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A FRAME-DRIVEN APPROACH TO BILINGUAL LEXICOGRAPHY: LEXICAL MEANING AND USAGE PATTERNS IN GREEK AND ENGLISH MOTION VERBS

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
2012

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ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with bilingual lexicography in Greece, and aims to make a contribution towards improving Greek-English lexicography in particular. A critical examination of the quality of existing Greek-English dictionaries reveals the necessity for empirically-grounded, theoretically-informed and user-oriented entries. In this light, the study proposes and implements an alternative, frame-driven approach to the bilingual lexicographic process from the raw language data to the dictionary product.

The study pivots on the idea that the compilation of dictionary entries can be systematized by structuring corpus-derived lexical information in a pre-lexicographic database. The first major concern of the work is to present the rationale for building a bilingual lexical database on the basis of empirical corpus research and linguistic theory suitable for representing semantic and phraseological networks in a coherent manner. Motion verbs in English and Modern Greek serve well as a framework for implementing the proposed approach, because their cross-linguistic differences in lexicalization preferences, polysemy structure, and co-occurrence patterns illustrate the major challenges facing bilingual lexicographers.

The second main objective of the work is to demonstrate how such a rich and multi-purpose pre-dictionary database can be used for creating a specific dictionary. Considering the electronic medium potential and the encoding needs of Greek-speaking users of English, we describe and illustrate the design of a novel Greek-English production-oriented electronic dictionary. The proposed dictionary would be more effective than the existing Greek-English dictionaries in both content and presentation; the pre-lexicographic database allows for an improved and refined treatment of lexical meaning and use, while the design framework enhances the user-orientation of the dictionary interface.

Throughout the process of database building and dictionary designing, the study provides valuable insight into the nature of lexicographic issues concerning polysemy, phraseology, translation, naturalness, and user-friendliness. To meet the demands of modern lexicography, bilingual dictionary projects need to systematically combine a wide range of resources such as available corpora and software tools, frame semantics and FrameNet, the cognitive theory of metaphor and metonymy, the contextual theory of meaning, native speaker intuition, template entries, user profiles, and the advantages offered by the electronic medium; the present work is a comprehensive guide to this end.