

How to Develop a Linguistic Model for Building a Bilingualized Lexicon

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Introduction

Lexicography has developed rapidly as an autonomous discipline in the academic world during the last decades. Hartmann (1989a: 213) says that "fortunately, the last few years have witnessed a spectacularly fast growth of resources, meetings and publications in the field of lexicography..."

The concept of a bilingualized dictionary is a new one. "The bilingualized learner's dictionary is still largely unknown... (They) provide a bridge between the traditional bilingual dictionary and the monolingual dictionary" (Harmann : 1999). VOX-English Learners' Dictionary (1990) is as example of a bilingualized dictionary. The BRIDGE project has been launched by Harper Collins (UK) for building bilingualized dictionaries and John Sinclair is the Chief Editor. Under this project Collins COBUILD Student's Dictionary has been selected for translation into different languages of the world. The fundamental question is: Will the new bilingualized dictionary be as effective as the existing monolingual COBUILD dictionary? It will not be so. That is what my perception is. This article deals with how to make such a dictionary effective. The linguistic model which

can be used for the said purpose is conceptualized here. It can rightly be called a descriptive framework for building an effective bilingualized dictionary.

The best possible way to develop this model is to work within the following parameters suggested by Hartmann (1989: 213):

- i) Dictionary typology
- ii) User Profiles
- iii) Needs analysis
- iv) Skill protocols

To conduct research in the needs of learners empirical study is the best approach. "If we are genuinely interested in the dictionary needs of the learners,...empirical studies can help us understand the learners' reference needs and reference skills. These needs and skills are always determined by the particular social and institutional contexts in which learning takes place." (Hartmann : 1999).

Statement of the Problem

The existing dictionaries (e.g. OALD, LDOCE, COBUILD and CIDE) treat all users as one group of English learners. None of them is based on an empirical study of what the specific really seek.

The phonetic transcription comprising IPA is not welcomed by dictionary users whose native language is written in letters other than Roman. Learning IPA is considered a burden as these users take it as a third script entirely different from the two which they have already learnt. Due to this they cannot make use of phonetic transcription for learning the exact pronunciation of English words. So the

phonetic aspect of these dictionaries remains useless for them.

No ELD is edited with the consultation of lexicographers/ linguists who come from the user's community (with a few exceptions). The importance of scholarly assistance needs to be recognized. No ELD mentions lexical gaps between English language and the learner's native language. No ELD explains the collocations of different lexemes on the basis of a comparative analysis of English language and the user's native language. The said analysis can be used as a true instrument to disambiguate the meanings.

All ELDs claim to be helpful in both decoding and encoding text. It is of crucial importance to investigate whether they are really helpful in the process of encoding i.e. the production of text in English and to what extent do they help a user when he intends to write about a local scene or culturally rich local phenomenon.

The said dictionaries do not recognize the importance of the communicative ecology of the users which basically differs from society to society. The Editor of the Cambridge International Dictionary of English mentions "the fuss" which is the basic feature of all EL dictionaries other than his own. "Our first concern in writing Cambridge International Dictionary of English has been clarity and simplicity that is the clearest presentation we could devise with the minimum of the fuss and clutter that are the usual features of the dictionaries." (Procter 1995: viii).

Objectives of the research

The Primary objective of the research is to establish the steps for the development of a descriptive framework for

building an effective bilingualized dictionary. The secondary objective is to establish the importance of consideration of specific needs of ELD users who can be classified into groups on the basis of their linguistic and cultural background.

Research Questions

Why is the consideration of the specific needs (linguistic and culture) important for developing an effective learner's dictionary?

To what extent are monolingual EL dictionaries helpful at the following levels:

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|----|-------------|----|-----------|
| a) | Phonetic | b) | Semantic |
| c) | Grammatical | d) | Pragmatic |

How can a bilingualized dictionary be developed as an effective helping tool for the encoding purpose?

How can lexemes be organized in a way other than alphabetical order to help users perceive the meanings of words in a better and clearer way?

How can IPA symbols be replaced with a new set of phonetic symbols to transcribe English words in a way that could facilitate the learning of pronunciation for the target group?

Underlying Assumptions

Neglect of the specific needs of users made the existing ELDs less helpful. If the specific needs of ELD users are fully

recognized and acknowledged, an ELD will meet the needs of a user in a more satisfying way.

