

Principles Of Reflection Of Absolute Synonyms In The Language Corpus

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ANNOTATION

The stylistic, syntactic, and lexical information of five synonyms in English language are examined in this article. The primary focus of this article is on loose synonyms; appeal, request, plead, beg, and ask. The data for this article was obtained from learner's dictionaries and corpora. The corpus-based data appears to be beneficial because it supplies additional information as opposed to dictionaries that lack comprehensive details of the words, for instance collocations or grammatical patterns. Additionally, corpora provide the option to search for more sample sentences of synonyms in case the learner is not clear on the meaning of a certain word.

Key words: synonym, loose synonyms, corpora, dictionary, connotation, collocations, dialects, grammatical patterns, contexts of use.

1. Introduction

This article investigates the similarities and differences between five synonyms, ask, beg, plead, request, and appeal, according to criteria comprising meanings, connotations, collocations, grammatical patterns, formality and dialects. Firstly, three recognized dictionaries, i.e. CALD, 2020 (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary), LDOCE, 2009 (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English) and OALD, 2020 (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary) were consulted. Then, the second part of the study consults and obtains data from corpus to examine the additional information that the dictionaries lacked. Lastly, the similarities and differences in the grammatical patterns of the five synonyms were discovered by concluding the information and tabulating those words.

The objectives of this article are as follows:

- I. Investigating the lexical information, i.e. connotative, collocational and referential meanings of the synonyms.
- II. Studying the grammatical patterns of synonyms, i.e. their syntactic information.
- III. Examining the stylistic information, i.e. context and formality in which respective synonyms take place.
- IV. Comparing the information provided in the three dictionaries with reference to corpus.

1. Literature Review

Synonymy is a basic lexicological phenomenon in a language. From an etymological perspective, the genesis of word synonym can be traced back to "sunonumon" a Greek word that means "to have the same name" (Jackson & Amvela, 2000, p. 92). This term is used to refer to a relationship of sameness and similarity of words, especially by semanticists, i.e. the ones who have interest in studying meaning in language (Jackson & Amvela, 2000). The two key types of synonyms should be studied in English linguistics, i.e. absolute (strict) or loose synonyms.

1.1 Strict and Loose Synonymy

There are normally two types of synonyms, absolute synonyms and loose synonyms. The first type refers to the synonyms that are interchangeable in every possible situation. Moreover, the connotation, style or meaning of the utterance is also not affected if a strict synonym is substituted with the actual word (Jackson & Amvela, 2000).

Thus, it gives the speaker a chance to choose between the two words as they are both equally appropriate in reference to the situation.

Nevertheless, numerous researchers argue that absolute synonyms do not exist or if they do, are extremely rare (MaCarthy, O’Keeffe, & Walsh, 2010). Moreover, as absolute synonyms lead to redundancy in a language, they are regarded uneconomical.

Generally, if such a word exists that can be substituted with the other word in all its entirety, then one of them becomes obsolete or changes its meaning somehow. For instance, “frumsceft” was extensively used in English language (Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams, 2003). Then, the word creation was borrowed from French language and it started being used with frumsceft. Eventually, frumsceft became was replaced with creation because they both had same meaning in all contexts, thus becoming obsolete. Therefore, absolute synonyms do not occur in English because of this phenomenon (Jackson & Amvela, 2000).

On the other hand, English is full of loose synonyms. Generally, loose synonymy offers varying degrees of application, and the word “synonym” usually implies loose synonyms as opposed to other synonym types. According to Jackson & Amvela (2000), in the study of loose synonymy, the contexts in which two words cannot be substituted for each other are identified in addition to finding out a notable overlap in their meaning.

The words insane and mad are coherent examples of loose synonyms, meaning “mentally ill”, in a general sense. In this context, they can be interchanged, e.g. “He is declared insane/made by the psychiatrists”. Nevertheless, it will not make sense to use “insane” when the word mad is implying that somebody is angry, e.g. “Mariah is insane at her kids because of the mess they created in the house”. In addition to this, the grammatical patterns are also violated here by the use of insane as native English speakers do not use “insane at” together.

