

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Keys on Synonyms
By: Al-Sayed Muhammad bin Ali
Al-Mujahid

Translation and Commentary by
Habib Zaatar



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The Research: Key on Synonyms By Al-Sayed Muhammad
bin Ali Al-Mujahid

Researcher: Habib Zaatar .

Researcher's Country: USA .

Reviewed by: Sheikh Al-Tusi Center for Studies and
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**A Statement from The Scientific and
Preparatory Committees
For the First International Scientific
Conference:
(Al-Sayyid Al-Mujahid and His
Scientific Legacy)**

All praise be to Allah Lord of the worlds, and may His peace and blessings be upon his noble messenger Muhammad and his pure progeny.

The sky of science and knowledge in the history of the Shias is filled with shining stars, whose bright light guides the lost. These great men carried the banner of truth and the torch of guidance and repelled ignorance. They are like how Imam Al-Sadiq (a.s) described as reported by Imam Al-Askari (a.s), "The scholars of our Shias are fighters at the border with Ibleesla and his warmongers, preventing them from advancing upon our weak Shias, and from them being overcome by Ibleesla and his adherents, the Nasibis (Hostile Ones). Indeed! So, the ones from our Shias who stand for that would be superior to the ones who fight against the Romans, and the Turks, and the Khazar, a thousand (upon a) thousand times,

because he defends the Religion of ones who love us, but the other one defends their bodies "⁽¹⁾.

They spread the divine knowledge of Ahl al-Bayt (a.s) and lead their Shias to the correct and upright rulings, making them the cause of guidance and the apparent villages as mentioned by Imam Al-Sadiq (a.s), "So the one who accepts our merits that we are the apparent town between them and their Shias, the town which Allah has Blessed therein, the apparent villages is the Rasool, and the transferring (transmitting of Hadeeth) from us to our Shias, and scholars of our Shias, to our Shias. And the Words of the Exalted: and We Apportioned the traveling therein, so the traveling is like the knowledge, journeying with it nights and days. The example of the one who journeys from the knowledge during the nights and the days from us to them (Shias), regarding the Permissible and the Prohibited, and the Obligations and the Judgements, there is safety in it when it is taken from him, safety from the doubt and the straying, and then transferring from the Prohibited to (become) the Permissible, because they are taking the knowledge from the ones whom it is Obligated for them to take it from them, with the recognition. (This is) because they are the people who inherited the Knowledge from Adam to where it has ended, children of Mustafa, from each other. It has not ended up to you, but it has ended up with us, and we are the children, the Chosen ones, not you and those that

(1) Bihar Al-Anwar, v.2, p5.

resemble you, O Hassan!"⁽¹⁾.

Thus, the school of Ahl al-Bayt produced the most eminent and distinguished scholars the Islamic nation has seen, despite the repression, restrictions, and fears that the Shias faced. The last four centuries are considered the most virtuous academic era and the brightest in development and prosperity, which saw great productivity. The grand scholars of this era left behind many, many significant works, which should intensify scientific efforts to revive their memory by presenting examinations and studies and holding conferences and seminars about the most prominent of those personalities.

Among the brightest stars of the thirteenth century is one of the masters of jurisprudence, the excellent and comprehensively knowledgeable scholar, a competent scholar in the principles of jurisprudence, the great leader, Al-Sayed Muhammad Al-Tabatabaei, nicknamed: Al-Mujahid. Allah has combined unique aspects and numerous characteristics in his honorable personality, such as his knowledgeable family and noble lineage. His father was Al-Sayed Ali Al-Tabatabaei, known as the author of Riyad Al-Masa'il and his mother was Al-Wahid Al-Bihbahani's daughter. Muhammad Ali al-Tabatabaei and Abd Al-Hussain Al-Tabatabaei were his uncles. He married the daughter of his teacher, Al-Allama Bahr Al-'Ulum.

(1) Al-Ihtijaj, v.2, p.63.

He was also blessed with God-given talents, a scientific environment, and a spiritual atmosphere that distinguished his scientific personality. In addition to that, his brilliance and intelligence aided his swift achievements. He studied in the holy seminary of Karbala under his father, in Najaf under Al-Sayed Muhammad Mahdi Bahr Al-'Ulum, and in the holy city of Kadhimiya under Al-Sayed Muhsin Al-A'raji. He then went to the Islamic seminary of Isfahan, in which he engaged in teaching and writing for thirteen years. Hence, he attended various Islamic seminaries and gained his knowledge from several religious schools.

