

## **Linguo-Stylistic Possibilities of Synonymic Choice in The Speech of Religious Scholars**

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**Abstract:** *The article analyzes the role of synonymic units in refining meaning, expressing respect, adapting speech to the audience and creating euphemistic mitigation in religious discourse. It discusses rows such as prayer-supplication, sin-mistake and died-passed away.*

**Keywords:** *Synonymy, Religious Speech, Stylistic Choice, Euphemism, Respect, Pragmatics*

### **1. Introduction**

Synonymic relations in the discourse of religious scholars function not merely as a means of repeating meaning but as a mechanism for refining content and adapting it to specific communicative contexts. By expressing a single concept through different lexical units, scholars can choose a tone that is more approachable, gentler, or more formal for their audience. For example, the words prayer, supplication, invocation, and entreaty all convey the general meaning of requesting from God; however, they differ in their degrees of spiritual intimacy, literary style, bookishness, and ritual significance [1].

The selection of synonyms is particularly important in sensitive religious contexts. In discussions concerning funerals, condolences, repentance, family disputes, or moral admonition, speakers often prefer softer lexical alternatives instead of more direct expressions. Referring to a person's death through expressions such as passed away, departed this life, or returned to the mercy of God rather than simply stating died is not merely a matter of linguistic etiquette; it represents a pragmatic strategy that takes into account the emotional state of the audience [2].

Synonymic choice also reflects the ethical culture of religious discourse. Religious scholars have the ability to express the same concept with a severe, neutral, or gentle tone. For instance, the term transgression carries a stronger religious judgment, whereas mistake leaves greater room for repentance and personal improvement. Thus, through the use of synonyms, speakers not only select meanings but also define the nature of their relationship with listeners [3].

The issue of synonymy has been extensively examined in Uzbek linguistics through the works of scholars such as Hojiev, Mahmudov, and other lexicographic researchers. These studies demonstrate that synonyms are united by a common semantic core while differing in stylistic coloring, spheres of usage, and emotional value. In religious discourse, these distinctions become even more pronounced because each lexical unit is associated with specific doctrinal, ethical, and ritual contexts [4].

In international linguistics, Edmonds and Hirst have highlighted the importance of near-synonyms in lexical choice, while Murphy has explained semantic relations within paradigmatic systems. From a pragmatic perspective, synonym selection depends on the speaker's intention, the audience's level of knowledge, and the degree of formality of the communicative situation. Religious scholars' discourse emerges precisely at the intersection of these three factors [5].

## 2. Research Methodology

This study employed methods of synonymic set identification, componential analysis, stylistic evaluation, and contextual-pragmatic analysis. Lexical units were compared according to their shared semantic features, stylistic coloring, contexts of use, impact on audiences, and euphemistic potential. Particular attention was paid to lexical items frequently encountered in religious discourse, including names and attributes of God, prayer-related expressions, terms denoting sin, and euphemistic expressions referring to death.

Five criteria were used in the analysis of synonymic series: common semantic feature, distinguishing semantic feature, stylistic coloring, ritual context, and emotional impact. For example, supplication and invocation share the same general semantic component as prayer, yet invocation tends to convey a more literary and spiritual nuance, whereas supplication emphasizes need, humility, and earnest pleading. These distinctions establish the internal hierarchy within the synonymic set.

## 3. Results and Discussion

The synonymic series Allah – Creator – Sustainer – Lord – Rabb refers to the same divine entity in religious discourse; however, each variant produces a distinct stylistic effect. Allah conveys doctrinal precision and theological formality, Rabb emphasizes lordship, nurturing, and divine care, while Creator provides greater accessibility and comprehensibility for a broader audience. Religious scholars select among these alternatives according to the audience's background, the seriousness of the topic, and the genre of discourse [6, 7].

Within the synonymic set sin – transgression – mistake – fault, the degree of moral evaluation varies progressively. Sin expresses a general religious judgment, transgression carries a stronger and more formal religious connotation, while mistake is often used in contexts aimed at encouragement, repentance, and self-correction. For example, when addressing young people, the use of mistake softens condemnation while still opening a path toward repentance and improvement. In this regard, synonymy serves as an important instrument of moral and educational discourse [8].

Synonymic expressions related to death perform a euphemistic function in religious communication. Expressions such as passed away, departed this life, entered God's mercy, and left this world present the reality of death in a respectful, gentle, and religiously meaningful manner. In funeral and condolence speeches, such lexical choices help avoid intensifying grief, encourage patience and acceptance, and demonstrate respect for the memory of the deceased. Consequently, synonymy in religious discourse is closely linked to cultural norms of courtesy and compassion [9].

Another important function of synonyms is to make religious terminology more accessible to the general public [10]. After using a term such as tawhid (Islamic monotheism), a scholar may explain it through synonymous or explanatory constructions such as belief in the oneness of God or not associating partners with the Creator. In this context, synonymy functions not merely as lexical substitution but also as a pedagogical tool for clarification and instruction. Such explanatory synonyms are particularly valuable when communicating with young people and broader audiences [11, 12].

Finally, synonyms contribute to the rhythmic and expressive qualities of religious discourse. Sequences such as be patient, be grateful, repent create semantic progression through closely related concepts [13, 14]. Such patterns help sustain audience attention and enhance memorability. Moreover, repeating a concept through two or three synonymous variants strengthens emphasis and increases the persuasive and exhortative power of religious speech [15].

**Table 4.** Analytical Indicators of the Linguistic and Stylistic Potential of Synonymic Choice in the Discourse of Religious Scholars

Synonymic Series	Distinguishing Feature	Primary Function
<i>prayer, supplication, invocation</i>	Degree of formality and spiritual intimacy	Strengthening the tone of entreaty and devotion
<i>sin, transgression, mistake</i>	Intensity of moral evaluation	Pedagogical softening and encouragement of repentance
<i>passed away, departed this life, left this world</i>	Euphemistic coloring	Expressing respect, consolation, and compassion

#### 4. Conclusion

Synonymic choice in the discourse of religious scholars serves as an important mechanism for managing semantic precision, stylistic appropriateness, and psychological impact. Through the use of synonyms, religious scholars can express a single concept in formal, colloquial, gentle, literary, or expressive forms depending on the communicative situation and audience. Future research should focus on the development of a specialized explanatory dictionary of religious synonyms, corpus-based investigations of euphemistic synonymic series in sermons and ritual discourse, and the incorporation of synonymic selection criteria into courses on speech culture and religious communication.

From a practical perspective, the creation of a contextual dictionary of religious synonyms would provide a valuable resource for imams, preachers, and authors of religious and educational texts. Such a dictionary should indicate the degree of formality, euphemistic potential, ritual applicability, and audience suitability of each lexical unit. This would help prevent excessive harshness, ambiguity, and stylistic inconsistency in religious discourse, thereby enhancing both the effectiveness and the cultural sensitivity of religious communication.

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