
Enantiosemy as a semiotic phenomenon

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Abstract: This article examines enantiosemy, one of the less-studied phenomena in linguistics. The theoretical basis of the research is the work of the 19th-century linguist Vikentiy Ivanovich Shcherl (1843–1906), entitled “*On Words with Opposite Meanings (On Enantiosemy)*”. In this work, the author substantiates those words can simultaneously express mutually opposite meanings and associates this phenomenon with the broader scope of polysemy in the early stages of language development. The article explains the essence of enantiosemy and demonstrates that, unlike antonymy, it is related to polysemy. It is noted that, depending on the context, polysemous words may develop different semantic nuances, homonymy, and internal opposition of meanings. The formation of enantiosemy is linked to the process of speech, and it is emphasized that changes in the emotional load of a word may gradually become a linguistic fact. The study analyzes the manifestations of enantiosemy in the Azerbaijani language. It is shown that this phenomenon is particularly common in verbs, with examples such as *qaralamaq* and *qorxmaq*. Additionally, in Azerbaijani language such words as *yaman*, *bəla*, and *alçaq*, which carry both positive and negative meanings, are examined. The historical semantics of these words are traced based on examples from classical literature and folklore. In conclusion, it is stated that enantiosemy is a rare but existing semantic phenomenon in the Azerbaijani language, and that context plays a decisive role in its correct interpretation. In conclusion, it is also noted that, as in polysemy and homonymy, the specific meaning of words in enantiosemy is determined by context.

Keywords: semiotics; polysemy; semantic change; enantiosemy; internal oppositional meaning

1. Introduction

The lexical meaning of a word is constantly changing and expanding in connection with the history of a people and the development of the language. As a result of lexical-semantic changes, polysemy emerges, and in this process individual meanings may gradually become independent. As a result of semantic development, different meanings, even mutually opposite ones, may arise from the same root. In such cases, the coexistence of opposite meanings within a single word is explained as enantiosemy (internal oppositional meaning) [1, pp. 26-30]. This phenomenon is interpreted within the framework of semantic opposition and polysemy and is regarded as a noteworthy phenomenon of lexical semantics [2, pp. 80-85]. V.I.Shcherl, in his work, specifically notes that such ambiguity, whereby identical sound forms or complexes combine opposite meanings, is particularly characteristic of ancient languages and the languages of primitive societies: the more ancient the language and the more primitive the society, the more frequently this phenomenon occurs; conversely, as a language develops and a society becomes more cultured and educated, the ability to differentiate meanings increases, and enantiosemy becomes less frequent (Shcherl, 1884, cited in Cruse, 1986 [2, p. 82]).

Although this important phenomenon has long been known in linguistics, it has not yet been sufficiently clarified; it has either received little attention or has not been thoroughly analyzed, at best being limited to vague examples. Therefore, a broader analysis of enantiosemy based on various examples appears to be appropriate.

The semantic nature of a word changes as a result of the speech process, in which its position and function must not be overlooked. The meaning of a word and its grammatical features change simultaneously, and the word enters speech in a formed state. Depending on the context, the meaning expressed by the word becomes clear. As can be seen, the conditions of realization obscure all meanings of the word except the one used in a particular instance. When a word is repeatedly used in the same syntactic position, it becomes fixed in that position. Any innovation in the meaning or function of a word is either accepted or rejected by linguistic norms. If accepted, it becomes established within the language system, which then regulates its meaning and function. Through use in a new syntactic position, the word acquires new categorial features. The common origin between the old and new features motivates and preserves the new property, making the word understandable and enabling its use in the language. As the word acquires new qualities, it loses its old ones, and its morphological elements become lexicalized and fossilized. As a result, the word functions as a lexical unit within its part of speech, on an equal footing with other units of that category, since changes in its semantic nature are a product of the speech process.

The semantic realization of a word and the specification of its meaning are also closely connected with context and the communicative environment. In this regard, presupposition plays an important role. As noted, “presupposition permeates all levels of communication—from simple everyday conversations to complex professional discourses, and it is impossible to imagine communicative acts and texts without it” [3, p. 91]. This demonstrates that the meaning in which a word is used is determined not only by its internal semantic potential but also by context and the system of prior knowledge. These factors play a decisive role in the correct interpretation of such complex semantic phenomena as enantiosemy.

