

## THE TRANSLATION OF SYNONYMS IN ARABIC AND ENGLISH

**Tasneem Fayeze Aqel**  
An-Najah National University  
taqel26@gmail.com

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**ABSTRACT:** *This paper shows that synonyms are inevitable in language. Arabic or English are no exceptions. Both employ synonymy, i.e. synonymy can be within and across languages. It is a controversial issue among linguists of both languages. The study explores the translation of several synonymous lexical items. These samples were taken from Arabic and English specialized dictionaries of synonyms. Through adopting a comparative investigation to these samples, the study explains that the translation of synonyms is problematic in the said languages. The study argues that although Arabic and English have synonyms, each one tackles its synonyms through its own linguistic system, using its own rules. The translation of synonyms in Arabic and English shows that similarities between both languages tend to be less than differences for they differ in different aspects.*

**KEYWORDS:** synonymy, absolute synonymy, near synonymy, translation, English, Arabic

### INTRODUCTION

Synonymy is one of the main issues that has been considered by many linguists in both Arabic and English. Debates concerning synonymy expanded to include linguists who call for synonymy in language and those who maintain that synonymy does not exist. Others tend to agree upon the existence of certain types of synonymy. As languages differ in their style, structure, culture, and vocabulary, it is highly expected that concepts are conveyed differently; however, sometimes such expressions seem to be synonymous to some extent. According to Edmonds & Hirst (2002:105) "A word can express a myriad of implications, connotations, and attitudes in addition to its basic "dictionary" meaning". In fact, this undergoes certain strategies that are adopted by scholars on how to judge that certain words are synonymous or not. Edmonds and Hirst add that "in order to find the right word to use in any particular situation—the one that precisely conveys the desired meaning and yet avoids unwanted implications—one must carefully consider the differences between all of the options." (ibid:105).

### Types of Synonyms

#### Perfect<sup>1</sup> Synonyms

Hassan (2014) discusses that some scholars such as Bloomfield (1962) denies perfect synonyms in language. In addition, Crystal (1993), Ghazala (2002), and Inkepen (2004) dismiss the idea of absolute synonyms or even maintain that they are quite rare. Edmonds & Hirst (2002) point that Quine (1951) and Goodman (1952) argue that total synonyms are unattainable, for if it is possible it will set aside other types of synonymy, but empirical and pragmatic arguments would prove that they are rare. In addition to that, Palmer (1976) stresses that there are no hundred percent synonyms in which words of exact meaning would not exist in a language.

Most of the scholars are prone to emphasize that real synonyms are almost rare or non-existence. Ishrateh (2006) points out that Cruse (1986: 268) admits that "There is no motivation for the

*existence of absolute synonyms in a language" unless two dialects of one language use two different lexical items to signify one object. In addition, Edmonds & Hirst (2002) point out that Clark (1992) mentions that true synonyms are bounded and restricted to dialect variations and technical terms. In fact, some words tend to be interchangeable in different contexts, hence they seem to be full synonyms to some extent, for example, sidewalk (American) and pavement (British), druggist and chemist, water heater and geyser, etc., . If words or expressions carry the same meaning, they are considered as translation of each other ( Appelo & de Jong1987). "In translation, it is rare to find the exact word that faithfully and directly translates a word of another language. Often, the target language will provide many near-synonyms for a source language word that differ (from the target word and among themselves) in nuances of meaning" (Edmonds1998:23).*

## **Near<sup>2</sup> Synonyms**

Near synonyms are abundant in languages and they can differ within and across languages. Some near synonyms put a burden on translators who try to render an absolute equivalent communicative lexical item. As a result of their availability in language, translators sometimes fail to recognize their shades of meaning whether denotative ones or connotative, thus translating them inappropriately. According to Edmonds & Hirst (2002:108) "*It can be difficult even for native speakers of a language to command the differences between near-synonyms well enough to use them with invariable precision, or to articulate those differences even when they are known. Moreover, choosing the wrong word can convey an unwanted implication*".

They add, a word that has near synonyms, can express different nuances (i.e. subtle differences in shades of meaning, or expressions) such as: attitudes, implications, and connotations. Therefore, some of these nuances may be disregarded in translation, hence a "*faithful translation requires a sophisticated lexical-choice process that can determine which of the near-synonyms provided by one language for a word in another language is the closest or most appropriate in any particular situation*." (ibid:106).

