



# **Synonyms**

## Lecture 9

# The plan of the lecture

- 1) The definition of synonyms and the main features
- 2) A synonymic dominant
- 3) Criteria of synonymy
- 4) Types of synonyms by V.V. Vinogradov
- 5) Some connotation types
- 6) Euphemisms

# The definition of synonyms

- Synonymy is the coincidence in the essential meaning of words which usually preserve their differences in connotations and stylistic characteristics.
- Synonyms are two or more words belonging to the same part of speech and possessing one or more identical or nearly identical denotational meanings, interchangeable in some contexts.

# FAQ

- What is denotation a connotation of a word ?



# Examples

- I have always *liked* you very much, I *admire* your talent, but forgive me I could never *love* you as a wife should *love* her husband.
- -Was she a *pretty* girl?  
-I would certainly have called her *attractive*.
- .....Romeo should *smile*, not *grin*
- A young man was *strolling* along the street and his small companion was demurely *trotting* by his side

**Where is a dominant synonym?**

***To tremble - to shiver-to shudder-to  
shake***



# Characteristic features of a dominant synonym

- High frequency of usage
- Broad combinability
- Broad general meaning
- Lack of connotations

# Criteria of synonyms

- Conceptual criterion
- Semantic criterion
- Criterion of interchangeability (much criticized)



# Examples

- He glared at her - ( angrily)
- He gazed at her - (attentively, with admiration)
- He glanced at her - (briefly, with no interest)
- He peered at her - (through darkness, fog)

# Types of synonyms by v.v. Vinogradov

- Ideographic synonyms
- Stylistic synonyms
- Absolute synonyms



# Classification

- Ideographic synonyms
  - Ideographic synonyms denote different shades of meaning or different degrees of a given quality.
  - They are nearly identical in one or more denotational meanings and interchangeable at least in some contexts,
  - **e.g. beautiful - fine - handsome -pretty** Beautiful conveys, for instance, the strongest meaning; it marks the possession of that quality in its fullest extent, while the other terms denote the possession of it in part only

# Classification

- Stylistic synonyms
- • Stylistic synonyms differ not so much in denotational as in emotive value or stylistic sphere of application.
- In many cases a stylistic synonym has an element of elevation in its meaning,
- e.g. **face - visage, girl - maiden.**
- Along with elevation of meaning there is the reverse process of degradation: **to begin - to fire away, to eat - to devour (пожирать) , to steal - to pinch, face – muzzle (морда, рыло)**

# Classification

- Absolute
- Total synonyms are those members of a synonymic group which can replace each other in any given context, without the slightest alteration in denotative meaning or emotional meaning and connotations.
- e.g. **fatherland - motherland, noun - substantive, functional affix - flection, inflection, scarlet fever - scarlatina**

# Types of connotation

- Connotation of degree or intensity: *to surprise – to astonish – to amaze – to astound; to satisfy – to please – to content – to delight.*
- Duration connotation: *to stare – to glare – to glance – to peep.*
- Emotive connotation :;*to love – to admire – to adore – to worship*
- *Alone-single-lonely- solitary*

# Types of connotation

- Evaluative connotation: *well known – famous – notorious – covered – celebrated.*
- Causative connotation: *to sparkle* (positive cause) – *to glitter* (negative cause)
- The connotation of manner: *to stroll – to stride – to passé – to stagger – to stumble.*
- The connotation of attendant circumstances *to peep-  
to peer*
- Stylistic connotation *snake-bite-refreshment-feast*
- *To leave-to be off-to clear out-to hoof it-to take the  
air-to withdraw (formal)*

# Euphemisms

- **Lavatory** – euphemisms (powder room, washroom, restroom, ladies room, water-closet )
- **To eat** – euphemisms (refresh yourself, break bread )
- Adj **drunk** – euphemisms (intoxicated (form), under the influence, tipsy , fresh, merry, full, drunk as a lord, drunk as an owl, boiled, fried, tanked, high as a kite, half seas-over
- **Devil** – euphemisms the Prince of Darkness, the black one, deuce, Old Nick



# Euphemisms

- **God**- euphemisms Good Lord, By Heavens! My goodness, Gracious me!
- **To die** - euphemisms to pass away, to depart
- Slang variants – to check out, to kick off, to kick the bucket , to take a ride, to hop the twig, to join the majority