

CHARACTERISTICS OF SYNONYMOUS RELATIONSHIPS IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH JUDICIAL TERMINOLOGY

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The article examines synonymous relationships within the contemporary English judicial system of terms, with a particular focus on exploring characteristics of synonymy in terminology. The study pays special attention to professional terms, along with their derivational and semantic peculiarities. Currently, the field of terminology exhibits heightened research activity, driven by the significant increase in professional information, processes of globalization, and the rising importance of term creation. Linguists actively analyze specialized terminological systems, focusing on the semantic characteristics of terms and their application within the language.

Judicial terminology has emerged as a response to the essential need for organizing social relations. A term of judicial sphere is a generally recognized and correctly structured lexical unit that accurately defines a specific legal concept. Professional terminological units are usually characterized by such qualities as emotional and expressive neutrality, systematicity and laconicism. Studying modern English judicial terminology is both relevant and beneficial for a comprehensive study of synonymy, conducting a cognitive analysis of synonymous relations at the lexical level, classifying synonymous terms, and identifying trends in the development of this phenomenon. It is important to highlight the significance of judicial terminology in the context of growing international integration, and the expansion of international partnership.

The object of our research is the contemporary English judicial terminological system, while the study's primary subject is characteristics of synonymous relationships within this sphere.

In the modern English legal terminological system, synonymous relations are of particular importance. We consider synonyms to be lexical units that serve to denote the same concept, which may differ in certain features of that concept. Synonyms are considered distinct linguistic signs.

We distinguish absolute synonyms, relative synonyms and definitional synonyms among the terminological units of contemporary English judicial terminology.

We have found that absolute synonyms are completely equivalent in meaning. They can be interchangeable in different contexts of the field of law. It is worth noting that relative synonyms have different semantic shades. The semantic phenomenon in which the meaning of a terminological unit of the judicial sphere corresponds to its definition is definitional synonymy.

It is proven that synonymous relationships are undesirable for the judicial terminology system, as they complicate communication between professionals in this field and cause misunderstanding of judicial documentation, in particular, professional legal texts.

ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКА СИНОНІМІЧНИХ ВІДНОШЕНЬ У СУЧАСНІЙ АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ СУДОВІЙ ТЕРМІНОЛОГІЇ

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Ключові слова: *судова термінологічна система, судовий термін, синонімічні відношення, класи синонімів, аббревіатури, дефініційна синонімія.*

У статті розглядаються синонімічні відношення у сучасній англійській судовій системі термінів. Особливий акцент зроблено на вивченні характеристик синонімії в термінології. Зокрема, в дослідженні приділено увагу професійним термінам, їхнім дериваційним та семантичним особливостям.

Нині сфера термінології висвітлює посилену дослідницьку діяльність, що зумовлено значним збільшенням професійної інформації, процесами глобалізації та зростанням значення термінотворення. Лінгвісти активно аналізують спеціалізовані термінологічні системи, зосереджуючи увагу на семантичних характеристиках термінів та їх застосуванні в мові.

Судова термінологія виникла як відповідь на насущну потребу організації суспільних відносин. Термін судової сфери – це загальновизнана та правильно структурована лексична одиниця, яка точно визначає конкретне правове поняття. Професійним термінологічним одиницям, як правило, властиві такі якості, як емоційно-експресивна нейтральність, системність, лаконічність.

Вивчення сучасної англійської судової термінології є актуальним і корисним для всебічного вивчення синонімії, проведення когнітивного аналізу синонімічних відношень на лексичному рівні, класифікації термінів-синонімів, виявлення тенденцій розвитку цього явища. Важливо підкреслити значення судової термінології в контексті зростання міжнародної інтеграції та розширення міжнародного партнерства.

Об'єктом нашого дослідження є сучасна англійська судова терміносистема. Предметом дослідження є характеристика синонімічних відношень у цій сфері.

У сучасній англійській юридичній терміносистемі особливого значення набувають синонімічні відношення. Синонімами ми вважаємо лексичні одиниці, що служать для позначення одного й того самого поняття, які можуть відрізнятися певними ознаками цього поняття. Синоніми вважаються самостійними мовними знаками.

