

Are Synonyms Always Synonymous? A Corpus-assisted Approach to *Announce, Declare, and State*

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Abstract:

The study on (near) synonymous word has been of intriguing topic in the recent decades. Scholars have investigated them from diverse perspectives including but not limited to semantics, grammar, and language teaching. However, few of them examine synonymous verbs. This study endeavors to scrutinize ‘announce’, ‘declare’, and ‘state’ by employing descriptive qualitative approach and British National Corpus as data source. Besides, it also attempts to shed pivotal light the pedagogical implication of corpus linguistics to the teaching of word or vocabulary and meaning in use. Sketch Engine is used as instrument analysis by which collocation and concordance analysis were employed to elucidate word combination and contexts to produce meaning. The findings demonstrate that ‘announce’, ‘declare’, and ‘state’ could not be used rudimentary interchangeably since they carry out (slightly) different meaning depending on collocates word and grammatical pattern. This study also corroborated the notion that corpus linguistics plays significant role in foreign language teaching since it offers authentic materials and contextual clue for language use.

Keywords: *Corpus linguistics, English language teaching, near synonymy, Sketch engine.*

1. Introduction

Mastering foreign language, especially for students, nowadays is an important asset since they have to understand the use of lexical choice in formulating sentences in, for instance, English. Such lexical choice covers selecting synonymous words that are an essential feature to help students use English in either speaking or writing appropriately. However, it is evidence that there are no, if not impossible, absolute synonyms (Edmonds & Hirst, 2002) because they are not entirely interchangeable (Liu & Espino, 2002). Lyon (1968) even emphasized that words which convey exactly the same meaning are extremely rare if they do exist. Instead of synonyms, there are only near-synonyms which refer to words with similar meanings. Using near-synonyms with invariable precision could be a difficult task even for the native speakers (Edmonds & Hirst, 2002) and it becomes more frustrating for EFL students since they don't have the innate capability to choose the utmost correct words. Teachers of EFL or ESL students therefore often teach students about word meanings mostly using dictionary if not depending solely on their vocabulary mastery.

Vocabulary plays a significant role for learners in acquiring a language (Cameron, 2001). It means that for someone to master a new language, they must firstly focus on expanding the ability to store vocabularies as many as possible. Vocabulary drilling, thus, has been mundane activities for EFL students and dictionary has been an inseparable part of it. Teachers would force students to look up word's meaning in dictionary. Dictionary might or might not help the students as its purpose is to provide the meaning without usage example. It is become even more complicated when the time to learn about synonyms arrives as a need for enriching their vocabulary skills but they have not understood how "synonyms" are not interchangeable. Another phenomenon in vocabulary teaching is the provision of academic wordlist formulated by the help of corpus. However, relying on the academic wordlists which only list the words without extensive sample of usage, might lead students into misunderstanding and misinterpretation when using them.

In particular, synonymous verbs are especially very essential in forming sentences. After all, "the verb is very central to the structure of the sentence that no syntactic analysis can proceed without a careful consideration of it" (Palmer, 2014, p.1). Verb carries a fundamental role in a sentence that with the omission of it will result in meaningless phrases. Without a verb, a sentence cannot be formed and will not have any meaning. Different verb conveys different meaning. It is very typical of, in e.g. writers, in avoidance of redundancy to use synonymous verbs. However, synonyms are not interchangeable including synonymous verbs. Hence, it is important to know the nuances of each word.

Until recently, there have been numerous studies investigating near-synonyms of verbs using corpus-based approach. The first corpus-based study on near-synonyms, Hanks (1996), investigates the verbs *urge*, *incite*, *bother*, and, *abandon*. The study focuses on set apart each verb. Since Hanks' study, another study on near-synonyms of verbs in English language, Li (2019), takes the verbs *preserve* and *conserve* as examples to investigate. Unlike Hanks, Li's study concluded a number of

implications of the study's findings in teaching English as a Foreign Language. Both studies show that corpus-based approach is very reliable and objective in distinguishing a set of near-synonyms, in particular verbs. The present study attempts to extend justification on how corpus is very helpful for EFL students to distinguish a set of near synonymous verbs *announce*, *declare*, and *state* employing corpus-based method and Sketch engine as instrument analysis. This study focuses on collocation, concordance, meanings, and grammatical patterns.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Synonym VS Near-Synonym

