BEYOND 50 WORDS FOR 'SNOW':

PUZZLES IN BILINGUAL LEXICOGRAPHY

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GOALS

▸ Present some puzzles/issues that the linguist/lexicographer may face during bilingual dictionary-making

▸ Present a certain orientation towards dictionary-making to approaching this complex task a little clearer

What I will NOT aim to do

▸ Give answers to the puzzles (sorry)

▸ Present novel analyses of grammatical forms

LEXICOGRAPHY (AND LEXICOLOGY)

▸ Lexicography: …the science concerned with the theory and practice of dictionaries, that is, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, lexica, glossaries, vocabularies, terminological knowledge bases, and other information tools covering areas of knowledge and its corresponding knowledge (Feurtes-Olivera, 2018).

▸ Lexicology: …the scientific investigation of the lexicon of a language, including, for example, its historical development, its social stratification, its quantitative composition, or the way in which some thematic area is encoded (Klein, 2015)

BILINGUAL DICTIONARY

▸ A bilingual dictionary helps translate words, idioms, and phrases from one language into another

▸ Two important concepts in bilingual dictionaries: the source language (SL) and the target language (TL)

▸ Various types of bilingual dictionaries, and choice of type decided by the target user

TYPES

▸ Monodirectional

▸ Bidrectional

▸ Definitions (Tamil-Hindi or Tamil-Tamil-Hindi)

▸ Word 'equivalents' (Tamil-Hindi)

PURPOSE OF THE DICTIONARY: RECEPTION & PRODUCTION

▸ To help native speakers of the TL interpret words in the SL (reception)

▸ To help native speakers of the SL figure out how to say something in the TL (production)

▸ To help bilingual translators (production)

▸ To help document an endangered language (mostly reception)

▸ To help revitalise an endangered language (reception + production)

▸ For machine translation (mostly production)

QUESTIONS

Please also share on chat what you think could be some issues in bilingual dictionaries

ISSUES/PUZZLES

▸ What are some common issues we can anticipate?

▸ "Inuit has 50 different words for snow" - the most common type of issue, lack of lexical equivalence

▸ This is an important issue

▸ But… we'll consider other types of issues here

ISSUES OF GRAMMAR: PARTS OF SPEECH

▸ Very common issue, particularly in production-oriented dictionaries

▸ Different languages encode information in different parts of speech

▸ What is expressed through a verb in one language may actually be expressed through an adjective, adverb, or noun in another

▸ Some languages may not lexically express a very common concept at all

ENGLISH VS TAMIL: VERB

▸ complain, v.t.

  ▸ (1) I complained that the water was cold

▸ Tamil - no easy equivalent (option: 'kurai sol')

▸ How do we approach translating this?

TYPES OF USE(R)

▸ To help native speakers of the TL interpret words in the SL (reception)

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ADJECTIVES

▸ Adjectives are interesting in the context of Indian languages vs English because they present many challenges in terms of parts of speech

▸ We'll consider two major types of English adjectives here and the problems they pose to the TL

ENGLISH ADJECTIVE PUZZLE I

▸ beautiful, adj.

▸ I saw **a** beautiful **cat** today

▸ How would this be translated?

ENGLISH ADJECTIVE PUZZLE I

▸ beautiful, adj.

  ▸ That cat is beautiful

  ▸ How would this be translated?

Both of these are considered adjectives in the SL but not necessarily in the target language. How would we accommodate both forms under the same English headword?

Answer: What does the user of your dictionary need?

ENGLISH ADJECTIVES PUZZLE 2

▸ hungry, adj.

   The hungry students demanded better food in the mess

▸ hungry, adj.

   I am hungry

Once again, how would we translate these into the TL?

How would we accommodate them under the same headword?

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

▸ Who is the target user?

▸ How does the directionality of the dictionary impact the way we accommodate mismatched parts of speech/other non-equivalent elements?

▸ Do we 'privilege' the SL or the TL? And why?

thanks in Tamil

translation and definition "thanks", English-Tamil Dictionary online

thanks ⊙ ⊙

IPA: /θæŋks/; Type: interjection, verb, noun;

- **நன்றி** ⊙   *{ noun, interjection }*

  used to express appreciation or gratitude

  expression of gratitude