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*With the right of manuscript*

**Nino Nijaradze**

**COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE AND SYNTACTIC  
SYNONYMY AS A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC PHENOMENON**

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**AN ABSTRACT**

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Research Supervisor: - **Madonna Megrelishvili**  
Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor

Opponents: - 1. **Guram Lebanidze**  
Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor  
(10.02.07)

2. **Nino Kirvalidze**  
Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor  
(10.02.04)

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at the meeting of dissertation board of the Faculty of Arts at Akaki Tsereteli State University  
Address: Block I, room 1114, 59 Tamar Mepe St., Kutaisi 4600.

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The secretary of the Dissertation Board  
Doctor of Philology  
Associate Professor

Irma Kipiani

The presented academic work combines the discussion of the main aspects of communicative competence and research into the concept of syntactic synonymy. In the last 50 years a lot has been done to study communicative competence (e.g. Hymes 1971, Habermas 1970, Canale and Swain 1980, Bachman 1990). Research into syntactic synonymy dates even further back (Пешковский 1930, Хэррис, Хомский 1962, Chomsky 1972, Шендельс 1970, Власова 1981). However, interrelation between these two linguistic phenomena has not been studied so far. Thus, our work aims to expand the scope of strategic competence by including syntactic synonyms into the repertoire of communication strategies. Besides, syntactic synonyms are analyzed from the psycholinguistic perspective allowing us to study the motivation of a speaker's choice.

Study of strategic competence, one of the main components of communicative competence, is an important part of the research in this area. **Strategic competence** is a very interesting phenomenon as it is a **language user's ability to select the tools from their repertoire that would enable them to carry out their communicative intent with maximum effectiveness**. Thus, it is an important condition of successful communication. In the process of research into strategic competence several interesting taxonomies of communication strategies have been developed. However, researchers mainly focused on so called lexical strategies, i.e. strategies that are associated with difficulties with vocabulary. It is logical to assume that vocabulary is not the only area where speakers make choices of the most effective means for implementing their communicative intentions. They have to plan whole phrases and sentences in order to make them optimal for their purpose, 'tailor-made' for their listeners and communicative situation. Thus, choices need to be made between various phrases and sentences i.e. syntactic constructions. Based on this position the dissertation analyzes syntactic synonymy as an important component of strategic competence.

Syntactic and generally, grammatical synonymy is a comparatively little researched area of linguistics. The dissertation attempts to provide a definition of syntactic synonymy that would reveal the essence of this phenomenon as a linguistic sign and also explain its functioning in terms of pragmatic and psycholinguistic factors that motivate its use.

**Research aims and objectives:** The main aim of the work is to

- a) study syntactic synonymy as a tool used in order to achieve success in communication i.e. one of the communication strategies, explore its structural, lexical, grammatical and stylistic characteristics;
- b) analyze psycholinguistic motivation behind the choice made by language users between various syntactic constructions in a specific communicative situation.

In accordance with these general aims the following specific objectives are defined:

- to develop a conceptual mechanism needed to analyse syntactic synonymy from the point of view of speaker's communicative intention and strategy use;
- to identify, based on the analysis of the four components of communicative competence, the main drawbacks of the existing interpretations of the strategic competence and reveal the need for taking into consideration the syntactic level of analysis;
- to provide a definition of syntactic synonymy including its categorial linguistic descriptors that would enable us to unambiguously identify syntactic synonyms and serve as a basis for their classification;
- within the framework of anthropocentric communicative paradigm carry out the analysis of syntactic structures used by the communicants in fiction (short stories) from the point of view of the pragmatic and psycholinguistic motivation of the language users' choice.

**Research methodology.** The general research methodology used in the present work is based on the synthesis of anthropocentric-communicative and linguo-semiotic approaches. More specifically, we use approaches developed within the following linguistic disciplines: general and English linguistics, communicative linguistics, linguistic pragmatics, psycholinguistics discourse analysis and speech act theory. Empirical data is analysed using methods of systemic-structural, contextual-semantic, transformational, socio-cultural and stylistic analysis. Such a combination of approaches and methods we believe is the only way to reveal the multidimensional na-

ture of the linguistic phenomenon under study from both paradigmatic and syntagmatic angles and ensure validity of the results.

In agreement with this general approach we have carried out semantic and pragmatic analysis of the empirical data, specifically the discourse of the characters in XX century British and American fiction i.e. passages from fiction that best reproduce authentic communicative situation.

