strusit* [act like a coward], *poterpet porazhenie* [suffer defeat] – *proigrat* [lose], *oderzhat pobedu* [win the victory] – *pobedit* [win]. There are complex cases of strict lexical collocations (such as *poterpet krakh*, *ponesti ubytki*, *preterpet ushcherb/uron* [fail, incur losses, suffer harm/damage]), which are often found in business communication but are very difficult for both foreigners and native speakers, therefore it is better to be more specific using a synonymous verb (international – *obankrotilis* [went bankrupt], Russian – *poteryali* [lost] with a direct object). One can also give examples of limited lexical collocation in business documents, where synonyms are not an error but are eliminated for unification: *sodeistvovat*, *pomogat* [assist, help] – *okazyvat sodeistvie* [provide assistance] (not *pomoshch* [help]); *napravit na rassmotrenie* [send for consideration] (not *vyslat* [ship]). Also in Russian language lessons, both in a Russian and foreign audience, it will be useful to clarify that the interchangeability of the following same-root verbs is imaginary and is a mistake: *odet* [dress] (someone) – *nadet* [put on] (something), *povernut* [turn] (somewhere) – *zavernut* [wrap] (in something), *oplatit* [pay] (the fare) – *zaplatit* [pay for] (travel), *uplatit* [pay] (what? *shtraf* [a fine]).

In literary texts, stringing of cases and splitting the predicate, which is also complicated by a figurative meaning, is also common. Thus, the phraseological unit "*derzhat marku*" (*berech reputatsiyu*) [keep up appearances (protect the reputation)] is found, for example, in the novel by N. Ostrovsky "How the Steel Was Tempered" ("But since the bourgeoisie invented diplomacy, we keep up appearances" (OSTROVSKY, 1970, p. 218)). "*Okazat vliyanie*" (*povliyat*) [exert influence (influence)] and "*proizvesti vpechatlenie*" (*vpechatlit*) [make an impression (impress)] are frequent phraseological units both in colloquial and, accordingly, in literary speech (in M. Bulgakov's novel "The Master and Margarita" – "Delai kak khochesh, no govoryu tebe, chto etot chelovek *proizvodit na menya vpechatlenie* ottalkivayushchee" [Do as you want, but I'm telling you that this person *makes a terrible impression on me*]; in Vs. Garshin's story "Artists" – "Konechno, ne bez togo, chtoby na eto ne *okazyval vliyaniya* moi, sravnitelno s nimi, solidnyi vozrast" [Of course, my age, which was considerable compared to them, *exerted influence* on this" (GARSHIN, 19234, 89)).

Even more difficulties even for native speakers of Russian are caused by the following morphological synonyms: *po pribytii, po vozvrashchenii, po zavershenii, po priedze, po prilete* [upon arrival, upon return, upon completion, upon arrival by land, upon arrival by air]. Here one can explain to foreigners that the preposition *po* [upon] is semantically identical to the preposition *posle* [after], but grammatically it is followed by the prepositional case, familiar to foreigners-beginners already in the first month, especially when switching to online classes (Fig. 1).



The subscriber TEST is unavailable.

Proshu po vozvrashchenii mne perezvonit
[Please call me back upon return]

Fig. 1. Example of usage of the preposition "po" [upon]

In Skype, the following message appears after a missed call, "Proshu po vozvrashchenii mne perezvonit" [Please call me back upon return]. "Po priedze" [upon arrival – *Prep.*] and others are used only in formal communication. Synonymous structures like "po priedzu" [upon arrival – *Dat.*] are used by those who want to appear strict and presentable but these people are mistaken: despite the prevalence in popular communication, the dative case in this situation is not considered a grammatical norm. Replacing the genitive case with the accusative case is not a priority option in the following situations: 1) lack of something (*nekhvatka vremeni, nedostatok sredstv, lishenie vozmozhnosti* [lack of time, lack of funds, deprivation of opportunity]); 2) if the noun is governed by a verb of comprehension/perception verb (*ne ponyal vazhnosti* [did not understand the importance]); 3) if the meaning is abstract (*ne vypolnil usloviya, ne prinyal porazheniya, ne nashel smysla* [did not abide by the conditions, did not accept defeat, did not find the meaning]). In other cases, a synonymous replacement is quite possible: *ne prochital stati – ne prochital statyu* [did not read the article]. The synonymous structures *s pomoshchyu* [with the help] and *pri pomoshchi* [using] are used with different "shades of meaning": a preposition derived from a noun in the

by a possessive adjective: *ispolnit tariverdievskuyu melodiyu* [to perform a Tariverdiev melody].

