



ISSUES OF GIVING UNITS EXPRESSING PERSONAL SPIRITUALITY IN LINGUOCULTURAL DICTIONARIES

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Abstract

This article examines the challenges and methodological issues associated with representing lexical units which express personal spirituality through linguistic elements in linguocultural dictionaries. The study analyzes the theoretical foundations of linguocultural lexicography and identifies key problems in documenting spiritual vocabulary. The problems include difficulties to define spiritual concepts which different cultures understand and to create equivalent spiritual terms between various linguistic traditions and to properly display the personal experiential aspect of spiritual language.

Keywords: Linguocultural dictionary, spiritual vocabulary, religious terminology, semantic equivalence, dictionary microstructure.

Аннотация:

В данной статье рассматриваются проблемы и методологические вопросы, связанные с представлением лексических единиц, выражающих личную духовность, в лингвокультурологических словарях. В исследовании анализируются теоретические основы лингвокультурологической лексикографии и выявляются ключевые проблемы документирования духовной лексики, включая трудности определения духовных концептов в различных культурах, установления эквивалентности между духовными терминами в разных лингвистических традициях и адекватного представления субъективного эмпирического измерения духовного языка.



Ключевые слова: лингвокультурологический словарь, духовная лексика, религиозная терминология, семантическая эквивалентность, микроструктура словаря.

Annotatsiya:

Ushbu maqolada lingvomadaniy lug'atlarda shaxsiy ma'naviyatni ifodalovchi leksik birliklarni aks ettirishga bog'liq muammolar va metodologik masalalar o'rganiladi. Tadqiqotda lingvomadaniy leksikografiyaning nazariy asoslari tahlil qilinadi va ma'naviy lug'at birliklarini hujjatlashtirish bo'yicha asosiy muammolar aniqlanadi, jumladan, turli madaniyatlarda ma'naviy tushunchalarni belgilashdagi qiyinchiliklar, turli lingvistik an'analardagi ma'naviy atamalar o'rtasida ekvivalentlikni o'rnatish va ma'naviy tilning sub'ektiv tajriba o'lchamini etarli darajada ifodalash masalalari ko'rib chiqiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: lingvomadaniy lug'at, ma'naviy leksika, diniy terminologiya, semantik ekvivalentlik, lug'atning mikrostrukturasi.

INTRODUCTION

The lexicographic representation of units expressing personal spirituality constitutes one of the most difficult challenges which modern linguocultural dictionary developers face. Spiritual vocabulary occupies a unique position in the lexicon of any language because it combines abstract philosophical concepts with religious terminology and subjective experiential descriptions and culturally specific worldview elements [1]. The spiritual lexical units of a language refer to internal human consciousness phenomena which exist in secluded internal spaces and their cultural and religious and historical background differ from one linguistic community to another. The compilation of linguocultural dictionaries which aim to bridge not only linguistic but also cultural gaps between languages faces particular difficulties when confronting this category of vocabulary [2]. Traditional lexicographic methods which lexicographers developed to document concrete terms and widely used abstract vocabulary fail to handle spiritual terminology because it includes specific cultural meanings and lacks precise definitions and its counterpart terms do not exist.



Bilingual and multilingual dictionary projects face severe challenges when they try to translate spiritual concepts between languages that belong to different cultural and religious traditions. This article examines the theoretical and practical issues surrounding the lexicographic treatment of spirituality-expressing units in linguocultural dictionaries, analyzing existing approaches and identifying key methodological challenges that require resolution. The research achieves its significance through the development of effective lexicographic methods which document a culturally sensitive vocabulary category that contains complex semantic elements essential for intercultural communication.

METHODOLOGY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The research uses qualitative analysis to study theoretical writings about linguocultural lexicography and contrastive semantics and the linguistic analysis of religious and spiritual communication. The research method uses linguocultural study principles which exist in research that studies the relationship between language and culture [3] together with lexicographic theory which explains how to create dictionaries that focus on cultural content [4]. The research examines literature about spiritual vocabulary usage to find both existing problems and theoretical debates. Multiple researchers have explored different aspects of this research problem from various perspectives. The study of religious terms used in bilingual dictionaries shows that non-equivalence is a major problem because spiritual concepts from one religious tradition do not have direct translations in languages which developed through different religious belief systems [5]. The research on culture-specific vocabulary shows that spiritual words belong to a group of "untranslatable" terms which need detailed explanation instead of standard translation methods [6].

