



UTILIZING SYNONYMS IN ESSAY WRITING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

The article reveals with the ways, strategies of effective writing academic essays and how to achieve high scores in process of it. It is suggested that one way is to choose proper word or phrase to avoid repetition in essays, however, can be tough job for a writer. A meaning of the word relates to a variety of the linguistic processes such as polisemy, synonymy, homonymy, styles of the speech. This research aims to discuss substituting proper the kinds of synonyms and the difference between polisemy and homonymy for a writer to success in academic essays.

KEY WORDS: *academic writing, synonymy, near synonymy, polisemy*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a contradictory process. It doesn't matter what kind of writing, the writer expresses his inner senses and opinions on the white sheet. It's hard, or as writer W. Somerset Maugham said, "To write simply is a difficult as to be good." Writing is also an empowering process, as essayist and literary critic William Hazlitt noted, "The more a man writes, the more he can write."

The writing process is also exciting and enlightening, thrilling and discouraging, humbling and exalting, just like life. We would want to live our lives and see what happens along the way as Ray Bradbury, the author of more than 500 published works, pointed out, "Creativity is continual surprise."

However, academic writing is also on great demand for students and learners. Academic writing in English is linear, which means it has one central point or theme with every part contributing to the main line of argument, without digressions or repetitions. Its objective is to inform rather than entertain. As well as this it is in the standard written form of the language. There are ten main features of academic writing that are often discussed. Academic writing is to some extent: complex, formal, objective, explicit, hedged, and responsible. It uses language

precisely and accurately. It is also well organized and planned. Written language is relatively more complex than spoken language. Written language has longer words, it is lexically more sense and it has a more varied vocabulary. It uses more noun-based phrases than verb-based phrases. Written texts are shorter and the language has more grammatical complexity, including more subordinate clauses and more passives. Academic writing is relatively formal. In general this means that in an essay you should avoid colloquial words and expressions. Written language is in general objective rather than personal. It therefore has fewer words that refer to the writer or the reader. This means that the main emphasis should be on the information that you want to give and the arguments you want to make, rather than you. For that reason, academic writing tends to use nouns (and adjectives), rather than verbs (and adverbs). Academic writing is explicit about the relationships in the text. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the writer in English to make it clear to the reader how the various parts of the text are related. These connections can be made explicit by the use of different signalling words.

One of the best techniques is to enhance writing skill and get best score is to avoid word



repetition in academic essays. When someone engaged with academic writing, his first objective is to think carefully about the choice of words. This is the creative phase where your main focus is on producing content that satisfies the objectives of your assignment brief or research proposal. Writing is a developmental process, and as you become more accomplished as an author, your range and understanding of the meaning and suitability of synonyms will increase and be reflected in your writing. ***In order to keep the reader connected with your writing is it vital to use synonyms, synonymous expressions and greater lexical variety. Replacing a word with an equivalent one perhaps, even a more specific one***, can improve how you are communicating your ideas. The use of synonyms also helps to make your writing more vivid and to create a more intriguing image in the mind of a reader. Language richness somehow depends on the varieties words and meanings used in the language. Why is it important to use synonyms in your speech or writing? It is important because synonyms can improve both your oral skills and your writing skills, as noted in the following section. Some of the benefits of using synonyms are that they can: Make text much more captivating. However, it is crucial to avoid plagiarism, as it is a serious issue for writers and editors and is considered copyright infringement. It is particularly serious for academic researchers because plagiarizing someone else's work in a research document can diminish or even destroy their professional credibility. Any works that you refer to in your writings that are not your original thoughts or ideas should be correctly cited and referenced. Must you always use direct quotations? Not necessarily, but any part of the original text that you include in your paraphrased text should be in quotation marks. Paraphrasing allows us to reduce a very lengthy quotation by using fewer words to convey the same message, and it can help avoid the temptation to use too many quotations. This is where synonyms come in handy, but you must be mindful of what words to use. When paraphrasing, be sure that the words you choose to replace the original idea are true synonyms. For example, the original phrase, "It was a dark day," could mean more than one thing. It could mean that the weather was gloomy or that the person's mood was somber and depressed. Be sure that you grasp the original idea and use words that will convey the same meaning.