According to the examples mentioned above, Thornbury (2002) states; the overlap in the meanings of words implies that they be substituted for each other, however, they cannot interchanged when they do not share the same context.

2. Distinguishing Synonyms using a Criteria

The following criteria can be used to distinguish synonyms:

1.2 Dialects

The geographical regions where the words originate from can be used as the first criterion to differentiate synonyms. It is rather common for native English speakers to refer to the same concept, thing or person using different words. For example, it is common for British people to say “let’s go to watch a game of football” whereas Americans refer to this sport as “soccer”. Therefore, it can be said that football and soccer both are the same, but they differ in terms of regional dialects. The sample pairs of synonyms in British and American dialects are given in the following table:

British	American
Mobile-phone	Cell-phone
Wardrobe	Closet
Crisps	Chips
Motorway	Highway
Holiday	Vacation
Post-code	Zip-code
Trainers	Sneakers

Additionally, the difference in synonyms because of dialects is also common within the same country. In America, people from Northeast use one word while those from Chicago use a different one for the same thing. For example, the word *sneakers* is used in Northeast whereas in Chicago they are widely known as *gym shoes*.

1.3 Contextual Style

The second criterion that can be used to distinguish synonymous words is their style or formality of the situation in which they take place. The context of two synonyms can vary, i.e. it can be formal or informal. As stated by LDOCE (2009), the words futile and commence are definitely more formal than hopeless and start respectively. It is not expected of people to use formal words in an informal setting and the other way round. For instance, it would be highly strange if a friend says to his group “I was harshly rebuked by my dad today”, the normal word in such a situation would be scolded rather than using rebuked which is too formal to be uttered between a group of friends in a casual setting. In a similar way, if elevators had a notice saying “Limit: 30 guys” rather than “Limit:

30 persons”, it would be strike as odd because in such a context, formal words are used.

Consider the formal and informal synonymous words pairs:

Formal	Informal
Reside	Live
Famished	Hungry
Avid	Eager
Notion	Idea
Require	Need
Fortunate	Lucky

1.4 Connotations

Finegan (2007) contends that the expressive or emotive meaning conveyed by two synonyms could differ even if they share the same context in alluding to a certain concept or thing. Consider, for instance, the verbs sneer and smile refer to upwards curving of mouth, however the word sneer is regarded in a negative sense, as it means “smiling or speaking unkindly to people and not respecting something or someone”. On the other hand, the connotation associated with the word “smile” is positive as it expresses happiness or friendliness (LDOCE, 2009). The fact that connotative meanings differ can be illustrated by another synonyms pair “interested” and “nosy”. The word interested is taken in a positive sense as it means to be curious about something or wanting to know more about somebody. On the other hand, nosy has a negative connotation associated with it, as it means to show curiosity in matters that do not concern you, i.e. in other people’s affairs (LDOCE, 2009).

1.5 Grammatical Patterns

Grammatical patterns are highly useful in distinguishing English synonyms. The grammatical patterns of synonymous words are not necessarily the same. For example, CALD (2020) states that the synonyms able and capable mean to have an ability or quality to accomplish something. Nevertheless, their grammatical patterns that these words take place in are different. An infinitival phrase is required by the word *able*:

- a. Jonathan *is able to fly* Concorde,

Source: CALD (2020)

Contrary to this, a prepositional phrase is used for the word *capable* starting with *of*:

- b. Jonathan *is capable of flying* Concorde.

Source: CALD (2020)

The grammatical patterns of these two words cannot be changed even if their meaning is the same, as demonstrated in the above examples. If the grammatical patterns are alternated then they will be considered incorrect, i.e.:

- c. *Jonathan *is able of flying* Concorde.
d. *Jonathan *is capable to fly* Concorde.

Source: CALD (2020)

1.6 Collocations

The dictionary definition of collocation is “an often and frequent occurrence of a combination of words which does not happen by chance” OALD (2020) as well as “using certain words together in a certain manner” (LDOCE, 2009). Additionally, according to CALD (2009), collocation alludes to a phrase or word that that is used with some other phrase or word quite often. The use of such two words together becomes so common that it starts sounding right. For example, the words *colossal* and *immense* have essentially the same meaning, however it would sound incorrect and unusual to hear colossal pride as opposed to immense pride which seems more fitting to the context.