Other than absolute or near synonyms, Ishrateh (2006) mentions that Cruse (1986), Lyons (1981) and Shunnaq (1992) attempt to provide another two types of synonyms which are: cognitive and contextual synonyms. On the one hand, cognitive synonyms are words which refer to the same referent but differ in respect of their evaluative/ connotative meaning. On the other hand, contextual synonyms are words that can be used interchangeably in such a context.

In general, synonymy is of great importance in language. It is used to show emphasis, achieve cohesiveness in a text, avoid repetition and clarification, enrich the language and style of the text.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Synonymy in English**

Synonymy is a controversial issue which was discussed from different points of view by Arab and European scholars. In English, for example, as cited in Hassan (2014:169) synonymy is defined as "*the similarity in meaning*" by (Palmer, 1981: 88; Crystal, 1993:340; Ghazala, 2002: 89). Other linguists as pointed by Abu-Melhim & Al-Omari (2014) like Palmer (1976); Cruse (1986); Farghal (1998) state that synonymous words are those which share the same meaning in which synonymy

represents the connection between these words as one clarifies the meaning of the other. It seems that synonymous words tend to be those that share the main attributes of them to convey the meaning and ignore those indicate tiny differences.

In order to understand the context of such an occurrence, one has to understand the meaning of its expressions, what they imply, and how they are used in that context. The meaning of words or lexemes is determined by the context; otherwise, any possible ambiguity is likely to arise. With regard to synonymy, Hassan (2014) points out that some scholars including Cooper (1979), and Jackson (1988) define synonymy as the substitution of words in all contexts. Jackson sets five methods to differentiate between synonyms:

1. Synonyms may persist in the vocabulary because they belong to different dialects.
2. Synonyms may be differentiated by style or level of formality.
3. Synonyms are differentiated in terms of technicality.
4. Synonyms may be differentiated as a result of connotation.
5. Euphemism is a fifth reason.

Moreover, Hassan (2014) points out that Nida (1975) considers words as synonymous if their meanings interfere in certain contexts. Whereas Yule (1998:118) states that "*while one word is fitting in a sentence, its synonym would, be inappropriate. He explains that the two words 'answer' and 'reply' are synonymous yet answer is proper in a context whereas reply would appear unusual*". In addition, Issa endorses the importance of context in translating synonyms. She illustrates that "*the individual words that need to be explained but rather the deeper concept that lies in the surrounding elements that help the translator to choose the best contextual equivalent. The reason why most translators are likely to translate synonyms inaccurately is that they do not take heed of "context based meanings"*" Issa (2011: 32, 38). Abu-Melhim & Al-Omari (2014) point that according to Ullman (1972), if words have many options to convey the message, the writer will tend to opt for that fits the context, i.e. that carries the emphasis.

If we suppose that words are totally similar or identical in a language with reference to meaning, all people would have the same word referring to the same concept either within one language or among languages. In fact, this means that we ignore the existence of languages at all, i.e. all people would speak the same language, use the same expressions, and share the same ideas or concepts, hence, denying varieties among languages.

### **Synonymy in Arabic**

In Arabic, many scholars argue about the existence and non-existence of synonymy in language. Both trends of scholars reflect the argumentative debate between scholars of the same era, or even between early and contemporary linguists. Synonymy in language is undeniable, one can notice how applying synonyms enrich the style and the structure of such a text. Advocates of synonymy maintain that synonymous words are that can share the same meaning and be substituted in all contexts. Hayagnah (2001: 12) discusses that Sibawayh (1991) (d.180 Hijri) says that:

*" Arabic has different words with different meanings, different words with the same meaning (synonymy) and the same word with different meanings (polysemy)".*

*"اعلم أن من كلامهم اختلاف اللفظين لاختلاف المعنيين ، واختلاف اللفظين والمعنى واحد، و اتفاق اللفظين واختلاف المعنيين"*

In addition, Al-Asma'i (1986) (d.214 Hijri) points out that synonymy means different words that have the same meaning : "ما اختلف ألفاظه و اتفقت معانيه" (ibid:12).

Ishrateh (2006) mentions that Ibn-Jinni (1988) (d.392 Hijri) discusses synonymy under the title: "تعادي الأمثلة وتلاقي المعاني على اختلاف الأصول و المباني"

He states that regional variation is an important factor in creating synonyms. This means that interactions among dialects within a language or across languages would of course create synonyms.

