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PAIRED PHRASES: EXPLORING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BINOMIALS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Paired phrases, also known as idiomatic expressions or collocations, are combinations of words that frequently occur together and have a specific meaning. Yes, paired phrases are often referred to as binomials or binomial pairs. The term "binomial" comes from the Latin words "bi" (meaning "two") and "nomen" (meaning "name"). Binomials are expressions made up of two words or terms that are linked together and function as a single unit, often conveying a specific meaning or concept. [1] They are a common feature of many languages and are used to enhance expression, create vivid imagery, or convey nuanced meanings.

The study of binomials, their usage, and their significance in language has been a topic of interest for linguists, researchers, and scholars in the field of linguistics. While there isn't a specific individual credited with researching binomials as a whole, various linguists and researchers have studied different aspects of binomials. One notable linguistic work related to binomials is "Binomials in the History of English: Fixed and Flexible" by Susan Pintzuk and George Tsoulas [2]. This work explores the historical development and syntactic patterns of binomials in the English language. Additionally, studies on idiomatic expressions, collocations, and formulaic language often encompass binomials as a subset. Linguists and researchers such as John Sinclair, and Patrick Hanks [3] have contributed to the study of collocations and formulaic language, which include binomial pairs as a significant part. It's important to note that research on binomials is not limited to one or a few individuals but is an ongoing area of investigation within the broader field of linguistics. Different linguists and researchers have examined binomials from various linguistic perspectives, including syntax, semantics, and language acquisition, among others.

Binomials, or paired phrases, typically appear in language as fixed or conventionalized expressions. They are formed by combining two words or terms that are linked together to create a specific meaning or convey a particular concept.

Binomials can be classified in different ways based on their characteristics and functions. From the point of view of their structure they can be:

Coordinated binomials: These are binomials in which the two elements are joined by a coordinating conjunction like "and" or "or." For example, "salt and pepper," "here and there," or "black or white."

*Well, never mind, you'll certainly be able to run **up and down** these stairs, won't you?* [4]

Adjective-Noun binomials: These binomials consist of an adjective modifying a noun, creating a descriptive phrase. Examples include "hot potato," "open secret," or "happy camper."

*Dressed in rough clothes, with a pair of pistols stuck down his breeches, he told Downing a **hair-rising** story.* [5]

Verb-Adverb binomials: These binomials involve a verb and an adverb that intensify or modify the action. Examples include "run quickly," "work diligently," or "sing loudly."

Preposition-Noun binomials: These binomials consist of a preposition followed by a noun, often expressing a specific relationship or connection. Examples include "by and large," "on and off," or "from time to time."

*All visa applications are adjudicated on a **case-by-case** basis.* [6]

*The **edge-to-edge** upright planks were sealed with wool soaked in tar, as in a hull of a ship, so that rain couldn't enter even in the stormiest weather.* [7]

Antonymous binomials: These binomials consist of two words with opposite meanings, emphasizing a contrast or dichotomy. Examples include "give and take," "black and white," or "pros and cons."

*A **black-and-white** dog sat with them; it, too, was thin.* [7]

Alliterative binomials: These binomials have two words with the same initial sound or consonant, creating a memorable and rhythmic effect. Examples include "safe and sound," "rock and roll," or "fast and furious."

*Mixing with **riff-raff** is definitely out of the question – unless you want to be the subject of the gossip.* [8]

Binomials can be classified from a stylistic perspective based on their impact on language use and style.

Poetic binomials: These are binomials that have a poetic or lyrical quality, often used in poetry or to add a rhythmic and melodic element to language. They may involve alliteration, rhyme, or repetition. Examples include "whispering winds," "moonlit night," or "dancing flame."

*After a **restless night** Maura slept in.* [9]

Figurative binomials: These binomials employ figurative language to evoke imagery and create vivid descriptions. They may involve metaphors, similes, or other figures of speech. Examples include "bitter sweet," "silver lining," or "heart of gold."

*He gave her a smile that would have melted a **heart of stone**.* [8]

Literary binomials: These binomials are frequently used in literature to convey specific meanings or themes. They may be associated with particular genres or periods of literature. Examples include "war and peace," "truth and beauty," or "light and darkness."

*Reluctantly she retraced her steps, determining in her mind that she would fight **tooth and nail** to hold on to her man.* [9]

There are several literary works that prominently feature paired phrases or idiomatic expressions. "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen: The title itself is a paired phrase and reflects the central themes of the novel, exploring the effects of pride and prejudice on the relationships and lives of the characters. "Sense and Sensibility", another novel by Austen, the title contrasts the characters' differing approaches to life—one governed by practicality and reason (sense) and the other by emotions and sensibility. "War and Peace" by Leo Tolstoy. This epic novel examines the contrasting experiences of war and peace, delving into the lives of characters during the Napoleonic Wars and their personal struggles amidst the broader historical backdrop. "Crime and Punishment" by Fyodor Dostoevsky. The novel explores the psychological and moral consequences of a crime committed by the protagonist, as he grapples with guilt and seeks redemption.

Colloquial binomials: These binomials are commonly used in everyday spoken language and have a casual, conversational tone. They reflect regional dialects, idiomatic expressions, or informal speech. Examples include "bits and bobs," "odds

and ends." Binomials can be idiomatic expressions, collocations, or formulaic language that have become established in a language over time. They may carry cultural, historical, or metaphorical connotations and contribute to the richness, expressiveness, and memorability of language use.

*Fight between **town and gown** had been happening in the streets of the city for centuries.* [4]

Jocular binomials: These binomials are used in a playful or humorous manner, often to create wordplay, puns, or comedic effect. They may involve unexpected combinations or juxtapositions. Examples include "rhythm and blues," "huff and puff," or "chit chat."

*The old woman was **grumbling and mumbling**, almost to herself.* [4]

The stylistic choices in using binomials can enhance the tone, mood, and overall impact of the language, adding richness and depth to the style of expression.

Paired phrases are a kind a really interesting and unique linguistic phenomenon, which loses its literal meaning during translation and is perceived as a whole expression, and not as separate parts. Knowledge of phraseological units will ensure a complete understanding of the language and an increase in the level of language proficiency, erudition, communication.

To conclude we can say that binomials often enhance the expressiveness of language. They can add emphasis, create vivid imagery, or convey a specific meaning more effectively than individual words. Binomials are often memorable due to their rhythmic or alliterative qualities. The repetition or combination of sounds can make them easier to remember and recall. Many of them have become established in a language over time and are part of its cultural and linguistic tradition. People use them because they are familiar and widely recognized, helping to convey shared meanings and experiences. Using a paired phrase allows speakers or writers to convey meaning efficiently without the need for lengthy explanations. Binomials are often used in figurative language and idiomatic expressions. They can convey metaphorical meanings, evoke specific connotations, or create a certain tone or mood in communication.

People use paired words because they provide linguistic richness, aid communication, and allow for creative expression. They have become an integral part of language and contribute to its effectiveness, aesthetics. They add color and depth to the language, making it more expressive and nuanced.

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