The learners of English language may initially find it hard to select a strong or good collocate that goes with the headword. However, observing collocational patterns can help in overcoming this issue.

3. Data Collection

Learner’s dictionaries and concordance lines were the two main sources which were used to derive data and carry out this article. As dictionaries provide clear meanings, standard pronunciations, clear definitions and distinct

senses of the words, three learners' dictionaries were used in this research. In addition to this, dictionaries also provide insightful information related to grammar. For instance, if a learner searches for a verbal word, the dictionary will identify it as an intransitive verb or a transitive verb or if a learner searches for a noun then it will be specified as an uncountable or countable noun.

Dictionaries also provide a tendency for the potential positions for an adjective. Master (1996) states, more specifically, a linking verb may be followed by the adjective as an attributive adjective, or the noun modified by an adjective as an attributive adjective may be preceded by it as well.

Given this insightful information, three widely-recognized dictionaries, i.e. CALD, 2020 (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary), LDOCE, 2009 (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English) and OALD, 2020 (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary) were consulted. These dictionaries assert that language corpora used by natural real English was used to obtain their data. For comparison purposes, this article also considers corpus-based data. For this purpose, a program representing journalistic language; Time (1995) was used to obtain text for analysis purposes and Wordsmith Tools, a software tool, was used. Concordance lines that show key-words in context are provided by Time (1995) that is regarded as a user-friendly program. Structural and lexical information related to keywords can be observed in a fast and easy manner with the help of concordance lines. In addition, if concordance lines are attentively and comprehensively scrutinized, they can also provide information on a word's connotations. In this manner, Hunston (2002) claims that it becomes easier to observe certain patterns related to some special meanings. However, dictionaries lack certain factors or details that that information from concordance lines could provide. For instance, dictionaries do not have some grammatical patterns that corpus data offers. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that corpus data includes everything. The speech of native speakers is likely to have various grammatical patterns that are not included in either corpus data or dictionaries. To cater to this issue, Yahoo and Google were also used in addition to learner's dictionaries and concordance lines. It should be noted that the intuition of native English speakers was also considered in this research, i.e. they were consulted with in case the above sources could not provide a viable answer to a certain issue or confusion.

4. Results

The five synonyms in English language, i.e. appeal, request, plead, beg and ask were studied in this paper in order to comprehensively investigate synonymy. The grammatical patterns, contexts of use, and the most important thing, the meaning of these words are discussed. In addition, OALD (2020) was used to obtain definition for the five words. The basic meaning of these five words could be summarized as an action to ask somebody to perform a certain task or do something. As a result of using these words in communication in order to ask someone to do a certain action, directive speech acts are committed. The illocutionary point of these consists in the fact that they are attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. Verbs denoting members of this class are ask, request, beg, plead and appeal ... (J.Searle). However, these surface meanings do not reflect the differences they have which will be comprehensively examined in this paper. The word *beg* is indicative of something that should be done as soon as possible, i.e. there is a sense of urgency and anxiety related to this word as opposed to the word *ask* which is rather simple in its meaning and connotations (LDOCE, 2009). On the other hand, the seriousness and importance of a situation is implied by the word *plead* while *request* means politely putting your concern forward for something or it can also be used in formal situations. The aspects of formality, urgency and seriousness are all related with the word *appeal* which can also be used in a legal system for different matters concerning law. In addition to this, metaphorical meanings can also be associated with some of these words, e.g. when something is available but nobody is accepting or using it then it can be said that "something is going begging", in such cases literal meaning of the sentence would not make sense and may seem inappropriate to the ones who are unfamiliar with the respective metaphor.

OALD (2020) is used to define the five synonyms and concordance lines are used to derive possible grammatical patterns.

1. ask (vt.², vi.³) to tell sb⁴ that you would like them to do sth⁵ or that you would like sth to happen. (OALD, 2005, p. 75).