Having variety meanings of a word is really vital in linguistics. Everyone can agree that the English language richness is more than comparing with other European languages. Learning to use synonyms effectively can provide the reader with colorfulness both written and oral speech. Hence, choosing a right word for each situation might be utterly confusing when you avoid making expression more arid and repetitious. As we know,

the word synonym in the linguistics can have exactly meaning or nearly the same as another word or phrase in one language. Synonyms may be any part of the speech, on condition that both words must belong to the same part of speech:

Noun: chance and opportunity

Verb: attend and go

Adjective: gorgeous and magnificent

Adverb: very and highly

Phrasal verbs: pass away and kick the bucket

Prepositions: by and next to

Negative prefix: un- and im-, unhappy and impolite

In linguistics the term synonymy has ambiguity of the words. Words that have the same meaning are said to be *synonymous* which they can be in one particular function. Synonyms with exactly the same meaning belong a seme or denotational seme while these with incisively similar meanings share a broader denotational or connotational seme and thus overlap within.

As Cruise established the scale of the synonymy: absolute synonymy, cognitive synonymy and near-synonymy. The last one is more common in writing. *Near-synonyms* are lexemes whose meaning is relatively close or more or less similar. The senses of near-synonyms overlap to a great degree, but not completely. [Murphy, 2003, 155] Moreover, unlike cognitive synonyms, near-synonyms can contrast in certain contexts:

He was killed, but I can assure you he was NOT murdered, madam. [Cruse 2000;159]

Near-synonymy is regularly found in dictionaries of synonyms or *thesauri* where most of the terms listed under a single dictionary entry are not considered to be cognitive synonyms (e.g. *govern-direct, control, determine, require*). [Maja 2009:19]

It is generally accepted that writing in English is a difficult process for English as a foreign language learners, it is not surprising that errors in writing are found as an unavoidable part of foreign language learners writing. Inferences are frequent in discourse of the English learners. They are eager to replace every word of the task by choosing synonymy. It would be better for learners to analysis more words and meanings relating to collocations, near synonyms in the thesaurus meanwhile practicing the writing.

When we try to use the synonyms the surface meaning seem to be similar exactly but we should draw attention there is a slight difference on account of *tone*. The tone of communication shows you what you are going to say and provide with variety meanings of the word. In discourse communication using synonyms is vital like "*blood for human body*". They can color the speech in different way to provide with essential meaning to emphasize the word meaning in certain tone.

The most common examples are *pretty* and *handsome* as two different forms which have the



same sense. However, *pretty* collocates with female and *handsome* collocates with male. Different words that are similar in meaning usually differ for a reason: *woman* can be used for person rather than *female*; and *extended* are only synonyms in one usage and not in others (for example, a *long arm* is not the same as an *extended arm*).

Synonyms are defined with respect to certain senses of words such as: *hilarious comical* and *priceless* can be synonymous in the meaning of *funny*, however, they mean funny in a slightly different way:

- *Hilarious* [adjective] – very funny (laugh out); *Hilarious cartoon that the whole family can enjoy.*
Comical [adjective] – means funny in a silly way (cause laughter especially by unusual or unexpected): *Little girl looked comical in her mother's dress.*
Priceless [adjective] – can mean extremely funny: *I could not help laughing whenever I saw that priceless film.*

Additional examples are analyzed for investigating **near-synonyms** with the help of *Merriam Webster Dictionary*.

- *sleep* [noun] and *nap* [noun] are synonymous but *nap* is a type of short sleeping especially during the day: *She is taking a nap now;*
strange [adjective] and *bizarre* [adjective] both mean odd but *bizarre* means strikingly out of the ordinary, very unusual: *The new film is full of bizarre situations;* *strange* may also apply for unfamiliarity and nonnative or unnatural: *She does not know anybody, she is strange here;*
- *shop* [noun] and *store* [noun]; store cannot be placed instead of shop in some cases, store is a large building or room things are sold and kept; *I'm going to store to buy groceries,* *Jane's aunt keeps flower shop;*
- *close* [adjective] and *near* [adverb] are synonymous, however, *near* cannot be synonym of *close friend* because *near* is close to someone or in distance: *My close friend is Sally;* *Sally lives near collage;*
- *expensive* [adjective], *dear* [adjective] and *pricey* [adjective] they all mean that something cost a lot of money but *pricey(pricy)* is more informal so it is difficult to see that in written form, *dear* is more modern, for instance:
I have bought a new expensive mobile phone it is a bit pricey but not as dear as previous one.
- *kill* [verb], *slay* [verb] and *murder* [verb] here *kill* states the fact of death caused by an agency in any manner: *the frost killed the plants;* *murder* specifically implies stealth and motive and premeditation and therefore full moral responsibility: *he was arrested and accused of murdering his wife;* *slay* is a chiefly literary term implying deliberateness and violence but

