

## Challenges in teaching the nominal substitute „same“ and its Bulgarian projections

Snejana Obeyd\*

**Abstract:** *The paper deals with the challenges that can be encountered in the English learning classroom in terms of the application of the language resource of substitution. Here our focus is only on the use of the nominal substitute “the same”. The latter presupposes an entire nominal group including any modifying element. The item discussed is presented by examples which are translated into Bulgarian and analyzed in terms of the projected items that appear in place of “the same”. In Bulgarian it is commonly illustrated by pronominalization and sometimes by synonymization which might be challenging for English language learners.*

**Key words:** *substitution, nominal substitute, pronominal items, presupposition, projection*

### Introduction

Substitution is a mechanism for making a text stick together. As a cohesive device, it is a matter of economical expression without disturbing the meaning of the text. It is a lexicogrammatical relation in the “wording” rather than directly in the meaning. The substitute is a place-holding device signalling that the interpretation depends on verbally explicit information. Structurally, substitution is operative at three levels: nominal, verbal and clausal. My primary concern in this article is to characterize the nominal substitute *the same* and mainly to provide concrete examples and its Bulgarian projections. I attempt to investigate and thus help learners and teachers of English clarify the means and mechanisms through which the substitute item *the same* is translated. By illustrating and analyzing its basic nature and generally the text-forming agency of substitution, learners would become aware of many challenges they encounter when learning a foreign language.

### Analysis & Discussion

*The same* presupposes an entire nominal group including any modifying element. It is almost always stressed except in cases in which it is rejected in favour of some contrast. The information that is given by the use of this item in the context is new, but the item itself has occurred before.

The substitute *the same* appears in the expression *say the same*, which is one of

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\* University of Shumen, Department of English Studies, Shumen, Bulgaria

the typical environments for this substitute to stand for a clause. Thus, it gives the presupposed clause the rank of a fact, as in:

[1] “Been taking VWs apart from years. Every damn time it’s the same – quality good as ever.” Brett nodded in agreement. “Wish we could say the same of ours.” (Hailey 1971:277)

In this example, the first occurrence of *the same* functions as an epithet with the meaning ‘not different, unchanged’, and contributes nothing to cohesion. *The same* in the expression *say the same* stands for the whole preceding sentence (*that*) *every damn time it’s the same – quality good as ever*. Though the presupposition includes the whole sentence, the information is encoded as new, with the prepositional object *of ours* providing the required contrast.

Here are the translated equivalents to this sample:

[1a] – Години наред разглобявам фолксвагени – въздъхна тежко механика. – И дявол да го вземе, качеството им е винаги на висота.

Брет кимна в знак на съгласие.

– Бих искал да кажем същото и за нашите коли.

[1b]\* – Бих искал това да го кажем и за нашите коли.

[1c] – Бих искал да кажем същото нещо и за нашите.

[1a] is rendered by means of pronominalization with ellipsis of the substantivized element. According to Dobрева, *същото* is a pronominal item having an adjectival nature and it is the only pronoun within the Bulgarian pronominal system that cannot be substantivized (personal discussion with E. Dobрева). Thus, it occupies the position usually taken by determiners, which indicates its defining value. Since it is used alone, the construction is considered elliptical. Hence, *същото* functions as an identifier signalling identity of form with the presupposed clause, but difference of reference. The broad scope of reference of this item extends beyond nominal phrases to a clause, sentence, or larger stretches of text. In this example, *същото* stands for the whole of the previous statement, thus expressing it in a condensed way. Since the construction is elliptical, *същото* is supposed to be assigned to a noun having a generalized reference, which out of context has an abstract meaning, but in a particular text it acquires a concrete meaning. [1c] exemplifies the case. The nominal expression *същото нещо* contains the substantivized indefinite pronoun *нещо*, which gains a definite meaning on account of its text-dependent nature. In this case, *същото нещо* appears to be a pronominal phrase that stands for the clause (*че*) *качеството им е винаги на висота*. Hence, the operative text-forming mechanism could be regarded as pronominalization.

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\* Translation equivalents [b] and [c] provided by the author.

[1b] is an interesting case of pronominalization, typical for some Balkan languages. That concerns the duplication of an object, expressed, in this example, by means of two pronouns: the demonstrative *това* and the short form of the objective personal pronoun *го*. As far as the actual distribution of a text into Theme-Rheme informational units, we can place such a case in the position of the Theme (see Nitsolova 1986: 55). The relation between the two pronouns is of co-reference and they both serve as indicators that reference should be made to the preceding text. In this case, the replacement of some of the pronouns with the previous clause is impossible. As an anaphoric item *това* generalizes the information of the preceding clause presenting it in a synthesized way.