Corpus data

1 ou were a member of a union, you could **ask** for representation, but there has never
2 helmed by the meat and I was obliged to **ask** for grown-up vegetables to accompany
3 ups of women struggled up with bags to **ask** for bread from the Chechen fighters.
4 If you are a member of a trade union, **ask** if they can supply a lawyer. You can
5 feel vaguely uncomfortable when people **ask** me for my autograph it's like, I'm m
6 at there's gonna be a wonderful party, so **ask** your mom if you can come wi
7 employers now accept that you cannot **ask** someone to perform at their best
8 Order, order in Flower Pot Language". I **ask** that you print an apology for this
9 weight is considered obese. You should **ask** the vet for an accurate guide to
10 ge and then leaves you to it. Best of all, **ask** the organizers if they will give y
11 ment of National Heritage next week to **ask** the Government to take their
12 ey should leave the engine running and **ask** to be shown identification through
13 house, it is the one picture that people **ask** to see above all the others."
14 or me I don't think I can make it. I will **ask** whether they can change my schedule

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

Possible patterns of ASK

The following patterns are obtained for the word *ask* using corpus data and OALD (2020):

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|---------------|
| a. ask + sb + to-V.inf | as in | 7, 11 |
| b. ask + to-V.inf | as in | 12, 13 |
| c. ask + (sb) + for + sth | as in | 1, 2, 3, 5, 9 |
| d. ask + (sb) + if/whether | as in | 4, 6, 10, 14 |
| e. ask + that + S + V-inf | as in | 8 |

Source: OALD (2020)

In the d. part, the pattern implies that something can be done by requesting permission (OALD, 2020), as demonstrated in the sentences 4, 6, 10 and 14 above. In addition, it is recommended to use this patter when a person wants somebody to do a certain thing, e.g. "She **asked** the professor whether students could use laptops in the class". The dictionary, OALD (2020), provides certain examples including *ask* as well, i.e. "There are three important questions to **ask**" and "When specifically **asked** about the report, she indicated she had not read it" (OALD, 2020).

2. beg (vt., vi.) to ask sb for sth especially in an anxious way because you want or need it very much (OALD, 2005, p. 125).

Corpus

data

15 says Clare, that he burst into tears and “**begged** me not to write the story.” His rea
16 was shown to the court in which Smith **begged** for the safe return of her children, a
17 back of her shattered house. Rana had **begged** for mercy. “Please,” she had scre
18 ng among those clever enough to have **begged** (from distracted friends), bartered f
19 i ssed it as melodrama. Occasionally, he **begged** Helena to marry him and help
20 , which killed 21 jews and wounded 62, **begged** journalists for the use of their
21 coming in. A judge at one of the shows **begged** some “Dallas” from me last year
22 challenge to the feminist order”. Others **begged** to differ. Linda Grant, 44, another
23to nobody’s very great surprise, the boys **begged** to return. The plea was accepted,
24ump said that the presenter had cried and **begged** to re-do the interview which
25 d then I shouted “Don’t leave me here. I beg of you! But he didn’t seem to listen
26 Finally Maria thought she should go. She **begged** that she be allowed to leave befor

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

Possible Patterns of BEG

a. beg + (sb) + (for + sth)	as in	16, 17, 20
b. beg + (sth) +(from + sb)	as in	18, 21
c. beg + sb + to-V.inf	as in	15, 19
d. beg + to-V.inf	as in	22, 23, 24
e. beg + that + S +V.inf	as in	26
f. I beg of you	as in	25

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

3. **plead** (vt., vi.) to ask sb for sth in a very strong and serious way.

Source: OALD (2005)

Corpus Data

27 Scottish has met the prime minister to **plead** for a referendum on a Scottish assem
28 had gone to the social security office to **plead** for a full disability pension to enable
29 a is unconvincing. After all, clubs once **pleaded** that they could never raise the poi
30 with officials in remote border posts, **plead** to be allowed on planes and trains f
31 to Washington DC.. in a final effort to **plead** with you for my son’s life ... I am
32 to clear his name. Belgian newspapers **plead** with Mr. Claes to resign for the sake
33 want the job: President Clinton had to **plead** with him to change his mind. Bu
34 rought Yahia’s mother to the airport to **plead** with her son. “In the name of

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

Possible Patterns of PLEAD

a. plead + with + sb	as in	34
b. plead + for + sth	as in	27, 28
c. plead + (with + sb) + (for + sth)	as in	31
d. plead + with + sb + V.inf	as in	32, 33
e. plead + to-V.inf	as in	30
f. plead + that + S + V	as in	29

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

4. *request* (vt.) to ask for sth or ask sb to do sth in a polite or formal way (OALD, 2005, p. 1155).

