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APHORISMS IN THE AZERBAIJANI LANGUAGE, THEIR LINGUISTIC STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS AND FORM OF USE IN DICTIONARIES

Valiyeva Fatima Mais,

Associate Professor, Baku Slavic University (Baku, Azerbaijan)

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-7081-5374

Abstract. The article presented for discussion has a certain scholarly interest. The author summarizes facts discovered by modern linguists and, in the process, presents his perspective on the issue under study. Within the scope of this compact work, the key structural and syntactic features and characteristics of Azerbaijani aphorisms are nevertheless detailed. They are presented in their diversity, more precisely, as part of both narrative and interrogative sentences, including rhetorical ones. It is emphasized that they could have been created by an author (most often) or (less often) by a group of people. In any case, they always and universally express folk wisdom and therefore carry philosophical or cultural overtones.

In terms of stylistic possibilities, aphorisms are one of the most effective forms of expression in language. Aphorisms can be used in both artistic and formal contexts and are often chosen to influence people's emotional worlds. The stylistic features of aphorisms determine how the ideas they express are conveyed and how these ideas are perceived by the interlocutor. The article also analyzes in detail these stylistic possibilities of aphorisms.

Key words: aphorism, linguistic structure, Azerbaijani language, lexicography, phraseology.

Introduction. Aphorisms are linguistic units that expand the expressive potential of language and express a profound and generalized thought in a concise form. Aphorisms are widely used in fiction, journalistic, and scientific texts. In Azerbaijani linguistics, aphorisms have been studied primarily in the context of phraseology, stylistics, and lexicology (Aforizmlər: seçilmişlərdən seçilmişlər, 2012). Currently, a comprehensive study of the linguistic structural features of aphorisms and their presentation in dictionaries is a pressing scientific issue.

An aphorism is characterized as a linguistic unit expressing a brief, laconic, and logically complete thought. It serves to present a specific event, life experience, or philosophical conclusion in a generalized form. Aphorisms are usually authorial and reflect an individual worldview and intellectual position. From this perspective, the aphorism is assessed as a linguistic fact and a cultural-philosophical textual unit.

The phraseology of the modern Azerbaijani literary language possesses extremely rich and varied stylistic possibilities. Set phrases with a distinct national flavor, profound proverbs, wise sayings, poignant aphorisms, and beautiful phrases constitute the extremely rich artistic and exemplary fund of the Azerbaijani language (Qurbanov, 2019).

Although aphorisms in Azerbaijani are brief in expressiveness, they are quite meaningful in meaning. They are often built on figurative meaning and give the reader the opportunity to reflect deeply. The main purpose of aphorisms is to draw a general and universal conclusion without the need for lengthy explanations. This characteristic makes them a means of expression frequently used in journalism, art, and science.

The main goal of this article is to determine the place and functionality of aphorisms in the lexical system of the Azerbaijani language.

Results and Discussion. The term “aphorism” is used to denote a judgment or idea that is brief, concise, and philosophical in nature. In Azerbaijani, aphorisms are primarily authorial expressions reflecting the social and moral realities of a particular period (Azərbaycan dilinin izahlı lüğəti, 2006, p. 51). Their main characteristics are as follows:

- broad meaning;
- compact form of expression;
- generalizing and didactic nature;
- emotionally expressive tone.

These characteristics serve as the main criteria distinguishing aphorisms from proverbs and sayings (Aforizmlər və müdrik nəsihətlər, 1991).

Syntactically, aphorisms consist of simple and repetitive syntactic structures. However, they are quite complex in content and meaning.

Simple sentences: the idea or meaning is expressed briefly and concisely. For example: “Zaman hər şeyi həll edir”¹. Despite its simple syntactic structure, this sentence contains multiple layers of meaning.

Compound Sentences: Aphorisms sometimes use compound sentences, especially in the affirmative, conditional, and final forms. For example: “Əgər insan öz yolunu taparsa, heç bir şey onu saxlaya bilməz”.

In Azerbaijani, aphorisms are generally formed within a simple syntactic structure. Although declarative sentences predominate, rhetorical questions and conditional sentences are also common. For example, sentences like “İnsan özünü dərk etmədən dünyanı anlaya bilməz” are syntactically simple but semantically multilayered (Hacıyev, 1976).