Synonyms are two or more words that have very closely related meanings and share the same semantic properties (Rowe & Levine 2016). They can be applied to avoid repetition of the same word over and over. Although these words can often be substituted for each other, however, the research of synonymous groups by Walker (2011) such as *run*, *head*, *manage* or *system*, *process*, and *procedure* demonstrate that these words have slight but significant distinction in meaning influenced by collocation and semantic prosody. One word may be appropriate to be used in a sentence, while its synonym would be odd because of the similarity between them is not the "total sameness" (Yule, 2010). In this sense, synonyms are not roundly identical, and that unidentical meaning between synonyms reveal that they are not completely interchangeable (Liu, 2010). Hence, synonyms with no exact meanings and non-absolute similarity are called near-synonymy. Above all, near-synonymy is essentially required to "choose the right word" in any situation of language production (Edmonds & Hirts, 2002).

According to Edmonds & Hirts (2002), near-synonyms are generally divided into four categories that can be differentiated from any aspect of their meanings. First is a denotational category that includes literal, explicit, and context-independent meaning of the word. Second is a stylistic category that examine pair synonym prompted by the dimensions, whether it is convenient in a formal or informal use, including dialect. Third, expressive category convey expression that following the speaker's attitude to denote, like the research of Islamiyah & Fajri (2018) towards three adjectives; *skinny*, *slim* and *thin*. Their paper results demonstrate that these adjectives have different connotation. *Skinny* is often used to reveal negative thing such as reproach. In contrast, *slim* has positive connotation and mostly used as a compliment to express that someone is "attractively thin", for example. On the other hand, *thin* tends to have neutral meaning. The word *daddy* also express stronger speaker's emotions of intimacy than *dad* and *father*. Last, structural category has relation with grammatical matters, including collocation and syntax.

2.2 Corpus Linguistics for ELT

Corpus in language sciences refers to a body of written text or transcribed speech which can serve as a basis for linguistic analysis and description as stated by Kennedy (2014). Nowadays, there are many understandings of the term corpus linguistics which is still being debated by linguists. Many scholars believe that corpus linguistics is a method of how to apply corpora in language studies, but

others still questioning, whether corpus linguistics is just a method or also as a theoretical framework. Nevertheless, according to Flowerdew (2012), leading corpus linguists agreed that a corpus is a collection of authentic languages, either spoken or written, which have been compiled for a particular purpose. In the 1990s, corpus linguistics has marked an important milestone in the attempt of making corpus works a new mainstream discipline within Language Science (Leon, 2005). Besides, corpora have been recently used in pedagogic and linguistics areas such as translation and discourse studies. As Leon (2005) notes, "what is called 'Corpus Linguistics' covers various heterogeneous fields ranging from lexicography, descriptive linguistics, applied linguistics - language teaching or Natural Language Processing - to domains where corpora are needed because introspection cannot be used, such as studies of language variations, dialects, registers and styles, or magnetic studies" (2005: 36).

There are lot of scholars who used corpora in English Teaching and Learning because corpora have been extremely influential in informing various aspects of pedagogy over the last few years (Flowerdew, 2012). For instance, Islamiyah & Fajri (2019), use corpus-based study of synonym adjectives of *Skinny*, *Slim*, and *Thin* to show differences in expressive meaning, usage, and syntactical pattern. As a result, the study has demonstrated the significance and effectiveness of a corpus-based study in analyzing synonymous adjectives (Islamiyah & Fajri, 2019). Cheng (2010), also examines that Corpora, corpus-analytic tools and corpus evidence have been increasingly used in English language teaching and learning for the last two decades.

Actually, there are two types of pedagogical corpus application, those are as indirect and direct. According to Flowerdew (2012), indirect corpus application is to inform reference materials and to inform the teaching syllabus and ELT materials. Whereas direct corpus application is for learners and teachers. Indeed, there are several advantages that we can take from applying corpora in ELT. For instances, corpus has helped in the development and critical evaluation of pedagogic skills among student teachers. The development of computerized corpus analysis has made the job of compiling word-frequency statistics far easier than it once was, and has given impetus to a new wave of pedagogically oriented research (Jones & Durrant, 2010).

3. Methodology

This study is descriptive-qualitative since it carries out thorough description of the data presentation and analysis, and does not regard number or statistics as an entry point of the analysis. This study investigates a set of near synonym verbs *declare*, *state*, and *announce* taken from Oxford Mini Thesaurus in which they are listed as synonyms. The thesaurus book, however, does not offer detailed explanation about when and how we should use each verb. Synonyms are not interchangeable and the lack of explanation could cause users, in this case, EFL students who have not understood about corpus method, to potentially use each word randomly and inappropriately. Besides their relations as synonyms, *announce*, *declare*, and *state* are also on the top 1000 list of most common verbs in English according to WordExample.com.

