

## **DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMPLETE AND ABSOLUTE SYNONYMY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This article focuses on the difference between complete and absolute synonymy in the context. It is justified by the fact that it contributes to the knowledge of synonymy, especially about their linguocultural value. The object of the research is to describe cross-level features of synonymy, which have an essential role in developing language competence and to examine the difference in the two cultures – English and Uzbek – which is reflected in their usage. The consequence is that history and culture contribute to the enrichment of the vocabulary of the languages, and a comparative analysis can help find similar and different features in synonymic row. These aspects present difficulties in translating synonyms into Uzbek or other languages in appropriate meaning.*

**Key words:** *scientific terms, contextual relations, target language, absolute synonyms, synonymic patterns, denotational meaning, lexical relations.*

### **АННОТАЦИЯ**

*В данной статье основное внимание уделяется разнице между полной и абсолютной синонимией в контексте. Это обосновывается тем, что способствует познанию синонимов, особенно об их лингвокультурном значении. Целью исследования является описание межуровневых признаков синонимии, играющих существенную роль в развитии языковой компетенции, и изучение различия двух культур – английской и узбекской – которое отражается в их употреблении. Следствием этого является то, что история и культура способствуют обогащению словарного запаса языков, а сравнительный анализ может помочь найти сходные и различные черты в синонимическом ряду. Эти аспекты представляют трудности при переводе синонимов на узбекский или другие языки в соответствующем значении.*

**Ключевые слова:** *научные термины, контекстуальные отношения, язык перевода, абсолютные синонимы, синонимические модели, денотативное значение, лексические отношения.*

## INTRODUCTION

It is true that we can learn much about culture through studying synonymic group of words and, in turn, get better understanding of them by learning the cultural background behind them. Expressions which are usable to the same effect have equal values, they are equivalent, and synonymy is primarily just this kind of equivalence. J.Lyons (1981) distinguishes between two kinds of synonymy, what he calls *complete* and *absolute* synonymy. He defines them as follows:

“...lexemes can be said to be *completely synonymous* (in a certain range of contexts) if and only if they have the same descriptive, expressive and social meaning (in the range of contexts in questions). They may be described as *absolutely synonymous* if and only if they have the same distribution and are completely synonymous in all their meanings and in all their contexts of occurrence.”

He says that *complete synonymy* is rare, and absolute synonymy hardly exists. If *absolute synonymy* exists at all, it is merely in very special contexts such as scientific terms (e.g. *almonds* and *tonsils*). But what happens when we have two absolute synonyms is that specialists or speakers in general tend to use one of the two synonymous words and agree that the chosen word should be always used to refer to the concept they are describing.

## DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

What about absolute synonymy, that is, according to D.A. Cruse (1986) where all contextual relations between the two terms are identical. Roughly speaking this means that in all linguistic contexts, the two terms are interchangeable without any difference in meaning. Given the difficulty of ascertaining the respective behavior of two candidate absolute synonyms in all contexts, D.A.Cruse suggests the normality test as a way of determining the absence of absolute synonymy. This test shows that one of the two terms is normal in a given context, and the other less normal.

- 1) Ann informed us the lesson *finishes* at 3.00 (+ normal)
- 2) Ann informed us the lesson *terminates* at 3.00 (- normal)

If we add ( 3), however, and compare it with ( 1) it is difficult to attribute greater normality to one or the other:

- 3) Ann informed us the lesson *ends* at 3.00

D.A.Cruse rules out the use of contexts where one term is odd in syntactic terms, suggesting the context should provide a level playing field in order to ascertain normality. If this is the case, one would have to go a long way to find two contexts where *end* and *finish* could be seen to be non-absolute synonyms. Furthermore D.A.Cruse also rules out the use of ‘irrelevant senses’ of a word form.

- 4) John’s mother won't permit him to play (+)

5) John's mother won't let him play (-)

6) John's mother won't allow her to play (+)

D.A.Cruse's normality test works well if we wish to show with the least amount of contextual investigation that three words are absolute synonyms. It is more difficult to show that two words are in fact absolute synonyms or not without analysing. F.R.Palmer (1981) differentiates between synonyms in five ways. First, some synonyms belong to different dialects of the language. For instance, the word *truck* is used in the United States and *van* is used in Britain. Second, some synonyms are used in different styles according to the degree of formality; colloquial, formal. For instance, *respond* (formal), *answer*, *reply*. Thirdly, some words differ only in their emotive or evaluative values but their cognitive meaning is the same. For instance, *reject*, *decline*. Fourthly, some words are subject to collocational restraints, i.e. they occur only with specific words. For instance, *rancid* occurs with *bacon*, *addled* with *eggs*. Fifthly, the meanings of some words overlap. For instance, *fast*, *quick*, *rapid*, *speedy*. If we take each of these words we will have a larger set of synonyms. F.R.Palmer suggests a test for synonymy by substituting one word for another. Because absolute synonyms are *mutually interchangeable* in all contexts, that is why absolute synonyms are very rare in language. Another way to test synonymy is using antonyms. For instance, *young* is the opposite of *old*, *elderly*, *aged*, *long-lived* and *mature*, while *new* is the opposite of *old* only.

