

Shakhlo U. Kholikova,
Senior lecturer;

Aida M. Talipova,
Assistant;

Shakhnoza Kh. Yusupalieva,
Senior lecturer,
Tashkent Institute of Textile and Light Industry

Interchangeable Character and Combinability of Synonyms in Teaching English

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Annotation: *in the linguistic literature on synonymy we can read that the interchangeable character of lexical units is considered as the effect to generalities of their lexical and grammatical importance.*

Considering the semantic generality of the lexical units and their partial interchangeability as the features of synonyms, that is to say, the compatibility of words in one contextual meaning and the inconsistency in others, we here under may confirm that two words interchangeable in all contexts are not synonyms, because when two words are used with no difference, there is no problem of the choice between them.

Now let us analyze this problem from the viewpoint of the Russian Scholar S. Ullmann. Citing on Aristotel, S. Ullmann emphasizes that synonymy of the words - a stylistic category and the style always expects the choice between two words, at least, which are compatible or incompatible. Hence it follows that where there are no grounds for choice between two or more words, there are no grounds for speaking about synonymy of these words.

Amongst the judgments about correlation of meanings in synonymy and their interchangeable character, there are such, which reduce the synonymy to unlimited interchange. For instance, A. Cherch writes that if two names (the question is about the names presented as combinations of the words) are synonyms (that is they have one and the same content), it is always possible for a linguist to change one of them into another. However, example, which A. Cherch gives on this cause, shows that the interchangeable character of synonyms is limited. This example looks as follows:

e.g. Sir Walter Scott is the author of "Veverley".

In this example we can see that though Sir Walter Scott is not a Veverley by its semantic content but Sir Walter Scott is Sir Walter Scott, though when we say a word "Veverley" we may mention Walter Scott as the author of the former.

In the linguistic literature on synonymy we can read that the interchangeable character of lexical units is considered as the effect to generalities of their lexical and grammatical importance. For

support of this idea we can take the works of A.L. Demidova, who, concerning with synonymic pretext, comes to conclusion that some synonyms differ in their semantically meaning and cannot be interchanged to each other, while the others are of stylistic shade and can be interchanged into each other. I agree with A.L. Demidova's idea is that there also exists the third group of synonyms, which combines in itself the features of the first two previous groups. And, consequently, such synonyms are interchangeable in one case and not interchangeable in another.

According to concepts, the synonymy exists only under the two above mentioned conditions of semantic generality, while the words which correspond only to one of these conditions, are not of synonymic character.

The verbs which fall into one synonymous row can possess the miscellaneous character of composing restrictions. The composing restrictions can be of lexical, semantic or referring character.

The lexical restriction reveals in the following fact: a synonym can be used only with determined circle of words. However, the verbal synonyms practically do not possess such type of restrictions, though there are some examples which might be suitable, to some degree, to the given type of restrictions:

For example, if we analyze the two synonyms - **to creep** and **to crawl**, the latter, is more preferable in usage with the names of animals that are deprived with limbs (e.g. **Snakes, gophers**, etc.)

cf: *The snakes **crawled** around the tree.*

Contrary to the above mentioned character, the semantic restriction is assigned by denotation of determined semantic feature, which a synonym must possess when correlating in syntactical relationship with the given word.

For instance, in the synonymic row **to escape, to flee, to fly, to abscond, to decamp** in the meaning of “кочмоқ” the first three synonyms possess a broad combinability, than the last twos. That is, in the case of semantic combinability the subject of the corresponding actions are both people and animals.

cf.: His best tow dogs **escaped** from the camp, the dog **fled** into the forest.

Meanwhile, the subject action of the verbs **to abscond** and **to decamp** is only people.

More complicated than the previously mentioned groups are the synonyms with the referring combinability restrictions. The example of such restrictions can be shown on the following synonymic row: **to reach - to achieve - to gain - to attain** in the meaning of “етмоқ” The following noun expressions which denote the purpose or the result of the action are of typical character for these three synonyms:

To reach / to achieve, to gain, to attain /one's aim (e.g. *the object of one's desires, success,*

fame, glory), **to reach** (*an understanding, agreement*), **to achieve the reputation for being rude, to achieve the realization of a dream, to gain / to attain / the attention of the clerk** (*the confidence of the mountain people*). It should be borne in the mind that the last examples the verbs **to gain** and **to attain** mustn't be substituted onto the verbs **to reach, or to achieve**, because the noun expression **to reach / to achieve / the attention of the clerk** (*the confidence of the mountain people*) are wrong (and not only somewhat different in the meaning).