Corpus Data

35 and into Africa. Patrick Roper, 57, has **requested** 150,000 for the project
 36 jersey (extra large). The place recently **requested** a catalogue from the Old Fashio
 37 on casual business wear; 700 have also **requested** a fashion show or seminar. Dani
 38 ublican senator's daughter. It brazenly **requested** a special gift for her father
 39 Dutch soldiers in Srebrenica had not **requested** air support. The Dutch marine
 40 ed new product development. Reuters **requested** an MBA to prepare a pro
 41 scester complained of a headache and **requested** an aspirin. "Impossible," was
 42 The United States had **requested** British help to stem a new
 43 chairman of the 1922 Committee, and **requested** him to set the machinery
 44 ticipants allocated to placebo have **requested** that their calendar packs be changed
 45 week. The Canadians said they had **requested** that the meeting be postponed.
 46 anic depression last year, he has never **requested** that his case should go before
 47 Lottery responsibilities on the council I **requested** the Secretary of Sate allow me t

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

Possible Patterns of REQUEST

a. request + sth	as in	37, 39, 41
b. request + sth + from + sb	as in	36
c. request + that + S + V.inf	as in	44, 45, 46, 47
d. request + sb + to-V.inf	as in	40, 42, 43
e. ⁶ request + sth + for + sb/sth	as in	35, 38

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

As compared to the three dictionaries, concordance lines provide more grammatical patterns, thus providing information that is noticeably intriguing. The pattern c should be considered first. "Should" is often times used alongside this patter as the corpus data indicates. For instance, reconsider:

46. he has never **requested** that his case should go before ...

Firstly, 'should' is used in the above example in a perfectly subjunctive and grammatical form. According to Swan (2020), native English speakers as well as modern linguists accept and widely use it (Carter & McCarthy, 2006).

Secondly, only passive construction of the word *request* is provided by the three dictionaries as far as pattern d is concerned. For example:

- i. "*Students requested that the school provide more computer classes.*" (LDOCE, 2020)
- ii. "*Participants are requested to gather in the hall.*" (CALD, 2020)
- iii. "*Visitors are requested not to touch the exhibits.*" (OALD, 2020)

Nonetheless, the possibility of both active and passive sentences is indicated by the concordance lines.

The natural occurrence of active constructions is proved and demonstrated by the sentences from 40-43. The three

dictionaries lack an interesting pattern offered by e. which is provided by concordance line in sentences 35 and 38.

5. *appeal* (vi.)

There are two closely related senses of the word *appeal*, as indicated by OALD.

1. *to make a formal request to a court or to sb in authority for a judgement or a decision to be changed.* (OALD, 2005, p. 60)

Corpus Data

48 Mr. Simpson's defence lawyers **appealed** against the dismissal of a black male jur
49 for Cantona, who successfully **appealed** against a jail sentence for assaulting a cr
50 abandoned the appeal. She also **appealed** against a decision of September 5, 1989
51 will not let the case rest, and has **appealed** to the supreme court of justice in Bucha
52 were committed. The applicant **appealed** to the Court of Appeal, which on June 1
53 confiscation order by 7,000. he **appealed** to the Commission of Human Rights
54 U to sell it televised racing. He **appealed** to the court against the German agreem

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

Possible Patterns of APPEAL (1)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| a. appeal + to + sb/sth | as in 51, 52, 53 |
| b. appeal + against + sth | as in 48, 49, 50 |
| c. appeal + to + sb + against + sth | as in 54 |

2. *to make a serious and urgent request* (OALD, 2005, p. 60)

In addition to this, a comprehensive definition of the appeal is given by LDOCE (2020) as publicly making a serious request for information, money or help.