It is also worth paying attention to the suffixes that can be synonymous: *mamin* – *materinskii*, *ottsov* – *ottsovskii* (*otecheskii*) [mother's – maternal, fathers – fatherly (paternal)]. However, possessive adjectives often act as qualitative adjectives (acquiring their properties in a context which is often phraseological): *otecheskaya zabota*, *materinskoe chute*, *orlinoe zrenie* [paternal care, maternal instinct, eagle's vision], etc. When foreign B1-level students are presented with texts of educational and scientific, popular science and art styles, they inevitably come across participles and adjectives. Complex participial formations such as *dikorastushchii*, *gustonaselennyi*, *vseznayushchii* [growing in the wild, densely populated, all-knowing] can be replaced by synonymous adjectives that are almost unrelated to verbs in modern language: *sorny*, *mnogolyudny*, *erudirovanny* [weedy, populous, erudite]. Even more examples of synonyms between participles and adjectives can be found in literature and real-life communication: *ustavshii* – *ustalyi*, *opavshii* – *palyi*, *zamerzshii* – *merzlyi*, *nezabyvaemy* – *nezabvenny*, *polzayushchii* – *polzuchii*, *sidyashchii* – *sidyachii*, *tekushchii* – *tekuchii*, *byvavshii* – *byvalyi*, *sozrevshii* – *zrelyi*, *umeyushchii* – *umelyi*, *skryvayushchii* – *skrytnyi*, *otkryvayushchii* – *otkryty*, *probnyi* – *probuemy*, *ottayavshii* – *talyi*, *opozdavshii* – *zapozdaly* [weary – tired, dead – fallen, damaged by frost – frozen, unforgettable – memorable, crawling – creeping, sitting – sedentary, flowing – fluid, former – seasoned, ripe – mature, able – skillful, concealing – secretive, revealing – open, trial – tried, thawed – melted, late – belated]. It is important to note that with the appearance of participles – a new part of speech with special morphology, it is necessary to exclude errors of the *samolyubimyi/trudolyubimyi* [self-centering/hardworked] type (CISE – Communicatively InSignificant Errors) and suppress attempts to form participles, not from verbs. The problem of paronymy is also close to adjective synonymy to participles, including in the process of teaching RFL at the A2+ level (DANIELYAN, 2018).

In some textbooks on RFL, synonyms (sometimes equal!) or words that are synonyms in colloquial speech are featured as Communicatively Significant Errors (CSE). For example, in the Test of Russian as a Foreign Language (TRKI), the former locative, and now the prepositional case ending in *-u*, about which A.M. Peshkovsky wrote, is considered the only correct answer, although it does not fit the grammatical paradigm. In the media, a student may hear "*v aeroportu*" [at the airport], however, at

the A2 level (TBU), it will be considered a grammatical error. In official documents, it is customary to use "studenty na pervom *godu* obucheniya" [students in the first year of study], but in oral speech, one can hear *gode*, the same occurs in literary and critical prose ("v 'Golom gode' B. Pilnyaka [in B. Pilnyak's 'Naked Year']"). The same rule applies to verb forms that are appropriate in oral but not in written (scientific or formal) speech. In communication, native speakers say, "*idu ya vchera* na rabotu" [I'm walking to work yesterday], but in TBU, one can only use a synonym with the past tense verb *shel* (*shla*) [was walking]. The same refers to the genitive case with the meaning of quantity and part (*vypit chashku chayyu, sest kusoček syru* [drink a cup of tea, eat a piece of cheese]), it is easier, of course, to offer a direct object, but in this situation, the accusative case is rarely used by native speakers. *Sidet, rabotat* etc. *za stolom, za zavtrakom* [sitting, working, etc. at the table, at breakfast] ("Ved govovil ya emu togda *za zavtrakom*" [After all, I did tell him that at breakfast], from M. Bulgakov's novel "The Master and Margarita"), *za kompyuterom* [at the computer] can be explained by the prepositional case (*na zavtrake, na kompyutere* [at breakfast, on the computer]). The combination typical for oral speech with the ablative case "*stoyat pod dveryu*" [to stand at the door] should be replaced by "*stoyat za dveryu*" [to stand outside the door] since the preposition *za* at the A2 level is just being behind the object, while *pod* means 'below'. The combination "*pod dveryu*" has an additional connotation of a long, forced, unpleasant, or even humiliating stay, frustration. *Rabotat nad temoi (nad statei) or po teme* [working on a topic (on an article) or with a topic] is easier to explain using the usual direct object *issledovat temu, pisat statyu* [research the topic, write an article]. It is important to emphasize that *pod Novyi god* and *pod Rozhdestvo* [on New Year's Eve and on Christmas Eve] is not during the day, but at night on the eve of the holidays. Explaining the movement by transport, we use the preposition *na* [by] if the mode of transport is indicated (*na poezde, na avtobuse* [by train, by bus]), the role of the driver (*ya na mashine* [I am driving]), and also, following the general rule, the presence of an object on the vehicle (*bagazhnik na mashine* [trunk of the car]). Moreover, it is better not to use the verbs of motion (in the car one can *sidet, mechtat, zhdet* [sit, dream, wait]) with the preposition *v* (*mashine*) [in (the car)]. The verb *okonchit* [finish] is synonymous with the verb *zakonchit* [end], but there is a difference: the verb with the prefix *o* means a circular or spiral upward movement (*obekhat mir, okonchit roman, universitet* [go around the world, finish a novel, university]), and the prefix *za* merely indicates the end of the action. The use of the ablative case with verbs of movement in