The study of dictionary microstructure demonstrates that standard entry styles which present short definitions and single-word translations fail to convey the full spiritual meaning and cultural significance of religious terms [7]. The study of religious and spiritual language demonstrates that these words function on three different levels which include doctrinal-theological and experiential-phenomenological and socio-cultural aspects that need to be documented in complete linguocultural dictionaries [8]. The scholars who study particular



lexicographic projects discover that they encounter two main challenges when they try to define spiritual concepts which different people from the same language group understand based on their religious beliefs and philosophical views and personal understanding of the spiritual realm [9]. The academic research examines how scholars face challenges when they try to describe spiritual vocabulary because people who speak the language give words personal meaning based on their spiritual journeys, which makes it hard to create standardized dictionary definitions. The current linguistic methods which treat spiritual vocabulary for linguocultural dictionaries need development because they have not been fully established yet, which demonstrates an important distance between existing lexicographic theories and their application in practice [10].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Theoretical literature combined with current lexicographic methods shows multiple interrelated issues which arise when linguocultural dictionaries try to represent spiritual expression through their dictionary entries. The first major issue concerns definitional complexity and the boundaries of spiritual concepts. The spiritual vocabulary needs precise definitions because it includes terms that defy standard lexicographic boundaries. The terms "faith" and "grace" and "enlightenment" and "spiritual awakening" describe intricate phenomena which different religious traditions and philosophical systems and personal beliefs understand in different ways. The attempt to create one official definition for these terms creates bias toward particular interpretive approaches which will lead to inaccurate representation of how these terms are used in different cultural contexts. The definition of spiritual concepts occurs through their relationship to broader theological and philosophical systems which creates problems for traditional dictionary entry systems that treat each word as an independent entity. The second critical problem involves cross-linguistic equivalence and translation. Different religious traditions have established deep spiritual concepts which their native speakers use to express their beliefs and these concepts do not have actual counterparts in languages that developed through different cultural backgrounds. Certain Buddhist spiritual concepts which Buddhist texts express through Pali



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and Sanskrit terminology do not exist as genuine equivalents in languages that developed through Abrahamic religious traditions and the same applies in reverse.

The use of straightforward translation equivalents in these situations establishes a false perception that two languages share identical meanings while it keeps their main cultural and conceptual distinctions hidden. The presence of cognate terms between Arabic and its linguistic descendants in Islamic-based languages leads to differentness in their actual meanings and social connections among different language groups. The third major obstacle involves how to show both experiential and personal aspects of human experience. The meaning of spiritual vocabulary depends mostly on individual personal experiences instead of needing to be experienced through external phenomena. Spiritual vocabulary terms which describe spiritual states and experiences and religious practices describe internal mental states and experiential states which remain unknown to others and cannot be proven through scientific methods. The process of defining words presents specific challenges because lexicographers use established methods to create definitions which require scientific proof yet cannot achieve accurate definitions. How can a dictionary adequately define a term like "mystical experience" or "divine presence" when the referent exists only in the subjective consciousness of individuals and may vary dramatically in its characteristics across different experiential instances? The fourth problem area involves metalanguage inadequacy. The conventional lexicographic metalanguage developed for defining ordinary vocabulary proves insufficient for spiritual terminology. Spiritual concepts often require explanation using equally complex spiritual vocabulary, creating circularity problems. Additionally, attempting to define spiritual concepts using secular, naturalistic language may fundamentally distort their meaning for believers who understand these concepts as referring to transcendent realities. Yet using religious or theological metalanguage risks excluding readers who do not share the relevant religious framework. Finally, there is the challenge of representing diversity and contestation. For many spiritual terms, there is no single agreed-upon meaning even within a particular linguistic community. Different religious denominations, theological schools, or spiritual traditions may invest the same word with quite different meanings.



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Individual practitioners may understand and use spiritual vocabulary in highly personal ways shaped by their own experiences and interpretations. Effective lexicographic representation would need to acknowledge this semantic diversity and contestation, but doing so within the space constraints of dictionary entries presents significant practical difficulties.

CONCLUSION

The representation of lexical units expressing personal spirituality in linguocultural dictionaries presents multifaceted challenges that extend beyond those encountered with ordinary vocabulary. The analysis demonstrates that conventional lexicographic methods developed for concrete and broadly shared abstract vocabulary prove inadequate for capturing the semantic complexity, cultural specificity, and subjective experiential character of spiritual terminology. The key issues identified include definitional complexity arising from the bounded and relationally defined nature of spiritual concepts, problems of cross-linguistic equivalence when dealing with culture-specific spiritual vocabulary, difficulties in representing subjective experiential dimensions, inadequacy of standard lexicographic metalanguage, and the need to acknowledge semantic diversity and contestation within linguistic communities. Addressing these challenges requires significant innovations in linguocultural dictionary design, including development of enhanced metalanguage systems capable of describing spiritual concepts without distortion, expansion of commentary space to provide necessary cultural and religious context, incorporation of multiple perspectives to represent semantic diversity, and possibly integration of ethnographic and phenomenological description alongside traditional definitions. Future lexicographic work on spiritual vocabulary would benefit from interdisciplinary collaboration involving linguists, cultural anthropologists, religious studies scholars, and representatives of relevant spiritual traditions. The development of more adequate methods for representing spirituality-expressing units in linguocultural dictionaries would contribute significantly to intercultural understanding and communication in an increasingly globalized world where individuals regularly encounter spiritual concepts from diverse linguistic and cultural traditions.



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