Corpus Data

55 to the nearby Mustapha hospital. It also **appealed** for blood donors. Security forces
56 eumann, secretary of the theatre school, **appealed** for help. Within days Mr. Shell
57c, backed the call for a referendum and **appealed** to the Prime Minister "In the na
58 C.C.P. had been rounded up. The radio **appealed** to Ghanaians to help the police
59 think it's going to be a cliffhanger." He **appealed** to voters to put maximum pressu
60 s always short of money and frequently **appealed** to its readers for donations. It
61 nent planning permission. The Gypsies **appealed** to the Secretary of State. David
62 ary return from the political wilderness, **appealed** to supporters at a closing rally at
63 had collapsed were not confirmed. He **appealed** to residents for calm. The local S

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

Possible Patterns of APPEAL (2)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| a. appeal + for + sth/sb | as in 55, 56 |
| b. appeal + to + sb | as in 57, 61, 62 |
| c. appeal + to + sb + for + sth | as in 60, 63 |
| d. appeal + to + sb + to + V-inf | as in 58, 59 |

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

5. Discussion of the Findings and Recommendations

The criteria explained earlier in this article can be used to systematically distinguish these synonyms.

1.7 Dialects

The synonyms examined in this article are used in almost all dialects in the English language. To be more specific, none of the synonyms belong to or are used in just one region. However, there are specific regions in which some of the metaphors related to a certain word are used. For example, the word *beg* can be used to lend corroboration to this point.

In Britain, when something is available but nobody is accepting or using it then it can be informally said that “something is going begging”, in such cases literal meaning of the sentence would not make sense and may seem inappropriate to the ones who are unfamiliar with the respective metaphor.

Ex. If that bottle of wine is going begging, I'll have it. (CALD, 2009, p. 120)

In addition to the above, a particular geographical region is also likely to use certain grammatical patterns more than the other. The pattern appeal + something + to + subject is used in North America, e.g. The company has five weeks to appeal the decision to the court.

1.8 Contextual Style

Synonyms have a certain context and style in which they occur. Accordingly, the words plead, beg, and ask may not be considered to occur in a formal setting as compared to the word request. The fact that the word request usually occurs with words that express formality is also supported by the concordance lines, as demonstrated in sentences 64-69 as follows:

64 to take it. The police sergeant then **requested** a urine sample. LORD JUSTICE
65 derotti's lawyers had successfully **requested** and received adjournments at past
66 Both its buyer and original owner **requested** anonymity, but they are already the
67 g of teeth. The inquiry, which was **requested** by the Gas Consumers' Council
68 ry responsibilities on the council I **requested** that the Secretary of State allow me
69 proclaimed: “Normal tennis attire is **requested**”. I have ceased playing tennis

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

In a similar manner, it is stated in LDOCE (2020) that the setting in which the word appeal occurs is also formal. This is particularly due to the word referring to an action with regards to making a formal request in a court or a serious public request or requesting to someone in authority. The collocations of these senses are formal, as shown in sentences 70-74.

70 for Cantona, who successfully **appealed** against a jail sentence for assaulting a cr
71 She and the prosecutors had **appealed** against Parche's conviction on a charge of
72 decision to dismiss Carling, **appealed** for reconciliation on a broad front. “I think
73 t the weekend that they never **appealed** for penalties and played in the charitable
74 botage. Such primal velocity **appealed** to the numerous crowd-surfers riding

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

1.9 Connotations

The referential meaning of the synonyms examined in this article is the same, however they differ from each other in terms of connotations. Evidently, the setting in which the word appeal occurs is formal. This is due to the word referring to an action with regards to making a formal request in a court or a serious public request, or requesting to someone in authority, who is influential and powerful.

The neutrality of word appeal cannot be denied, however it expresses a negative meaning when a preposition appears against it. In such a context, a semantic prosody assumes a vital position. According to Partington (1996),

semantic prosody is referred to as when connotational coloring extends beyond the boundaries of a single word. In the following sentences, i.e. 75-79, appeal against is a pattern that exemplifies semantic prosody as confirmed and supported below:

75 Mr. Simpson's defence lawyers **appealed** against the dismissal of a black male jur
76 for Cantona, who successfully **appealed** against a jail sentence for assaulting a cr
77 days, though the South Africans **appealed** against Dalton's punishment. But Ray
78 She and the prosecutors had **appealed** against Parche's conviction on a charge o
79ide him. Williams and Benetton **appealed** against the fine and it is almost certa

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

1.10 Grammatical Patterns

The synonyms used in this article follow grammatical patterns, in addition to connotations, stylistics, and dialects, that are discussed in this criterion. These synonyms may not be able to substitute for one another as they are loose synonyms. For example, the grammatical patterns and similarity in meaning of the words beg and ask is acknowledged, but they are not considered completely appropriate to be interchanged in all the patterns or co-occur with words that seems fitting to one synonym. The similar and different patterns of these two words are shown in the following table in an effort to provide better understanding for these patterns.