the meaning of the place of action, usually expressed by the prepositional in modern language, is predominantly literary. The ablative case in the meaning of a place of movement is used, for example, in a poem from the cycle of stories "The Adventures of Dunno and His Friends" by N. Nosov ("Shel ya *lesom*, shel ya *lugom* so svoim khoroshim drugom" [I was walking in the forest, I was walking in the meadow with my good friend]); in Russian folk tales ("shli oni *podzemnym khodom*" [they walked through an underground passage]) and epics ("ekhali *rozdolitsem chistym polem* [they rode through the expanse, through a vast field]), in the fairy tale "The Magic Ring" by A. Platonov "*chistymi polyami* begut" [they run through vast fields] and in the script for the cartoon "The Magic Ring" by Yu. Koval and L. Nosyrev ("Bredut *lesami temnymi. Idut stepyami shirokimi. Lezut gorami vysokimi*" [They wander through dark forests. They walk wide steppes. Climb high mountains]), in L. Oshanin's marching song ("Vetsya pyl pod sapogami – *stepyami, polyami*" [Dust is curling under the boots – along the steppes, fields]). In colloquial speech, the expression "*idi lesom*", "*shel by ty lesom*" (lit. "go through the forest") means a rude refusal, possibly correlating with the formula of ancient love spells and quarrels. However, even in modern speech, there are the latest morphological synonyms, for example, the use of the dative case in the meaning of position, circumstance, which was usually expressed by the prepositional case: *orientirovatsya po situatsii* (v situatsii) [be guided by the situation (in the situation)]; *deistvovat po obstoyatelstvam* (v opredelennykh obstoyatelstvakh) [act according to circumstances (in certain circumstances)], *strelyat po lyudyam* (v lyudei) [shoot at people (fire upon people)]. Thus, one should implicitly consider the differentiation of synonyms and quasi-synonyms dependent on the context. The matter of stress is complicated, as it often gives a different meaning to the same word in the same case: *zoloto v krovI* [gold in blood] (outside), *zoloto v krOvi* [gold in blood] (inside, in the figurative meaning of nobility). In this case, it is not synonymy but homonymy (homography). One should also consider the interference of English or, for example, closely related languages, which is possible among European students. *Rugat pri vsekh* [scold for everybody to hear] is much more common in colloquial speech than *pered vsemi* [in front of everyone], while in English, only the option "*in front of everyone*" is possible ("*Finch gave me a real blowing-up in front of everyone*", H. Fielding); *nakhoditsya za rulem* [to be behind the wheel] instead of *pered* [in front] ("*Dad was sitting in the front of his Sierra*", H. Fielding), although the seat in Russian is *perednee* [front] = *the front seat of the car*; *razgovarivat za obedom* [talk during lunch]

instead of *na obede* [at lunch], although one can say *na peremene*, *na obedennom pereryve* [at recess, at lunchtime]; *fotografirovatsya na fone* [to be photographed at the background] instead of *protiv* [against] – unlike the English *against backdrop/background*. Scholars believe that the common mistake "*skuchayu za toboi*" [I miss you] arose under the influence of the Ukrainian language or dialects.