2. Object and subject of research

The object of the research is enantiosemy as a semantic and semiotic phenomenon in language, particularly in the Azerbaijani language.

The subject of the research is the semantic nature, mechanisms of formation, and contextual realization of enantiosemy, as well as its manifestation in lexical units (especially verbs and culturally significant words) and its relation to polysemy, semantic change, and communicative factors.

3. Target of research

The aim of this study is to examine enantiosemy as a complex semantic phenomenon, to clarify its relationship with polysemy and semantic change, and to analyze its functional realization in the Azerbaijani language within different linguistic and cultural contexts.

4. Literature analysis

The phenomenon of enantiosemy has been examined within the broader framework of lexical semantics, semantic change, and polysemy. Foundational theoretical approaches to lexical meaning and its development are provided in the works of D.Geeraerts [1] and D.A.Cruse [2]. D.Geeraerts emphasizes the dynamic nature of lexical meaning, highlighting processes such as semantic extension, polysemy, and meaning differentiation, which create conditions for the emergence of semantically opposed meanings within a single lexical unit [1]. Similarly, D.A.Cruse analyzes the relationships between polysemy, antonymy, and semantic opposition, offering a framework in which enantiosemy can be interpreted as a special case of semantic complexity within the lexicon [2].

In the context of Turkic linguistics, the historical-semantic development of lexical units has been extensively documented. The work of G.Clauson provides a comprehensive etymological

account of pre-thirteenth-century Turkic vocabulary, tracing semantic shifts and demonstrating how meanings evolve and diverge over time [4]. This is complemented by classical sources such as Mahmud al-Kashgari's "Divanu Lugati't-Turk", which records early semantic features of Turkic words and offers valuable evidence of their polysemous and context-dependent usage [5].

A significant contribution to understanding semantic development in Azerbaijani linguistics is made by İ.Mammadov, who analyzes lexical semantics and the mechanisms of meaning formation in the Azerbaijani language [6]. Further insights into lexical structure and semantic processes are provided by H.Hasanov, who examines the vocabulary system of modern Azerbaijani, including polysemy and semantic variation [7]. Studies by T.Hajiyev [8] and E.Azizov [9] contribute to the historical and dialectological perspectives, demonstrating how semantic features are preserved or transformed across different stages of language development and regional varieties.

The role of cultural and literary sources in preserving and reflecting semantic phenomena is particularly evident in Azerbaijani folklore and classical literature. Collections such as "Azerbaijan dastans" [10], "Folk poets" [11], and the epic "Kitabi-Dede Gorgud" [12] provide rich material illustrating the contextual use of lexical units with divergent meanings. These texts reveal that enantiosemy is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a stylistic and cultural device, contributing to expressiveness, imagery, and semantic depth in discourse. Similarly, "Kutadgu Bilig" offers historical examples of semantic variation and contextual meaning realization in Turkic literary tradition [13].

From an etymological perspective, studies such as that of F.Jalilov investigate the development of specific lexical roots (e.g., *al*), demonstrating how semantic expansion and transformation can lead to the emergence of contrasting meanings within related forms [14]. This supports the view that enantiosemy is closely linked to diachronic processes of semantic change.

In recent linguistic research, pragmatic factors have also been recognized as essential in understanding meaning realization. The study by K.Habibova highlights the role of presupposition in communication, emphasizing that meaning is not solely determined by lexical structure but also by contextual and cognitive factors [3]. This perspective is particularly relevant for enantiosemy, where the interpretation of opposite meanings within a single word depends heavily on context and shared knowledge.

Overall, the reviewed literature demonstrates that enantiosemy emerges at the intersection of polysemy, semantic change, and contextual interpretation. While general theoretical frameworks are well established, the specific analysis of enantiosemy in Azerbaijani and Turkic languages remains relatively underexplored, which underscores the relevance and necessity of the present study.