not necessarily motive: *the knight slew the dragon;*

- *Alike and same*; both words mean similarity but there is a great difference in grammar structure alike [adjective] – similar in appearance, exhibiting close resemblance without being identical; alike is predicative adjective so that it comes after noun or auxiliary verb:
These covers of the books are alike. *Your new suit seems alike;*
same shows similarity of size, color and age. After *same* follows a noun
 “the same + noun + noun”, moreover, *same* is used with definite article “the”.
 For instance: *Both girls have the same color dresses.*

A thesaurus lists similar or related words; these are often, but not always, synonyms. Thesaurus are used to avoid word repetition and also to enrich vocabulary in a language. Dictionary for synonyms are first appeared in 1852 by Peter Mark Roget. Roget's Thesaurus is two volume set which are available both published and electronic version. It was initial work of synonyms which listed and put in alphabetical order. Thesauruses are often used by writers or students to find out a proper word to express an idea. Many of the dictionaries don't have definition but include a list of synonyms of the word. However, while searching a synonym in thesaurus draw attention to semantic and denotative meaning of the word. I think there are a lot of near synonyms (almost the same meaning) in thesaurus, choosing a synonym is profound effort anyway. Let's see the words *consume* and *use*, both are they synonyms in the context *consume petrol* and *use petrol* are synonymous, but *use* cannot be practiced in the phrase *consume meat*. Here we can see synonyms are different according to their meaning and collocation, therefore, it is highly recommended that the writer should be careful when looking up to choose the right word from thesauri dictionary, as not every word can be suitable synonym for replacing owing to near synonyms.

One of the remarkable challenges is polysemy for writers. Polysemy is the capacity for a word or phrase to have different meanings, usually related by contiguity of meaning within a semantic field. Polysemantic words always serve to enrich the language, but at the same time these words create some confusions in the language. There is context to avoid such confusion. It is the context that clearly defines the meaning of polysemantic words in language. The true exact meaning of a word is determined within context. Other meanings come to the fore only when the word is used in certain contexts. This is true of all polysemantic words. For example the adjective *yellow*, when used in isolation is understood to denote a certain colour, whereas other meanings of this word, e.g. “envious”, “suspicious”, “sensational”, “corrupt” are perceived



only in certain contexts, “a yellow look”, “a yellow press”.

Furthermore, in linguistics the term homonymy can be always confused with the term polysemy. Homonymy is another factor that hinders the learners' writing skills. Synchronically the differentiation between homonymy and polysemy is as a rule based on the semantic criterion. It is usually held that if a connection between the various meanings is apprehended by the speaker, these are to be considered as making up the semantic structure of a polysemantic word, otherwise it is a case of homonymy, not polysemy. For example, in English

Fire:
1. Destructive burning,
2. Burning material in a stove, fire place (a camp fire)
3. Strong feeling, passion, enthusiasm (a speech lacking fire).

CONCLUSION

Synonymy affects the aspects of vocabulary when learners can substitute a synonym for a word in a text, the learners could be expected to score higher on writing tasks, measuring knowledge of syntagmatic association, paradigmatic association, and grammatical functions for target words with known synonyms than target words without them. It is obvious that writing skills are based on the using techniques of the right and proper words. Using synonyms, polysemantic words should be accurately used in writing process. Using synonyms and paraphrasing to avoid plagiarism can be used in writing skills.

Plagiarism is a significant problem for authors as editors, and it is considered a violation of copyright. Plagiarism in a research paper is especially dangerous for academic researchers because it can damage or even ruin their professional reputation. Any works that you mention in your writings but aren't your own. Learning to properly use synonyms will help you express your ideas more effectively. Using a number of synonyms in a clear and succinct text will provide your readers with more enjoyable reading that will keep their attention. After all, the ultimate aim of scholarly writing is to clearly introduce new subjects and studies to everyone who is interested.

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