Moreover, Al-Suyūṭīy (1986) defines synonymy saying:

"هو الألفاظ الدالة على كل شيء واحد باعتبار واحد"

It means the denotation of words to one meaning.

There are differences between lexical items used to denote the referent and lexical items that are only descriptions. According to some scholars who deny synonymy like Ibn-Faris (1969) (d. 395 Hijri), if any two words have at least one semantic feature, they are best described as attributes rather than synonyms. In contrast, others use the adjectives of certain concepts as synonyms. For instance, there are many attributes for the word

"lion" : "الأسد" that describes it in Arabic such as:

أسامة ، الليهس ، حيدرة ، الرئبال ، حمزة ، الضيغم ، الضرغام ، الغضنفر ، الليث ، أبو شبل ، السبع ، الهزير ، العباس ، الدلهمس ، قسورة ، العنيس ، الهواس .

Another example is the word "wine" : "الخمير" that has many adjectives such as:

الشمول ، الراح ، المزة ، الكأس ، القهوة ، المُدام ، العقار ، الكُميت ، الصهباء ، السُلاف ، الخمط، الشراب

Each one of these designations indicates either the situation when one drinks wine or a characteristic of wine. Despite the differences of these indications, they all refer to special characteristics of wine other than to any other drink. For instance,

يُقال شمولاً: لأنها شملت القوم بريحتها ،  
عقاراً: لأنها تعقر شاربها أي تلازمه  
قهوة: لأن شاربها يقهي عن الطعام أي  
لا يشتهيها ،  
مُدام : لأنها أُدِمت في ظرفها ،  
لأن صاحبها يرتاح إذا شربها أي يهش للسخاء والكرم ،  
سُلاف: ما سال منها من غير أن يعصر ،  
لأنها حمراء إلى الكُلفة أي إذا اشتدت حمرتها حتى تضرب إلى السواد  
الصهباء : التي عُصرت من عنب أبيض .

As regards the use of adjectives as synonyms, Al-Zayadi (1980) states that Ibn-Alatheer (1971) (d. 606 Hijri) who rejects that claim states that names indicate the object itself merely without a meaning, while adjectives point to the object with a special meaning. Other scholars like Ibn-Alatheer maintain that we have names and adjectives and both are different. One can say that some adjectives are used by people traditionally in different contexts without causing any ambiguity in meaning, hence these adjectives tend to be synonymous. Al-Zayadi (1980) points out that the word "sword" in English has many names in Arabic. The word "Sword": "السيف" refers to:

المشرفي ، الرسوب ، الصمصام ، الحسام ، الصارم ، البتار ، ذو القفار ، المهند ، اليماني ، النصل ،  
الكهام ، المعضد .

On the other hand, if such adjectives of a certain concept create ambiguity or have different shades of meaning but refer to the same concept, they do not appear to be synonyms. For example, the word "snake" or "serpent" are presented in many expressions (adjectives) in Arabic that do

not seem to be synonyms to some extent, for they carry such differences of their semantic features such as:

الصَّمَّة: الذكر من الحيات .	الحية: الأفعى للذكر والأنثى .
الثعبان: حية ضخمة وقيل : هي الحية العظيمة.	الأفعى : حية عريضة على الأرض .
الأرقم: الذي فيه سواد وبياض ، و هو أخبث الحيات.	الحنش: الأسود من الحيات.
الصل: الحية الدقيقة الصفراء.	الرقشاء: الحيات المنقطة بالأبيض و الأسود.
	الهلال: فرخ الحية

Opponents to synonymy in language claim that no two words have the same meaning. They opine that synonymy is a way of illustration of one's ideas in such a text. However, illustration may be applied by paraphrasing that involves using different words but carrying or conveying the same meaning that does not change the meaning of the context. Many scholars deny the existence of synonymy in Arabic. For example, Hayagnah (2001) discusses that Al-Asakari (2002) (d.395 Hijri) asserts that different phrases and names dictate having different meanings. Names indicate the meaning signified by the referent and if we refer to an object once, it becomes definite. Therefore, referring more than once is useless, the creator of language is wise and s/he does not add useless things to it.