5. Research methods and materials

The present study is based on a combination of theoretical and empirical methods aimed at analyzing enantiosemy as a semantic phenomenon. The primary methodological approach includes descriptive and analytical methods, which are used to examine the semantic structure of lexical units and to identify cases of enantiosemy in the Azerbaijani language.

A comparative method is applied to relate enantiosemy to other semantic phenomena such as polysemy, homonymy, and semantic opposition, drawing on established frameworks in lexical semantics [1; 2]. In addition, a diachronic approach is employed to trace the historical development of lexical meanings and to reveal the origins of semantic opposition within individual words, particularly in Turkic languages.

The empirical material of the study consists of lexical units selected from various sources, including explanatory dictionaries, classical literary texts, and folklore materials. Special attention is given to examples drawn from Azerbaijani epics and literary works, such as "Kitabi-Dede Gorgud" [12; 15], as well as historical sources including Mahmud al-Kashgari's "Divanu Lugati't-Turk" [5] and Yusuf Has Hajib's "Kutadgu Bilig" [13]. These sources provide evidence of semantic

variation and the coexistence of opposite meanings within single lexical units across different historical periods.

6. Research results

In general, semantic change in a word can be defined within the language system by taking into account its lexical meaning, its relationship with directly associated words, and its realization within textual and situational contexts, as follows:

- 1) Various semantic nuances of a polysemous word are manifested.
- 2) One of the meanings of a word becomes detached and develops toward homonymy.
- 3) Opposite meanings emerge from a single word.

The manifestation of different semantic nuances of polysemous words has been widely discussed in Azerbaijani linguistics, and this process has been sufficiently examined [6].

Word formation through semantic means can be viewed as the emergence of homonyms as a result of the splitting of a polysemous word. As a new meaning displaces the old one, different words of the same origin are effectively formed.

The separation of mutually opposite meanings from a single word is also one of the important aspects of semantic word formation. Such meanings are referred to in linguistics as enantiosemy [7, p. 115]. It should be noted that in studies devoted to Turkic languages, enantiosemy (internal oppositional meaning) has not been sufficiently investigated based on their linguistic material.

Enantiosemy is often explained by the fact that, in ancient times, roots and their derivatives possessed very broad and highly indefinite meanings. Over time, numerous semantic nuances gradually emerged and branched into independent categories, resulting in meanings that, despite their common origin, acquired distinct specificity.

The polysemantic nature of ancient root words, which is undoubtedly one of their most characteristic features, is considered one of the main causes of enantiosemy. Even in the earliest stages of language development, concepts and notions that were inherently vague and interconnected were fixed within the same root, which, although derived from a common idea, combined two mutually opposite meanings. In addition, many words may function in both broad and narrow senses, with ironic, sarcastic, or pejorative connotations, as well as in literal or figurative meanings.

There is no doubt that, in the earliest periods of language development, due to the polysemy and vagueness of words, people encountered greater difficulties in explaining things to one another compared to later periods. However, it should also be noted that speakers have always made use of multiple meanings to enrich and enliven their speech. In some cases, enantiosemy may appear accidental, being conditioned by the richness and expressive potential of ancient roots. The development of oppositions from general conceptual domains should be considered not accidental but logical. Such words add imagery and semantic depth to speech. They are frequently used in literary creativity, journalism, and everyday communication to create effects of ambiguity, irony, and wordplay. Furthermore, the emergence and spread of such lexical units may reflect communicative norms and the mechanisms of language functioning.

Words that acquire oppositional semantic shades through enantiosemy and become independent units' function within different parts of speech, particularly nouns and verbs. Internal oppositional meaning is especially common in verbs.

The verb *qaralamaq* is used in Azerbaijani both in the meanings of "to write" and "to cross out/erase." In the sense of writing: "*Bir şey qarala, konfransa gedək*" ("Write something quickly, and let us go to the conference"). In the sense of erasing: "*Yazdıqlarının hamısını qarala. Bunların heç biri yaramır*" ("Cross out everything you have written. None of it is suitable").