**Actuality of the academic work** is determined by the following considerations:

1. Research into communicative competence is of particular importance at the present stage of development of linguistics. The concept itself is the product of the communicative paradigm dominant in modern linguistic thought. According to this paradigm the process of communication is one of the manifestations of human activity in general. Interactive model of communication emphasizes interaction defined by certain social and cultural characteristics of a situation. Here the focus is on various aspects of communication viewed as behaviour. Communication is perceived as cooperation between two subjects in the joint process of meaning demonstration and interpretation. The outcomes of the process can be determined by non-verbal aspects of interaction, general social and cultural context.
2. Communicative competence includes language users' knowledge and skills that allow them to exploit all the semiotic systems accessible to them as members of a given socio-cultural community. Such knowledge is concerned with the level of discourse with language operating as an open system and constantly interacting with its environment. It is an example of pragmatic knowledge encompassing syntactic and semantic knowledge as its consistent parts.
3. The main conceptual categories and theses of syntax and semantics, we believe, remain topical in spite of a long history of research in these issues. On the one hand, issues connected with the analysis of the structure of syntactic constructions and most importantly a sentence, and on the other, the problem of synonymy as interrelation between the form and meaning of linguistic signs maintain linguists' interest to this day. Also, these linguistic phenomena are reconceptualized in the light of anthropocentric-

communicative paradigm with a focus on the speakers' communicative intent and competence.

4. We believe that actuality of the presented work is increased by the fact that the use of linguistic form is viewed here as language users' joint activity. Syntactic synonymy is presented as a language user's choice conditioned, apart from purely linguistic, by a number of pragmatic and psycholinguistic reasons and implementing their communicative intention.

**The scientific novelty of the present work** is conditioned by two main factors: on the one hand, it researches a completely new syntactic aspect of strategic competence and on the other, it presents a new communicative-functional approach to studying syntactic synonymy. More specifically novelty of the dissertation lies in the following:

1. The work attempts to research communication strategies on the example of syntactic structures i.e. complex propositional nomination. Previously, linguists studying this phenomenon focused mainly on lexical strategies thus limiting the scope of study to simple nomination.
2. The dissertation offers a definition of syntactic synonymy that provides the main syntactic, semantic, communicative-pragmatic parameters forming the criterion of synonymy between syntactic structures. Definitions existing so far have failed to provide either a satisfactory definition of the concept or a set of criteria that would solve the problem of their identification.
3. The work takes a communicative-functional view of syntactic synonymy. Syntactic synonyms are viewed as tools for implementing communicative intention used by language users to achieve ideal communication. Consequently, synonymous syntactic structures are analysed from the point of view of their functional differences, pragmatic and psycholinguistic motivation of the choice made by the speaker.
4. Relationship between communicative competence and syntactic synonymy is perceived as an example of language users' linguistic creativity. Speakers' make choices from the repertoire of communication strategies available to them and any choice is a creative act however small.

**The theoretical value of the work** is chiefly determined by the fact that it outlines the concept of syntactic synonymy defining its linguo-semantic essence, structural, semantic, functional, pragmatic and psycholinguistic characteristics thus presenting a view of this phenomenon as a communication strategy, a tool used for achieving successful communication. This allows us to claim that the dissertation will be of some interest for linguists researching these issues.

**The practical value of the work.** The results of the research, we believe, support the need for teaching syntactic synonymy, especially at higher levels of language teaching, as it is one of the ways of achieving success in communication. The empirical data and findings presented in the dissertation can be used in lectures and seminars of English syntax, linguistics pragmatics, psycholinguistics, communicative linguistics and stylistics. Analysis of the empirical data carried out with the purpose of revealing speakers' strategic competence can be useful for applied linguists or anyone interested in language teaching and learning.

**The structure and volume of the work** are consistent with the aims and objectives of the research. The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters and conclusion (163 printed pages) followed by references.

**The introduction** explains the choice of the research problem, defines the aims and objectives of the research, emphasises scientific novelty and actuality of the work, its practical and theoretical value.

**The first chapter – "Communicative competence and the essence of strategic competence"** discusses the existing models of communicative competence and various interpretations of its important component, strategic competence. Comparative analysis of these interpretations reveals some of their deficiencies and consequently, defines the direction for our research.

**The second chapter – "The problem of syntactic synonymy in linguistics and synonymous syntactic structures"** traces the evolution of the concept of syntactic synonymy and summarizes the main directions and problems in the study of this phenomenon. On the basis of the critique of its various interpretations and definitions we suggest a definition and criteria for establishing syntactic synonymy that can be used for their identification.

The third chapter – “Syntactic synonymy as textual manifestation of communication strategy” offers classification of syntactic synonyms based on the criteria suggested in the dissertation. Most importantly it researches pragmatic and psycholinguistic motivation of the speaker’s choice with regard to syntactic synonyms on the material of the characters’ discourse in short stories.

The conclusion summarises the main findings and results of the research.

The main findings of the research have been presented as papers at scientific conferences of Akaki Tsereteli State University and scientific seminars at the English Studies Department of KSU. The dissertation was presented and approved by the English Studies Department staff meeting on 29 January, 2010.

#### Chapter I – “Communicative competence and the essence of strategic competence”

At the present stage major part of linguistic research is focused on studying the communicative aspect of language. In the process of research into the interrelation between language and communication various models of communication have been developed. These models differ in the way they view the aim of communication and consequently, they provide differing lists of conditions necessary for its successful implementation.

According to the interactive model of communication shared linguistic code is not a sufficient condition for success in communication. In order to achieve their aim communicants need to have a common system of knowledge and skills including language as one important aspect, but certainly not limited to it. In other words, what is required is that communicants have similar communicative competence and our dissertation aims to research some of the more interesting aspects of this concept.