These verbs are retrieved from British National Corpus (henceforth, BNC) which refers to a 100-million words collection of samples of written and spoken language deriving from a wide range of sources (e.g. academic books, magazine, newspaper, periodicals, and transcriptions of conversations), from 1980s to early 1990s (Hu & Yang, 2015). BNC is chosen because of its comprehensiveness, useful user-friendly search functions, and easy access. This corpus is later equipped by Sketch Engine (henceforth, SkE) to process the data accordingly. Sketch Engine is a leading corpus tool, largely used in lexicography, language teaching, and other study areas (Kilgarriff et al., 2004) that has a number of main functions such as Word Sketch, Thesaurus, and Concordance. To confirm that *announce*, *declare*, and *state* are indeed synonymous words, we use the Thesaurus functions and Word Sketch to gain the collocations of each word, and concordance that allows us to see how and when each word is used.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Frequency and Collocation Analysis

The meticulous computation performed in SkE illustrated that *announce*, *declare* and *state* clearly have different occurrence and frequency. *Announce* is the most frequently used as illustrated in Table 1. It is nearly 40% higher than *state* and exactly 50% higher than *declare*. On the other hand, *declare* and *state* are moderately the same.

Table 1. Frequency of *announce*, *declare* and *state*

Word	Frequency
Announce	12532
Declare	6288
State	7777

The frequency discrepancy on those verbs might indicate dominant and less-dominant use or appearance in the corpus which later could be helpful in elucidating meaning and usage. Such description of word frequency is followed by the collocation and concordance analysis as illustrated in Table 2 - Table 10 to support the data. *Frequency* shows how often the word collocated with *announce*, *declare* and *state* whereas the *score* is indicating how strong the collocation is. The higher the score, the stronger the collocation. A low score means that the words in the collocation also frequently combine with many other words.

4.1.1 Adverb, Subject, and Object Collocation of *Announce*

Firstly, *announce* mostly goes together with the adverbs that indicate time and manners. As the data shown in Table 2, the adverbs can be categorized into adverbs of time (*shortly*, *recently*, *previously*, *yesterday* and *subsequently*) and adverbs of manners (*proudly*, *officially*, *formally*, *publicly* and *duly*). These two adverb categories are the most often collocate with *announce* as pre-modifier. Nevertheless, that is not a rare thing if the adverbs lie as post-modifier.

Table 2. Top 10 collocates adverbs of *announce*

Announce		
Word	Freq	Score
Shortly	33	8.6
Proudly	23	8.58
Officially	39	8.46
Formally	42	8.4
Recently	120	8.27
publicly	27	8.15
duly	20	7.89
previously	44	7.37
yesterday	12	7.31
subsequently	20	6.98

Objects that mostly come with *announce* explain the higher frequency of subjects' aim or choice such as *intention*, *plan* and *decision*. It shows that *announce* is not basically used to directly and unconsciously tell something toward people without any purpose or any plan. In addition, *announce* also frequently collocated with the objects that related to the domain of employment or something which have formal sense like *resignation*, *retirement*, and *appointment*. It indicates that this verb is often used to intentionally inform people about something, especially in formal way.

Table 3. Top 10 collocates objects of *announce*

Announce		
Word	Freq	Score
intention	191	9.55
plan	288	9.49
yesterday	214	9.12
resignation	90	8.83
formation	71	8.43
appointment	70	8.23
retirement	58	8.22
decision	115	7.95
week	94	7.84
measure	70	7.83

In the part of collocation with subjects, Table 4 shows that the word *government* has the highest collocation frequency and score of *announce*. Besides, the other subjects such *ministry*, *corp* and *bush* strongly indicate that this word is often used by an institution, people who have authority or hold a high position in government or the government itself. Furthermore, these subjects can either be animate (*secretary*, *Lamont*, *Klerk*) or inanimate (*yesterday*, *week*, *Inc*).

This result has demonstrated that syntagmatic relation of *announce* often takes institutional “body” which brings different spectrum of semantic meaning (Huang & Tsai, 1997). To Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), this typical feature of lexical choice in which *announce* would collocate might be similar to that of *agent* concept. Thus, the *government* or *corps*, for instance that takes subject position of *announce* would be best interpreted as to bring authoritative meaning (see table 4).