The syntactic structure of aphorisms enhances their depth of meaning and expressive power. However, most often, this structure is contained within succinct and concise remarks. The explanation is simple: the author (and in some cases, the representatives of a collective creative team) needed to convey the deepest possible meaning in a particular aphorism. Therefore, the sentence itself is distinguished by relative simplicity of expression and clarity of style.

If this is indeed the case, then we have compelling reasons to argue that the syntactic structure of Azerbaijani aphorisms, firstly, is deeply meaningful, and secondly, due to its poignancy and brevity, has its own distinctive features. The creator of aphorisms aims, above all, to skillfully utilize the rich internal potential of the grammatical, logical, and structural capabilities and characteristics of the language. The harmonious combination of these linguistic features inherently enhances the expressiveness of aphorisms. Consequently, their dynamics increase in mathematical progression. And this, in turn, is a powerful stimulant of the forms of expression and the syntactic diversity of forms in the language – in our case, in modern Azerbaijani.

This evolving dynamic is such that, according to their syntactic norms, aphorisms can consist of both complex and simple (common, uncommon, or complex) sentences. In any case, they succinctly express the author’s central idea. Let us give one typical example: “Zaman hər şeyi dəyişdirir”. Let us examine the aphorism from the perspective of its internal content. In a simple and concise form, it expresses the main idea. In this case, it is monosyllabic. But other variants are also possible, where the syntactic structure allows for the expression of more complex authorial thoughts. For example:

“İnsan nə qədər özünü tanısa, başqalarını da o qədər yaxşı anlayar”. What characterizes the syntactic structure of the aphorism cited? In our opinion, the profound idea is manifested here by two consecutive subordinate clauses.

As noted at the very beginning of our article, they naturally strive to convey a complex idea in this way. Because aphorisms have two sides of the coin – explicit and implicit meanings – they symptomatically stimulate the reader.

For example: “İnsan bir dəfə dünyaya gəlir”. Syntactically, this is a simple, common sentence. However, it’s worth noting that the phrase/expression “dünyaya gəlir” is clearly associated with such a significant event as a person’s birth.

¹ Here and below are aphorisms used mainly in colloquial and everyday vocabulary, as well as in various sources.

Modern linguists have noted that the majority of Azerbaijani aphorisms are declarative sentences. However, it turns out that interrogative ones also occur. At first glance, this might seem like a personal expression of the author's will. However, if they contain a question, it carries a charge of philosophical force. As a rule, such questions force one to ponder the correct answer. In our opinion, the fact that they are less common quantitatively than declarative sentences only further demonstrates their mobility.

Let us give an example: "İnsan nə zaman başqasının dərini anlamağa başlayar?". It is easy to see that this is a question, and it's typical that the reader must answer it themselves. Moreover, the question can also be rhetorical, in which case it demands even greater independence from the reader.

This is confirmed by the following example: "Nə üçün güvənmək çətindir, amma inamsızlıq çox asandır?"

The semantics of aphorisms are typically figurative. Universal values, ethical norms, and philosophical conclusions are concentrated within a single expression. This ensures their universality across time and space (Aforizmlər: seçilmişlərdən seçilmişlər, 2012, p. 118).

Aphorisms are semantically multilayered. That is, a single sentence contains both concrete and figurative meanings. This feature enhances their power and lends the text multiple interpretations. Aphorisms rely largely on figurative meaning, and sometimes their explicit meaning can only be discerned by the reader or listener in different contexts.

Aphorisms often possess polysemy (multiple meanings). The presence of multiple meanings in a single sentence provides the reader with a variety of interpretations. This multiplicity deepens the meaning of the aphorism and leads to its being understood differently in different situations and contexts.

For example: "Gözlər insanın ruhunu göstərir".

The above sentence should be considered in two ways. A) The medical purpose, that is, the eye as an organ of vision; B) Not the physical, but the figurative meaning, as an aphoristic reflection of the individual's psychological world, primarily its emotional one. Moreover, it seems to us difficult to distinguish the stylistic dominant in this aphorism – the physical or the emotive concept. This example alone clearly demonstrates the polysemy of Azerbaijani aphorisms, which, upon closer examination, undoubtedly convey a broader idea than might appear at first glance.

