A Comparive Study of Synonym Structure in Uzbek And English Bilingual Dictionaries

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Abstract: Synonyms—words with similar meanings, but in different forms—are an integral part of language construction. The structure and presentation of these synonyms, however, can vary across different linguistic contexts. This comparative study focuses on the organization of synonyms within Uzbek and English bilingual dictionaries, aiming to identify problems with their lexicography and giving suggestions.

Keywords: True synonyms, similar meaning, near synonyms, semantic closeness, thesauri, style and register, lexicography.

Introduction: Synonyms are also considered essential parts in several types of lexical resources, such as thesauri, word nets (Miller et al., 1990), and linguistic ontologies (Jarrar, 2021; Jarrar, 2006) [1]. According to Miller et al. (1990), "two expressions are synonymous in a linguistic context if the substitution of one for the other does not alter the truth value". Others might refer to synonymy to be a "closely-related" relationship between words, as used in distributional semantics, or the so-called word embeddings (see e.g., Emerson, 2020). In this paper the organization of synonym sets between two languages: English and Uzbek is investigated. For this purpose we use an Uzbek Synonym Dictionary, an English Synonym Dictionary and Oxford Online Dictionary.

Synonymy is a lexical semantic relation, that is, a relation between meanings of words. According to its definition, synonyms are 'words or expressions of the same language that have the same or nearly the same meaning in some or all senses' (Inc., 2004). Cross-linguistically, the question that we are attempting to answer in this work is what order bilingual dictionaries follow when semantizing synonym words.

METHODS AND RESULTS

Dictionaries have several criteria to define synonyms effectively. Here are some of the main ones:

Semantic closeness: The most important factor is how closely related the words are in meaning. Synonyms should be truly interchangeable in most contexts.

Style and register: Synonyms can vary in formality or the situations they're used in. A good dictionary will often label synonyms as formal, informal, slang, etc.

Usage examples: Seeing synonyms used in sentences can help users understand the subtle differences in meaning and appropriate usage.

Connotations: Even close synonyms can have slightly different emotional or cultural associations. Dictionaries might hint at these differences in their definitions.

Thesaurus or synonym list: A separate thesaurus section is provided in some dictionaries or they include a list of synonyms directly after the headword's definition.

Dictionaries try to provide users with a clear and helpful overview of a word's synonyms by considering those factors.

There are a few different types of synonyms, indeed.

First, there are what we call "true synonyms". These are words that can be used interchangeably in almost any situation. They have the same basic meaning and don't carry any special connotations. But finding such synonyms can be tricky, even within the same language. According to some scholars, true synonymic pairs which can be interchangeably used are quite rare. Words "motherland" and "fatherland" are the exact examples. Everyone is happy in their fatherland or Everyone is happy in their motherland. There is no difference in meaning. Both mean a country where a person as born.

Then, there are synonyms which are nearly the same in meaning but have slightly different shades or connotations. These are sometimes called "near synonyms" or "loose synonyms". They might be used in slightly different contexts or carry different emotional weight.

Dive into a comparison of some words in to languages.

"Happy" and "glad" are given in one synonymic line of bilingual dictionaries.

xursand a glad, merry, happy; pleased; ~ bo'lmoq, be glad, be happy; be pleased; ~ qilmoq make glad, make happy, make please, satisfy; ~lik satisfaction, pleasure, happiness; fun, mirth. (Sh. Butaev, p 800).

While they both convey positive emotions, "happy - shod, xursand" might suggest a general feeling of contentment, while "glad - mamnun, minnatdor" often

implies pleasure about something specific. However, in bilingual dictionaries, there are problems with presenting, especially "near synonyms". In other words, without explaining such underlying intricacies, bilingual dictionaries present all synonymic sets, which in turn, confuse the user in terms of choosing the one that suits best in the context.

Another example, in the bilingual Uzbek-English dictionary by Shavkat Butaev, for example, this semantization is given.

qaramoq v 1) look at, glance; oynaga ~look at oneself in the mirror;

2)nurse; look after;

3) look for (qidirmoq);

4) herd, graze;

5) support (oilaga); support, undergo a cure (kasalga). (Sh. Butaev, p 754).

"Look" is a versatile word that can have a lot of meanings. There are synonyms like see, glance, stare, peek, and observe in English, each with its own subtle difference.

