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Master-class 'Cross-linguistic Comparison of Synonyms'

List of synonyms:

far, far-away, far-off, distant, remote

Polysemy:

1. Space

1.1. Located at a distance from the speaker or reference point

*He enjoyed travelling to **distant** <far-off> lands.*

*They went to exotic and **faraway** locations.*

*The school is **far** from home.*

*Hubble space telescope tracked the most **remote** galaxy ever observed.*



1.2. Requiring to travel a long distance

*It's a **far** journey.*

*No one would do the **far** trip to Portugal just for skiing.*

1.3. Perceived from a long distance

*He heard a **far** voice calling.*

*All they could see were some **distant** lights on the lake.*

*We heard a **distant** sound of thunder.*



1.4. Without actual contact

*I take care of my child, so I'm looking for a **remote** job.*

***Remote** control <access, monitoring, host, server, PC, user>.*



1.5. Arriving from or going to a great distance:

I have here a distant letter from Japan.

The record for the most distant flight remains with Air India, as its flight from New Delhi to San Francisco overcomes 15,298 kilometers.

Distant <letter, journey, trip, flight>.



2. Abstract space.

2.1 'Not conforming to the ideal, norm, goal, or expectations'

*This hamburger is **far** from the ideal.*

The challenges thus are far from being resolved .

Far from normal <universal, complete>.



*Her poise is as **remote** from his temper as it's possible to be.*

*All these theories seem very **remote** from our everyday experience in the classroom.*

Remote from reality <standard, everyday experience>.

2.2. 'Indirect, secondary'

*The **remote** causes of the war*

3. Degree

3.1. 'Nearest one side or end of an object'



*I'm the one on the **far** left<right>.*

3.2. 'Located at the end or side of an object that is at a greater distance from the observer'

*She moved to the **far** side of the bed to make room.*

***Far** side <corner, end, edge>.*



3.3. 'The slightest'

*She was not in a **remotest** way to blame.*

*You have only the **remotest** chance of winning the lottery.*

***Remotest** possibility <idea, degree, chance>.*

4. Time

4.1. 'A long time ago/at a distant date in the future'

*One day, in the **distant** future, I might go and live abroad.*

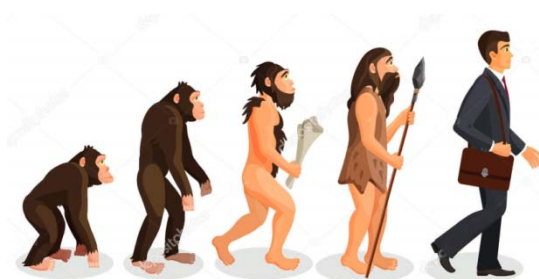
In the distant past there was no separation between man and animal.

***Distant** event <memory>.*

4.2. 'Of a person related to you who lived a long time ago/will live in the distant future'

*Our **remote** <distant> ancestors lived in primordial oceans.*

*Odin is a **remote** <distant> descendant of Thor, removed by twelve generations.*



*Royal family membership may extend to **distant** descendants of a monarch.*

*Cousin marriage is a marriage between people with a common grandparent or other more **distant** ancestor.*



5. Kinship

'Distantly related by blood or marriage'.

*He was a **distant** cousin of Henry James.*

Distant cousin <relative, aunt, uncle>.



6. Mental/emotional

6.1. 'Reserved in manner':

*She was polite but very **remote** when I met her.*

*In a cold and **distant** voice he told me to pack and leave.*

6.2. 'Not focused on the surroundings'.

*He gave me a **distant** look and I wondered if he recognized me.*

*A woman with a **far-away** look in her eyes.*

Semantic features (spatial meaning):

1. Distance

- Specific distance possible (special constructions):

***How far** is it from here?*

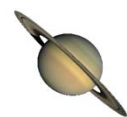
*The plants are **six inches distant** in the row.*

- Very large distance:

far-off, far-away

impossible a little **far-off** location, ? an extremely*

***far-away** country*



2. Reference point

- Observer or another object:

*The coast was **far**; He looked at the **distant** coast*
(observer);

*The school is **far** from home; a **distant** galaxy*
(another object)

- Center, inhabited areas:

***remote** country, **remote** corners of the world, **remote** village*



3. Temporary/permanent location

*He is **far** from us; The houses already looked like **distant** specks on the horizon* (temporary);

*He lives in a **remote** village* (permanent).

4. Accessibility

Remote is accessible with difficulty:

*This **remote** village is so out of the way that mail comes only once a week.*

Semantic features (temporal meaning):

Future/past reference

Cf. *distant past* / *distant future* (equally possible), **but**
remote past / *remote future* (future reference is rare)

Semantic features (mental meaning):

Reason for distancing

*She was **distant** with us* (\approx 'cold'): may be intentional

*Her **far-away** look*: absorbed in other thoughts

*She listened to him with a **remote** air*: feeling alien to smb. or smth.



Idioms:

Metaphoric extension: ubiquitous, all-encompassing

far and wide - 'everywhere'

*We were looking **far and wide** for the lost diamond ring.*



Metaphoric extension: high achievement

to go far - 'to an advanced point or stage'

*This brilliant student will **go far**.*



Metaphoric extension: difference

far cry - 'something that is very different from something else':

*This food is a **far cry** from what we got in the cafeteria.*



an Stock Photo

Metaphoric extension: deviation from the norm

to go too far - 'to behave in a way that is unreasonable':

*Threatening legal action is really **going too far**.*



Metaphoric extension: movement

so far, so good - 'used for saying that someone or something has been successful up to this point'

***So far, so good** - 96 per cent of calls have been answered within six seconds.*



Metaphoric extension: yet unknown

dim and distant - 'distant in the past or future':

*He retreats into memories from his **dim and distant** past.*

*It's a **dim and distant** prospect.*