After his father's death – the leading Shia authority – he succeeded his father and became the leading Shia authority and leader of the Islamic seminary. His noble presence in Karbala's Islamic seminary helped it flourish with knowledge and development. Many scholars attended his classes trained under him – some of which were his father's former students, the most important of whom are:

Al-Sheikh Al-Ansari

Dawud b. Asad Allah b. 'Abd Allah Burujirdi

Ibrahim Musawi Qazwini

Muhammad Salih Baraghani

Mulla Hasan b. Muhammad 'Ali Yazdi

Mulla Husayn Wa'iz Tustari

Muhammad Sharif Mazandarani

Mulla Safar 'Ali Lahijani Qazwini



Al-Sayed Muhammad Shafi' Japalaqi

Ahmad b. 'Ali Mukhtar Gulpaygani

'Ali b. Muhammad Wali Qa'ini

Mirza Nasr Allah Mashhadi

Mirza Muhammad 'Ali b. Muhammad Husayn Shahristani

Mirza Muhammad Rida b. Muhammad Baqir Qazwini al-Khuwaysini.

Another significant role Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid had was his fatwa of jihad to protect the Shia borders in the Russo-Persia war. This critical historical incident is considered a significant event in his honorable life, and an important historical turning point in his biography, even more, in the history of Shias. Thus, it becomes clear why he is nicknamed: Al-Mujahid (The Warrior).

Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid left behind various highly valuable works such as:

Mafatih al-usul

Al-Wasa'il fi l-usul

Risalat hujjiyyat al-zann

Al-Manahil

'Umdat al-maqal fi tahqiq ahwal al-rijal

Al-Masabih fi sharh al-Mafatih li l-Kashani

Jami' al-'Aba'ir fi l-fiqh

Kitab fi al-aghlat al-mashhura

Al-Misbah al-bahir fi radd al-yadiri wa ithbat nubuwwat nabiyyina al-tahir

Based on the important historical roles, unique characteristics, and overlooked aspects Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid possessed, the Sheikh Al-Tusi Center for Studies and Examinations committed to holding an international scientific conference on the authority of Al-Sayed Muhammad Al-Mujahid Al-Tabatabaei. The conference aims to commemorate his memory and to preserve his tremendous hard work. In addition, it intends to supplement the Islamic library and fill scientific gaps by shedding light on various aspects of his life, biography, and sacrifices.

Astonishingly, Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid's works have not been published or examined until now. It is also surprising that there are no books, studies, theses, or scientific articles about Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid in Arabic, Persian, and foreign languages. The historical sources are scarce with information about him, and some of them, including errors and inaccurate information regarding the jihad fatwa. Therefore, the importance of holding this conference is undeniable.

The most important objectives of the conference are to shed light on the overlooked aspects of Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid's life and his scientific heritage, examine and publish his most important works, and study his role in the Russo-Persia war to respond to the false and fabricated allegations about his fatwa.

The conference's scientific committee followed meaningful and

accurate steps to hold the conference in the best and most complete way. The activities of the conference were divided into the following categories:

The First: Document Examinations of Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid's Works

Most of Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid's works are neither published nor examined and still in the form of manuscripts. Since some scientific centers have announced that they have begun to examine his two books in the field of Principles of Jurisprudence: (Mafatih Al-Usul) and (Al-Wasa'il Fi l-Usul), we turned to his most important remaining scientific works. Al-Sheikh Al-Tusi Center has also made great strides in examining Al-Manahel. This will be the first time these works will be examined and published, except for 'Umdat al-maqal, which was previously published.

The Second: Studies About Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid

Several independent studies have been written about Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid, in which we have tried to complete the various aspects of his scientific personality. This was through writing about the most important fields he mastered and highlighting his role in developing these sciences, such as Jurisprudence, Principles of Jurisprudence, Biographical Evaluation, and Hadith. Moreover, some studies looking at the most overlooked aspects of the personal and academic life of Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid have been written.

The Third: Researches and Articles

Researches and articles written on the personality of Al-Sayed Mujahid – especially the scientific ones – are varied with the variety of sciences and knowledge. Honorable students and eminent figures in the Islamic seminary and several Iraqi university professors wrote various researches. It must be noted that the participants were from different countries, including Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Kuwait.

The Fourth: Media Work About Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid

This category consists of numerous works, the most important of which was preparing a documentary film on the scientific and historical life of Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid.

In conclusion, we would like nothing but to express our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to everyone who contributed and supported the formation of this scientific conference, even if it was just a prayer. In particular, we would like to mention the supreme religious authority, His Eminence Al-Sayed Ali Al-Husseini Al-Sistani, who like Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid, gave a fatwa of jihad without we would not have been able to hold such conferences. We pray to the Almighty to prolong his life.

