

What is Synonymy and Register Variation?

Worksheet

Synonymy is the relationship between words with similar meanings; register variation is how these synonyms shift across formal, informal, technical, and colloquial contexts — essential for choosing the right word at the right time.

Questions

1. Which word pair shows register variation for 'to eat'?

- A) manger vs. ingérer
- B) manger vs. déguster
- C) se restaurer vs. bouffe
- D) all above

2. 'Je te demande de bien vouloir' is which register?

- A) Familier
- B) Courant
- C) Soutenu
- D) Argot

3. Register is determined by...

- A) Word origin only
- B) Context and audience
- C) Grammar alone
- D) Verb tense

4. 'T'as niqué ton truc' is register:

- A) Soutenu
- B) Courant
- C) Familier
- D) Neutre

5. Provide synonyms for 'peur' (fear) at three registers.

6. Rewrite 'On va manger' in formal register.

7. Identify register: 'T'as vu ce mec?'

8. Define: What is synonymy?

9. Define: What is register variation?

10. Define: Give a synonymy pair for 'fatigue'.

Answer Key

1. D) all above — All are valid: manger (neutral), ingérer (formal/technical), déguster (formal), bouffe (slang).
2. C) Soutenu — Long phrase with 'de bien vouloir' is textbook formal (soutenu).
3. B) Context and audience — Register depends on speaker, listener, setting, and purpose.
4. C) Familier — Contractions, slang, and casual tone mark familier.
5. Formal: appréhension, crainte Neutral: peur Casual: trouille, flippe
6. Neutral: On va manger Formal: Nous allons nous restaurer / Nous prendrons un repas
7. Context: very informal, colloquial Register: Familier Formal version: As-tu vu cet homme? / Avez-vous vu cette personne?
8. The relationship between words with similar meanings, often varying by register, formality, or context.
9. How word choice shifts across formal (soutenu), neutral (courant), and informal (familier) speech.
10. Formal: épuisement; Neutral: fatigue; Informal: crève, cassé.

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