The figurative and metaphorical meaning of Azerbaijani aphorisms is a panacea for accurately deciphering their meanings, both literal and figurative. But metaphorization, of course, enriches them, imbuing them with a semantic meaning that makes readers pause and reflect. Moreover, taking into account the irrefutable fact of a fairly solid baggage of lexical metaphors in the modern Azerbaijani language, both professional scientists and ordinary readers have the opportunity to compare and contrast different objects with a particular event or concept.

Zaman bir çay kimi axır – If the beginning of the aphorism nominatively denotes its time, the second part of the sentence is a lexical metaphor, compared to a river. If we draw a line between the two parts of the phrase, it becomes clear: the main idea is contained in the nature of time itself. Thus, the entire sentence acquires a philosophical meaning. After all, a river is a prototype of fluidity, the uneven movement of waters, and their instability.

It is significant that the syntactic structure of national aphorisms often contains a certain element of generalization. The conclusions, as a rule, are also varied and diverse. In particular, they are quite capable of reflecting real events, current situations, and human behavior. This triad clearly testifies to the acquisition of positive life experience, on the one hand, and philosophical reflection, on the other. Thus, the overall meaning of the aphorisms expands.

"Həyat bir yolculuqdur, amma nə qədər uzun olursa olsun, sona çatır".

If the previous aphorism associatively bridged the gap between time and the river, here the chronotope of time illustrates a change in life, recording an experience that is clear to everyone. Thus, aphorisms are born in the form of statements that literally have enduring meaning. In fact, this is proof of the uniqueness and universality of time as a global philosophical concept, enshrined in linguistics.

Azerbaijani aphorisms are imbued with elements of irony, subtle humor, and even paradox. The tangle of contradictory thoughts seems to provoke readers to serious reflection with corresponding consequences. Irony and humor only enhance the allegory.

“Həyat ən gözəl şəkildə başladığı yerdə sona çatır”.

In this case, the sentence is not so much ironic as it expresses a paradox. It lies in the simultaneous contrast between two directly antonymous (beginning and end) phases of life. This motivates the modern reader to more deeply appreciate the frailty of existence, the fleeting nature of life.

From all of the above, one can draw the preliminary conclusion that brevity and simplicity are outwardly conventional attributes that actually deepen their moral and ethical meaning. So the situation is essentially analogous to *paremias*, where clarity of style, coupled with inner content, enriches the overall meaning of aphorisms with multiple layers of meaning.

Let us give an example:

“Sözlər bəzən daha çox təsir edir”.

This is a simple sentence, but if we break it down into three components at a conditional associative level, we believe each of these internal elements helps us better understand not only human behavior but also the fluidity of the Azerbaijani language and its communication factors.

It is also true that some aphorisms can have a positive impact on a person's emotional state. True, this influence is indirect; however, its figurative and metaphorical language more accurately captures the essence of the aphorism, making it vivid, memorable, and, since it influences emotions, somewhat touching.

A typical example:

“Ümid heç vaxt itirilməz”

Unlike the one above, this sentence is simple, yet saturated with various emotions. This is expressed in a bright hope for a better future. Here, strong and noble feelings prevail and should, in theory, evoke a corresponding response in the reader.

By analyzing Azerbaijani aphorisms, we came to some interesting conclusions. In particular, it turns out that when compared, the meaning of certain ideas coincides. In any case, the central links of the aphorisms are identical or very similar to one another. For example, a conflict between ideas, situations, or events flares up, and this naturally evokes divergent associations in the reader. Thus, the meaning of the aphorisms expands.

“Başqalarının səhvlərini bağışlamaq çətindir, amma öz səhvlərini anlamaq daha da çətindir”.

This compound sentence contains two situations that are polar opposites in meaning. On the one hand, they are diametrically opposed, yet on the other, they are closely related. Contradictions and the possibility of unification, figuratively speaking, in a single person based on a common idea – this is the decisive understanding of the aphorism.

The palette of aphorisms in the Azerbaijani language is very rich. Above all, they are characterized by a wide arsenal of ideological and artistic devices. Among them, the presence of lexical metaphors, antonyms, epithets, and parallelism is noteworthy. Clearly, they “organically enhance the impact on the emotional sphere of the individual, simultaneously facilitating their more rapid memorization” (Hacıyev, 1976, p. 52).