Glance at - looking at someone or something for a short time, ko'z tashlamoq

Stare at - looking at someone or something without blinking eye, tikilmoq

Peek - looking at something suspiciously - mo'ralamoq

The point is that these differences in synonymic variations of the headword - look is not explained in the dictionary. When a user looks up synonyms of look to use in order to avoid repetition in their academic, political or another writing, he/she is highly likely to make mistake without knowing underlying intricacies of the above explained synonyms.

Extract: I was peeking at him with admiration when he was given a prize in the competition. Not peeking.

uy n 1) house; dam olish ~i rest home; modalar ~i fashion house; 2) home; u ~da yo'q he is out; u ~dami ? Is he in?; 3) room, flat; 4) (madaniy-maishiy idoralar) bolalar~ i children's home; madaniyat ~i Palace of Culture. (Sh. Butaev, p 793)

As the translation and equivalent of the word uy, in English, house is given in Uzbek-English bilingual dictionary. When close attention paid, as the synonymic sets, home, flat, room are presented. However, house and home are different concepts.

house n /haʊs/ a building for human habitation, especially one that consists of a ground floor and one or more upper storeys. "my wife and I are moving to a new house" (Oxford online dictionary)

home n /həʊm / the place where one lives

permanently, especially as a member of afamily on household. "the floods forced many people to flee their homes" (Oxford online dictionary).

Obviously, these words cannot be used interchangeably as a synonyms despite having close meaning. In bilingual dictionaries, such subtle differences should be explained. Understanding the criteria for synonym order is important for effective language learning and research.

✓ "Strong" also is a good one to look at.

In English, we have words like powerful, sturdy, robust, and mighty that convey different shades of strength. Some suggest physical power, while others imply durability or forcefulness.

Now, in an Uzbek-English bilingual dictionary, you might find that there are specific words for the strength of a person, - kuch-quvvat, qurb the strength of materials - chidamlilik, or the strength of an idea - qat'iylik. The nuances within these categories might be much more defined in Uzbek.

Sometimes some bilingual dictionaries fail to present the degree of formality of a word. This semantization is given in Sh. Butayev's bilingual dictionary, p495:

regarding [ri'ga:din] prep. ... ga kelganda, ... haqida gap ketganda; haqida

regardless [ri ga:dlas] a 1) pisand qilmoq.

This one is given in wisdom online dictionary:

regarding prep. /rɪˈgɑːdɪŋ/ [formal] bo'yicha, borasida, borada, haqida, doir, oid, to'g'rida, to'g'risida, xususida, jihatdan, vuzasida(n).

The first dictionary do not show the register - the degree of formality of regarding, but Wisdom dictionary claim it to be formal.

Common Criteria for Synonym Order in dictionaries

Alphabetical Order: this is the most common method. Synonyms are listed alphabetically, regardless of their semantic relationship or frequency of use.

Semantic Similarity: Synonyms may be grouped based on their closeness in meaning. This helps users quickly find words with similar nuances.

Frequency of Use: more commonly used synonyms are listed first, assuming that users will often seek the most frequent alternatives.

Register or Style: depending on the specific context or style in which they are typically used (e.g., technical, literary, colloquial), synonyms might be classified.

DISCUSSION

The comparative analysis of languages is a key method to examine any language phenomenon. It helps to shed more light on the structural, semantic, stylistic, expressive aspects of words in a language [2]. The text discusses the concept of synonymy in Tatar and English. It argues that while Tatar relational adjectives indicate properties through relationships, they are not limited in their ability to form synonymous rows within their semantic structures. The study found that similar notions are expressed differently by synonymous items in the two languages. In some cases, a single Tatar synonymic row may be expressed by a single English lexeme or by several non-synonymous lexemes. Another work by Tsoraeva Olesya Igorevna also worth considering [3].The text discusses the concept of synonymy and its relationship to polysemy within the semantic field of "success" in Russian and English. It highlights that some lexical units have multiple meanings, making it necessary to analyze their definitions and classifications to understand the nuances of synonymy. The author suggests that further research on polysemy within the semantic field of "success" can contribute to a better understanding of synonymy and its complexities.

CONCLUSION

This comparative study has revealed that the organization of synonyms in Uzbek and English bilingual dictionaries exhibits both similarities and differences. While both languages employ various strategies to group synonyms, discrepancies in the presentation and classification of these words can lead to challenges for learners and researchers. To enhance the effectiveness of bilingual dictionaries, it is recommended that lexicographers adopt a more consistent and comprehensive approach to synonym organization, incorporating both semantic and syntactic relationships. By addressing these issues, bilingual dictionaries can better serve as valuable tools for language learning, translation, and research.

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