



**COMPARATIVE TYPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF HOMONYMY AND POLYSEMY IN  
ENGLISH, RUSSIAN AND UZBEK**

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**Abstract**

The author of the article describes etymological and semantic criteria in polysemy and homonymy. As we know, two or more words identical in sound and spelling but different in meaning, distribution and (in many cases) origin are called homonyms. The examples of homonyms are given in this article in three languages (English, Uzbek and Russian languages)

**Keywords:** etymological criteria, semantic criteria, polysemy and homonymy, identical in sound and spelling, different in meaning, comparative typological analysis.

As we know, two or more words identical in sound and spelling but different in meaning, distribution and (in many cases) origin are called homonyms. The term is derived from Greek (homos 'similar' and onoma 'name') and thus expresses very well the sameness of name combined with the difference in meaning.

There is an obvious difference between the meanings of the symbol fast in such combinations as run fast 'quickly' and stand fast 'firmly'. The difference is even more pronounced if we observe cases where fast is a noun or a verb as in the following proverbs:

**A clean fast is better than a dirty breakfast;**

**Who feasts till he is sick, must fast till he is well.**

Fast as an isolated word, therefore, may be regarded as a variable that can assume several different values depending on the conditions of usage, or, in other words, distribution. All the possible values of each linguistic sign are listed in dictionaries. It is the duty of lexicographers to define the boundaries of each word, i.e. to differentiate homonyms and to unite variants deciding in each case whether the different meanings belong to the same polysemantic word or whether there are grounds to treat them as two or more separate words identical in form. In speech, however, only one fall the possible values is determined by the context, so that no ambiguity may normally arise. There is no danger, for instance that the listener would wish to substitute the meaning 'quick' into the sentence: It is absurd to have hard and fast rules about anything or think that fast rules here are 'rules of diet'. Combinations when two or more meanings are possible are either deliberate puns, or result from carelessness. Both meanings of liver, i.e. 'a living person' and 'the organ that secretes bile' are, for instance, intentionally present in the following play upon words: "7s life worth living?" "It depends upon the liver."

Very seldom can ambiguity of this kind interfere with understanding. The following example quoted from lies, 1 sound somewhat artificial, but may him also a deliberate joke and not carelessness:



The girls will be playing cricket in white stockings. We hope they won't get too many runs. Runs in this context may mean either 'ladders in stockings' or 'the units of scoring, made by running once over a certain course' (a cricket term).

Homonymy exists in many languages, but in English it is particularly frequent, especially among monosyllabic words. In the list of 2540 homonyms given in the Oxford English Dictionary 89% are monosyllabic words and only 9,1% are words of two syllables. From the viewpoint of their morphological structure, they are mostly one-morpheme words. Many words, especially those characterized by a high frequency rating, are not connected with meaning by a one-to-one relationship. On the contrary, one symbol as a rule serves to render several different meanings. The phenomenon may be said to be the reverse of synonymy where several symbols correspond to one meaning.

## **Comparative typological analysis of two linguistic phenomena in English, Russian and Uzbek**

The most widely accepted classification is that recognizing homonyms proper, homophones and homographs. Homonyms proper are words identical in pronunciation and spelling, like/as if and liver above or like scale 'one of the thin plates that form the outer covering of most fishes and reptiles' and scale, 'a basis for a system of measuring'. Homophones are words of the same sound but of different spelling and meaning:

Air-heir;	Piece-peace;
Arms-alm;	Rain-reign;
Buy-bye-by;	Scent-cent-sent;
Him-hymn;	Steel-steal;
Knight-night;	Storey-story
Not-knot;	Write-right-rite
Or-ore-oar;	Meet-meat

For example, in the sentence "The millwright on my right thinks it right that some conventional rite should symbolize the right of every man to write as he pleases", the sound complex [rait] is noun, adjective, adverb and verb, has four different spellings and six different meanings.

The difference may be confined to the use of a capital letter as in bill and Bill, in the following example: "How much is my milk bill?" "Excuse me, Madam, but my name is John."

Homographs are words different in sound and in meaning but accidentally identical in spelling:

<i>bow</i> [bou]- <i>bow</i> [bau]	<i>tear</i> [tea]- <i>tear</i> [tia];
<i>lead</i> [li:d]- <i>lead</i> [led];	<i>wind</i> [wind]- <i>wind</i> [wand]
<i>row</i> [rou]- <i>row</i> [rau];	<i>read</i> [ri:d]- <i>read</i> [red]
<i>sewer</i> I'soua]- <i>sewer</i> [sjua];	



It has been often argued that homographs constitute a phenomenon that should be kept apart from homonymy as the object of linguistics is sound language. This viewpoint can hardly be accepted. Because of the effects of education and culture written English is a generalized national form of expression. An average speaker does not separate the written and oral form. On the contrary he is more likely to analyze the words in terms of letters than in terms of phonemes with which he is less familiar. That is why a linguist must take into consideration both the spelling and the pronunciation of words when analyzing cases of identity of form and diversity of content.

## **Typological analysis of homonymy and polysemy in three languages**

Below we would like to compare the English differences between homonymy and polysemy with Russian and Uzbek equivalents.

As it was noticed above we have polysemy and homonymy in both Russian and Uzbek. As in English, in Russian and Uzbek homonyms are words identical in sound and spelling but different in meaning. For example, "завод" - "an industrial undertaking" and "завод" - "a device which brings an action of a mechanism".

"o't" - "firewood", "o't" - "grass" and "o't" - "the verb which means movement".

"olma"-means apple, "olma"-means not to take.

"ot"- means to throw, "ot"- means the horse

As in English, in Russian and Uzbek we correspond to polysemantic words the words which have several connected meanings.

For example, "кольцо" - "one of the jewelry things" and "кольцо" - "a shape of something, e.g. smoke". Another example is "ko'z1" - "a part of human's body" and "ko'z2" - "a sing on wood".

As in, English there is the lexical method of distinction of polysemy and homonymy is used in Russian and Uzbek in the same degree.

For example, in Russian the word "коренной" – used in the meaning of "коренной житель" is referred to its synonym "исконный, основной" and the word "коренной" in the meaning of "коренной вопрос" corresponds to the synonym "главный". The words "основной" "главный" used in this sense are synonymic in their character, so we may conclude, therefore, that in this example we have two meanings of one word.

The word "худой" –used in the meaning of "не упитанный" is formed in the synonymic row with the adjectives "тощий, щуплый, сухой" while the word "худой" forms its meaning with the adjectives "плохой", "скверный", "дурной". So we can draw a conclusion that the words "тощий", "щуплый" are not synonyms with the words "плохой", "скверный". So in this case the words "худой" and "худой" are homonyms.

In Uzbek we have the same phenomenon: For example, the word "dum" - "a part of animal's body" and "dum" "a partial comet".

It means that these two meanings can be substitutive with synonymy "the end of the body". It means that these words are polysemantic in their lexical meaning.



If we take another pair of words, e.g. "yoz" - "summer" and "yoz" - 'the form of the verb which expresses the order to write'.

## Conclusion

Having analyzed the problem of homonyms in Modern English we could do the following conclusions:

- a) The problem of homonyms in Modern English is very actual nowadays.
- b) There are several problematic questions in the field of homonymy the major of which is the problem of distinguishing of homonyms and polysemantic words..
- c) A number of famous linguists dealt with the problem of homonyms in Modern English. In particular, Profs. A. Buranov and J.Muminov were the first who dealt with this problem in our Republic,
- d) The problem of homonymy is still waiting for its detail investigation.

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# Academica Globe: Inderscience Research

ISSN: 2776-1010      Volume 2, Issue 6, June, 2021

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