"الشاهد على أن اختلاف العبارات و الأسماء يوجب اختلاف المعاني أن الاسم كلمة تدل على دلالة الإشارة، و إذا أُشير إلى الشيء مرة واحدة فَعُرِفَ، فالإشارة إليه ثانية و ثالثة غير مفيدة، واضع اللغة حكيم لا يأتي فيها بما لا يفيد".

This means that if the references to the object more than once are different from the first one, words would not be synonymous as each one of them refers to different things. However, the extra reference would be of no value, i.e. there is no need to use another phrase to give the same meaning.

Ibn-Darastwaih (d.347 Hijri) (ibid) believes that it is impossible to have different words of the same meaning in one language.

Ibn -Faris (d.395 Hijri) takes a similar position to Al-Asakiry and Ibn-Darastwaih who deny the existence of synonymy in Arabic. Ishrateh (2006) mentions that Ibn-Faris (1969) adopts a criterion to arrive at the degree of similarity between synonyms. He explores that by differentiating between synonyms through finding their opposites.

Also, El-Hassan (ibid) discusses synonymy in Arabic asserting that real synonymy is difficult to prove, but he accepts near synonymy in language. In his discussion of collocations, he points out three types of items that may collocate in Arabic in which synonymy is considered one of them (synonyms may collocate). For instance:

generosity and liberality	الكرم والجود :
joy and happiness	البهجة والسرور:
courage and valor	الشجاعة والبطولة :

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper explores the translation of synonyms from Arabic into English and vice versa. Firstly, the lexical synonyms investigated here were selected from different Arabic and English dictionaries of synonyms. The Arabic lexical items were taken from *Al-Mukhtar* dictionary (Farshokh,1995), and *Kitab Tahtheeb Al-alfaz* dictionary (Ibn Issac, 2005). The English lexical items were taken from *Use the Right Word* dictionary ( Hayakawa,1968), and *A Basic Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms* (Urdang,1982). The researcher finds that relying on these specialized dictionaries of synonyms is helpful, valuable, and beneficial to show differences between synonyms. Instead of

listing a compile of synonymous words which seems confusing, these dictionaries answer the purpose congruently to enrich the study via depending on the use of such examples in various contexts that clarify the employment of synonyms in language. Secondly, the data obtained from the two languages were compared and contrasted. Thirdly, the data gathered was analyzed in order to find how each language deals with synonymy. Finally, a number of recommendations are put forth. It should be mentioned here that the analytic and descriptive approaches of research were used.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section examines how synonyms can differ within and across languages (Arabic and English). Some of the specific problems that translators encounter while translating such types of synonyms will be discussed since Arabic is mostly derivational and agglutinating<sup>3</sup>. Arabic is replete with synonyms that reflect how rich it is in synonymous lexemes. Hayakawa (1968) claims that English has the most synonyms of any language in the world. He attributes that to the incorporation of words from other languages into English such as: French, Latin, and Greek.

In what follows a comparison and contrast is carried out between English and Arabic in terms of synonymous lexical items. The researcher sets ten categories under which we can have potential synonyms.

### When two words are described as attributes

Some scholars who deny the existence of synonymy in language believe that any two words, which share at least one semantic feature, are best described as attributes rather than synonyms. However, here one thinks that if these attributes do not exchange the context, they tend to be synonymous. In Arabic, for example, in order to describe a **dark night**, we have many synonyms to perform that

ليلة دامجة ، داجية ، مظلمة ، ظلماء ، غُدرة ، مُغدرة ، مُدلهمة ، بَهيمٌ  
ليل جنيسٌ ، عظيمٌ .

In English, these synonymous words can be rendered as : **Pitch-dark night**.

There are different synonyms in English that vary in their implications. For instance, "**darkness**" can be used to express the meaning other than using gloom, murkiness. These words suggest dimly lit, unpleasant places or pessimistic frames of mind. In reference to places, "**gloomy**" suggest poor lighting, but it sometimes suggests drabness or the hopeless side of any problem. While the special overtones of "**murky**" suggest something clouded in confusing obscurity. Nevertheless, "**darkness**" suggests a literal dimness.

### Euphemism

In order to achieve synonymy in writing and avoid repetition either in Arabic or in English, some writers resort to adopt euphemism. Euphemistic expressions almost carry the same semantic features, i.e. any substitution between them would not affect the context. Both Arabic and English employ euphemism to refer to "**death**". For example, to express the idea of death in Arabic we say :

توفي الرجل ، قضى الرجل نحبه ، وَجَبَ الرجل ، زهقت نفسه ، فاضت روحه إلى بارئها ،  
انتقل إلى رحمة ربه ، انتقل إلى جوار به ، أسلمت الروح ، انتقل إلى مثواه الأخير .