The term “communicative competence” was introduced by Dell Hymes in the 60s in contrast with the Chomskyan concept of “linguistic competence”. Hymes uses this term to emphasise the social aspects of language use. Starting from the 70s this concept has sparked of a lot of research in linguistics and applied linguistics (Savignon 1972, Canale and Swain 1980, Widdowson 1983, Bachman 1990). The attempts to study this

phenomenon in more detail have led to emergence of varied, even contradictory theories. In the process of research the concept of communicative competence has undergone serious modifications; several interesting models have been developed emphasizing some of the aspects neglected in Hymes’ interpretation.

Among various interpretations of communicative competence the theoretical framework suggested by Canale and Swain (1980) and later modified by Canale himself is probably the most influential one. They see communicative competence as composed of four main components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. Although the other components of communicative competence have clearly received more attention so far, the understanding of the concept of strategic competence has also undergone certain revision. Initially it was believed that they were called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence. However, nowadays their function is interpreted much more widely. The criterion of problematicity that served as the basis for initial definitions of communication strategies is considered controversial. If we accept the view that generally the process of language use can be perceived as an attempt to overcome a communication problem, it becomes impossible draw a clear dividing line between strategic and non-strategic language use. Consequently, we can claim that **communication strategies are the tools that allow speakers to organize utterances so that the message is conveyed to specific listeners with maximum effectiveness.**

All the taxonomies of communication strategies created at the initial stages of research focus on lexical strategies i.e. strategies used when the problem is connected with inaccessibility of a lexical item. This concentration on lexical strategies has had its positive outcomes as narrow focus has resulted in in-depth analysis of the phenomenon – several sets of communication strategies have been identified and classified; besides, theoretical models have been developed explaining their use.

At a later stage attention shifted from lexical strategies to the so called ‘referential strategies’; and this is not merely a terminological difference. It indicates a shift from a semantic to a pragmatic approach. Instead of the linguistic (namely lexical) resources used for implementing a commu-

nication strategy, researchers' interest is centred on cognitive strategies underlying specific utterances (e.g. conceptual strategies including holistic and analytic communication strategies), changes in speakers' evaluation of the situation and the resulting alterations in their strategic behaviour.

It is evident that at the present stage of research into strategic competence there is a need for broadening the scope of research. Studying lexical or even 'referential' strategies is not sufficient to provide a clear picture of an individual's strategic competence. Thus, we believe it important that the researchers' interest move to the next, syntactic level of linguistic analysis.

#### Chapter II – "The problem of syntactic synonymy in linguistics and synonymous syntactic structures"

The concept of synonymy originates from lexicology where it has been researched thoroughly. However, in modern linguistics the term 'synonymy' has been applied much more widely to phonological, morphological and syntactic levels of language. Still, majority of studies focus on the synonymy between lexical items and research into other types of synonymy generally builds upon the concepts and categories developed in lexicology and lexical semantics.

Although much less researched than lexical synonymy, syntactic synonymy (sometimes referred to as syntactic equivalence) has become a focus of a number of serious studies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Practically all linguistic theories have given some attention to this phenomenon and consequently, the concept itself has evolved and changed. At the present stage of development of linguistics syntactic synonymy is studied from many different perspectives for various purposes. In spite of such apparent interest the most important issues, i.e. the definition of syntactic synonymy and determining criteria for establishing synonymous relationship between syntactic structures, still remain controversial.

Like lexical synonyms, syntactic synonyms are generally identified on the basis of three main criteria:

1. similarity or identity of meaning
2. formal characteristics
3. functional interchangeability of synonyms.

Comparison of various definitions suggested in the literature shows that they all contain reference to similarity of meaning of the given constructions. However the concept of 'meaning' itself is interpreted in different ways. Peshkovsky (1930) introduced the term 'grammatical synonyms' to refer to words and word combinations that are close in their grammatical meaning. These he then subdivided into morphological and syntactic synonyms. In spite of the difference in approaches, nowadays majority of linguists agree that similarity of meaning between syntactic structures cannot be restricted to their grammatical meaning, although the issues of grammatical form are still given a lot of attention.

Syntactic synonymy is directly related and may even be said to derive from the concept of transformation introduced by Harris (Хэппис 1962) and further developed in Chomsky's works (Хомский 1962, Chomsky 1972). Generally transformation implies forming one sentence from another where a transform or a newly produced sentence is equivalent to the initial one from the point of view of its content and lexical make-up but differs in its syntactic and grammatical structuring. Although Harris does not refer to the semantic aspect of sentences, application of transformation method in practice makes it possible to focus on the sentence meaning as transforms can be viewed as syntactic variants with the same denotation.

The view that syntactic synonymy implies only similarity of denotation is arguable. The referent of a sentence is the real-world situation it denotes. It is evident that the same situation may be described in different ways using variety of means. Consequently, criteria of synonymy apart from identity of denotation must necessarily include similarity of interrelations between the described events. Conceptual identity between sentences or their parts is an essential criterion for defining syntactic synonymy. Complex interrelations existing between extralinguistic phenomena are reflected in complex signification i.e. a structured concept a group of concepts forming an entity that is a reflection of series of single-type interrelated events. It must be noted, however, that signification is a category of conceptual rather than linguistic level. This raises the issue of determining formal linguistic criteria needed to identify syntactic synonyms.