Table 4. Top 10 collocates subjects of *announce*

Announce		
Word	Freq	Score
government	418	8.93
yesterday	102	8.75
ministry	59	8.22
week	65	7.94
bush	51	7.93
inc	44	7.52
corp	41	7.5
secretary	37	7.37
lamont	30	7.37
klerk	28	7.34

4.1.2 Adverb, Subject, and Object Collocation of *Declare*

In Table 5, modifiers of *declare* are all in the form of adverbs. We can classify all these adverbs into adverbs of manner including *unilaterally*, *hereby*, *openly*, *publicly*, *formally*, *roundly*, *etc.* Adverbs of manner tell the way or how something is done and modified the verbs. Taking Huddleston and Pullum’s (2002) idea, this typical adverb often appear after verb and could be modified by another adverb showing ‘degree’. We further check the concordance of each modifier and find that *unilaterally*, *hereby*, *formally*, and *promptly* precedes the verb *declare* in a sentence, thus, they are categorized as pre-verbal modifier. Meanwhile, *openly*, *publicly*, *roundly*, *solemnly*, *officially*, and *proudly* can either precede or follow the verb *declare* in a sentence. Thus, they are categorized as both pre-verbal modifier and post-verbal modifier.

Table 5. Top 10 collocates adverbs of *declare*

Declare		
Word	Freq	Score
Unilaterally	11	8.57
Hereby	12	8.5
Openly	19	8.35
Publicly	23	8.27
Formally	25	7.92
Roundly	6	7.73
Solemnly	5	7.34
Promptly	8	7.29
officially	14	7.29
proudly	6	7.26

As shown from Table 6, words that collocate with *declare* as object are all abstract nouns. *War*, *independence*, *republic*, *truce* are words related countries or nations. *Intention* and *aim* mean desired things to do or to happen. *Dividend* here is a term used in a company or business setting. *Zone* is a spatial term used for either military territory or protected areas. *Candidacy* is a political term. All words are definitely used for formal setting.

Table 6. Top 10 collocates objects of *declare*

Declare		
Word	Freq	Score
war	194	10.03
intention	87	9.13
independence	49	8.71
emergency	30	8.42
dividend	34	8.33
aim	32	7.98
republic	22	7.83
truce	17	7.67
zone	19	7.54
candidacy	14	7.45

A number of words that collocate with *declare* as subjects are difficult to define without the context. We looked up for concordance lines of some words to help understanding them. *Soviet* here refers to the Supreme Soviet, *Gorbachev* refers to the first President of Soviet Union, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, *Bush* refers the 43rd president of the United State, George W. Bush, and *Kohl* refers to a former Chancellor of Germany, Helmut Kohl. Thus, subjects of *declare* can be people of a great significant position in government such as President or Chancellor. *Republic* is term refers to a group of people forming a state. *Delegate* and *assembly* are political

terms. *Order* as in court order is a term used in a trial setting. All words have a formal degree. It turns out that either animate nouns (e.g. a person's name) or inanimate nouns (e.g. resolution, statement, and order) can be a subject of *declare*.

Table 7. Top 10 collocates subjects of *declare*

Declare		
Word	Freq	Score
Soviet	12	7.39
resolution	13	7.26
Gorbachev	11	7.05
Republic	11	7
Bush	12	6.85
Kohl	7	6.71
statement	12	6.43
delegate	6	6.24
assembly	7	6.22
Order	12	6.19

4.1.3 Adverb, Subject, and Object Collocation of *State*

The word *state* is frequently collocated with nouns and verbs since it is a verb. Albeit, adverbs also collocate with *state* as pre-modifier (e.g. *clearly*, *wrongly*) and few of them as post-modifier (e.g. *positively*, *quietly*). Besides, the adverbs which describe *state* can be categorized into adverb of manners such as *Explicitly*, *Categorically*, *Expressly*, and *bluntly* adverb of degree like *specifically*, *categorically*, and *publicly*.

Table 8. Top 10 collocates adverbs of *State*

State		
Word	Freq	Score
Explicitly	90	9.83
Categorically	37	9.18
Expressly	42	9.03
Clearly	201	8.82
Otherwise	80	8.74
Publicly	35	8.32
bluntly	15	7.83
specifically	35	7.79
Openly	19	7.66
unequivocally	13	7.64

The second discussion is collocation with objects. The table below illustrates that *fact* is mostly used with *state*. It shows that the objects of *state* are usually kind of factual information. On the other hand, there are *preference*, *intention*, *objective* and

purpose whose demonstrate the objects of *state*. Furthermore, the words *reason*, *case* and *opinion* related to people’s view, while the objects *principle* and *belief* can be a guide of life. In the objects of *state*, most of them tend to occur in abstract terms such as *principle*, *belief*, *intention*, *objective*, and *preference*, then the remains are concrete terms.