In educational and scientific as well as oral speech (especially informal), there are also a lot of synonyms for numerals: *dva*, *dvoe*, *oba*, *para*; *dvenadtsat* – *dyuzhina*, *pyatdesyat* – *poltina* [two, twain, both, couple; twelve – dozen, fifty – half a hundred]. The correct use of quantitative and collective grammatical forms causes many difficulties for foreign students. In modern Russian, when denoting the number, synonymous substitutions are possible, for example, *tri studenta* – *troe studentov* [three students]. There are no stylistic restrictions for the usage of cardinal numerals while collective numerals have limited collocation. Collective numerals collocate with nouns denoting males as well as with masculine words ending in *-a* (*troe rebyat*, *dvoe muzhchin* [three boys, two men]) but are not used with feminine nouns (*troe studentok* [three female students]). When explaining the rules for the usage of collective and cardinal numerals, it is necessary to focus the attention of students on the fact that it is not always possible to replace combinations with collective numerals with quantitative ones, for example, *dvoe studentov* [two students] is a grammatical synonym for the expression *dva studenta* [two students], and the phrase *troe yunoshei* [three young men] sounds better than *tri yunoshi* [three young men], it is impossible to replace the combination *tri cheloveka* [three people] for *troe lyudei* [three people.] Also, the synonymous replacement of a cardinal numeral with a collective one depends on the context: "*troe studentov poluchili diplomy*" [three students received their diplomas] (together, in the same way), "*na zanyatii net trekh studentov*" [three students are absent in the class] (not together, for various reasons). Collective numerals with inanimate pluralia tantum also cause difficulty: *nozhnitsy*, *bryuki (dzhinsy)*, *sutki* [scissors, trousers (jeans), day]. The declension of these phrases does not fit into the declension paradigm of a collective or cardinal numeral. In the nominative case, *dvoe nozhnits (sutok)* [two scissors (days)], in the genitive – *dvukh nozhnits (sutok)*, in the dative – *dvum* (not *dvoim!*) *nozhnitsam, sutkam*; but in the accusative, the form of the collective numeral is also used, for example, "*poezdka rasschitana na dvoe sutok*" [the trip is designed for two days].

The use of collective numerals is not so frequent in the scientific style of speech, however, such numerals are common in colloquial speech. Students can often hear such expressions during lectures as *para voprosov*, *para eksperimentov* [a couple of questions, a couple of experiments], and the word "para" [couple] immediately causes them difficulty. The familiar "para" in the meaning of "one lesson at the university" does not correspond to the number "two". Foreign students often struggle to read phrases that contain a two-digit numeral. For example, the phrase "22 sutok" [22 days] is sometimes read as *dvadtsat dvoe sutok* [twenty couple days], rather than *v techenie dvadtsati dvukh sutok* [during twenty-two days]. Educational texts for foreign students often feature substantivized numerals, for example, in such combinations as *na urok prishlo dvoe*, *nas budet troe*, *oba iz Kitaya* [two people came to the lesson, there will be three of us, both from China], etc. The countable nouns used in speech are stylistically marked. Some substantivized words are archaic (*dyuzhina* [dozen]), others are limited in usage. It is important to start the study of numerals as early as possible for reasons related not only to linguistics: for example, because of the obligatory synonymous replacement of the digital equivalent with the verbal one in official business papers, especially financial ones.

The synonymy of the auxiliary parts of speech is almost limitless: *radi (dlya) nauki*, *pri Petre Pervom – v period pravleniya Petra Pervogo*, *ot styda (iz-za styda, so styda)* [for the sake of (for) science, under Peter the Great – during the reign of Peter the Great, out of shame (because of shame, due to shame)]. It is very important to accompany authentic prepositional-case structures with synonymous, albeit artificial, created structures that are already well-known to students: *ot boli i strakha – iz-za, ot radosti – potomu chto radovalsya* [from pain and fear – because of, from joy – because he was happy]. It is advisable to change the structure with the preposition *na* [on] with a structure with a conjunction *chroby* [so that] because both of them mean, first of all, the goal, and only then the time and direction of movement: *elektrichka na Moskvu*, *povorot na avtostradu*, *dengi na uchebu (chtoby uchitsya)*, *poekhat na leto (chtoby letom otdykhat)*, *tort na den rozhdeniya (chtoby est)*, *garantiya na tri goda (chtoby polzovatsya)* [a local train to Moscow, a turn onto a motorway, money for studying (to study), go for the summer (to rest in the summer), a birthday cake (to eat), a three-year warranty (to use)]. Sometimes the meaning of goal and time are closely intertwined: *zubnoi pasty khvatit na mesyats (chtoby chistit zuby mesyats)*, *na desyatiletanii brak mozhet ponadobitsya pyat muzhei* [there is enough toothpaste for a month (to brush your