For this purpose syntactic semantics uses the concept of 'proposition'. In linguistics proposition has been analyzed from two different per-

spectives: in relation to extralinguistic reality and in purely linguistic context. According to the first of the above-mentioned perspectives proposition is an iconic reflection of an event or situation in one's mind. Viewed in the linguistic context it is understood as an abstract mental structure reflecting a referential situation and representing a semantic constant or an invariant as it is devoid of any modal, evaluative or affective aspects and independent of any sentence transformations e.g. nominalization.

In the dissertation structural-semantic organization of proposition is explained on the basis of predicate-argument approach of symbolic logic. According to Charles Fillmore, the author of this approach, proposition consists of predicate nucleus and its arguments. Each argument is characterized by a semantic role in relation to the predicate i.e. its 'deep case'. The meaning of the predicate is determined by its semantic structure and valency i.e. its ability to control a certain number of arguments.

The meaning of syntactic structures at the sentence level cannot be adequately analyzed without considering their modality. Modality (lat. *modus*) in linguistics is generally perceived as a universal functional-semantic category which expresses relation of the utterance to reality on the one hand and various types of subjective qualification of the message conveyed on the other. Consequently, we can speak about objective and subjective modality. Objective modality is a fundamental characteristic of a sentence as together with temporal features it determines predicativity by expressing the relation of the utterance with objective reality with regard to its reality/unreality. In the grammatical paradigm of sentence objective modality is realized through the category of mood.

Subjective modality expresses addresser's attitude to the extralinguistic referential situation described in the utterance. As a result, it is perceived as a pragmatic category in communicative linguistics. Subjective modality is based on the concept of evaluation in the broadest sense of the word as it implies rational-logical qualification of the message as well as speaker's emotionality as expressed in the stylistic, semantic and syntactic structuring of the utterance.

In modern linguistics syntax is believed to consist of two levels (layers). Majority of researchers agrees, however, that synonyms cannot be limited either to the level of word combinations or to the sentence level, as

elements of these levels intersect and influence one another. 'Structural similarity,' often mentioned in various definitions, should be understood as belonging to the same area of linguistic analysis, i.e. syntax.

Based on the above discussion and generalizations we suggest a new definition of syntactic synonymy according to which syntactic synonyms are the units of a syntactic level that share predicate-argument propositional structure and function, but differ in subjective modality and grammatical structure and consequently, can be viewed as variants of the same semantic invariant. We believe that this definition allows us to identify and analyse synonymous syntactic structures.

### Chapter III. Syntactic synonymy as textual manifestation of communication strategy

The definition suggested in the previous chapter can serve as the basis for identification and analysis of synonymous syntactic structures. However, it is necessary to identify the taxonomy of semantic roles to be used as a point of departure. Taxonomy of deep cases was developed by Fillmore in 1968, but in later years this system underwent certain changes. It is mainly used in linguistics in order to compensate for deficiency of morphological category of case in the English language. In the following discussion we operate with the following roles: agent, patient, experiencer, objective, goal, beneficent, source, instrument and locative.

Building on the semantic analysis of syntactic structures we have identified the following syntactic synonyms:

1. active and passive constructions can be considered synonymous if the same arguments are present. e.g.:

"Who was it that invented religion, and sin and all that? And why?"

John laughed. "It was invented by Adam" he said...

\*Adam invented it...

Also an active construction with the subject expressed by an indefinite pronoun (they, you, one) can be considered synonymous with the corresponding passive construction without a prepositional object.

"They tell me there's a man called Freud, an Austrian I believe."

\*I'm told there's a man...

2. sentences with and without introducers *it* and *there* can also be considered synonymous. For example:

There is a good film on tonight.

*A good film is on tonight.*

It's her damned virtue that caused the whole trouble.

*Her damned virtue caused the whole trouble.*

Expletive *it* has a much wider use than *there*. In the construction 'it + to be + noun + relative clause' *it* introduces direct or indirect object, adverbials of time, place, etc. In all these cases synonymous constructions can be found where all the semantic roles are maintained.

3. complex or compound sentences and corresponding simple sentences containing nominalized propositional constructions i.e. secondary predication. In discussing syntactic synonymy we need to delimit predication and predicativity. Predication is logical category reflecting subjective-predicative relations whereas predicativity is a grammatical category reflecting the relationship between the content of the utterance and objective reality. Predicativity emerges as the result of synthesis of the grammatical categories of verbs, particularly of tense and mood as these specify the referred event in time as well as express the speaker's attitude to this event. It is predicativity that turns a phrase into a sentence; thus nominalization leads to the loss of predicativity although predicational or propositional structure of the clause is maintained. For example, in "*I saw him crossing the street*" "*him crossing*" is a complex object expressed by nominalized (participle) propositional construction having its predicate-argument configuration. As soon as non-finite form of the verb acquires grammatical categories of tense and mood, the construction becomes a sentence: *I saw that he was crossing the street.*

We can argue that the relationship of synonymy holds between complex sentences and simple sentences containing non-finite clauses on the grounds that they both

- have polipropositional structure as they refer to (nominate) two or more extralinguistic events;
- convey temporal, causal, conditional, etc. relations between the events of objective reality;
- may be considered as syntactic variants of the same semantic invariant. Simple sentences containing non-finite clauses can be viewed as a marked member of the opposition whereas complex (or compound) sentence is unmarked.