Frequently used expressions that ascribe the status of fact to *the same* are: *The same is true of ...*, *The same goes for...*, *The same applies to...*, in which *the same* functions as subject of the clause. There are two such cases in the analyzed examples.

[2] Here, too, eye and nose irritation were constant and Brett remembered a recent U. S. Public Health warning, that breathing New York's polluted air was equal to smoking a pack of cigarettes a day. He presumed *the same* was true of Los Angeles, perhaps even more so. (Hailey 1971: 346-7)

*The same* in this example replaces the clause (*that*) *breathing the polluted air was equal to smoking a pack of cigarettes a day*, with the genitive locative *New York's* ousted by *of Los Angeles*.

The corresponding Bulgarian translations are:

[2a] Тук също се усещаше щипане в носа и очите и Брет си спомни едно от предупрежденията на Американската здравна организация, в което се сочеше, че дишането на замърсения нийоркски въздух се равнява на изпушването на пакет цигари дневно. Без съмнение в Лос Анжелис това важеше с много голяма сила.

[2b] Според него това съотношение важеше с още по-голяма сила и за Лос Анжелис.

[2c] Предположи, че същото важи и за Лос Анжелис, но вероятно с по-голяма сила.

[2a] is organized by pronominalization: the demonstrative *това* serves as anaphoric deictic (pointer) to the information necessary for decoding the sentence. Due to the lack of grammatical as well as semantic restrictions, this pronoun can be characterized with the broadest possible scope of usage (see Nitsolova 1986: 116). Since it has 'jumped out' of its grammatical paradigm (lack of gender), semantically it could carry the contents of any lexical item, clause, or section of the text.

[2b] illustrates nominalization. The demonstrative pronoun *това* has an attributive function, and thus it appears as an identifier of the noun *съотношение* as the item that refers to the preceding clause, which in turn, presents the

information to which it refers in a summarizing way. Such generalizing nouns allow for subjective or objective views towards the referred part of text to be expressed in a compressed way. In this instance, the demonstrative is a 'strengthening' equivalent of the definite article for it also carries the meaning of definiteness (see Nitsolova 1986: 113). The weaker the semantic link between the two designations, the stronger the necessity of a demonstrative to determine the reference.

In [2c] the pronominal adjective *същото* could be seen as a direct substitute of the previous clause. In spite of this, the mechanism realizing the textual relation could not be considered simply as pronominalization. This is explained on the grounds of the impossibility of substantivization of this item. Hence, it is appropriate to classify it as pronominalization with a following ellipsis of the head element, on account of the pronominal nature of this item.

The second example that provides for *the same* the appropriate setting to stand for a fact is the following:

[3] "Okay, we help somebody like these two kids, but as soon as we do, we expect them to have all our middle-class values. Which it took us years of living our way to acquire. *The same goes for money.*" (Hailey 1971: 293)

*The same* substitutes for the clause (*that*) *it took us years of living our way to acquire, with middle class values*, left outside the parameter of substitution, rejected by *money*. *The same goes for ...* is one of the most common expressions, making it explicit that *the same* treats the clause that it stands for as a fact.

This use of *the same* can be projected onto Bulgarian in several ways:

[3a] Добре – залавяме се да помогнем на някого, както помогнахме на тези две хлапета. И какво? Очакваме, че те моментално ще възприемат всичките онези дребнобуржоазни ценности, които ние придобиваме след дълги години живот по собствените си норми. Същото е и с парите.

[3b] Добре, помагаме на някого като на тези две деца и скоро след това очакваме от тях да притежават всички ценности на средната класа които ние сме придобили след години живот по един и същи начин. Това се отнася и за парите.

[3c] Такова е положението и с парите.

In [3a] the mechanism used for translating *the same* is pronominalization (see the discussion of [2c]). In this case, *същото* resembles the pronominal adverb *така*, both having an anaphoric function.

[3b] is realized by pronominalization. The demonstrative *това* is the subject of the sentence, which is a result of substantivization (Nitsolova 1986: 116).

In [3c] the demonstrative *такова* has the structural function of a predicative and semantically modifies the subject *положението*. Its role, beyond the structure of the sentence, is identifying that section of the text correlative with

*положението*. Semantically, the pronoun implies comparison between two or more entities. The noun *положението* appears to be a generalizing word referring to the previously mentioned fact, thus presenting it in an abbreviated way and at the same time, breaking the monotony of the narration.