We also thank the legal guardian of the Al-Abbas's (p) Holy Shrine, His Eminence Al-Sayed Ahmad Al-Safi, and all the honorable directors and officials of the Al-Abbas's (p) Holy Shrine.

Thanks are due to all the parties that contributed to the establishment of this conference, from institutions, scientific centers, and Islamic libraries, and we would like to mention in particular:

1. The Heritage Revival Center, (Al-Abbas's (p) Holy Shrine – Manuscript Department)
2. The Manuscripts Copying and Cataloging Center, (Al-Abbas's (p) Holy Shrine – Manuscript Department)
3. Karbala Heritage Center, (The Department of Islamic and Human Knowledge Affairs at the Al-Abbas's (p) Holy Shrine.)

We also thank the honorable Sheikhs and figures in the scientific committees, the technical cadres in the General Secretariat, the staff at Al-Sheikh Al-Tusi Center, and all the hands that contributed to the establishment of the conference. They have our sincere gratitude

and appreciation, and we ask Allah Almighty to accept their deeds and greaten their rewards, and our last supplication is that praise is to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

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Habib Zaatar

The Islamic Seminary - Holy Qom

Abstract

Communication is self-evidently one of the most important social concepts. It is what allows us to pass information to other people, and to understand what is said to us. Thus, it is fundamental for building and developing societies. With that being said, people differ in their communication abilities, as some are better than others. One of the methods used to help enhance the quality of our communication is the usage of synonyms. This is because it makes our speech and text much more appealing and aids in providing a clear image in the mind of the listener and reader.

The topic of synonyms is usually known to be studied in the field of linguistics, yet what many are unaware of is that is also studied in Usul Al-Fiqh (the principles of jurisprudence). This goes back to the need for the field of Usul, as it gives the jurist the required ideologies to deal with the divine texts. Hence, scholars in the Islamic

seminaries have deeply studied the topic and brought up various theories concerning it.

One of the prominent figures in this field who profoundly studied this topic is the great Sayed Muhammad Al-Mujahid (b. 1180 /1766 – d. 1242 /1827) in his book Mafatih Al-Usul (The Keys to The Principles). This article intends to throw light not only on the topic, but on the works of the scholars of the Shia seminary. The article in summary is a translation of the major “keys” of the topic written by Al-Mujahid. When suitable a commentary explaining the translation is stated. It consists of an introduction, four keys, and a conclusion.

نظرة استدلالية في مبحث الترادف

للسيد محمد المجاهد رحمته الله

حبيب زعتر

الحوزة العلمية - قم المقدسة

الملخص

لا ريب في أهمية التخاطب والتواصل - سواء على المستوى اللفظي أو الكتبي - في تكوين وتطوير المجتمعات، اذ يساعدان على انتشار واكتساب المعرفة والمعلومات مع أفراد المجتمع، وبها تحفظ العلوم للأجيال القادمة، مع هذا نرى تفاوت الناس في القدرة على التخاطب والتواصل، فبعضهم أقدر من بعض، وتختلف اساليبهم وطرقهم في إيصال المفاهيم إلى مجتمعاتهم، ومن الطرق المذكورة لترقية سالكه إلى سمو البيان والفصاحة هو استعمال المرادفات، إذ به يجعل الكلام أكثر جاذبية ويساعد في نقش صورة واضحة في ذهن المتلقي.

الشائع هو أن هذا الموضوع يدرس في علم اللسانيات، ولكن ما يغفل عنه الكثيرون هو أنه قد أعطي حقه في علم أصول الفقه كذلك، إذ حاجة الفقيه إلى الأدوات المناسبة للتعامل مع النصوص الدينية يلزمه البحث عن مثل هذه

المواضيع، ولذا نرى فقهاءنا الأعلام قد اشبعوا هذا الموضوع تحقيقاً وتنقيحاً

ما يروى به الضمآن ويشبع به الجوعان، ومن ضمن تلك المجموعة المقدسة السيد الأجل الأعظم، الأكرم الأفخم، البحر الزاخر، والسحاب الماطر، الفائق على الأوائل والأواخر، صاحب التحقيقات الرشيقة، والتأليفات الأنيقة، كالمفاتيح والمناهل السيد محمد بن علي المجاهد الطباطبائي (1180 - 1242 هـ)، نور الله روضته وأعلى في الفردوس منزلته.