Like Arabic, English conveys the same concept with its own expressions which include :

**Pass away/ on / over , departed from the world , went to his reward , found rest , expire , decess , demise .**

Both versions of Arabic and English are used euphemistically instead of "die" and "مات" which are also synonymous.

### Designations of Kinship terms

Needless to say that Arabic in particular has several synonymous lexical items that refer to the same person in terms of relationships or kinship. In contrast, English would often provide one single item to refer to. For example, to refer to one's wife there are various designations which all would be translated into one item "wife" in English. These designations are complete synonymous as their meaning would not change, i.e. it always refers to one's wife. Such synonyms are :

قرينة ، عقيلة ، حرم ، عرس الرجل ، طلته ، حنته ، زوجة أو زوجته ، بعله أو بعلته ، حليلته ، رُبُّضُه .

In addition, the word "uncle" in English can be rendered into more than one lexical item in Arabic:

عم : father's brother ، خال : mother's brother

The word "uncle" refers also to an old man in the family, and to an old strange person as a form of address to show respect.

Moreover, the word "nephew" refers "ابن الأخ / الأخت" while "niece" refers to: "ابنة الأخ / الأخت".  
to:

Translators should pay attention while translating because of the cultural differences. In Arabic the forms of address in kinship terms are precise referring to one entity only. Thus, such items can not be considered as synonyms.

### Equivalent synonyms with slight differences in use

Sometimes, some synonymous expressions in Arabic may be translated into their English synonymous equivalents that seem to have slight differences in use. In Arabic for example, اللب : العقل ، الكيس : العقل والفتنة ، الحصافة : ركانة العقل ، الذكاء : الفطنة وسرعة الفهم ، الفطنة : الذكاء والحدق ، الفهم : مع فتك الشيء بالقلب ، الدهاء : العقل والفتنة و جودة الرأي.

These expressions may be translated into : **mind , brains , intellect , head , intelligence , reason , wits .**

These words pertain to the mental capacities or qualities of people. For example "mind" may refer to mental facility, e.g. : Albert Einstein had the *mind* of a genius. "Intellect" and "intelligence" both are more formal to refer to mental ability than "mind". "Intellect" can be used informally to describe mental alertness or accomplishment, e.g. : a professor with quite an *intellect*. "Intelligence" refers to a range of mental faculties wider than that suggested by "intellect". Mental alertness, problem –solving, ability and keen perception of relations are all implicit in "intelligence". "Brains", "head", "wits" are very informal words for aspects of "intelligence". The word "Brains" often refers to mental ability that has practical results, e.g. : It takes *brains* to land a cushy job. "Wits" refers specifically to alertness or sensitivity rather than to

mental facility, e.g. : Warning him to keep his *wits* about him. It can also refer to rational intelligence. "**Reason**" refers to the rational part of the mind and it is one aspect of "**intelligence**".

### Gradable synonymous pairs

Synonymous words that refer to states of well-being or the pleasurable satisfaction that accompanies such states seem to be near synonyms in Arabic. It is worth mentioning that Arabic has gradable synonymous pairs that represent the degrees of emotions such as happiness. On the other hand, in English we have gradable pairs of antonyms like tall and short. Despite that, the synonymous equivalent English versions of the following synonyms in Arabic range in the degree of expressing the same concept, as well. For example in Arabic we have :

الفرح : لذة القلب لنيل ما يشتهي من الرضا ، المرح : شدة الفرح ، السرور ، الجذل ، الحبور ، الابتهاج ، السعادة .

While in English these would be rendered as: **Happiness, pleasure, joy, delight, gladness, cheerful.**

These words all denote feelings of satisfaction or happiness. "**Cheerful**" suggests an extroverted and open manner that is pleasant, and contented. "**Happiness**" may imply any degree of well-being from that of mere contentment or absence of sorrow to the most intense joy and sense of fulfillment, e.g. : Children can bring so much *happiness* into a home. "**Gladness**" is overflowing happiness and suggests an emotional reaction to a pleasant event rather than sustained state of mind, e.g. : Her *gladness* at seeing us again was most touching. "**Pleasure**" may convey the mere absence of discomfort, e.g. : Sally gets a great deal of *pleasure* out of spending a day with her grandchildren. "**Delight**" may be a strong feeling of pleasure, but it is likely to be sudden and transient. "**Joy**" can be used interchangeably with pleasure, delight , but it implies greater intensity than pleasure does , longer duration than delight does, e.g. : There is nothing to parallel the children's *joy* at visiting their grandmother.