teeth for a month), a ten-year marriage may require five husbands]. Like the preposition *za* [for] in the meaning of the report for the past period, the preposition *na* [for] can be used in structures with past tense verbs ("zubnoi pasty khvatilo, chtoby ya mesyats chistil eyu zuby" = *khvatilo na mesyats* [there was enough toothpaste for me to brush my teeth with it for a month] = enough for a month]). Similarly, the preposition of a report on the work done can mean a predictable result and be used in structures of a simple future tense with a perfective verb: "*ya sdelayu eto za mesyats*" [It will take me a month to do this]. A more difficult example is *polozhit* [put] (an informal synonym – *zakinut* [throw]) *dengi na schet, na telefon* [money into the account, into the phone account], etc. Here, the direction to a virtual place in the digital space (account) and a possible action for the agent (*chtoby zvonit* [to call]) is realized only after the predicate of existence (*chtoby dengi byli na schetu/na schete* [so that the money is in the account]) or possession (*chtoby on imel dengi na schetu/na schete* [so that he has money in the account]). In a foreign-language audience, it is better to use the prepositional case ending in *-e*. The prepositions *do* [before] and *k* [by] can also be synonyms, and they have a distinctive "semantic connotation": to do something *do chetverga* [before Thursday], the deadline is Wednesday, *k chetvergu* [by Thursday] means the deadline is Thursday. Frequent announcements in universities that "my uchimsya *po ponedelniku*" [we study like on Monday], which means that the schedule on a certain day will be like on Monday, can be perceived by a foreigner as "we study on Mondays", i.e. every Monday. In this case, it should be noted that the singular and plural in this combination are not grammatical synonyms.

In the RFL lessons for students at the basic level, it is possible to mention connective words that have lost their meaning (with synonymous substitutions). Phrases "*Chto ty za chelovek?*", "*Chto ty nadelal?*" ["What kind of person are you?", "What have you done?"] seem to claim that the addressee is not a very good person and has done something bad. The meaning of the conjunction of unreal comparison (GVOZDEV, 1965; ASTASHCHENKO, 2020; GUDAEVA, KARLINA, 2015) and a particle associated with unreal modality is lost (they say *kak by nechayanno* [seemingly not on purpose] when something is deliberately done but presented to others as an accidental, unintended action), the particle *kak by* [as if] in the exclamation "*Kak by ne tak!*" [Not likely!] – is actually *ne tak* (analogous to the English exclamation "as if!").

Conclusion

Therefore, the understanding of morphological (and more broadly – syntactic) synonymy and its application in reading, speaking, writing, and listening performs the following functions: enriches the active and passive vocabulary of students; facilitates paraphrasing when information is conveyed from an educational and scientific or popular science text; develops communication skills with native speakers who easily vary the presentation of information and reflect the national consciousness in speech (for more details (GUDAEVA, KARLINA, 2015, p. 64; SUKHOTIN, 1968, p. 14). When syntactic synonymy is included in the process of teaching RFL, this phenomenon should be distinguished, first of all, from communicatively significant errors (*nadet rebenka* [to put on a child]), quasi-synonyms (*on ni o chem* [he is neither here nor there]), and one should also consider linguistic interference (*rugat pri vsekh* [scold for everybody to hear] instead of *pered vsemi* [in front of everyone]; *rabotat za kompyuterom* [work at the computer] instead of *na kompyutere* [on the computer]; *razgovarivat za obedom* [talk during lunch] instead of *na obede* [at lunch], although one can say *na peremene, na obedennom pereryve* [at recess, at lunchtime]. Exercises on syntactic synonymy in textbooks are an intermediate and often overlooked link in exercises on lexical collocation, where you need to correlate a verb with a dependent noun. For example, there may be a task where the first item will be to choose a synonym (*igrat, ustraivat svadbu – pozhenitsya* [celebrate, arrange a wedding – get married]) and the second item is to choose possible dependent words from the list (*prazdnik, svadbu, uzhin, konferentsiyu, ekzamen, skandal* [holiday, wedding, dinner, conference, exam, scandal]). To revise new grammatical structures, it is advisable to use tasks for the transformation of information without changing/distorting the meaning (*pri gorenii, kogda gorit, vo vremya goreniya* [when burning, when it burns, during burning]). To test understanding, one can offer listening with a preliminary list of new collocations and structures, and the post-text task will be to paraphrase what one heard, retelling with the replacement of complex structures that belong to, for example, educational and scientific, popular science or official business style, with simple ones. It is also possible to offer the students a reverse course – to hear the familiar counterparts of complex structures. With current control, it is advisable to present tasks that test not only the word collocation in a certain context but also the ability to vary information, produce speech, simplifying, if necessary, grammar and syntax.

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