We have analyzed the following cases of synonymy of polipropositional constructions:

a) a simple sentence with direct word order and similar sentence with an inverted subject replaced by expletive *it*. We have already discussed these cases. However it is important to add that the function of the subject may be performed by infinitive (as well as its expanded form or for-to infinitive) or gerund (as well as its expanded form), for example,

Refusing invitations is not always easy.

*It is not always easy to refuse invitations.*

b) Complex sentence with a subjective clause and a simple sentence when its subject is expressed by gerundial phrase, accusative + infinitive or accusative + participle, for example,

His coming here is really desirable.

*It is really desirable that he (should) come.*

c) Complex sentence with an objective subordinate clause and simple sentence when its object is expressed by expanded form of infinitive or gerund, for-to infinitive, gerundial phrase, accusative + infinitive or accusative + participle, for example:

I felt somebody touch my shoulder.

*I felt that somebody had touched/was touching my shoulder.*

d) Complex sentence with a relative (attributive) clause and a simple sentence when its attribute is expressed by infinitive (after the words *the first, the last, the only*, etc and some superlatives), of + gerund or the participle, often postpositional, e.g.



- The captain was the last man to leave the ship.  
*The captain was the last man who left the ship.*
- e) Complex sentence with an adverbial subordinate clause and a simple sentence when its adverbial modifier is expressed by infinitive or for-to infinitive construction, gerund or its expanded form, present or past participle, absolute participle construction e.g.
- I had to bite my lips in order not to laugh.  
*I had to bite my lips so that I wouldn't laugh.*
- f) Main clause of a complex sentence or one of the clauses of a compound sentence is synonymous with a participle functioning as an adverbial modifier of a simple sentence, e.g.
- Opening the drawer he took out a revolver.  
*He opened the drawer and took out a revolver.*

IV. The final example of syntactic synonymy the dissertation concentrates on is synonymy between simple sentences with direct and inverted word order. First of all, we need to focus on the cases where the adverbial modifier of place takes the initial position in a sentence. For example,

Along this cool avenue my girlfriend led me.  
*My girlfriend led me along this cool avenue.*

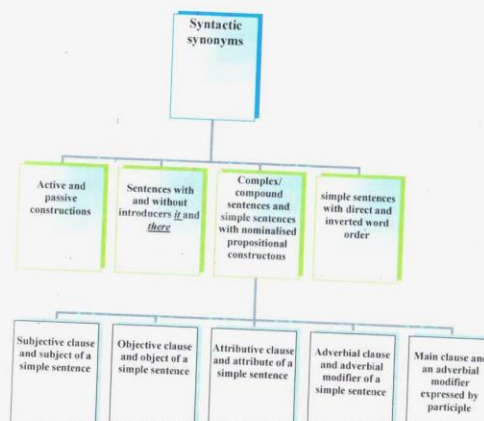
Inversion may also be caused by other adverbs and prepositional phrases. Other types of inversion, which are also quite common in English, can prove to be very interesting from the point of view of syntactic synonymy. These examples include inversion of the subject when the sentence initial position is taken by predicate, object, participle construction, part of the compound nominal predicate. For example,

Playmates I found there...  
*I found playmates there*

This analysis of the types of syntactic synonyms can be summarized in a diagram:

### Synonymous Syntactic Constructions

Diagram 1.



It is evident from this discussion that a wealth of syntactic means is available in the English language for expressing synonymous meanings. Particularly interesting are the differences in the communicative value of syntactic synonyms and study of the causes that determine a speaker's choice in a specific communicative situation.

The differences in the meanings of syntactic synonyms may be functional as well as purely linguistic. Thus, we will focus on the linguistic and pragmatic motivation of speakers' choice made between the syntactic synonyms.

From purely grammatical point of view a choice of a syntactic structure may be determined by the manner of expressing the subject. The sen-

tences under analysis mainly have either a single-subject structure or multi-subject structure. A decision is made in favour of a complex (or compound) sentence mostly in the case of multi-subject structure.

An important difference between complex sentences and simple sentences with non-finite verb forms lies in the way of expressing modality. Dependent clauses express objective modality independently whereas modality expressed by constructions with non-finite verb forms fully depends on the modality of the main clause of the sentence.

Another factor the choice of a complex sentence may be based on is the content features of the main clause. If its content is expressed explicitly, either of the syntactic synonyms may be used. However, if the content of the main clause is implicit, the use of non-finite clauses is rare.

As for the stylistic motivation of the choice of a syntactic synonym, the research shows that none of the synonymous syntactic structures is exclusive to any particular style and each of them can be found in all functional styles. The difference mainly lies in the frequency of their occurrence.