Серед термінологічних одиниць сучасної англійської судової термінології виокремлюємо абсолютні синоніми, відносні синоніми та дефініційні синоніми. Ми виявили, що абсолютні синоніми повністю еквівалентні за значенням. Вони можуть бути взаємозамінними в різних контекстах галузі права. Відносні синоніми мають різні семантичні відтінки. Семантичним явищем, у якому значення термінологічної одиниці судової сфери відповідає її визначенню, є дефініційна синонімія.

Нами доведено, що синонімічні відношення є небажаними для системи судової термінології, оскільки вони ускладнюють спілкування між фахівцями у цій галузі та спричиняють хибне тлумачення судової документації, зокрема професійних юридичних текстів.

Problem statement. Currently, the issue of synonymy is one of the most important problems of terminology. The need to study synonymy in terminology is explained by the tasks of practice in the terminology field.

There is an opinion that the presence of synonymous terms motivates to find a difference between them, which can cause distortion of the meaning. The use of different terminological units is the basis for uncertainty that we are talking about the same concept. This complicates mutual understanding and causes disputes about terms [Korotka, 2021, p. 120].

The dynamic activation of integration processes of the late 20th – early 21st centuries in the world and, in particular, on the European continent, in order to create unified legal standards that correlate with the modern needs of the civilizational development of society, requires the ordering and normalization, and possibly the restructuring of the legal terminological system [Koval, 2018, p. 479].

Identifying modern trends in improving the terminology of the legal field, highlighting the nature of terms and their functioning, studying the derivational processes of legal terminological vocabulary attracts the attention of many researchers.

Currently, linguists focus on the systematization and standardization of legal terminology, studying the features of the formation and functioning of the legal terminological system in the general system of language. These issues are considered in their studies by such scientists as Romanyuk O., Bialyk V. [Romanyuk, Bialyk, 2020], Lazarev V. [Lazarev, 2022], Lysenko O. [Lysenko, 2022], Zakharova K. [Zakharova, 2021], Popova O., Krasnyuk V. [Popova, Krasnyuk, 2022] and others. Researchers study the logical and linguistic criteria for identifying terms, try to separate them from words of the general language, and find out the lexical and structural features of professional terminological vocabulary.

It is worth noting that synonymous relations, problems of synonymy, determining its place in the language system, synonymous processes at the lexical and word-formation levels are studied thoroughly in the works by such linguists as Korotka N. [Korotka, 2021], Zelenska O. [Zelenska, 2017], Babyatynska Yu., Huseynova K. [Babyatynska, Huseynova, 2020], Gumovska I. [Gumovska, 2017], Lytvynska S. [Lytvynska, 2020] and others. However, at present there is no single interpretation of this phenomenon, that's why the research is so relevant.

Judicial terminology is a terminological system that continues to develop and improve. The study of modern trends in its development, the study of the semantic potential is relevant both in the theoretical and in the practical dimension.

Purpose of the article. The aim of this research is to study the main characteristics of the synonymous

relationships in the contemporary English judicial terminology system and to identify certain types of synonymous terms.

The work solves the following **tasks** in accordance with the main goal:

- 1) to study the phenomenon of synonymy within the terminology field of the judicial sphere;
- 2) to investigate the specific processes of emergence of synonymous judicial terms;
- 3) to identify the classes of terminology synonyms in judicial sphere;
- 4) to investigate the impact of synonymous terms on the interpretation of special court documents.

The object of analysis is the contemporary English judicial terminological system.

The subject of the study is characteristics of synonymous relationships within this system.

Presentation of the main material. Modern English judicial terminology is a specific lexical layer, which is gradually being improved and is a unique tool for communication in the professional sphere. All components of the terminological system are interconnected and are characterized by a certain specificity of functioning. The content of each lexical unit highlights its place in the system, demonstrates connections and correlates with other elements of professional terminology.

The relevance of the work is due to the important role of the modern English judicial terminology system in the English-speaking professional communicative sphere. It is worth noting that judicial terminology is currently popular, as it is the leading language in legal proceedings.