Supervising more attentively to the nouns **attention** and **confidence**, which are capable to enter in the place of the direct object in the sentences with the verbs **to gain** and **to attain**, but not as the direct object to the verbs **to reach** and **to achieve**, we may notice the following interesting peculiar feature of the studied synonymic phrases: the subject for the state, marked by the words **attention** or **confidence**, do not correspond to the subject of the action, marked by the verbs **to gain** and **to attain**, i.e. the attention of the clerk is attracted not by the clerk himself, but by the other person, and the confidence of highlanders is achieved by someone different from highlanders.

However, the verbs **to gain** and **to attain** are capable to match with the nouns, marking such conditions (the characteristics, situations), the subjects of which coincide with the subjects of actions corresponding to these subjects: that is in the case of the verbs **to gain / to attain / one's aim** (*success, glory*) the subject of the action of **to gain / attain** is one and the same person.

So now we can formulate the referring restriction for the verbs **to reach** and **to achieve**: they cannot be combined with the names of conditions, the subjects of which do not coincide with the subject of the action marked by these conditions.

The similar difference is presented in the pair of the synonyms **to condescend** - to deign (in the meaning of “vouchsafe”): the first of them is combined both with the name of the action or property, the subject of which coincides with the subject for the verb **to condescend** (e.g. *he condescend smile*); and with the name or state the subject of which does not coincide with the subject for the verb **to condescend** (cf.: *to condescend to smb's folly*). Meantime, the verb **to deign** can be combined in its meaning only with the names of the proper actions or the characteristics of the subject:

cf.: *He didn't deign to smile, he didn't deign to their folly.*

The differences in combinability between the synonyms can, like constructive differences, be motivated or non-motivated.

Let us take into consideration, for instance, the synonyms **to surprise** - “хайрон қолдирмоқ” and **to amaze, to astound** - ” to astonish”. They differ, in particular, on the feature of degree of a feeling. All the three synonyms can be combined with the adverbial modifiers of measure, but the verb **to surprise** can be combined with any circumstance of this class (cf.: *he was a little [not a little, very much] sup*), while **to amaze** and **to astound** can be combined only with those adverbial modifiers of measure, which mark the super high or the maximal degree of property, condition or feeling at least once unusual unless absolutely anomalous, word-combinations.

In the above mentioned case the differences in combinability are naturally removed from the differences in the meanings of synonyms. However, even the differences in combinability can be semantically non-motivated.

Below we shall take into consideration some more several examples of differences in combinability between the synonyms.

The verb **gather** “to collect” differs from their synonyms **to assemble** and **to congregate** by the following: the subject for the verbs **to assemble** and **to congregate** can only be (in stylistically neutral text) only the living beings, but the subject for the verb **to gather** - can be expressed by any moving things:

e.g. *The clouds are **gathering**, it will rain.*

The verbs **to ponder**, **to meditate** and **to ruminate** in the meaning of “думать” are combinable with the names of situation, characteristic, products of thoughts as object (the theme) of reflections:

cf.: **to ponder / to meditate/ upon the course of actions; to ruminate over the past; to ponder / to meditate, to ruminate/ the point.**

The verbs **to ponder** and **to meditate** are combinable with the names of the person as object for reflections; the latter is characterized for the verb **to ruminate**:

cf.: *To ponder on modern young men, he meditated on all those people and the things they represented in his life.*

The verbs **to depress**, **to oppress** and **to weigh down (upon)** in the meaning of “push” can be combined with the names of feelings, actions, characteristics, etc. as the reasons for the oppressed condition:

cf.: **a feeling of isolation depressed / oppressed / her, she was oppressed by fear, oppressed / weighed down / by the heat.** Besides, the verbs **to depress** and **to oppress** can be combined with the names of the concrete things and living beings in same meaning, which is not characteristic for the phrasal verb **to weigh down (upon)**: Cf.: *The dim room depressed / oppressed / her, she depressed me.*

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