TABLE 1

A. Shared Patterns	
ASK	BEG
ask + (sb) + for + sth	beg + (sb) + for + sth
ask + sb + to-V.inf	beg + sb + to-V.inf
ask + to-V.inf	beg + to-V.inf
ask + that + S + V.inf	beg + that + S + V.inf
B. Different Patterns	
ASK	BEG
ask + (sb) + if/whether	beg + (sth) + (from + sb)

When learning English, learners should be familiar with the lexical phrases or idiomatic expressions in reference to phraseology that the word "beg" is an element of. Consider the following:

- *I beg your pardon*: this is used to ask sb to repeat what they have just said.
- *I beg to differ*: this is used in a formal context to show one's disagreement with sth that has been said.
- *be going begging*: if sth is going begging, it is available for anyone who wants it.
- *beg the question*: this expression is used to make sb want to ask a question that has not yet been answered.

(LDOCE, 2009, p. 136)

The fixed lexical phrases in the above examples prohibit substitution of ask for beg. The words *ask* and *beg* are similar in terms of their meaning, however it would sound incorrect and unusual to hear "I ask to differ" or "I ask your pardon".

The word *ask* is taken as the basic word against which other synonyms are compared. In the following table, an analysis of the grammatical patterns of the word *plead* is made.

TABLE 2

A. Shared Patterns	
ASK	PLEAD
ask + for + sth	plead + for + sth
ask + to-V.inf	plead + to-V.inf
ask + that + S + V.inf	plead + that + S + V
B. Different Patterns	
ASK	PLEAD
ask + (sb) + if/whether	plead + with+ sb
ask + to-V.inf	plead + with+ sb + for + sth
	plead + with+ sb + to-V.inf

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

It must be noted that the usage of ask and plead somewhat varies for the shared pattern comprising a *that-clause*. This is because a subjunctive mood is required by this pattern, implying the verb in it is in the base-form. Whereas, this is not required by the *that-clause* of plead in terms of its verb phrase. Verbs in the past tense are used with word must and could, as suggested by the concordance lines. However, this may not reflect the occurrence of this pattern in its entirety because the corpus is limited. It cannot be concluded that similar to that of beg and ask, a verb cannot be taken into the subjunctive form by the pattern plead + that + clause. It is highly likely that subjunctive form exists with regards to this certain pattern and may be seen if larger corpora are examined. The dictionaries and corpus data provided the shared and different patterns of ask and request as shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3

A. Shared Patterns	
ASK	REQUEST
ask + sb + to-V.inf	request + sb + to-V.inf
ask + that + S + V.inf	request + that + S + V.inf
B. Different Patterns	
ASK	REQUEST
ask + (sb) + if/whether	request + sth
ask + to-V.inf	request + sth + from + sb
ask + (sb) + for + sth	

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

TABLE 4

A. Shared Patterns	
ASK	APPEAL (1+2)
ask + for + sth	appeal + for + sth
B. Different Patterns	
ASK	APPEAL (1+2)
ask + (sb) + if/whether ask + to-V.inf ask + sb + to-V.inf ask + (sb) + for + sth ask + that + S + V.inf	appeal + to + sb + for + sth appeal + to + sb + to-V.inf appeal + against + sb

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

There are two shades of meaning of the word appeal and they are greatly similar to each other. These two senses are merged together because of the overlapping of their patterns, as shown in Table 4.

1.11 Collocations

Adverbs and nouns are the major collocates of the words because they are all verbs. The collocations of these words discovered in dictionaries and corpus data will be used to discuss the five synonyms.