Table 9. Top 10 collocates objects of *state*

State		
Word	Freq	Score
Fact	130	8.93
Preference	22	8.04
Intention	30	7.83
Reason	57	7.4
Objective	21	7.37
Principle	28	7.37
Case	69	7.06
Purpose	15	6.88
Belief	14	6.88
Opinion	15	6.79

The table illustrates that frequent collocation subject with *state* is *report*. It can be observed that the subjects of *state* can be something formally in written or spoken such as *report*, *document*, and *letter*, or an official announcement such as *notice*, *declaration*, and *communique*. For *Bush*, *Lj*, and *member* are related to someone in law or people of institution. Last, *conditional* mostly used after the word *state* like “*Certain facts stated by the latter conditionals,..*” which is quite different with another frequently collocate subjects of *state*. It denotes that *state* rely in a requirement. Those all subjects are concrete terms because it can be physically seen or heard.

Table 10. Top 10 collocates subjects of *state*

State		
Word	Freq	Score
Report	90	7.81
Notice	19	7.55
Document	22	7.31
Declaration	13	7.26
Letter	27	7.23
Bush	17	7.18
Conditional	9	6.92
Communique	9	6.88
Lj	9	6.86
Member	36	6.83

4.2 Dimensions of Meaning around *announce*, *declare*, and *state*

The wide range of different collocation of near synonymous adjective *announce*, *declare*, and *state* supports the notion that they synonymous word are not always interchangeable (Islamiyah & Fajri, 2019). Moreover, they have subtle different semantic meaning that non-native English speakers should be aware of. We further make use of Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary (2008) to demonstrate the semantic meaning. First, *announce* means to make something known publicly according to the dictionary. Drawing upon the collocation items of this verb, it is used to make the public know about personal intentions (such as intention and plan), and/or final settlement (such as decision and resignation). Besides, as shown in Table 11, *announce* can be used to introduce people’s name and officially tell people about something like engagement. In extent, *announce* also generally used to give information in public place such as airport and railway station through a loudspeaker, whereas that is non sense to use *declare* or *state*.

Table. 11 Selected concordances of *announce*

Guatemala's Minister of Energy and Mines	has announced	a <i>plan</i> to set up a series of solar generating stations
Please	announce	<i>me</i> to Mr. Rabaq
A couple may begin living together or formally	announce	their <i>engagement</i>

As clearly seen in the table above, the word *announce* tend to carry out assertive utterance (Kreidler, 1998) since it focuses on information giving. According Bergler (1991), moreover, the semantic field of *announce* has high ‘strength of complement’ (p. 8) and thus often has specific context, for instance, level of formality and specific audience. The present result thus corroborates the earlier finding which stated that near synonymous words are always substitutable.

In addition to the semantic feature of *announce*, the word *declare* in this observation means to say something officially or ‘formally’. *Declare a war on/against* can literally mean to start a battle against an opponent. The phrase can also mean to eradicate something harmful, in this case golf course as what environmentalists believe as a threat to the environment. *Declare war on/against* has become a fixed expression and word *declare* in the phrase can’t be substituted with its near synonyms, *announce* and *state*. To *declare* a war that is presented by the agent, for instance, *government*, country official, the president, could exploit the serious intention and degree of ‘formality’. The recipient, therefore, would interpret it as facing a severe condition where war could possibly happen. In contrast to *announce*, whenever used in the similar position, to *announce a war* thus means to inform readers that the agent in this case aims to *make a war* with somebody/countries. The meaning seems to be less “serious” and could be presupposed as to have a kind of *psywar*. Unlike Bergler’s (1993) observation to *announce* and *declare*, the undergoing examination to these words do not seem equivalent. Nonetheless, it does agree that both could be used in formal context (cf. Bergler, 1991; 1993).

In regard with the function, *declare* is used to make known a serious matter such as *independence* and *an emergency*. Especially, the phrase ‘*declare one’s independence*’ is permanent and *declare* here cannot be substituted with another word as substitution will result in changing the sense. Moreover, *declare* has also manifested into an idiomatic expression, ‘*declare an interest*’ which translates into telling people that you are connected with something that is being discussed. The expression is also fixed and the word *declare* cannot be replaced.