In judicial language, a large number of various linguistic designations of a certain concept function. Taking this into account, when creating draft regulatory acts, understanding and correct selection of synonyms occupy one of the first places among the terminological problems of the judicial sphere.

Regulatory acts provide for regular use. When presenting them, it is necessary to adhere to the language and style that correlate with the actions and tasks of law as a regulator of relations in society. Incorrect formulation of legal provisions and the use of synonyms in this way can prevent the achievement of the legal goal.

With the development of the state, judicial terminology evolves, as it is associated with changes in the state system governed by law [Sydor, Nanivskyi, 2018, p. 199].

It should be noted that the judicial terminological system at the present stage is really dynamically developing, depends on the life of society, on changes in the language system, absorbs special scientific information and has a much greater variety of professional fields of application compared to other terminological areas [Bilokon, 2018, p. 55].

The current trend towards the interaction of certain judicial areas illustrates the need for a deeper study of the judicial language of documents and contributes to the improvement and replenishment of the modern English legal terminology system.

It is worth noting that the phenomenon of synonymy in modern English judicial terminology is currently insufficiently studied. The issue of synonymy is one of the urgent problems of linguistic semantics that does not receive a generally accepted solution, despite constant efforts both in terms of theoretical understanding of the phenomenon and in terms of practical compilation of dictionaries of synonyms [Zelenska, 2017, p. 383].

The research material is a corpus of special vocabulary of 3000 terms, selected by the method of continuous sampling from lexicographic sources and from periodicals in the field of jurisprudence. The total volume of the processed material is about 5000 pages of text.

Obviously, the phenomenon of synonymy is inherent in professional terminology, in particular, it concerns terminological systems that are dynamically developing and improving. For the most part, synonymous relations are characteristic of the early stages of development of the terminological system, since the selection of the necessary lexical material is carried out, and versatile variants of the name function in the system of terminological nomination.

The phenomenon of synonymy can manifest itself at any stage of the evolution of terminology, given that the emergence of a new referent causes the emergence of several names that can coexist in the terminological system.

In linguistics, there is an opinion that synonymy has a positive meaning, since it allows to highlight the smallest nuances of thought, to diversify speech, to make language more effective and expressive, and synonymy in terminology indicates a high level of development of science, functional flexibility of the terminological system, necessary for the implementation of various communicative tasks [Zelenska, 2017, p. 382].

We consider synonymy as a negative phenomenon, because a term in a legal terminological system should strive for such properties as systematicity, accuracy, semantic unambiguity.

The phenomenon of synonymy within the realm of terminology can be described as the presence of various terminological units that are capable of denoting identical or closely related concepts, with such semantically equivalent terms occasionally being referred to as doublets [Korotka, 2021, p. 120].

In our analysis, we regard synonyms as lexical units which serve the function of denoting the same conceptual meaning while potentially differing in some specific aspect or characteristic of the concept

they represent, and these synonyms are viewed as distinct and separate linguistic signs within the broader structure of language.

Typically, judicial synonyms can highlight not only semantic nuances, but also the period of creation of legislative acts, including terminological vocabulary popular in society.

The results of the analysis of the source database on the research problem indicate that among the terms of the modern English judicial terminology system, absolute synonyms, relative synonyms and synonym-definitions are distinguished.

It should be noted that absolute synonyms completely coincide in meaning and use in any context related to the judicial sphere. They do not interfere with communication between specialists.

Compare

- *incarceration* “putting someone in prison” – *imprisonment* “putting someone in prison”;
- *border* “a line separating two countries” – *frontier* “a line separating two countries”;
- *to own* “have (something) as one’s own; possess” – *to possess* “have (something) as one’s own; possess”;
- *to forbid* “refuse to allow (something)” – *to prohibit* “refuse to allow (something)”;
- *jurist* “one having a thorough knowledge of law” – *lawyer* “one having a thorough knowledge of law”.
- *plaintiff* “person who files a lawsuit in court” – *claimant* „ person who files a lawsuit in court”;
- *defendant* “the party against whom the claim is filed” – *respondent* “the party against whom the claim is filed”;
- *judgment* “the decision of the court” – *decision* “the decision of the court”.