The fact that this phenomenon exists and is fully capable of being reproduced in speech is demonstrated by the functioning of the aforementioned linguistic devices in aphorisms. Thus, metaphors in them both color the speech and deepen the understanding of the text. In turn, antonyms automatically direct readers' attention to the use of a similar idea.

Parallelism performs virtually the same function. According to the classic rule, these are sentences of identical structure that follow in strict sequence to emphasize a specific point: “Söz gözəl olar, əgər əməllər onu tamamlayarsa”.

Finally, we must mention phonetic matches and mismatches. The law of harmony in the Azerbaijani language is well-known, and in accordance with it, sentence parts in aphorisms are also presented rhythmically. The harmony of individual lexemes creates an additional dynamic effect. The most frequently observed phonetic phenomena are alliteration and assonance.

“Sözümüz sərhəd tanımaz...” (Canlı saz-söz abidəimiz. <https://medeniyyet.info.az/page/news/21440/Canli-sazsoz-Abidemiz-.html>)

The repetition of the “s” sound here reinforces the melodic rhythm and ensures the aphorism’s memorization.

Aphorisms often express complex content in a simple manner. These are, naturally, complex thoughts expressed in simple sentences. However, in some cases, aphorisms can also employ more complex syntactic structures. In this case, the sentence remains concise, but the expressed idea becomes broader and more multilayered.

In Azerbaijani lexicography, aphorisms are primarily recorded in explanatory and phraseological dictionaries. In explanatory dictionaries, aphorisms are often presented as example sentences or quotations (Azərbaycan dili antologiyası, 2012, p. 214). In phraseological dictionaries, they are presented as set expressions. Specialized aphoristic dictionaries indicate the author, source, and semantic explanation of the expression, facilitating their use in scholarly communication (Azərbaycan dilinin izahlı lüğəti, 2006, p. 9). Since aphorisms are short and meaningful expressions, they are presented in dictionaries according to a specific structure and formatting rules. Since the primary goal of dictionaries is to systematically present the wealth of words and expressions in a language, aphorisms are also presented in a specific style and order. Since aphorisms are often independent expressions reflecting the worldview of a specific text or author, their presentation in dictionaries is carefully considered from both a semantic and stylistic perspective.

Fuzuli’s poetry is rich in clear, wise words – aphorisms. The poet’s wise words also played a significant role in popularizing Fuzuli’s poetry, which is the memory of the Azerbaijani people and has enjoyed universal respect throughout the Islamic East for centuries. Leaving aside poems that can be considered the best examples of describing the world of love and affection, let us analyze several examples of the poet’s purely socially significant words. The poet demonstrates that:

Cənnəti almaq olmaz axça ilə,
Girmək olmaz behiştə rüsvət ilə.

If everything could be obtained through bribery and career advancement, then the arena of talent, the world of crafts, and the paradise of poetry could not be entered artificially.

In this ghazal, the poet preaches bold and courageous qualities such as willpower, integrity, and independent thinking:

Gühər tək qılma təğyiri-təbiət, dəlsələr bağrın,
Qərar et hər havada, olma şurəngiz dərya tək (Azərbaycan dili antologiyası, 2012, p.405).

The format of aphorisms in dictionaries is based on the following basic principles:

Aphorisms in dictionaries are usually presented in a short and concise form. Objectively speaking, this is a separate and important page of scientific research. Lexicographers, understandably, strive to determine the meaning of a particular aphorism in the most appropriate form. As in terminology, everything here should be presented, if possible, unambiguously, and also closely linked to the context. This context, incidentally, can be not only a purely linguistic text but also have a psychological, socio-philosophical, and literary/artistic bent.

“Gözlər insanın ruhunu göstərir” / “Gözlər, insan ruhunu ətrafa əks etdirən aynadır” (Müsləman dünyasının gönderisi)

This is undoubtedly a colorful aphorism. It helps to deeply reveal both the psychological world and the emotional state of a person, using the simplest linguistic means. Scholars have noted that Azerbaijani aphorisms of this type are primarily used in literature and psychology.

Both in the annotation and at the very beginning of this article, we acknowledged the authorship of the aphorisms and specifically emphasized the individual nature of their creation. This same principle is fully observed in lexicography. Moreover, individual authorship clarifies the essence of the aphorism, since each creator possesses their own system of linguistic relationships.