The verb *keçinmək* is employed both in the meaning of "to live modestly, to make ends meet" and "to pass away." In the sense of living: "*Kənd camaatı birtəhər keçinirdi*" ("The villagers

somehow managed to get by”). In the sense of dying: “*O dünən keçindi*” (“He passed away yesterday”).

The verb *qorxmaq* conveys both the meanings of “to be afraid of, to avoid” and “to respect.” In the sense of fear: “*Qaranlıqdan qorxma*” (“Do not be afraid of the dark”). In the sense of respect: “*Hamı atamdan qorxurdu*” (“Everyone feared [i.e., respected] my father”).

In the Azerbaijani language, the words *yaman* and *bəla*, which carry both positive and negative meanings, are noteworthy examples of enantiosemy. Among such lexical units, the following are particularly prominent and actively used.

The word *yaman* demonstrates the coexistence of opposite meanings, functioning in parallel with its original semantic value. While the primary meaning of some words (e.g., *yazıq*) is preserved only in historical texts, *yaman* is used in both positive and negative senses in modern Azerbaijani. In the negative sense: “*Zəmanə yaman dəyişildi*” (“Times have changed for the worse”); “*Bu dünyada üç şey bəladır: yaman oğul, yaman arvad, yaman at*” (“There are three troubles in this world: a bad son, a bad wife, and a bad horse”). In the positive sense: “*Ancaq onu xeyli vaxtdır görmürəm, ürəyim yaman istəyir*” (“I have not seen him for a long time; I miss him greatly”); “*Qız Afiqin yaman xoşuna gəlirdi*” (“The girl liked Afig very much”); “*Yaman danışdı*” (“He spoke very well”).

In folk literature the word is more frequently encountered in its negative meaning, as in: “*Yaxın yoldaş yaman gündə sınınar*” (“A close friend is tested in bad times”); “*Aman, aman oldu, gəl, halım yaman oldu, gəl*” (“Alas, alas, come, my condition has become bad, come”), among others. Historically, this word was primarily used in a negative sense; however, due to its active usage in speech, it later acquired a positive semantic nuance, which appears to be a relatively recent development.

The word *bəla* is also among those lexical units that acquire both positive and negative semantic connotations. In its negative sense: “‘*Axl, o bəlanın adı nədir?*’, *deyə israr etdim*” (“‘What is the name of that trouble?’, I insisted”); “*Qarğa çox bildiyindən bəlaya düşər*” (“A crow suffers misfortune because of its excessive cleverness”) (Proverb). In its positive sense: “*Zalım balası lap bəladır, elə bil od-alovdur*” (“That boy is truly impressive, like fire and flame”).

In certain cases, particularly in artistic discourse, both semantic variants of this word are employed to create heightened emotional expressiveness. For example: “*Bu qız bəladır*” (“This girl is amazing” — in a positive sense); “*Axırı nə oldu? Onun başına gör nə bəla gəldi...*” (“What happened in the end? Just look what trouble befell him...”).

Traces of enantiosemy can still be observed in the Azerbaijani language today. The word *alçaq* may be regarded as a prominent example of this phenomenon. In explanatory dictionaries of Azerbaijani, *alçaq* is recorded with the meaning “a place of low height” or “a place slightly elevated above ground level.” In its figurative usage, however, the word acquires a negative semantic value, denoting “a base or despicable person” (*alçaq adam*, “a despicable person”; *alçaq hərəkət*, “a vile act”).

In the 1969 edition of Azerbaijani epics, in the commentary to the episode “Koroğlu and Dali Hasan,” examples are provided from a version of the “Koroglu” epic published in 1688 in Armenian sources. In one manuscript of “Koroglu” written in the Armenian script, the following variant of a stanza is attested:

“*İgid alçaq gərək, alçaq,
Atı yüyrək, kəndi qoçaq,
Hər yanında ciftə, bıçaq,
Belində qılıncı gərək*” [10, p. 401].
 (“A brave man should be humble,
His horse swift, he himself courageous,
With a gun and a knife at his side,
And a sword at his waist”).

This goshma was not included in the main text of the “Koroglu” epic. One possible reason for its exclusion may have been the perceived inappropriateness of the usage of the word *alçaq* in this context.