In addition, there are synonymous words that refer to pleasing facial appearances. For example:

- ( a ) "**good-looking**" : "**الحسن**" is equally weak as in specificity, but it can be used appropriately for both men and women.

الحسن : هو الجمال

- ( b ) "**beauty**", "**pretty**" :  
"الجمال"

الجمال: الحسن في الخلق و الخلق

The word "**beautiful**" indicates a strikingly desirable or attractive face, suggesting symmetry of features or perfection of proportion.

The word "**pretty**" indicates a less elevated or more superficial appeal than beautiful , it is more exclusively to women and might suggest vivacity and sweetness, while "**beautiful**" might suggest elegance and nobility.

e.g. : She is a pretty woman. هي امرأة حسناء

- ( c ) "**handsome**", "**comeliness**" : "**الوسامة**"

الوسامة : الحسن والجمال

The word "**handsome**", used of men, it suggests regularity of features and a sturdy manliness.

e.g. : He is a handsome man هو رجل وسيم

( d ) " gorgeous " : " البهاء " ، " الأروع " ،  
البهاء : الجمال، و المنظر الحسن ، الأروع : الرائع بحسنه و جهازه منظره

It is used to refer to someone extremely beautiful or handsome.

In translating gradable synonymous pairs, it is vital that translator aim to cover the precise meaning and implication of expressions due to the range of degree of meaning the expressions carry.

### Near synonyms with distinct meanings

According to Abu-Melhim & Al-Omari (2014) near synonyms appear sometimes to be synonymous, but they reveal distinct meanings at the deep level. For more illustration, if we consider the words "deep" and "profound", we notice that they mean the same when applied to thought, but only "deep" can modify water.

deep well	:	بئر عميق	,	profound thought	:	تفكير عميق
deep sleep	:	نوم عميق	,	deep water	:	مياه عميقة

In Arabic, they seem to be real synonyms while in English they are regarded to be synonyms at the surface level. In fact, translators should always try to apply such words like these in context to judge if they are complete synonyms or even synonyms. According to the above example, in Arabic we have one morphological equivalent for two words in English. In other words, Arabic has one word used in different contexts while each one of the two words in English has its own context.

### Near synonymy with polysemous words

A type of partial synonymy occurs when sometimes a polysemous word shares one of its meanings with another word. For example, "ripe" and "mature" are used in different contexts in English, but rendered into one item in Arabic :

mature person	:	شخص ناضج
ripe fruit	:	فاكهة ناضجة

In English, "mature" applies to persons while "ripe" applies to fruits.  
In Arabic, the word " ناضج " applies to both.

Another example is "strong" and "powerful". "Strong" refers to physical strength while "powerful" refers to authority. In Arabic both are rendered as : " قوي "

e.g. : - The man is strong.  
- US is a powerful country .

### Names of things as synonyms ( synonymy refers to names expressing the same thing)

In Arabic, we refer to "gold" with diverse expressions. These are known to be names of "gold", and they do not mean anything else other than gold . "Gold" can be rendered into the following synonyms in Arabic :

الذَّهَبُ ، العَسْجَدُ ، العَقِيان ، الابريز(ذهب خالص) ، الاصفر ، التبر ، النُّضار(الجوهر الخالص)

Even though most of these expressions are not frequently used, they are synonyms. Similarly, the word "Silver": "الفضة" has many synonyms in Arabic like:

الفضة ، اللجين ، السامة ، صولج (فضة خالصة) ، صريف ، وذيلة (قطعة من الفضة) ، الجذادة (قطعة صغيرة من الفضة) ، الأسترب (دخان الفضة) .

As regards these examples (gold and silver) Hayagnah (2001) quotes Ali (1954) that Ibn-Janah states that Arabs may tend to have many names for one item and to name with one item many things.

" اعلم أن العرب قد تجعل للشيء الواحد أسماء و تسمي بالشيء الواحد أشياء "

In addition, Hassan (2014) mentions that Al-Fairouzabady (1978) believes that a synonym refers to names expressing the same thing.

