

THE PROBLEM OF NORMATIVITY IN EXPLANATORY ENGLISH DICTIONARIES

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ANNOTATION

An academic type dictionary is a normative one that describes the lexical system of a given language: it should not contain facts that contradict modern usage. The article is devoted to the issues of normativity in explanatory English dictionaries such as there is given a great number of examples along with plausible justification to the work.

Keywords: slang word, lexicon, inclusion, metaphor, guilty pleasure, scope, feature, lexical units, collocations and idioms.

The most important tool in the systematic description of the national lexicon and improving the culture of speech. An integral part of this kind of dictionary is a system of stylistic marks, which are designed to give a functional, stylistic and normative characteristic of a fixed unit and there by designate the scope and features of its use, its place in the national language system.

It is proven by many that the selection of lexical units for inclusion is included into itself: their arrangement, the setting of the entries, the selection and arrangement (grouping) of word-meanings, the definition of meanings, illustrative material, supplementary material.

In a nutshell, the majority learners encounter problems grasping metaphors as in every language it is phenomenal to come across difficulty interpreting figurative meaning such as metaphor is a figure of speech that states that one thing is another thing. It's used to make a comparison between two objects or concepts that aren't alike but have something in common

It is obvious that metaphors are powerful tools that allow us to unleash creativity, expose inner worlds, and stand out in our writing and speech. To illustrate this some common misunderstanding words, unclear metaphors are followed:

*"My thoughts are stars I cannot fathom into constellations."

—The Fault In Our Stars, John Green

(refers to the fact that Augustus has so many things he wants to say, so many things he wants to share with the world, with others, but he can't put them into words).

*"Memories are bullets. Some whiz by and only spook you. Others tear you open and leave you in pieces." —Kill the Dead, Richard Kadrey

Thinking about one memory tends to activate other memories. If you are trying to retrieve a particular memory, the flood of memories can cause competition, leaving you with a traffic jam of neural nodes, leaving you with nothing."

*"Wishes are thorns, he told himself sharply. They do us no good, just stick into our skin and hurt us." —A Face Like Glass, Frances Hardinge

"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."

—As You Like It, William Shakespeare. (People have roles to play in life just as actors do in the theatre).

“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by . And that has made all the difference.”

—“The Road Not Taken,” Robert Frost

They do us no good, just stick into our skin and hurt us.

Another the problems in the normativity of explanatory dictionaries is collocations which a learner can not understand at first sight. To illustrate that, the followings: "Everybody has a guilty pleasure—for me, it has to be mid 70s disco”

*Guilty pleasure something, such as a film, television program, or piece of music, that one enjoys despite feeling that it is not generally held in high regard.

According to the Oxford dictionary, the meaning of “guilty” culpable of or responsible for a specified wrong doing. "he was found guilty of manslaughter"

When the learner looks for the synonyms of the word “Guilty”, encounters with a great number of nearby words

culpable	blameable	answerable	condemnable
to blame	at fault	accountable	erring
blameworthy	in the wrong	censurable	reprehensible
delinquent	offending	felonious	sinful
iniquitous	criminal	convicted	peccant

Additionally the word “pleasure” indicates a feeling of happy satisfaction and enjoyment. For instance: "she smiled with pleasure at being praised".¹

happiness	rapture	fulfilment	amusement
delight	satisfaction	contentment	delectation
joy	glee	contentedness	enjoyment

If we translate word by word, there is less interpretation than using explanatory dictionary, that is why we need to be aware of the normative of this dictionary. Furthermore, the collocations and idioms are not found in the explanatory dictionaries which only give the interpretation along with synonyms, antonyms of singular words are written.

Another common widespread problems among learners are slang words which are an essential part of conversing in English. The majority of learners encounter American slang is full of eccentric sayings and colloquialisms, which are useful in a wide variety of casual situations.

Now, it may be wondering the learners what is a slang word, or what are some cool slang phrases? “Slang” refers to informal vocabulary words that aren’t typically found in a dictionary. Many of these slang words have multiple meanings, so the learners will have to pay close

¹ Oxford dictionary

attention to the context of a conversation in order to use them correctly. There is the first given common slangs which is used nowadays and the breaking normativity of explanatory dictionaries. Additionally, there is mentioned the Oxford dictionary meaning, their usage in normal English. For example:

1. Laid back – Relaxed or calm. E.g. “This weekend was very laid back.”

Lay laid; past participle: laid

*put (something) down gently or carefully. For example: "she laid the baby in his cot"

*Back-/bak/

*the rear surface of the human body from the shoulders to the hips.

"he lay on his back"

2. Chill – (Same as above).

Chill /tʃɪl/ (noun) an unpleasant feeling of coldness in the atmosphere, one's surroundings, or the body. "there was a chill in the air"

3. Sweet – Fantastic. “I passed the test!”

-“Sweet!”

Sweet /swi:t/ (adjective) *having the pleasant taste characteristic of sugar or honey; not salt, sour, or bitter.

4. Cool – Same as above

Cool /ku:l/ (adjective) *of or at a fairly low temperature.

"It'll be a cool afternoon"

5. Lame – The opposite of cool or fantastic. Eg. “That’s so lame that you can’t go out tonight.”

Lame /leɪm/ *(especially of an animal) unable to walk without difficulty as the result of an injury or illness affecting the leg or foot.

"his horse went lame"

6. Bomb – Really good. E.g. “That sandwich was bomb.”

Bomb /bɒm/ *a container filled with explosive or incendiary material, designed to explode on impact or when detonated by a timing, proximity, or remote-control device.

"a bomb attack"

7. Bummer – A disappointment. Eg. “That’s such a bummer. I’m sorry that happened.”

Bummer /'bʌmə/ *a disappointing or unpleasant situation or experience.

"the party was a real bummer"

8. Shady – Questionable or suspicious. E.g. “I saw a shady guy in my neighborhood last night.”

Shady /'ʃeɪdi/ *situated in or full of shade. “shady woods”

9. Hot – Attractive. E.g. “He/she is hot.”

Hot /hɒt/ *having a high degree of heat or a high temperature.

"it was hot inside the hall"

10. Beat – Tired. E.g. “I was so beat after that soccer game.”

Beat /bi:t/

*strike (a person or an animal) repeatedly and violently so as to hurt or injure them, typically with an implement such as a club or whip.

“If we were caught, we were beaten”

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