ليس هدف هذه المقالة إلقاء الضوء على الموضوع فحسب، بل على تراث علماء الحوزة الشيعية؛ ليعلم بذلك فضلهم وعزهم، وهي عبارة عن ترجمة ما ذكره السيد المجاهد في مفاتيح الأصول حول الموضوع، مع ذكر تعليقات توضيحية عند المناسبة، وهي مؤلفة من تمهيد، ثم مقدمة السيد في تعريف المرادف، ويتبع ذلك أربعة مفاتيح وخاتمة.

نسأل الله تعالى القبول وأن يرزقنا شفاعة السيد.

Introduction

The Shia seminaries have produced many gems, most of which are unfortunately unknown or criminally underrated outside the seminaries, and even between Shias. This can lead to the unclearness of the scientific history the Shia school of thought went through, and how it came to be today. As researchers miss out on knowing figures in the holy seminaries, they miss out on the chance to know a method of thought from the Shia ideology, and more importantly the manner in which Shia lifestyle in all its aspects was like at that era.

A prominent figure which has shockingly not been shed light upon is Al-Sayed Muhammad Al-Mujahid (b. 1180 /1766 – d. 1242 /1827). This scholar had many virtues, that make researching about him and his work significant in understanding the Shia school of thought. This includes the fact that he was born in a family of scholars. His Father was Al-Sayed Ali Al-Tabatab'i, the famous Shia authority and author of one of the most important books in Shia jurisprudence; *Riyad Al-Masa'il*. His grandfather from his mother's side was none other than Al-Wahid Al-Bihbahani, who played a vital role in erasing the Akhbari movement. His uncles were also well-respected scholars, and his father-in-law was the great Allama Bahr Al-Ulum.

Other virtues include the fact that he was the main Shia authority

after his father passed away, and the role he played during the period of Fath-Ali Shah Qajar, in defending the Iranian borders against Russians. Last but not least, what makes him special is the combination of his deep knowledge and existence at that specific era of thought. He was a walking encyclopedia and fountain of knowledge that lived in the era of a scientific boom.

Thank god that such a figure did not leave this world without leaving any of his knowledge behind, as his works include:

- Mafatih Al-Usul
- Al-Wasa'il fi l-usul
- Risalat hujjiyyat al-zann
- Al-Manahil
- 'Umdat al-maqal fi tahqiq ahwal al-rijal
- Al-Masabih fi sharh al-Mafatih li l-Kashani
- Jami' al-'Aba'ir fi l-fiqh
- Kitab fi al-aghlat al-mashhura
- Al-Misbah al-bahir fi radd al-yadiri wa ithbat nubuwwat

nabiyyina al-tahir

The Importance of Mafatih Al-Usul

To grasp the importance of Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid's works one must understand the scientific situation at his time. At the start of the eleventh century in the Hijri calendar the Akhbari idea began to lose its influence in Shia seminaries. By the time of the birth of Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid, the period of stagnation in Usul Al-Fiqh (principles of jurisprudence) and other fields of sciences abandoned by Akhbaris ended, and their revival was accelerating. During this period many of the authored works published were encyclopedias and collections of opinions including the ideas from different Islamic sects. The impact of the stagnation was heavily felt; thus, it caused a hyper movement to revive it.

Al-Mujahid's lineage, great knowledge, and authority all assisted in contributing works that would help the cause. He was special, as he knew what he was talking about and the structure of thoughts in every field, along with all the manuscripts and books he possessed thanks to his authority. This can be greatly seen in the book Mafatih Al-Usul, which is in the field of Usul Al-Fiqh (principles of jurisprudence). We see that he brings up most – if not all – the options available, then states each theories evidence and what can they be answered with, and finally gives his view. The author starts every topic – when needed – with an introduction usually stating the meaning of the topic and information needed before going into proving. He then states

“Keys” relating to that topic and studying each in the mentioned method.

In a nutshell, the book Mafatih Al-Usul is an illustration of the methods, ideas, views, and style of the scholars in the Shia seminaries at that particular era. The book is authored by a specialist in the field of Usul, who scholars from all around would return to for knowledge. Till this day, I personally have witnessed many of the current teachers and authors return to his books and work for information.

A reason why such works of Al-Mujahid are under the radar is because of the inflation of information their period witnessed. Processing information became difficult in the twelfth and thirteenth century (Hijri), to a point where the need to “purify” the information was felt. The processes of doing so are seen in Kifaya Al-'usul by Al-Akhund Al-Khursani (b. 1255 /1839 – d.1329 /1911), which to till this day is studied and somewhat accepted in seminaries.