“Həyat qısa, sənə verilən vaxt isə qiymətlidir” (Seneka)

Or “Həyat bir silsilədir; Bir fəsil başqa fəsil üçün bir fasilədir” (Əbu Turxan)

This example is directly attributed to a specific author, who, as we know, was a great philosopher (Seneka) and, in his own spirit and style, demonstrates the value and importance of the category of time.

Aphorisms in dictionaries are often formatted as short sentences or fragments of text. Since an aphorism is intended to convey the main idea in a few words, dictionary compilers are obliged to present them in a minimalist style. In some cases, several aphorisms are listed one after another, relating to the same topic or author. For example:

“Sözlər bir insanın düşüncə gücünü göstərir”.

“Sözlərin dəyəri, onların arxasında duran mənədadır”.

“Sözlər, həm insanı yıxa, həm də ucalda bilər”.

“Sözlər fikirlərimizin qiyafətləridir”.

Aphorisms may be presented differently in different types of dictionaries. For example, while general language dictionaries present aphorisms in a simplified form, philosophical or literary dictionaries present them in more detail, in various contexts and in relation to the authors' worldviews.

In general language dictionaries, aphorisms are presented simply as their meaning or as a well-known expression.

In philosophical and literary dictionaries, the meaning and analysis of the aphorism, as well as its corresponding philosophical, social, or literary significance, are explained in detail.

Example:

In a general language dictionary: “Həyat qısa, zaman isə qiymətlidir”

In the philosophical dictionary this aphorism emphasizes the importance of appreciating one's life to the fullest, expressing the boundless and extraordinary nature of time. It is linked to the principle of the 'valuation of time' promoted by Stoic philosophy.

Lexicographers also consider such options as the use of synonyms in the text, which facilitates the understanding of Azerbaijani aphorisms in their various forms.

We will provide examples of the use of synonyms.

“Sözlər bəzən daha çox təsir edir”.

Option 1. Synonyms: “Bəzən sözlər davranışdan daha çox gücə sahib olur”

Option 2. “Sözlər çox zaman hərəkətlərdən daha böyük təsirə malikdir”

As with individual terms, in lexicography, aphorisms are often accompanied by laconic commentary. Special explanations clarify the general meaning of the aphorism, define its main idea, and demonstrate its potential for use in various types of texts.

“İnsan bir dəfə özünü taparsa, dünyanı dəyişdirə bilər”.

Here's a commentary on this aphorism: here, like the milestones of some significant phenomenon, factors of psychological self-knowledge, emotional state, and a person's peace and self-confidence are simultaneously present. In summary, it can be concluded that this aphorism captures changes at all the above-mentioned levels, with the individual at the center of attention.

In studying the various functions of aphorisms in modern Azerbaijani, contextual analysis is of no small importance. It is inappropriate to examine them outside of their specific context, as it naturally carries both psychological, ideological, and philosophical subtext. At times, they can be closely linked by a single idea.

“Zaman hər şeyi dəyişdirir”

Or “Zaman hər şeyin dəyərini göstərir”

Here's a contextual analysis: This aphorism contains a philosophical thought that once again emphasizes the transience of social existence, nature, a particular phenomenon, event, and reproductive experience, etc. The idea of the infinity of both nature and time runs through it like a red thread.

Conclusion. Thus, from all of the above in our article, the following conclusions and generalizations can be drawn: aphorisms in the Azerbaijani language represent an important and striking fragment in the overall lexical-semantic picture. Both their linguistic and structural features undoubtedly enrich the language, as they draw on cultural, spiritual, and aesthetic values. The use of national aphorisms in lexicography is a separate and responsible task for dictionary creators. The linguistic and structural features of Azerbaijani aphorisms are so significant that they simultaneously enrich the lexical and semantic field of ideas and figurative expressions. They are clearly reflected in various types of structures. A correct understanding of aphorisms confirms their profound meaning and clearly indicates their significant linguistic potential. The stylistic quality of the aphorisms, in turn, creates a powerful aura that gives a corresponding impetus to their central meaning. This is facilitated by their reliance on the emotional sphere of the individual, on the one hand, and on mentality, on the other. And what is imprinted in people's memory is all the more associated with its profound meaning and inner content. This allows us to objectively evaluate the main features and characteristics of Azerbaijani aphorisms from linguistic, psychological, philosophical, and cultural perspectives.

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