Table. 12 Selected concordances of *declare*

Finland joined forces with Nazi Germany and	declared	war on Russia.
the Crimean Supreme Soviet	declared	the Crimea's independence from Ukraine
The Presidium of the Kirghiz Supreme Soviet immediately	declared	a state of emergency
Chairman, I wish to	declare	an interest on the social services
Councillor Collinson (the applicant)	declared	an interest and left the meeting.
Environmentalists have	declared	war on the golf course.
Chairman, I wish to	declare	an interest on the social services
Councillor Collinson (the applicant)	declared	an interest and left the meeting.
Leeds manager Howard Wilkinson has already	declared	an interest in him after he spent a week training at Elland Road.

Such semantic feature of *declare* and *announce* might be best illustrated through the object collocation like *war* in the example. In this case, the sentence “Finland join force with Nazi *declare war* on Russia” carries out semantic association of reporting verb. On the other ward, it means that they are, Finland and Nazi declare that their army are at the state of war. To substitute *declare* with *announce* for instance, will bring idea that they are not in the time of war against Russia but intend to do so soon in the future.

Third, *state* means to formally write or say something, especially clearly and fully. According to scrutiny of random concordance lines of each item, *state* is frequently used when speakers want to convey something truth. The truth can be proven by data, research, or news report. As shown on the table, *state* collocates with ‘subject’ such as *report*, *voters (in law context)*, and *institution*. Hence, it means that *state* used in formal contexts like other two words observed here. This evidence also can be proven by indicate the whole meaning of the context of each item. For example on the third row, which is the keywords show that this sentence is in formal context are *sovereignty* and *legitimacy*.

Table. 13 Selected concordances of *state*

The report	states	that <i>about 45% of ancient woodlands have been destroyed</i> or seriously damaged,
Last year's Segni Law means that voters will	state	a single <i>preference</i> for a named candidate on the ballot paper
Democratic constitutions universally	state	the <i>principle</i> of popular sovereignty

The observation to the word *state* in the present study is closely affiliated with that of Bergler’s (1993) claim that it could be used in formal context. However, the word *state* has different degree of strength that *announce* or *declare* but is higher than *say*. She further argues *state* could express meaning to be known by public. Thus, the first example in table 13 might be understood as to ‘inform’ so that stakeholders what happened.

4.3 Grammatical Patterns

The differences of *announce*, *declare* and *state* can be analyzed through grammatical patterns. As Gu (2017) said that in *Sketch Engine*, BNC (British national Corpus) is one of the sub-corpora and *Sketch Diff* function that offers collocation difference and also gives more explanation how to use each word in a proper grammatical pattern by utilizing concordance lines. The details analysis will be given as followings.

4.3.1 *Announce* (vt.) make sth known publicly (Oxford Dictionary, 2008, p. 15).

Table. 14 Selected concordances of *announce*

1.	The USA and the UK	announce	that naval vessels are being sent to the Gulf
2.	It was then	announced	from Cairo that all countries would be repr
3.	Japan	announces	it will provide US \$1,000 million to assist the multi
4.	France	announces	water restrictions
5.	Magic Carpet Travel	announce	with pride the opening of an entirely new sunshine holiday area
6.	British Columbia has	announced	plans to allow logging to continue in the ancient temperate r
7.	es industry executives saying that the trio plan to	announce	by the end of the month that th
8.	Please	announce	me to Mr. Rabaq
9.	Plans to create the UK's largest nature reserve have been	announced	by Environment Secretary Michael Heseltine.
10.	Nirex, the UK nuclear industry's waste disposal company, has	announced	its plans for the storage of Britain's nuclear waste in an underground repository near Sellafield in Cumbria.

Possible patterns of *Announce*

a. announce + sth	as in	4
b. announce + that + clause	as in	1
c. announce + from + sth	as in	2
d. announce + S + V	as in	3
e. announce + with	as in	5
f. announce + sth + V.inf + sth	as in	6
g. announce + sb + V.inf + sb	as in	8
h. announce + sth + for + sth	as in	10
i. announce + by + sb	as in	7
j. announce + by + sth	as in	9

The analysis above show that *announce* can lie in the various grammatical patterns. Patterns a, f and h (**announce + sth + ...**) present that *announce* is mostly followed by sth (something), means that it is a transitive verb which needs object. Furthermore, *announce* can be followed by that-clause, prepositions (*from, with, by*), and also sb (somebody) as the selected concordances no. 1, 2 and 8. It also can occasionally occur in the active and passive sentences as in selected concordances no. 3 and 9. However, *announce* which directly followed by *for* and to-infinitive was not discovered from the concordance lines.