The Goal of This Article

This humble article aims to drive the attention of researchers towards Sayed Al-Mujahid and the heritage he left us with. To make it more eye catching for the readers, the topic chosen is one that has sadly been “purified” from the field of Usul, yet given great importance in the fields of logic and linguistics; and that is the topic of Synonyms.

Synonyms play a big role in the way we express our communication. Thus, this topic is of great importance to linguists and those who deal with divine texts. This topic is viewed as one of the many that linguistics and Usul Al-Fiqh have in common, which can open a door for an international spread of ideas.

Our method in dealing with this article is to translate what Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid stated in his book Mafatih Al-Usul, while adding a commentary where we see it suitable. The words of Al-Mujahid will be in bold, while the commentary will not.

The View on Synonyms

Introduction [The definition of synonymous words]

Commentary: Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid started his research on the subject by giving an introduction in which he cites the definition of "Synonym" given by Al-Allama Al-Hili in his book (Nihayat Al-Wusul). He does not comment on Al-Allama's definition which usually means he himself accepts the stated definition. Defining this term is vital as the rest of the research about the subject will be based on the definition stated here. It is also important to note that the definition given here is different to the one usually given by linguistics nowadays.

It is stated in Al-Nihaya that synonymous words are, "The singular words that signify the same concept with one aspect. With our limitation of 'singular' the definition and defined are removed from the term. Also, with our limitation of 'one parameter' words that signify the same concept, but differ in characteristic such as (Muhanad) and (Sarim) are also outside the term"⁽¹⁾.

Commentary: Thus, for a word to be considered a synonymy it must 1- be singular and 2- have the same exact meaning in all aspects. Thus, when using (rational animal) instead of the word

(1) Nihayat Al-Wusul v.1, p.204.

(human), it is not considered as a synonym usage, because (rational animal) is not singular. This will be discussed more on in a separate “key”. Most importantly, in this definition the term synonym is limited to the “Absolute synonymy” which means words that have nearly the same meaning are not synonyms. Hence, the words (Muhanad) and (Sarim) which both mean sword but differ in aspect – the first one means the sword made out of metal from India and the latter means sharp sword– are not synonyms. This factor will be discussed more in the coming “key”. What is important to emphasize here is that the meaning in the synonymous words is the same exact thing, even if the words differ in usage, roots, etc.

A Key

[The existence of synonymous terms]

The majority of researchers believe in the availability of synonyms in languages. It has been cited that Ibn Faris⁽¹⁾ and Taghlab deny its availability. They claim what might be thought to be considered as synonymous words such as (Insan) and (Bashar) actually are unique from each other. The first group prove their case by inspection of the language. The second group bring up cases. The first is that if synonyms were available then that would be unreasonable, and without any benefit. This is because the purpose of words is to signify meanings, and this can be achieved with one word, therefore there is no need for a second word. The second case is that the availability of synonyms will account for defining the previously defined, and that is void. The reason behind its voidness is that the purpose of establishing words is to make concepts comprehended. Thus, if there was an intention to make a concept comprehended with another word then that would account for making the comprehended, comprehended, and that would be a second occurrence of what is occurrent, which is void. The third case is if there was one word for every concept, then that would be easier to learn, identify, and memorize. The opposite is true if there were multiple words for one

(1) Al-Sahibi Fi Fiqh Al-Lugha, p.59.

concept. Hence, the establisher of language is obligated to place one word for each concept to obtain the stated benefit.

These three cases can all be answered. As for the first case, if it was true, then that would contrast with reality, as there are words that signify one concept in one language, such as (Insan) and (Bashar). Also, multiple words from multiple languages also signify one concept, and claiming that this is false is self-evidently void. This is why we see an Arab signify a concept with a word and a Persian signify that same exact concept with a different word. The same goes with the Indian, Turkish, Roman, and African.

What we stated was implied by Al-Sayed Ameer Al-Deen, as he stated after accepting the possibility of synonyms, “what indicates our view is that if it was not possible, it would not have been available, though it is available, so it is permissible. Its availability in multiple language is self-evident, and in one language is proven by the statements of lexicographers, as they stated that the words (Asad) and (Sabu’) were established to signify the large wild animal of the cat family. They also mentioned that the words (Qu’ood) and (Juloos) mean that specific position. All while acknowledging that their statements in such circumstances are considered valid evidence.”. However, it can be argued that the words with same meaning from different languages are not considered synonymous terms because the condition for a word to be considered as a synonym it has to be from the same language.

