



Contemporary Trends In Lexicography: From Traditional Description To Associative Dictionaries

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Abstract: This article examines contemporary trends in the development of lexicography, reflecting the transition from traditional normative dictionary models to cognitive and associative forms of language description. The importance of associative dictionaries for studying linguistic consciousness, national and cultural specifics, and the functioning of language in a bilingual environment is substantiated. Particular attention is paid to the theoretical foundations of associative lexicography and its place in modern linguistics.

Keywords: Lexicography, associative dictionary, cognitive linguistics, linguistic consciousness, bilingualism, psycholinguistics, lexicographic tradition.

Introduction:

Modern lexicography is undergoing significant changes associated with the transition from a normative description of language vocabulary to a cognitive-communicative paradigm. While traditional lexicographic practice focused primarily on the recording and codification of lexical units, today the emphasis is shifting toward reflecting the mental and cultural aspects of language functioning. Dictionaries are no longer merely reference books and are increasingly becoming tools for studying linguistic consciousness, national and cultural values, and cognitive structures.

One of the most promising areas in this field is

associative lexicography, which arose at the intersection of psycholinguistics and cultural linguistics. It focuses on identifying associative links between words and uncovering their role in shaping the linguistic worldview. Associative dictionaries allow us to capture the dynamics of semantic fields, nationally specific reactions, and manifestations of bilingual consciousness, making them a unique tool in modern linguistics.

Methods

The study utilized comparative analysis, a cognitive-linguistic approach, and the psycholinguistic technique of an associative experiment. Additionally, content analysis and lexicographic data structuring were employed to identify the specific features of the traditional and associative approaches.

Results

The analysis revealed that associative dictionaries are becoming an integral part of modern lexicography. They allow not only to describe vocabulary but also to reconstruct the cognitive mechanisms underlying language perception and use. Unlike traditional dictionaries, associative models provide a reflection of the dynamics of linguistic consciousness and cultural stereotypes, which is especially important in a bilingual environment.

Discussion

Historically, lexicography developed as a primarily normative discipline, the primary goal of which was the organization and codification of a language's lexical resources (Apresyan, 1995). The first dictionaries were viewed as reference books serving not only to convey information about the meaning of words but also to ensure the accuracy and uniformity of their usage in speech. Explanatory dictionaries recorded the semantics of words and provided systematic definitions, translation dictionaries reflected interlingual correspondences, and orthographic and orthoepic dictionaries established writing and pronunciation norms.

This approach was aimed at preserving the stability and sustainability of the literary language, its codification and standardization, which met the needs of society at different stages of its development. Normative lexicography served an important cultural and educational function: it contributed to the formation of a unified linguistic space, consolidated the norms of the

literary language, and regulated speech practice. Moreover, dictionaries became a tool of education; they provided access to knowledge for the general population and, at the same time, served as an indicator of the level of development of the science of language.

However, focusing exclusively on capturing "correct" meanings and forms of usage limited the potential of dictionaries as sources of information on the cognitive, associative, and cultural features of language functioning. Consequently, lexicography gradually shifted its emphasis from a purely normative function to a research and cognitive one, paving the way for the emergence of associative lexicography and other innovative approaches.

In other words, traditional dictionaries, despite their undeniable value, poorly capture the dynamics of semantic processes, associative connections, and cultural connotations. As V.N. Telia (1996) notes, language cannot be described solely as a system of signs: it is closely linked to cognitive and cultural processes. It was precisely this limitation that prompted the search for new lexicographic models.

Since the late 20th century, a cognitive approach has been actively developing in lexicography, prioritizing not only the recording of a language's vocabulary but also the study of its mental mechanisms. This approach takes into account psycholinguistic, cognitive, and cultural factors, reflecting not only the linguistic system but also the linguistic consciousness of its speakers. Lexicographic description has gradually moved beyond the confines of purely normative codification and has acquired a research-based nature, allowing for the reconstruction of cognitive structures, cultural scripts, and modes of conceptualizing reality.

The research of Yu.N. Karaulov and his school (Karaulov, 1994) played a leading role in the development of this approach, developing the associative experiment method. It was on the basis of this large-scale collection of associative data that the "Russian Associative Dictionary" was created, becoming a fundamentally new type of lexicographic source. Unlike traditional dictionaries, which record the normative meanings and usage of words, an associative dictionary reflects the dynamics of associative connections and represents the structure of the mental lexicon of native speakers.

This approach allows us to identify not only direct

semantic connections but also hidden cognitive associations that are formed through linguistic experience. It demonstrates the place a given word occupies in individual and collective memory, and how it is connected to cultural stereotypes and values. Thus, an associative dictionary becomes a tool for studying not only language but also mentality and intercultural differences, which is especially important in the context of bilingualism and globalization.

Associative dictionaries demonstrate not a static, but a dynamic model of language, revealing stereotypical reactions, cultural markers, and cognitive structures. According to E.F. Tarasov (1996), they reflect "cultural scripts" entrenched in national consciousness. This makes them a valuable source of data for psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics, and sociolinguistics.

Associative dictionaries are particularly relevant in the context of bilingualism. Comparing the associative responses of different linguistic communities allows us to identify both universal and ethnically specific cognitive structures. Such dictionaries are becoming a tool for analyzing intercultural differences and developing bilingual linguistic consciousness.

Today, associative lexicography is actively integrating with digital technologies: electronic databases, interactive dictionaries, and corpus resources are being created. This opens up new possibilities for a

comprehensive analysis of linguistic personality and the dynamics of linguistic consciousness in a globalizing world.

Conclusion

Thus, the development of lexicography from traditional description to associative models reflects a shift in scientific paradigms in linguistics. Associative dictionaries are becoming a significant tool in cognitive and cultural linguistics, allowing for the study of not only vocabulary but also mental structures, ethnocultural characteristics, and the specifics of the bilingual environment. Their further development is associated with digital technologies, which expand the boundaries of lexicographic description.

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