A bilingualized dictionary developed on the basis of consideration of learners' needs will be more effective than the existing monolingual dictionaries.

For the transcription of English words a new set of easier and more effective phonetic symbols can be developed if the acquired linguistic knowledge of a particular group of users is exploited.

Different meanings of lexemes can become clearer for a learner if the vocabulary is organized thematically rather than alphabetically.

If lexical gaps on a comparative basis (English V user's native language) are mentioned in a bilingualized dictionary, it will be more effective for encoding purpose.

Research Method and Paradigm

In the post-positivistic paradigm the qualitative research would be the most suitable one for the present research.

The following variables are involved in this study:

- (a) Independent Variable: Linguistic features of dictionaries
- (b) Dependent Variable: EFL learners' ability to use the dictionary

Research Instruments

The following instruments are required for this research:

- i) Questionnaire
- ii) Interviews

iii) Tests

iv) Related Literature

Subjects

The subjects of this study should consist of 1000 informants. They should comprise English teachers, educationists, policy makers and degree students in colleges and universities in user's native country (for the sake of specification let it be Pakistan). All these informants should have significant formal instruction in English during their education. They exhibit a good social distance from native speakers of English. They belong to a group that is neither dominant nor equal to Britons technologically or economically. The cultures of these two groups are hardly similar and the same is the case with their societal structures. The subjects have a fair degree of knowledge about the British and American cultures.

Research Procedure

Data for the analysis will be gathered through the questionnaire. The subjects will be samples drawn at random from the population. It is not arbitrary or haphazard as it requires a systematic approach.

Questionnaires will be administered to groups of students and individuals. They will fill them up in the presence of the researcher. With a captive audience a relatively high completion rate is guaranteed. Moreover if anyone finds a question unclear, the researcher can explain what he means.

Simple language tests will be administered to get data on both the aspects i.e. decoding and encoding.

Interviews will be held individually and they will be recorded for a detailed analysis.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Data collected from this qualitative research will be ordinal which means that scores can be placed in order from the smallest to the largest. It is sometimes called rank measurement. These ranks have the numerical values 1,2,3,4,5 etc. The Likert scale used would have only five alternative values. In this way tabulating data will be straightforward. Moreover the quantitative analysis is possible if data is in numbers.

The mean, mode and median of the data will be specified as the statistical mean, mode and median of the subjects are the mean, mode and median of the population. T-test and ANOVA should be carried for the advanced analysis. The computational tool to be used for the statistical analysis should be SPSS version 10.0.5. This programme helps summarize data into easy formats and present them through tables and explicit diagrams which will be adequately illustrated.

On the basis of the findings a Linguistic Model for building a bilingualized dictionary would successfully be developed.

Significance of the research

a) Theoretical Significance

The research is an interdisciplinary approach. Linguistic theories are involved for the development of lexicographic practice. Major theories involved in the present study are as follows:

- i) Zgusta's concept of anisomorphism of Languages
- ii) Semantic Fields

iii) Equivalence Typology

The survey to be conducted is hoped to favour Zgusta's concept of anisomorphism of languages. This theory refutes isomorphic polysemy. The division of semantic space is not identical in any two languages.

Thematic organization of vocabulary in a dictionary would be one of the questions in the said survey. Is the consideration of semantic field better than lexical sets? It will also provide material for discussion on collocations and colligation of lexical items. The proposed survey will be helpful to analyze the notion of lexical gaps at contrastive level. A comparison between *meaning-based entry* and *equivalence-structured entry* will be possible after collecting data on a good number of selected lexemes used in the survey. The informants' preference to either of the entries will help solve the debatable thematic issue of the translation meaning problem. The structuralist concept of 'three logically possible equivalence relations - full, partial and zero equivalence would be examined in the proposed survey.

Last but not least is the theoretical issue of contrastive idiom analysis. It concerns relations between idiosyncratic phenomena and the universal features of idioms. A theory based on cognitive heuristics can be established why certain idioms of a foreign language are easily understood or distorted or hardly understood. The analysis of responses from the informants will help develop the theory of cognition of idioms. Here the study of interlanguage will also be conducted which will help to develop the said theory.

b) *Empirical Significance*

This model to be developed with the help of lexicographers and dictionary editors for building an effective bilingualized dictionary. The phonetic symbols invented on the basis of exploitation of users' native language will be of a universal nature.

Literature Review

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