Secondly, we do not accept that there are no benefits, even if the intended meaning was capable of being signified by only one of the

synonymous words. The benefits other than comprehending meanings have been referred to in Al-Tahdib, as the author stated, “Its [synonymous terms] occurrence in the likes of (Asad) and (Sabi’), and such words is proof of its possibility. It is possible for a tribe to put a word for a meaning, then another tribe puts another word for that meaning. The reason that caused a singular establisher of a language to place two or more words for one meaning is to make the use of expressive language easier, to observe the meters in rhymed poetry, to be able to use words that rhyme, etc”⁽¹⁾.

As for the second case, we disproof it firstly by stating that if it was true then that would contradict with the concept of proofing a matter with multiple evidence which is obviously false. Secondly, the establisher of language put the multiple words in order to define with any of them, not to define with the multiple words together; to make it easier.

As for the third case, the stated benefit – if correct – will be considered if there was not a more important benefit, because if a more significant benefit or wisdom was available – such as in our case – then it will not be considered.

Commentary: Keeping in mind that the meaning of synonym set in this study is the complete identity of all meanings of two or more lexemes in all contexts, Al-Sayed Al-Mujahid puts forward the question, “Do synonyms exist in languages?”. He then mentions that there are two views on this topic between scholars. Most of them

(1) Tahdeb Al-Wusul Ila Ilm Al-Usul, p.69.

believe that it is available, backing their view with the claim that upon investigating and searching in the language we fall upon various words that have the same meaning. For example, it is mentioned that the meaning of sword has more than a thousand words in the Arabic language that signify it, the meaning of lion has five hundred, and so on the many examples. Thus, the idea that synonyms exist can be verified by simply searching in the language.

Opposing the well-known view is the opinion of the likes of Ibn Faris and Taghlab, who believe synonyms with the definition given do not exist. If someone were to ask a person with such a belief, “What about the claim that there are five hundred words for lion?”, their answer would be: there are differences in the meanings of each word claimed to be a synonym. In other words, there is no absolute identity between the words. A prime example would be (Insan) and (Bashar), which both give the meaning of human, however the first comes with the context of forgetting (from Nisyan) and the latter comes with the context of good form (from Bashr)⁽¹⁾.

The author then states how do this group prove the inexistence of synonyms by bringing forward three cases, which he later answers.

The first claim is based upon understanding the purpose of language. To simply put it, the main purpose of language is to simplify communication, in the sense of transmission of information from one person to another. This goes back to the fact that human beings are a social species that relies on cooperation to survive and

(1) View Lisan al-Arab, vol. 6, p. 11, and Al-Furook Al-Lughawiyah, p.228.

thrive. This cooperation that we need cannot be unless there was communication, hence, language allows us to communicate with one another and achieved all of our progress as human beings.

Acknowledging the stated above, the need of communication can be achieved by placing one word for one meaning. There is no use or need in placing more than one word for one meaning. Such an action would be considered an irrational action.

The author answered this by bringing up the fact that even if we considered the action of placing more than one word for one meaning as irrational that does not make it impossible. Thus, as long as it is possible, we have to check for its availability, which we did and find. In addition to the existence of synonymous terms in one language, a clearer example of its existence is if we looked at two languages for one meaning, we would find that there are multiple words for that meaning. However, the author retreats from this claim as for a word to be considered a synonym it has to be from the same language.

In a nutshell, to prove their claim they must either prove the existence of synonymous terms is impossible or prove of its unavailability in the language.

Secondly, the author denies that there are no wisdoms, fruits, or benefits behind placing multiple words for more than one meaning. He cited the words of Allama Al-Hilli, which state some benefits behind synonymous terms, which in summary associate with simplifying the elegant use of words and simplify making poetry.

The second case put forward to disprove the existence of synonymous terms is also based on understanding the purpose of

language. Yet in this case, it is stated that if there was a meaning made grasped by one word then using the other word would be making something already available [which is the comprehension of the meaning], available.

There are two answers to this claim as stated by the author. The first is that if this was the case then we would not be able to prove things with more than one evidence, because if the first proof gives us certainty then the second will give us certainty as well which is already there. This is self-evidently false, because it is obvious that we can prove a notion with multiple evidence. The second answer is that synonymous terms were established so that they can indicate the meaning by one of them, not together.

The third claim states that if there were synonymous terms then that would make communication difficult. This is because there will be many words to memorize and learn. Also, there will be many situations where a person is not aware of the synonym. Hence, to keep things easy the establishers of language must stay away from placing more than one word for one meaning.

The answer to the claim as mentioned by the author is that the establisher had other benefits which they viewed more significant than easing the language.