The English word-stock is extremely rich in synonyms, which can be largely accounted<sup>1</sup> for by abundant borrowing. The synonymic resources of a language tend to form certain characteristic and fairly consistent patterns. Synonyms in English are organized according to 2 basic principles. One of them involves double, the other a triple scale. In English there are countless pairs of synonyms where a native term is opposed to one borrowed from French, Latin, and Greek. In most cases the native word is more spontaneous, more informal and unpretentious whereas the foreign one often has a learned, abstract air. They may also have emotive differences: the Saxon word is apt to be wanner and homelier than its foreign counterpart. The native words are usually colloquial. We quote a few examples of synonymic patterns double scale.

Adjectives: *bodily* - *corporal*, *brotherly* - *fraternal*, *heavenly* - *celestial*, *inner* - *internal*, *learned* - *erudite*, *sharp* - *acute*.

Nouns: *fiddle* - *violin*, *friendship* - *amity*, *help* - *aid*, *wire* - *telegram*, *world* - *universe*.

Verbs: *answer* - *reply*, *read* - *peruse*, *buy* - *purchase*.

<sup>1</sup> объясняется

Side-by-side with this main pattern there exists in English a pattern based on a triple scale of synonyms:

NATIVE	FROM FRENCH	FROM
LATIN		
to ask <sup>2</sup>	to question <sup>3</sup>	to
interrogate <sup>4</sup> belly abdomen	stomach	
to end	finish	complete
to gather	to assemble	collect
to rise	to mount	to ascent
teaching instruction	guidance	

The infiltration of British English by Americanisms also results in the formation of synonyms pairs, one being a traditional Britishism and the other - a new American loan: Leader - editorial; autumn - fall; government - administration; luggage - baggage; wireless -radio; lorry - truck; tin - can; long distance (telephone) call - trunk call; stone - rock; team -squad.

As a rule the Americanisms have a lower frequency index than the British counterparts. Thus, tin is more common than can, team - than squad. But luggage - baggage, lorry - truck, leader -editorial are used sometimes interchangeably.

In a few cases the American synonym has a higher frequency than its British counterpart as in the pair: commuter - a season ticket holder (Br.). Very often 2 synonyms differ stylistically. Br. Synonym is stylistically neutral while the Americanism is stylistically marked (usually as colloquial or slang): intellectual - egghead excuse - alibi angry - mad averse - allergic.

English also used many pairs of synonymous derivatives, the one Hellenic and the other Romance: hypotheses - supposition periphery - circumference sympathy - compassion synthesis - composition.

Another source of synonymy is the so-called euphemism, when a harsh word indelicate or unpleasant or least inoffensive connotation. Thus the denotational meaning of drunk and merry may be the same. The euphemistic expression merry coincides in denotation with the word it substituted but the connotation of the latter faded out and so the utterance on the whole is milder and less offensive.

Very often a learned word which sounds less familiar and less offensive or derogative: for example “drunkenness” – “intoxication”, “sweat” – “perspiration” (cf.

<sup>2</sup> задавать вопросы

<sup>3</sup> расспрашивать

<sup>4</sup> допрашивать

Russian terms “экспроприация”, “раскулачивание”). The effect is achieved because the periphrastic expression is not so harsh, sometimes jocular: poor - underprivileged; pregnant - in the family way; lodger - paying guest.

Set expressions consisting of a verb with a postpositive are widely used in present day English: to choose - pick out, abandon - give up, postpone - put off, return - come back, quarrel - fall out.

Even more frequent are, for instance, such set expressions which differ from simple verbs in aspect or emphasis: to laugh - to give a laugh, to sign - to give a sign, to smoke - to have a smoke, to love - to fall in love.

*Smell, scent, odor, aroma* all denote a property of a thing that makes it perceptible to the olfactory sense. *Smell* not only is the most general of these terms but tends to be the most colorless. It is the appropriate word when merely a sensation is indicated and no hint of its source, quality or character is necessary.

*Scent* tends to call attention to the physical basis of the sense of smell and is particularly appropriate when the emphasis is on emanations or explanations from an external object which reach the olfactory receptors rather than impression produced in the olfactory center of the brain. *Odor* is oftentimes indistinguishable from *scent* for it too can be thought of as smth. diffused and as smth. by means of which external objects are identified by the sense of smell. But the words are not always interchangeable, for *odor* usually implies abundance of effluvia and therefore does not suggest, as *scent* often does, the need of a delicate or highly sensitive sense of smell.

*Aroma* usually adds to *odor* the implication of a penetrating, pervasive or sometimes a pungent quality; it need not imply delicacy or fragrance, but it seldom connotes unpleasantness, and it often suggests smth. to be savored.

## CONCLUSION

**To conclude**, when we use language for the purpose of communication, we come to perceive any expression as a tool more or less suitable for our purpose, we come to see it as possessing a certain value. So, synonymy must be analyzed both in terms of inner and outer relationships. Being a lexical relation, synonymy cannot avoid interrelating with other lexical relations such as antonymy, polysemy or even homonymy.

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