### One item in a language rendered into many items in another

In English to indicate to pure water we say : "fresh water" which is rendered in Arabic into: ماء عذب ، نُفَاحٌ ، زُلَال ، سَلْسَال ، سَلْسَل .

The word "fresh" emphasizes newness or lack of use as well as purity.

In this example, one item in English like "fresh" has five synonymous lexical items in Arabic.

### Synonymous words of dialects within a language

Languages have different dialects manifested through native speakers speech which distinguish them from others through the expressions used to refer to things or to express ideas. Speakers are characterized by dialects which reflect the variety of cultural environment and regional influence such as the Arabic dialects that refer to one linguistic environment. Familiarity with these dialects help to understand others because speakers sometimes would use expressions different from those used in a standard version of a language. In spite of having different expressions (lexical items) referring to a similar entity, these expressions are synonyms. In other words, the differences among dialects explain why a language has synonyms, thus, what matters here is the denotative meaning of expressions. For example, in Arabic Al-Khigani (2016) quotes Abdul Tawwab (1999) who mentions many synonyms in Arabic dialects for the word "change" in English, e.g.: *Do you have a change for this \$20 note ?*

In Arabic dialects, it is rendered as:

" رفاقى " in Libya, " خردة " in Iraq, " فراطة " in Syria and Jordan , " فراير " in Lebanon, " صرافة " أو " تفاريق " in Saudi Arabia .

However, it is very important to consider that sometimes one word may have two different meanings in two dialects, i.e., no tendency to have synonyms in such a case among dialects.

Consequently, translators should be aware of such differences while translating from colloquial Arabic into English or at least ask a native speaker of the dialect when standard Arabic is not used. For example, the word "فوت" in Levantine Arabic means "come in" while in Sudanese Arabic it means "leave". So, to achieve communicative translation it is essential to recognize how to address others to avoid any misunderstanding.

## CONCLUSION

Synonymy is fundamental in language as it influences the meaning. Its abundance in a language reflects its richness. What really matters while translating synonyms is the meaning that is determined by the context; as a result, translating synonyms should be with utmost care. Hence, unnecessary use of synonyms is a mark of poor translation. Based on the above discussion, the study reveals that languages have synonyms, but each one has its own way of dealing with synonymy since each has its own linguistic system. There is no doubt that synonymy exists in language. Arabic and English are of different origins, cultures, structures, and styles. Although we have differences, still we have similarities. On the one hand, regarding synonymy among languages, Arabic and English enjoy having the same synonymy in terms of the levels of meaning and expressions themselves, i.e., the equivalents used while translating reflect that kind of synonymy. On the other hand, differences between Arabic and English, they stem from the cultural variations such as: social, religious, and historical backgrounds of each language. Both languages are similar in certain aspects, but there is a gap between them. For example, one lexical item in English may have many items in Arabic and vice versa. In addition, what seems to be complete synonyms in Arabic tends to be partial synonyms in English as they have different shades of meaning that influence the context.

## RECOMMEEDATIONS

On the basis of the above discussion, the following recommendations are presented:

- 1 . It would be helpful to overcome any problem while translating synonyms that translators are aware of the differences between the synonymous lexical items including slight ones (shades of meaning).
- 2 . Translators should take heed of context based meanings to render an adequate translation.
- 3 . Translators should recognize that even though the meaning of some lexical items interferes in certain contexts, their translation would not because we do not depend on the superficial meaning but the deeper one.
4. Translator should try to bridge the gap between any two languages through considering most levels of language variations.
5. Researchers should go further than just arguing about the translation of synonyms in general. Many contributions should focus on employing the translation of synonyms in different text types and contexts.
6. Researchers should investigate the extent to which the translation of synonyms is attainable regardless of text types.
7. Researchers should go a little bit further so that they can bring many issues under discussion. For example, translating synonyms of dialects within a language.

## ENDNOTES:

- 1 . Throughout the research, the researcher mentions different terms used by scholars to refer to a certain type of synonymy. For example: (perfect synonymy = absolute, total, real, true, full, exact, and complete.
- 2 . near synonymy = partial, plesionymy.
- 3 . agglutinating : (of a language ) forming words predominantly by agglutination, rather than by inflection or using isolated elements.

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