Emphasizing that the debate on the existence of synonymous terms is based on the definition given for it in the introduction, it can be argued by those who reject the concept of the availability of synonymous terms, that their availability even if possible is not likely. This hides in the fact that there are more meanings than there

are words, which might be why we have homonyms. Hence, the establisher who we consider to be rational will not have enough words, so wasting words on meanings that already have words would be unsound.

In addition, they have searched the language and did not find any synonyms. There is always a small difference in meaning between the words thought to be synonyms. The difference can be etymology, orthography, phonic qualities, connotations, ambiguous meanings, usage, and so on, which make them unique. Another basis of difference can be that the people of the language often deal with a concept, so they place words which signify that concept, yet differ in description. For example, it is stated that the Eskimo who casually deal with snow have dozens of words that signify it but with different contexts: “utuqaq,” ice that lasts year after year; “siguliaksraq,” the patchwork layer of crystals that forms as the sea begins to freeze; and “auniq,” ice that is filled with holes, like Swiss cheese. This also unsurprisingly goes with reindeers in their language, as the Sami also have as many as 1,000 words for reindeer. These refer to such things as the reindeer’s fitness (“leami” means a short, fat female reindeer), personality (“njirru” is an unmanageable female) and the shape of its antlers (“snarri” is a reindeer whose antlers are short and branched).

The words (Matar) and (Ghayth) which both mean (rain), however the first means rain that is from wrath or is ruthless and the latter means rain which is merciful. This can be proven when reflecting on the usage of the words in the holy Quran and the context they were used in.

﴿وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا فَأَنْظَرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ﴾

We poured upon them a rain of brimstone. See what was the end of the wicked!⁽¹⁾.

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَتْ هَذِهِ حَقًّا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَامْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِنْ السَّمَاءِ أَوْ آتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴾

And remember when they prayed, “O Allah! If this is indeed the truth from You, then rain down stones upon us from the sky or overcome us with a painful punishment.”⁽²⁾.

﴿ فَلَمَّا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا جَعَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمَا سِوَاهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا حِجَارَةً مِنْ سِجِّيلٍ مَنْضُورٍ ﴾

When Our command came, We turned the cities upside down and rained down on them clustered stones of baked clay⁽³⁾.

﴿ ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَامٌ فِيهِ يُغَاثُ النَّاسُ وَفِيهِ يُعْصِرُونَ ﴾

Then after that will come a year in which people will receive abundant rain and they will press oil and wine⁽⁴⁾.

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَآذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴾

Indeed, Allah alone has the knowledge of the Hour. He sends

(1) Al-Quran, 7:84.

(2) Al-Quran, 8:32.

(3) Al-Quran, 11:82.

(4) Al-Quran, 12:49.

down the rain, and knows what is in the wombs. No soul knows what it will earn for tomorrow, and no soul knows in what land it will die. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware⁽¹⁾.

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوا وَيَنْشُرُ رَحْمَتَهُ، وَهُوَ الْوَلِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ﴾

He is the One Who sends down rain after people have given up hope, spreading out His mercy. He is the Guardian, the Praiseworthy⁽²⁾.

Yet this argument can be rebuffed by two claims. The first is that we must acknowledge on how synonymous words occurred. Upon studying the etymology of many words in the Arabic language it can be proven that a word was placed for a meaning by one tribe then another tribe places another word for that same exact meaning. This can be observed by the actions of the Quraysh tribe – who were in charge of the pilgrimage rituals in which Arabs from all tribes would travel for– as they would choose words from various tribes to add to their dictionaries.

Secondly, the differences stated between words is not a difference in meaning, but rather these differences, which make them unique are noticed in usage of the words. So, the definition of the word (Matar) and (Ghayth) are the same, but when used they point out to a specific aspect. This is why if we were to use the second in place of the first it would not be wrong. In addition to the fact that, not all these

(1) Al-Quran,31:34.

(2) Al-Quran, 42:28.

characteristics are known or considered in every communicational situation or usage. This fact is important to keep in mind when dealing with eloquent texts, especially divine texts.

A Key

[Synonymous terms created by religion]

Let it be known that those who view the availability of synonyms in language differ in whether religion made its own synonyms or not. According to Al-Qurafi⁽¹⁾ and others, it is available as they believe that there are two words established for the meaning of obligation; (Wagib) and (Farid), also they believe that there are multiple words for the meaning of recommended. It has been cited that Al-Razi⁽²⁾ views that it [synonyms placed by religion] is not available, as he believes it is contrary to the primary rule, thus, it needs evidence to be proven, which is absent. Al-Qurafi's claim is answered with the fact that those words were not placed for those meanings by religion, but rather they are the terminology of jurists and those who study the principles of jurisprudence.