ASK

- a. ask + **sb** + $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{for + sth} \\ \text{to-V.inf} \\ \text{for + sth} \end{array} \right\}$
- b. **adverb** + ask *or* ask + **adverb**

sb: people, children, the private sector, the market makers, the board, the crew, followers, the government, manufacturers

sth: help, vegetables, bread, a drink, concessions, asylum, a review, food, aid, an injection, an application form, a transfer, curriculum vitae, discounts

adverb: repeatedly, formally, normally

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

BEG

- a. beg + for + **sth**
b. beg + **sb** + to-V.inf
c. **adverb** + beg

sth: the safe return, amusement, visits, an approach, mercy, denationalization, news, a chance, support

sb: listeners, me, them, member states, my family, Nick, the banks, the Vatican, the organizers, the fighters, the beak, the girls

adverb: always

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

PLEAD

- a. plead + with + **sb**
- b. plead + for + **sth**

sb: you, him, them, her son, a policeman, the Office of Fair Trading, ministers, the people of the United States

sth: a referendum, one's life, calm, funding, freedom, mercy, good behavior, more cash, greater tolerance, clemency, better treatment, one hour, more time, common sense, human decency, an international conference

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

REQUEST

- a. request + **sth**
- b. request + **sth** + from + **sb**

sth: money, a fish, a stay, a performance, a gift, a fashion show, a seminar, a meeting, justice, a review, an evidence, a delay in any ruling, a urine sample, information, air support, airstrikes, an urgent report, an application form, an update, an aspirin, gas masks, privacy, an action, the return of keys, removal, supervision

sb: shareholders, a passing waitress, her father, the authority, the Scottish Office, the police, him, journalists, Parisians, the plaintiff

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

APPEAL

- Sense 1:**
- a. appeal + against + **sth**
 - b. appeal + to + **sb**

sth: the decision, the case, the dismissal, the order, the award, a jail sentence, convictions, the fine

sb: the Court of Appeal, the supreme court of justice, the judges, the High Court, the House of Lords

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

Sense 2: a. appeal + for + sth/sb

sth: understanding, the issue, calm, a change, blood donors, reconciliation, their release, help, the men's lives, talks, the fixture, an early opportunity, a pardon, penalties, information, a more generous statement, ammunition, hand ball, privacy, unity, mutual forgiveness, an amnesty, loyalty

sb: witnesses, blood donors

b. appeal + to + sb

sb: the thieves, him, the media, Mr. Bell, children, the club, religious leaders, Tony Blair, China, her community, undergraduates, residents, the Allies, his party, Thatcher, mankind

c. appeal + adverb

adverb: heavily, intellectually

Source: BNC & COCA (2020)

It should be considered that the dictionaries and corpus-data provided a number of examples related to collocates out of which some are discussed above. The synonyms used in this article can have various collocates and are not limited to the ones mentioned here. There is a need to discuss larger corpora in order to discover the natural collocations occurring in real English language. According to the above discussion, the context of a word makes it hard to interchange with its synonyms. The appropriateness of the synonyms to the situation should be considered because sometimes they should only be used in a certain context.

2. Conclusion

To conclude, this article proves that there are mostly loose synonyms in the English language. The focus of this article was on five loose synonyms that appeared similar in terms of their dictionary meaning, however they could not be, for most part, substituted for each other in every setting. The data for this article was obtained from learner's dictionaries and corpora. The corpus-based data appears to be beneficial because it supplies additional information as opposed to dictionaries that lack comprehensive details of the words, for instance collocations or grammatical patterns. Additionally, corpora provide the option to search for more sample sentences of synonyms in case the learner is not clear on the meaning of a certain word. Firstly, three recognized dictionaries, i.e. CALD, 2020 (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary), LDOCE, 2009 (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English) and OALD, 2020 (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary) were consulted. Then, the second part of the study consults and obtains data from corpus to examine the additional information that the dictionaries lacked. Lastly, the similarities and differences in the grammatical patterns of the five synonyms were discovered by concluding the information and tabulating those words. It was discovered that the grammatical patterns, contexts of use, and the most important thing, the core meaning of these words differ and their surface meanings, which might be similar, do not reflect the differences they have that are outlined in this paper.

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