It is possible for the substitute *the same* to be accompanied by the “general word” *way* when substituting for an attribute (Halliday, Hasan 1976: 112). Thus, for example, in: [4] I know you are interested. You turned me on, too, and you know we were in good company because the chairman felt *the same way*. (Hailey 1971:435)

*The same way* stands for *interested*, with *you* rejected by *the chairman*. In this context, it would be possible for the accented form *the same* to alternate with the weak form *so*: “The chairman felt so (too).”

In the place of the substitute item *the same*, various other cohesive devices appear in the translated variants of this sample:

[4a] Ти държеше на този проект, а успя да запалиш и мен. Бяхме далеч нелоша компания, тъй като на наша страна беше и президентът.

[4b] Знам, че беше заинтересуван. Бяхме добра компания, тъй като заинтригува мен, а и председателя също.

[4c] Знам, че бе заинтригуван, заинтересува и мен. Бяхме хубава компания, защото председателя и той бе впечатлен.

In [4a], the prepositional phrase *на наша страна* is a kind of a paraphrase of the previous clause. The possessive pronoun *наша* specifically refers to *ти* and *мен*, involving them in the relation of possession. It is realized by a mutual belonging to a process, which is nominalized in the reference. Nitsolova regards this as “hidden” predicate which is nominalized by a generalizing noun of abstract meaning (1986: 82-3).

[4b] is rendered by omission of the predication *беше заинтересуван*, on account of its explicitness in the near context. So, it is quite natural to add the missing part after the subject *председателя* in order to fill out the structural gap. In this example, the word *също* is an adverb exemplifying confirmation that the omitted predication still holds good.

[4c] is organized by means of using synonyms, regarded by Dobрева and Savova as synonymization (2000: 224). Instead of *заинтригуван*, its dictionary equivalent *впечатлен* is used, thus avoiding the monotonous duplication of words.

Another possible context for *the same* as a substitute item is *do the same*. Though it looks like verbal substitution, Halliday and Hasan have ranked it as nominal substitution (1976: 109).

[5] We forget that plenty of us who’ve lived with money still run up debts we can’t

manage. But let this guy *do the same* thing and our system's all set to throw him back on the garbage heap. (Hailey 1971: 293)

In this example, the form *do the same* is used to express the process in “a nominalized form by means of an empty verb plus its object” (Halliday, Hasan 1976: 109): ‘do a run up in debts’. The form is also accompanied by the “pronoun” *thing* and though resembling a reference item, it comes to be used as a substitute as the item *the same* itself (Halliday, Hasan 1976: 112). In this case, *do the same thing* stands for *run up debts he can't manage* and it is the other elements in the clause that provide the contrast: the subject *this guy* rejects the expounded subject of the previous clause *plenty of us who've lived with money*.

The sample could be presented in Bulgarian as follows:

[5a] Забравяме, че доста хора от нашите среди са затънали до гуша в дългове, макар че са свикнали да боравят с пари. Но когато това се случи на човек като него – Уингейт кимна към домакина, – нашата система моментално го изхвърля на боклука!

[5b]... Но нека този човек направи това и нашата система е готова веднага да го изхвърли на сметището.

[5c]... Но нека това момче направи същото нещо...

In [5a] and [5b], *do the same thing* is translated *това се случи* and *направи това*, with the demonstrative *това* functioning as subject in [5a] and as object in [5b]. The verbs *правя* and *случвам се* have abstract meanings, always presupposing existence of some concrete process and happening (see Dimitrova 1995: 30). They are always functioning as ‘carriers’ of an item that presents the process in a nominalized form. In this case, the demonstrative *това* points back to the process mentioned in the immediate context, presenting it as a fact. Hence, the mechanism can be regarded as pronominalization. Such combinations in Bulgarian, formed by an abstract verb (the most frequently used are *правя* and *върши* plus pronoun, can be considered substitutive constructions for some verbs or verbal phrases.

In [5a], the pronominal expression *същото нещо* is interchangeable with the demonstrative *това*, as in [5b]. The difference lies in the implication of comparison denoted by *същото*. Anyway, the mechanism is pronominalization.

## Conclusion

The contrastive analysis has shown that nominal substitution in Bulgarian does not exist in its strict sense, but the same ‘things’ keep on being mentioned. The items projecting the nominal substitute *same* that summarize and present the information in a compressed form in Bulgarian are the pronouns. Though generally different from the English substitutes they signal the points of contact

with what has gone before. Therefore, they also realize a continuity that allows for the reader to restore the semantic make-up of a text. All of them are resources that give “texture” to a piece of text.

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