

SYNONYMS


Lecture # 9

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Synonyms

- *words of the same language*
- *belong to the same part of speech*
- *possess one or more identical or nearly identical **denotational** (основное, точное) meanings*
- *interchangeable, at least in some contexts*



Synonyms are different in outer aspects but identical or similar in inner aspects.

Mother –mom

A lot of borrowings → A lot of synonyms in English

Hearty (native)- Cordial (borrowed)

Synonyms

- *differ in morphemic shape*
- *differ in phonemic shape*
- *differ in shades of meaning, **connotations***
(дополнит-е, сопутств-ующею значение)
- *differ in style, idiomatic use*

-Was she a pretty girl?

-I would certainly have called her attractive.

‘**pretty**’ is too good for her –not **pretty** but **attractive**
essentially they both describe a pleasant appearance

-Think you can play Romeo? Romeo should *smile*, not *grin*;
walk not *swagger*; *speak* his lines not *mumble* them!

Smile (positive)----grin (broad but foolish smile)

Walk – swagger (walking but in insolent manner)

Speak – mumble (speaking but indistinctly)



Criteria of Synonymy

- conceptual criterion
- the criterion of interchangeability
- semantic criterion

Conceptual Criterion

Synonyms

- are of the same category of parts of speech
- convey the same concept
- differ in shades of meaning
- differ in stylistic characteristics

Washington is the capital of the USA.

(referent is the same, but there's no linguistic relationship of synonymy)

Semantic Criterion

Synonyms

- have the same denotation
- differ in connotations (connotative component)

denotative component + **connotative component**

To glare

to look

+ *lastingly* + *with anger*

The Criterion of Interchangeability

Synonyms

- are interchangeable at least in some contexts *without any considerable alteration* in denotational meaning

A pretty /good-looking / attractive / beautiful girl,




But!

I like you but I cannot love you

Romeo should smile but not grin

Substitution of one word for another is impossible!

- 
- He glared at her.
 - He glazed at her.
 - He glanced at her.
 - He peered at her.

- *He looked at her angrily.*
- *He looked at her steadily and attentively.*
- *He looked at her briefly.*
- *He tried to see her better, but something prevented (darkness, weak eyesight).*



Type classification of Synonyms

(by V.V. Vinogradov)

- Ideographic
- Stylistic
- Absolute

Classification of Synonyms (by V.V. Vinogradov)

■ *ideographic (denotational)*

words conveying the same concept but differing in shades of meaning

to look –

to see

to gaze

to glare.

Type classification of Synonyms

(by V.V. Vinogradov)

- ***absolute*** – words coinciding in all their shades of meaning and in all their stylistic characteristics

Motherland- homeland

Very rare !!!

Classification of Synonyms

(by V.V. Vinogradov)

- ***stylistic*** – words differing in stylistic characteristics

Father – Dad - Daddy

Types of Connotations

- **connotation of degree or intensity**

to like – to admire – to love – to adore – to worship

- **connotation of duration**

to shudder (brief) – to shiver (lasting)

Types of Connotations

- **emotive connotation-** associating with the same nature of the emotion they imply
to tremble – to shiver – to shudder – to shake
- **evaluative connotation** – convey speaker's attitude towards the referent, labeling it as good or bad
well-known – famous - celebrated

Types of Connotations

- **causative connotation** (different reasons)

to shiver with a cold, from a chill

to shudder with fear, horror

- **connotation of manner** (different ways and types of doing smth)

to stroll – to stride – to trot – to pace – to swagger

– to stagger – to stumble

Types of Connotations

- **connotation of attendant circumstances**

(a set of scenery is build in the context)

to peep -to look at smb/smth through a hole /
from a half-
closed door, a curtain

to peer -to look at smb/smth in darkness, through
the fog, from a great distance

Types of Connotations

■ stylistic connotation

girl

girlie (colloquial)

lassie (dialect)

bird, birdie

skirt (slang)

maiden (poetic)

damsel (archaic)

The Dominant Synonym

All synonymic groups have a “central” word of this kind whose meaning is equal to the denotation common to all synonymic group.

This word is called- *the dominant synonym*


To make-

to produce,

to create,

to fabricate,

to manufacture



The dominant synonym expresses the notion common to all synonyms of the group in the most general way, without contributing any additional information as to

- *the manner,*
- *intensity,*
- *duration,*
- *any attending feature of the referent.*

Dominant synonym-

a typical basic-vocabulary word.



Dominant Synonym

- **high frequency of usage**
- **broad combinability**
(ability to be used in combinations with various classes of words)
- **broad general meaning**
- **lack of connotations**
(goes for stylistic connotations)

Hyponymic structures

Inclusion-

relations exist between two words if the meaning of one word contains the semantic feature constituting the meaning of the other word


Flower ---- rose, tulip, snowdrops...



Hyponymy

The semantic relations of inclusion –
hyponymic relations

Vehicle

car, bus, taxi, tram...

The general term

Hyperonym

The more specific term

hyponyms

Sources of Synonyms

- **synonymic attraction** - the referent which is very popular attracts a large number of synonyms
- **variants and dialects of English**
 - lass (Scottish) - girl (English)*
 - long-distance call (USA) – trunk call (British)*

Sources of Synonyms

■ word-building

lab ← *laboratory* ***shortening***
cheery - *cheerful* ***affixation***
anxiety – *anxiousness*

■ phrasal verbs and set expressions

to continue – to go on

to smoke – to have a smoke

Sources of Synonyms

- **euphemisms** – a shift of unpleasant, too direct or rude meaning of a word to a more pleasant or milder one

drunk – merry

naked – in one's birthday suit



lavatory

- *Restroom*
- *Washroom*
- *Powder room*
- *Public comfort station*
- *Ladies' (gentlemen's) room*
- *Water-closet \ WC*
- *Public conveniences*



U-language

- **U-people (upper class)**
- **Non-U people**

Luncheon-lunch

Cycle- bike

Slang

- Hitch-hiker
- Guy

- Sham

Smth or smb that is not true as it seems to be

- Chap

Man

- humbug

Smth or smb to deceive people

Phraseological synonyms

Words become identical in their meanings but different in their combinability with other words

- *To be late for a lecture - miss the train*
- *To visit museum – to attend lectures*
- *Teachers question students-*
Judges interrogate witnesses

Contextual synonyms

Become synonyms only under some specific distributional conditions

Buy ----- **get** (*not synonyms out of context*)

BUT!

I'll go to the shop and buy some bread.

I'll go to the shop and get some bread.

Lexical variants (not synonyms)

- **Phonetical**

Vase [veiz] [va:z]

- **Graphical**

To-morrow Tomorrow