Commentary: In this “key” the author discusses if the divine texts or communications with humans created synonymous words. Shihab al-Din al-Qurafi, the Maliki jurist and legal theoretician believed that in divine texts the words (Wagib) and (Farid) were placed by the

(1) Nafais Al-Usul, v.2, p.834.

(2) Al-Mahsul, v.1, p.316.

divine texts to mean obligation. Thus, religion created its own synonymous words.

Al-Razi states that the primary rule is that there is one meaning for every word unless proven otherwise. Thus, to prove the matter there must be proof, which is by searching in the “divine texts’ lexicon”. As for what was stated as an example, the words (Wagib) and (Farid) are truly synonyms, but they were not placed by religion, as they are terms used and placed by jurists.

A Key

[The definition of a word is a synonym of the defined word]

Let it be known that it has been reported that some consider the definition of a word as a synonym for that defined word. This is true if what they meant by definition “definition by synonym”, which is to define a word with another word that has the same meaning as the defined word and is better recognized, usually because it is used more, such as (Ghadanfar), (Asad), (Layth). However, if they meant “formal definition” or “the complete term”, such as defining human as: a rational animal, then this is against the scholar’s understandings. This is because the connotation of definition and defined word are heterogeneous. The definition is indicative of the parts of essence in multiple situations and a detailed indication, and the defined is indicative of that in a single condition and an overall indication.

Commentary: As stated in the field of logic, there are various ways to define words and concepts. There is the manner of stating the “complete term”, which by stating the near genus and near differentia, as the goal of this method is to comprehend the reality of the concept and to distinguish it from any other concept. The second method stated here is “definition by synonym” which makes difficult or abstract words understandable by simply throwing other words at

them. for example, defining the word "expository" – which may not be familiar – by saying that this is also called a "description". There is no trouble in recognizing that synonym, and now in the brain the two words can be associated so that when hearing one, it is known that it also refers to the other. The main difference between the two is that in the first way there is always a need to define by multiple words unlike the latter.

As mentioned, when the author defined synonymous terms, it was conditioned that they were singular, thus defining by stating the complete term is not an example of synonymous usage.

A Key

[Conducting commands using synonyms]

If the subject of a divine law was a precise phrase, such as if [the Shari'a] ordered, "State Allahuakbar", "Recite Sura Al-Hamid.", or "Do not say Ameen in prayers.", it is not permissible to place that law on the synonym of that phrase, whether the phrase and synonym were from one language or not.

The reason behind this is that the apparent meaning of the Shari'a discourse is to indicate the law for that phrase precisely. Thus, the application of that law on to the synonym needs evidence, while acknowledging that the phrase being synonymous is not enough for that.

The proof for the first claim [the indication that the law is for that phrase precisely] is that it is commonly understood from the discourse and its meaning in language. Therefore, the individual who was ordered to state Allahuakbar yet stated its synonym, and the person who was ordered to recite the Quran or a supplication but recited their synonym, is not viewed by the people of the language as a complier of the order or a follower of the command.

As for the second claim [there is no evidence], there is no proof available in the four sources of fiqh, that is, the Qur'an, the tradition (sunna), consensus (ijma'), and reason ('aql) that allows the

application of the law on the synonym. Although it is rational, not everything rational means it is a reality.

It is not correct to state: “If the matter was as mentioned, then it would be wrong to say that a servant, who was ordered by his master to tell Zaid ‘this and that’ but instead told him with synonyms of the words, as someone who obeyed the command. However, this is the opposite of reality, as we witness rational people consider the servant’s action as observation of the command without a doubt about it. Even more, the trait among rational people when sending verbal messages is to use synonyms. Thus, how can we judge that stating the same exact words of the sender of the message is an obligation when it isn’t even likely to do so?!”

This is not a correct statement because the contextual indication of such commands is that the sender’s main intention is for the meaning of the message to be reached to the receiver, not the same words. It is accepted that if there was clarity that the intention was the meaning only, then there is no denning of the permission of using synonymous terms. Yet without the contextual indication it is not permitted to use synonymous terms.

Conclusions

- The definition given for synonymous words is, “The singular words that signify the same concept with one aspect.”.
- In accordance to the definition, the synonyms must have the same exact meaning.
- Synonymous words do exist in language.
- It has not been proven that religion created synonymous texts.
- Defining by the method of “complete term” is not a synonymous usage.
- When ordered to state a word the subject cannot use the synonyms of the word to conduct the command. This is unless there was contextual indication or clarity otherwise.
- the authors of the Four Books have certainty, then others

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