Functional motivation of the choice between the synonymous syntactic structures is mainly determined by the actual division of a sentence i.e. its theme-rheme structure. From the formal point of view the main sentence elements are its grammatical subject and grammatical predicate, from actual division perspective we can talk about its theme and rheme. Theme denotes the point of departure, what the sentence is about, while rheme refers to what is said about the theme. At a later stage Halliday drew a dividing line between given (information) and theme on the one hand and new (information) and rheme on the other (Halliday 1985). He believes that theme/rheme are speaker-oriented concepts whereas new/given are generally listener-oriented.

Analysis of the synonymous syntactic structures from the point of view of their information structure shows that the choice between active and passive constructions is often determined by the speaker's decision whether agent or patient (or goal) should be given the role of a theme, or given, familiar information and which to present as new information to the listener. The information structure of a sentence may serve as the main motivation for the speaker's choice in the case of the constructions with introducers. It would be justified to claim that the main function of expletive

pronouns is to give the status of new rather than given information to an argument in accordance with the speaker's communicative intention and subjective modality. In some cases the choice of a syntactic synonym may be conditioned by the speaker's desire to maintain the topic of the conversation. Furthermore, information structure is what differentiates simple sentences with inverted subjects (expressed by infinitive or gerund) from their synonyms. The same claim can be made about the difference between a complex sentence with a subjective clause and a simple sentence with a subject expressed by gerundial phrase, complex infinitive or participle constructions.

Considering the importance of word order in revealing the information structure of the English sentence, inverted order of words can be used by speakers as a major tool for structuring the information in the desired way in order to convey it to the listener. Inversion leads to thematisation of various parts of the sentence i.e. their removal from their unmarked position to a marked sentence-initial position.

In spite of similarity in meaning syntactic synonyms have some differentiating features. Their differing grammatical, stylistic and functional characteristics motivate the choice of one of the synonyms from a pair. The choice is made in favour of the synonym that fulfills the speaker's communicative intention better in the given communicative situation. Thus, making a choice of a syntactic synonym is an intentional strategic action and this allows us to view syntactic synonymy as an example of a communication strategy. It must be noted that intentionality does not always imply conscious control. When talking about motivation of a speaker's choice we find ourselves within the scope of psycholinguistics as we have to focus on the issues of text production and perception i.e. language processing.

Psycholinguistic experiments focusing on communication strategies have shown that the type of task is a major influence on the choice of a strategy. It is evident from these studies that differences in the speaker's choice is largely determined by the presence or absence of a listener. Very often this can be explained on the basis of Grice's Cooperation Principle and the conversational maxims. According to this theory participants in the process of communication are guided by cooperation principle which implies achieving understanding between the communicants under normal

conditions. This principle does not aim to provide linguo-pragmatic description of the interaction. Rather it postulates the norms that govern linguistic behaviour and in combination ensure the success of communication. These postulates are presented in the form of four main categories or maxims. Two of these maxims, Maxim of Quantity and Maxim of Manner, are of particular importance for the purposes of our study. These maxims require from the speaker to make the utterance clear and easily understandable, but also avoid giving information that is not absolutely necessary in the given situation. Within the scope of pragmatics and communicative linguistics these principles and their application have been studied in some detail. We have already noted that communicative strategies are used in any kind of verbal communication (and not only when specific problems occur). Consequently, it is natural that these maxims play a certain role in selecting a communication strategy. In order to observe both of the above-mentioned maxims a speaker must maintain a certain balance between being sufficiently informative on the one hand and the effort required to achieve this on the other. It must be specified at this point that when referring to 'effort' here we mean not only the speaker's contribution to structuring the utterance, but also the listener's attempt to interpret it.

Several interesting studies (Bongaerts and Poullisse 1989, Poullisse 1999) confirm that Grice's Maxims are applicable to the use of strategies in so called 'problematic communication'. Experiments show that the length of a referential expression depends on the environment, linguistic context and the existence of a listener. Later studies confirm the cooperative theory of communication providing evidence for the claim that a speaker and a listener cooperate for the purpose of minimising the joint effort (Clark, Wilkes-Gibbs 1986).

In a dialogue the listener is a factor that largely determines how the speaker formulates the utterance. Initially it may seem that help offered by the listener in the form of questions, options, etc violates the Maxim of Quantity as by increasing the effort on the part of the listener the utterance becomes less economical for him/her. However, the focus here is not on the effort of one of the interlocutors, but on their mutual costs that can only be reduced to minimum through cooperation.

Analysis of the empirical data presented in the dissertation has shown that in informal interpersonal communication complex and compound sentences prevail over synonymous simple sentences containing non-finite clauses. We have studied only those cases where synonymous syntactic constructions were available. The result is that in over 81 % of the examples complex (or compound) sentences are used. Only in 18.7 % of cases do the speakers use non-finite constructions within a simple sentence. Thus, we may conclude that speakers give preference to longer and consequently, more complex forms violating the Maxim of Quantity. This phenomenon can be explained by several main reasons:

a) We have discussed examples showing that some features of predicativity are expressed only implicitly in non-finite clauses. Lack of explicit expression may lead to ambiguity when the utterance is processed by the listener. Thus, an additional effort invested by the speaker into the formation of the utterance serves to reduce the efforts required for decoding the message by the listener in accordance with the principle of shared responsibility. For instance,

*On arriving to Dover Poirot's behaviour moved me to intense amusement.*

In the absence of the context this statement may cause certain ambiguity as the subject of the gerund is not explicit. Such problems can be avoided if a subordinate clause is used.