4.3.2 *Declare* (vt.) say something officially or publicly (Oxford Dictionary, 2008, p. 114)

Table. 15 Selected concordances of *declare*

11.	The government has	declared	a state of emergency
12.	France	declared	war on Prussia and Austria.
13.	Arthur	declared	that if necessary he would defend his water by force of arms.
14.	The city will	declare	a neighborhood clean-up week
15.	the American colonies had	declared	their independence in 1776
16.	The family doctor had	declared	his client unfit
17.	The committee	declared	that it was "unfair" for western environmentalists to blame ASEAN countries for global problems.
18.	We therefore	declare	that nations begin to consider the development of scientifically based national non-communicable disease plans.
19.	Monro, who did not even bother to land on the peninsula,	declared	for evacuation.
20.	Environmentalists	declared	themselves disappointed (at the outcome of the meeting)

Possible Patterns of Declare

- a. declare + sth as in 11, 14
- b. declare + sth + prep. (on, in) as in 12, 15
- c. declare + sth + adj. as in 16
- d. declare + that + S + V as in 17, 18
- e. declare + that + if clause as in 13
- f. declare + for + sth as in 19
- g. declare + reflexive pronoun + adj. as in 20

Declare is a transitive verb which means that an object must follow after the verb as shown in concordance lines no. 11 and 14. Thus, pattern **declare + sth** is formulated accordingly. Prepositions can follow after declare + sth pattern and form a new pattern, **declare + sth + preposition**. However, this pattern is not absolute and a preposition is optional depending on the writers' need. We also would like to highlight that different nouns are followed by a different preposition. For example, *war* is mostly followed by *on/against* and *independence* is usually followed by *in* if the writer wants to give additional information about the time. *Declare* in a sentence can also be a complex transitive verb as shown by concordance lines no. 16 and 20. Thus, the pattern **declare + sth + adj.** and **declare + reflexive pronoun + adj.** are formulated. Moreover, subordinate that-clause can follow after *declare*, thus, the pattern **declare + that + S + V** and **declare + that + if clause** are created.

4.3.3 State (*vt*) *formally write or say something, especially clearly and fully.* (Oxford Dictionary, 2008, p. 434).

Table. 16 Selected concordances of *state*

21.	the signatory	states	to remove the need for restrictions on the free flow of data
22.	because it has actually	stated	we have employed an Environmental Officer.
23.	rules of logical deduction can be	stated	which will apply to an indefinitely large set of propositions
24.	Bellator President Scott Coker	stated	the winner of Thompson vs. Lashley could be in line
25.	as well as its supporters	state	wrongly personals out your Judaism point out.
26.	The contract will	state	whether they have both or not.
27.	The parties should then	state	that these documents constitute the entire agreement
28.	'You had me fooled ten minutes ago,' he	stated	with deadly calm.
29.	that voters will	state	a single preference for a name candidate on the ballot paper
30.	The principle was	stated	by Lord Blackburn in Livingstone v Rawyards Coal Company

Possible patterns of State

a. state + to-V.inf	as in	21
b. state + S + V	as in	22,24
c. state + which + V + to-V.inf	as in	23
d. state + adverb + sb	as in	25
e. state + wheter + S + V	as in	26
f. state + that + S + V	as in	27
g. state + with + adverb + sth	as in	28
h. state + sth + for + sth	as in	29
i. state + by + sb	as in	30

In terms of its grammatical patterns, it can be seen that *state* have several different patterns. It can be followed by subject, to-infinitive, that-clause, conjunction (*e.g. whether*) and preposition (*e.g. with*). *State* usually needs an object which means that it is a transitive verb. Concordance line no. 29 shows that a direct object follows right after *state*, thus, pattern **state + sth + for + sth** is made. In addition, *State* is commonly used in reported speech as shown by concordance lines no. 22, no. 24, no. 27, and no. 28, although, the word *that* is not always necessary. Reported speech usage then clustered into pattern **b, f, and g**. Moreover, *state* can also be used in a passive sentence as shown in no. 23 and 30.