Indeed, in the modern understanding, the concept of bravery (*igidlik*) does not correspond to the negative meaning of *alçaqlıq* (“lowliness, baseness”). There is no doubt that, regardless of the specific meaning in which the word *alçaq* is used in this stanza, it clearly carries a positive connotation. A similar example is found in the epic “Azatinli Amrakh”:

*“Alçaqdan ucaya gün düşən kimi,
Cəmi durnalara him düşən kimi,
Cim, əlif altından mim düşən kimi,
Camalın şöləsi mahala düşmüş”* [10, p. 68].
 (“Like sunlight falling from low to high places,
Like a signal spreading among all the cranes,
Like the letter ‘mim’ emerging beneath ‘jim’ and ‘alif’,
The radiance of your beauty has spread across the land”).

The idea of sunlight falling from a lower place to a higher one does not conform to logical reasoning, which suggests that *alçaq* is not used here in its literal sense.

An example from the didactic preface (*ustadname*) of the epic “*Tahir and Zohra*” is also noteworthy:

*“Qoçaqdan olubsan, qoçaq olgunan,
Qadadan, bəladan qaçaq olgunan,
Sən açıq ol, mərd ol, alçaq olgunan,
Demə varım çoxdu, pulum yaxşıdı”* [17, p. 23].
 (“If you are born of the brave, be brave,
Avoid trouble and misfortune,
Be open, be courageous, be humble,
Do not boast that you are wealthy or well-off”).

In the example cited from Khasta Gasym, the word *alçaq* is used in the meaning of “noble, humble.” In the collection “*El şairləri*”, compiled by Salman Mumtaz and Hummat Alizade and published in 1935, this goshma by Khasta Gasym appears in the following variant:

*“Qoçaqdan olubsan, sən də qoçaq ol,
Qadadan, bəladan gen gəz, qaçaq ol,
Açıq qabaxlı ol, mədam alçaq ol,
Demə pulum vardır, malım yaxşıdı”* [11, p. 162].
 (“If you are born of the brave, be brave yourself,
Keep away from trouble and misfortune,
Be open-hearted, and always remain humble,
Do not boast that you are wealthy and prosperous”).

This variant of the poem “*Yaxshydy*” is considered more accurate. In this version as well, the word *alçaq* is used with a positive meaning. As can be observed, the word *alçaq* has existed in the Azerbaijani language since ancient times in terms of its phonetic structure; however, it has undergone semantic change and has lost its original meaning. Nevertheless, its initial semantic value has been preserved in the language of epic texts.

In “*Divanu Lugati't-Turk*” by Mahmud al-Kashgari, the word *alçaq* is recorded with meanings such as “gentle” and “refined” [5, p. 126]. In early Turkic lexicographical sources, the meanings “humble” and “mild” are also foregrounded, and several examples from Kutadgu Bilig are provided to illustrate this usage [4, p. 134; 13, pp. 85-90].

It is noteworthy that in the epic “*Kitabi-Dede Gorgud*” the semantics of the word *alçaq* reflects both meanings — “low” and “high.” Consider the following example from the epic:

“Alan-alçaq həva yerdən gələn arğış; Qışda-yazda qarı-buzı əriməyən Qazılıq tağına gəldi çıxdı. Alçaqdan yuca yerlərə çapub çıxdı” (“The wind blowing over low plains rises from the

ground; it reached and climbed Mount Gazylyg, where snow and ice do not melt in winter or summer. It ascended from low places to high ones”) [15, p. 38].

In these sentences, the word *alçaq* is used with different semantic nuances. In the first instance, *alçaq* conveys the meaning of “elevated,” whereas in the second it expresses the meaning of “low.”

The word *alçaq* is also used in the sense of “noble, humble” in the well-known ghazal by Həsənoğlu, “*Necəsin, gəl, ey yüzi ağum bənüm*”: “*Hüsn içində sana manənd olmaya, Əsli yuca, könli alçağum bənüm*” (“Among beauties there is none like you; My origin is noble, yet my heart is humble”).