*When we/the arrived to Dover, Poirot's behaviour moved me to intense amusement.*

b) As we have mentioned above, producing a subordinate or a coordinate clause is less economical for the speaker than producing an equivalent construction with a non-finite verb. This extra effort itself serves for the listener as an indicator of a greater value and importance of the given construction. The following extract can serve to illustrate the point:

*Then presently came a somber dark woman, with a grave, pale face and dreamy eyes, a somber woman, wearing a soft long robe of pale purple, who carried a book, and beckoned and took me aside with her into a gallery above a hall .... (H. Wells)*

Interestingly, initially the speaker uses a non-finite verb form (*wearing a soft long robe*) to describe the woman. Then he continues the description

using a subordinate clause (*who carried a book*). This, we believe, is due to the fact that the information conveyed in the latter construction is more essential to the speaker's purpose and its value is not limited to providing the description of one of the characters.

c) Applying some of the concepts from cognitive linguistics we could claim that the speaker varies synonymous syntactic constructions in order to make a distinction between 'ground' and 'figure'. Although these terms have mainly been used to analyze the relationship between the members of a simple sentence, we believe they can be applied to demonstrate our viewpoint. Generally subdivision into 'ground' and 'figure' relies on the theory that the information exchanged in communication is organized on the basis of dominance of some of its parts. The pieces of information that are most prominent function as 'figure', the less highlighted parts – as 'ground'. Whereas subordinate (or coordinate) clauses are used to emphasize the message conveyed, synonymous non-finite clauses on the other hand carry less weight and may be used to remove the information to the background. For instance,

*"So it wasn't I who made you feel weak and disabled, wanting that very silly Claudia ... Wanting her and not wanting her, you got yourself into that perplexity, my dear."* (D. H. Lawrence)

In the first sentence the speaker uses a cleft construction (*it wasn't I*) in order to identify the rheme and give an additional emphasis to the sentence. In contrast, a participle construction seems to provide irrelevant or supplementary information. In the second sentence the intonation (conveyed through the use of bold type) identifies the focus (*yourself*). Here, as in the first sentence, the speaker uses a participle construction purposefully to signal to the listener that the message contained in this part of the sentence is less valuable for the purposes of communication.

d) From psycholinguistic point of view a distinction drawn by Halliday between new and given information on the one hand and theme and rheme on the other is also relevant. In the case of theme and rheme the decision depends on the speaker's priorities and is fully determined by what the speaker himself chooses as the most important part of the message. Such a focus of attention may be selected from new as well as given information. This is exactly what an inverted word order is often used for. The informa-

tion placed in the initial part of the sentence can be referred to as 'focused rheme'. It often functions to express contrast and carries particular weight in the sentence. For example,

*A great name, wealth, social distinction, worldly success: those were the things that mattered to her.*

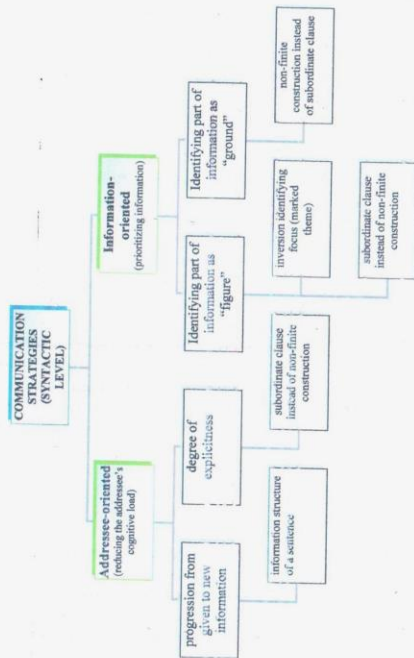
To summarize, **the choice between two syntactic synonyms is determined by the speaker's communicative intention to make the message as informative and economical as possible in the given situation.** The speaker is fully prepared to make an additional effort in order to decrease the utterance processing costs for the listener. The second reason leading to increased effort on the speaker's part in violation of the principle of economy is his/her attempt to give extra emphasis to one piece of information at the expense of its other parts. In this case Maxim of Quantity is violated for both speaker and listener.

Consequently, it would be justified to claim that at the syntactic level we can identify addressee-oriented and information-oriented communication strategies. **Addressee-oriented strategies refer to all the attempts made by the addresser to reduce the cognitive load for the addressee.** Here we have included, for instance, using subordinate clauses instead of non-finite clauses. Another example of addressee-oriented strategies is word order determined by the thematic structure. Organizing the information in progression from given, known to new is also a tool aiming to reduce the listener's processing costs.