Abbreviations and their decodings also belong to absolute synonyms. Such terminological synonyms are interchangeable. It is worth noting that abbreviations are often used in documents related to legal proceedings.

Compare

- CIV – Civil Case;
- CR – Criminal Case;
- FRCP – Federal Rules of Civil Procedure;
- FRCrP – Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure;
- SC – Supreme Court;
- Ct. – Court;
- R.O.A. – Record on Appeal;
- Am. – Amendment.

Relative synonyms differ in semantic nuances. In the field of judicial law relative synonyms are rare, as legal language strives for maximum precision.

Compare.

- *robbery*” the unlawful taking of personal property from a person by violence or by threat of violence that causes fear” – *burglary* ” the act of breaking and

entering an inhabited structure (as a house) especially at night with intent to commit a felony (as murder or larceny)”;

larceny by trick “a crime which involves the obtainment of another’s property through fraud” – *embezzlement* “a type of financial crime, usually involving theft of money from a business or employer”;

attorney “a person who has the legal right to act for someone else” – *barrister* “a lawyer who represents a litigant as an advocate before a court”;

trial “legal process” – *hearing* “legal proceedings relating to a separate meeting”;

court “a place where legal cases are heard.” – *tribunal* “a place where administrative or specialized disputes are heard”;

verdict “jury decision” – *finding* “jury decision on the facts of the case”.

The presence of relative synonyms can be considered a negative phenomenon, as they sometimes contribute to misunderstanding of the term and interfere with professional communication.

Definitional synonymy is a semantic phenomenon that consists in correlating the meaning of a terminological unit with its definition. Thus, the judicial term *prison* has a definition “a building where people are kept as a punishment for a crime”. The term *tort* has a definition “an act or omission that gives rise to injury or harm to another and amounts to a civil wrong for which courts impose liability”.

The judicial term *subpoena* has a definition “A legal document ordering someone to attend court or produce evidence”.

The term *bail* is defined as “A sum of money or property given as security to ensure the defendant’s appearance at court”.

The judicial term *injunction* has a definition “A court order that requires a party to do or refrain from doing specific acts”.

The given definitions highlight the key features of terminological units of the judicial sphere. The semantics of the corresponding lexical units actualizes these same features.

Conclusions and prospects for further developments. Synonyms can be defined as lexical units within a language system that are employed to express or represent the same conceptual idea, yet they may exhibit variations or distinctions in specific features, attributes, or characteristics associated with the concept they denote, illustrating their role as separate linguistic signs.

The exploration and detailed analysis of the phenomenon of synonymy within the realm of judicial terminology allow for the conclusion to be drawn that this linguistic phenomenon is generally considered undesirable, primarily because the existence of synonyms introduces significant complexity into professional communication, thereby increasing the

likelihood of misinterpretation or misunderstanding of judicial texts, especially within the context of documentation and formal records. Furthermore, it is essential to emphasize that the principles of correctness, precision, and unambiguous clarity are fundamental and mandatory criteria within the specialized field of judicial knowledge, as they ensure the effective conveyance of meaning.

Within the expansive system of modern English judicial terminology, we can identify and categorize terms into groups such as absolute synonyms, relative synonyms, and a specific type known as synonym-definitions, each of which contributes differently to the intricacies of legal language.

Absolute synonyms are completely identical and do not interfere with communication between specialists. Abbreviations with their definitions stand out among the absolute synonyms of the judicial sphere.

Relative synonyms differ in semantic nuances, their semantic similarity does not extend to all their meanings. This can interfere with the correct understanding and use of professional terms.

With definitional synonymy, the meaning of a terminological unit correlates with its definition, which helps to highlight the main features of the term.

It can be assumed that, as a result of the further evolution of judicial terminology, synonyms may disappear and only one improved terminological unit will remain, which will correspond to all the ideal features of a legal term.

Looking ahead into future research endeavors, our intention is to conduct a comprehensive and detailed investigation into the structural characteristics, defining features, and inherent properties of lexical units that constitute the intricate and multifaceted system of modern English judicial terminology, with a focus on uncovering patterns, relationships, and underlying principles that govern their usage, formation, and evolution within the specialized context of legal language.

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