4.3.4 Announce, declare and state patterns

Table 17. Differences patterns between *announce*, *declare* and *state*

Patterns	Announce	Declare	State
verb + sth	v	v	v
verb + that + S + V	v	v	v
verb + from + sth	v	-	-
verb + S + V	v	-	v
verb + with	v	-	-
verb + sth + V.inf + sth	v	-	-
verb + for + sth	-	v	-
verb + sth + for + sth	v	-	v
verb + by + sb	v	-	v
verb + by + sth	v	-	-
verb + sth + prep.	-	v	-
verb + sth + adj.	-	v	-
verb + that + if clause	-	v	-
verb + reflexive pronoun + adj.	-	v	-
verb + to-V.inf	-	-	v
verb + which + V + to-V.inf	-	-	v
verb + adverb + sb	-	-	v
verb + whether + S + V	-	-	v
verb + with + adverb + sth	-	-	v

The comparison table above illustrates that *announce*, *declare*, and *state* have similarities and differences in their grammatical patterns. First similar pattern of the three words are **verb + sth** and which indicates that the three of them are all transitive verb and takes direct object. Second same pattern is **verb + that + S + V**. The rest are the differences. Pattern **verb + from + sth** is only owned by *announce*, if the verb substituted with *declare* and *state*, it would be ungrammatical. Commonly, *state* is followed by *for* if it has a function as *noun*, like in sentence '*He's the Secretary of **State** for Energy or Minister for Energy*'. In addition, note that some other patterns probably exist in a larger corpus. In particular, *declare* is the only one who takes pattern **verb + sth + adj**, which indicates *declare* is a complex transitive verb.

4.4 Corpus linguistics for the teaching of near synonymy in ELT context

Corpus-based approaches to ELT (English Learning and Teaching) provides learners with abundant advantages. Our study on near-synonym, *announce*, *declare*, and *state* confirms that they are not interchangeable thus teaching students to use them merely from dictionary is not sufficient. Besides, students also should understand their collocation, dimension of meaning, and grammatical pattern to be able to use them appropriately in either speaking or writing. The pedagogical implication of corpus linguistics to English Language Teaching is of evidence proof towards the need to the update and upgrade the teaching and learning method in the classroom. By using corpora, learners can not only enhance linguistic skills of speaking and listening, but reading and writing as well. Furthermore, a research conducted on Chinese and American students proved that when using corpus-based approach, students get an increased critical understanding of grammar, which makes learning more interesting and effective (Liu & Jiang, 2009).

Walker (2011) substantiated the efficiency of using corpora. In the first case study is explained that a senior German manager, Doctor T, takes 40 hours of one-to-one training with an experienced English teacher. Doctor T wants to prepare his presentation to the native speaker workforce. Because of Doctor T has a high standard in English, he got confused to choose the appropriate word of *run*, *manage*, or *head* to introduce himself as the manager of Human Resources Division. He asked to his teacher and to explain those things, the teacher uses corpus-based approach to see the most relevant word that can relate to management style. According to the data of corpora, the most appropriate one is *manage*. Hence, the teacher should suggest to him to use utterances such as *I manage the Human Resources Division* and avoid phrases like *I run the Human Resources Division*. From this case, it can be proven that corpus can increase or make him more understand to use the exact vocabulary in his interests in English.

Despite its capability to provides complex data, not all of the level learners can well-understood how to use corpora in a proper way. This statement is strengthened by Islamiyah & Fajri (2019) who said that English learners whose English proficiency in average might feel overwhelmed to absorb all the information which is given by the corpora. However, since the traditional way of teaching by using dictionary is limited to expound near synonyms, the presence of corpora will help students to find

out not only near synonyms, but also the grammatical patterns and collocations. Nevertheless, it should be underlined that only appropriate materials that can use by the intermediate students as mentioned before, also the English student's level and purpose of English learning should be considered in organizing corresponding classroom activities (Gu, 2017). Therefore, before students study corpora, they should educate and train properly in order to boost their skills and knowledge in using corpora effectively (Zahra & Abbas, 2018).

In similar vein, the teachers also can use corpora to do a research in near synonyms. Hence, they can explain thoroughly in detail to their students. Besides that, corpus-based approach can be used in linguistics research which discuss more complex study such as *syntax, semantic, pragmatics* and other *macro linguistics*. Corpus-based approach gives frequently used lexical items, which are interpreted in various contexts. It is demonstrated relevant uses of phrasal verbs, idioms, synonyms and antonyms and meanings (Zahra & Abbas, 2018).

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study investigating a set of near synonyms *announce, declare, and state* confirmed that these verbs are somewhat different in terms of meaning's nuance and grammatical pattern. The study also has proven the reliability of corpus-assisted study to learn about words' meaning and usage in text. We hope that teacher can implement corpus in teaching vocabulary in class. Students' independence of operating and utilizing a corpus tool like Sketch Engines is preferable.

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