Discussing the language of this ghazal, Professor T.Hajiyev explains the word *alçaq* as follows: “While adhering to the formal requirements of classical poetic genres, elements of folk literary expression have left a clear trace in the language of the ghazal... ‘əsli yuca’ (of noble origin), ‘könlü alçaq’ (simple, humble in meaning) — this idiom, also found in *Dede Gorgud*, has been preserved in our modern dialects as well” [8, p. 89].

The dictionary meaning of *alçaq* as “a place of relatively low height” (e.g., *alçaq dağ* — “low mountain,” *alçaq ev* — “low house,” *alçaq boy* — “short stature,” *alçaq divar* — “low wall”) is also noteworthy. Indeed, within the semantics of *alçaq*, a notion of elevation is still preserved: although it does not denote great height, it nevertheless implies a certain degree of elevation. Thus, when referring to an *alçaq dağ* (“low mountain”), one still implies a mountain, that is, an elevated object.

Etymologically, the word *alçaq* is assumed to derive from the root *al / ala*, which historically conveyed the meanings of “large” or “high.” This assumption, however, is presented here as a hypothesis. It is well established that the root *al / ala* in Turkic languages has been used with meanings such as “high,” “elevated,” and “great.” It has been noted in linguistics that oronyms such as *Alatau* and *Altay* originate from the root *al*, expressing the meaning of “high mountains.” In some Caucasian languages, the word *al* even denotes “sky” or “god” [14, p. 89]. In modern Turkish, the word *ala* is still used in the sense of “great,” as in: “*Bundan ala təhdit mi olur*” (“What could be a greater threat than this?”).

In the epic *Kitabi-Dede Gorgud*, the word *ala* is also used in several instances with the meaning of “large” or “great,” for example: “*Üç yerdə dəpə kibi taş yığdı, ala qollu sapanın əlinə aldı*” (“He piled up stones in three places like hills and took the large-armed sling into his hand”); “*Altundağı alaca atun nə ögərsən? Ala başlu keçimcə gəlməz mana!*” (“Why do you praise the piebald horse beneath you? It cannot compare to my large-headed ram!”); “*Belündə toqsan oqun nə ögərsən, mərə kafər? Ala qollu sapanımca gəlməz mana*” (“Why do you boast of the ninety arrows at your waist, infidel? They cannot compare to my large-armed sling”) [12, p. 43].

In linguistics it has been noted that the oronyms *Alatau*, *Alp Mountains*, and *Altay* are derived from the root *al* and express the meaning of “high” or “great mountains.” In the language of epics, oronyms formed with the word *ala* are also attested. In the epic *Kitabi-Dede Gorgud*, examples include mountains *Alajalar* and *Ala dağ*: “*Axan duru suların xəbər keçə, ərquru yatan Ala dağdan ətər aşar*” (“News passes from the flowing clear waters, crossing over the wide-spread Ala Mountain”) [12, p. 43]; “*Arqu beli Ala tağdan dünin aşdım*” (“Last night I crossed the ridge of the Ala Mountain”) [12, p. 105]; “*Sən gedəli, xanım, ərquru yatan Ala tağların avlanmamışdır*” (“Since you left, my lady, the wide-spread Ala Mountains have not been hunted”) [12, p. 105]; “*Arquru yatan ala tağlar ətəginə ava vardın*” (“You went hunting at the foot of the wide-spread Ala Mountains”) [12, p. 105].

It has also been indicated in linguistics that words such as *alp*, *yalçın*, and *yal* originate from the meaning of elevation associated with the root *al* [14, p. 168]. It may therefore be assumed that the first component of the word *alçaq* is likewise derived from *al / ala*.

The meaning “humble, noble,” recorded in written monuments and in Mahmud al-Kashgari’s “*Divanu Lügati’t-Türk*”, appears to have developed from the notion of elevation and can be regarded as a derivative of it. Indeed, qualities such as nobility and humility may be viewed as attributes associated with elevated status.