**Information-oriented communication strategies include the steps taken by the speaker to give additional emphasis to the information or on the contrary, move it to the background.** Inverted word-order aiming to identify the focus of the sentence, using non-finite verb forms for backgrounding the information and using a subordinate clause (or even a new sentence in certain cases) for making parts of information more prominent can all be considered as examples of information-oriented strategies.

## The Psycholinguistic Model of Communication Strategies

Diagram 2.



## Conclusions

Linguo-semiotic research of communicative competence and syntactic synonymy in the context of anthropocentric-communicative paradigm has led us to the following theoretical generalizations:

1. In contrast with the view dominant in the research of strategic competence, we believe that the examples of their use can be found whether problems caused by insufficient linguistic competence occur or not. Communication strategies can be viewed as tools allowing communicants to organize their utterances so that the message can be conveyed with maximum effectiveness to a specific addressee. Thus, we support the view that delimitation of strategic and non-strategic language use is not possible.
2. Studying strategic competence solely from the point of view of reference and reducing communication strategies to only lexical strategies used in referring expressions cannot be justified. In order to provide a complete description of communicative competence and more specifically, its strategic component we need to broaden the scope of research to the level of syntax.
3. On the basis of our findings we suggest a new definition of syntactic synonymy according to which syntactic synonyms are the units of a syntactic level that share predicate-argument propositional structure and function, but differ in subjective modality and grammatical structure and consequently, can be viewed as variants of the same semantic invariant. This definition can serve as the basis for identification and analysis of syntactic synonyms.
4. According to the empirical data the following constructions can be considered synonymous:
  - a. active and passive constructions;
  - b. sentences with and without introducers *it* and *there*;
  - c. complex or compound sentences and simple sentences containing nominalised propositional constructions i.e. secondary predication;
  - d. simple sentences with direct and inverted word order.

5. The research shows that the choice between syntactic synonyms in communication may be motivated by purely linguistic (grammatical, stylistic or functional reasons) as well as pragmatic and psycholinguistic factors.
6. From grammatical point of view the choice of a synonym may depend on subject expression (single or multi- subject structure), implicitness or explicitness of predicative characteristics and sub-textual expression of the content of the main clause.
7. The study has shown that from functional point of view the choice of a syntactic synonym may be motivated by the information structure of a sentence. The difference between active and passive constructions, sentences with and without expletive *it* and *there* lies mainly in the theme-rheme distribution in the sentence.
8. Linguistic data has provided evidence that mainly information structure distinguishes from each other simple sentences with direct and inverted word order. The former are unmarked as information structure in English coincides with syntactic structure of a sentence thus leading to the use of direct word order in neutral style. Inverted word order is marked with the speaker's subjective modality and determined by their communication strategy causing rhematization of the subject i.e. its shift from the position of the theme. Majority of these sentences represent the examples of a marked theme.
9. The analysis of short stories has shown that the number of complex or compound sentences far exceeds the number of synonymous simple sentences with non-finite clauses. This can be explained by two main reasons:
  - a) Extra effort invested by the speaker in producing the utterance serves to decrease the reception costs for the listener in accordance with the principle of shared responsibility.
  - b) The speaker's effort is an indicator for the listener that the construction carries more weight. In other words, the communicants' efforts increase based on how important they perceive the purpose of communication.
10. Empirical data supports the claim that a speaker varies synonymous syntactic constructions in order to identify figure and ground.

The information is organized on the basis of dominance of its parts. Thus, we find frequent examples of the attempts to focus a listener's attention on one event at the expense of another.

11. Generalisation of the findings of the study allows us to view syntactic synonymy as a part of communicative competence and an example of communication strategy inasmuch as it provides language users with a choice between linguistic means. Being one of the communication strategies syntactic synonymy allows language users to implement their communicative intention with maximum effectiveness.
12. At a syntactic level we have identified addressee-oriented and information-oriented strategies.
  - a. Addressee-oriented strategies combine all the steps taken by the speaker to reduce the potential cognitive load for the listener.
  - b. Information-oriented strategies include the actions taken to restructure the information itself in accordance with the speaker's communicative intention. This usually implies emphasizing some parts of the message and backgrounding the others.
13. Interrelation between communicative competence and syntactic synonymy can be viewed as an example of language users' linguistic creativity inasmuch as the choice made between syntactic synonyms is an intentional strategic action and choice is always a creative act however minimal.

**The main concepts of the dissertation are presented in the following publications:**

1. Nijaradze, N. *Communicative competence and the concept of communication strategies*. Proceedings of the International Conference 'Language - Intercultural Mediator', Kutaisi 2010, 463-470
2. Nijaradze, N. *Syntactic Synonymy and communication strategies*. Scientific journal 'Language and Culture', Kutaisi 2009, 72-76
3. Nijaradze, N. *On the essence of syntactic synonymy*, Linguistic Papers, v. XIX  
Academy of Sciences of Georgia, Institute of Linguistics, Tbilisi 2005, 190-196
4. Nijaradze, N. *Theoretical Basis of Communicative Competence*, KSU Works, Series of Historical and Philological Sciences, v. IV (38), Kutaisi 2004, 164-174