In modern usage, the figurative meaning of *alçaq* (“a base or despicable person”) stands in contrast to the meanings “humble,” “gentle,” and “noble” attested in early Turkic lexicography. It may thus be concluded that both the primary and figurative meanings of this word in the modern language have developed on the basis of internal oppositional meaning (enantiosemy).

In contemporary Azerbaijani the meaning of elevation associated with *alçaq* has been preserved in expressions such as *Alçaq dağları yaratmaq* (“to create low mountains”). In the Gazakh dialect (Azerbaijan region), the word retains the meaning “simple,” while in the Ordubad dialect it preserves its original semantics in the expression *alçaq könül* (“kind-hearted, humble”) [9, p. 44]. In modern Turkic languages, particularly Turkish, Turkmen, and others, the word *alçaq* remains actively used in the sense of “noble” and “humble.”

In regions such as Zagatala and Nakhchivan, the idiomatic expression *alçaq könüllü* (“humble, modest”) is also observed in this meaning. In the language of Hasanoglu and İ. Nasimi, as well as in dialects and vernaculars, the word does not appear independently but has been preserved in a fossilized form within the expression *alçaq könül*. In the language of epics, however, *alçaq* functions both as part of expressions and as an independent lexical unit with the meanings “elevated,” “kind-natured,” “noble,” and “humble.” Since in modern Azerbaijani the word is no longer used with the meanings “noble” and “humble,” it can be classified as an instance of historical enantiosemy.

Enantiosemy is often explained by the fact that, in ancient times, roots and their derivatives possessed very broad and highly indefinite meanings. Over time, numerous semantic nuances emerged and gradually branched into independent categories, resulting in meanings that, despite their common origin, acquired distinct specificity.

7. Discussion

The results of this study show that enantiosemy should not be viewed as a marginal or accidental phenomenon, but rather as a natural result of semantic development within the language system. The analysis of Azerbaijani lexical material demonstrates that enantiosemy arises at the intersection of polysemy, semantic change, and contextual use, which is consistent with general theories of lexical semantics.

The examples analyzed in this study, particularly the verbs *qaralamaq*, *keçinmək*, and *qorxmaq*, indicate that enantiosemy is closely connected with functional and pragmatic variation. In these cases, opposite meanings are not random but depend on communicative needs and context. This suggests that semantic oppositions within a single word are shaped by actual language use rather than being fixed properties.

The analysis of words such as *yaman* and *bəla* shows that enantiosemy can develop through evaluative change, when negative meanings gradually acquire positive connotations in certain contexts. This highlights the role of expressiveness, emotional coloring, and stylistic usage, especially in literary language and everyday speech.

An important result of the study is the historical analysis of the word *alçaq*. The data show that this word originally had positive meanings such as “noble” and “humble,” which are preserved in classical texts and folklore. However, over time, it developed a negative meaning in modern Azerbaijani. This shift clearly demonstrates how enantiosemy can emerge through semantic change.

In addition, the etymological link between *alçaq* and the root *al / ala*, meaning “high” or “great,” supports the idea that opposite meanings can develop from a common semantic base. This reflects broader processes of semantic development in Turkic languages.

The findings also confirm the important role of context and presupposition. The meaning of enantiosemic words is determined not only by their lexical structure but also by the communicative situation and shared knowledge. This shows that enantiosemy cannot be fully understood without considering context.

Overall, enantiosemy appears to be a complex linguistic phenomenon that combines semantic change, polysemy, and pragmatic factors. Although it is not very common, it represents one of the ways in which polysemy develops. The Azerbaijani language provides valuable material for studying this phenomenon, but it still requires further research, especially in comparison with other Turkic languages.

8. Conclusion

Thus, enantiosemy can be regarded as a linguistic phenomenon that demonstrates both the flexibility and continuous development of language, as well as its stability and richness of internal resources. As a result of the natural evolution of language and the complex processes of communication, opposite meanings may coexist within a single lexical unit.

Although enantiosemy, as a semiotic phenomenon, is not widely распространена in language, it represents one of the developmental pathways of polysemy. Enantiosemy is a complex linguistic phenomenon. As in polysemy and homonymy, the specific meaning of a word in cases of enantiosemy is determined by context.

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