

Article

Cross-Linguistic Stylistic Synonyms in Russian and English: Application in Uzbek Parallel Corpus Development

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Abstract: This paper examines the phenomenon of stylistic synonyms in Russian and English for using them in parallel corpora to observe linguistic phenomenon to create Uzbek English parallel corpus. Stylistic synonyms—words with similar meanings but differing in tone, connotation, or formality—are often challenging for translators and linguists. By analyzing synonyms, we explore how stylistic variations manifest in both languages, offering insights into cross-linguistic differences in synonymy. Results indicate that Russian and English share common types of stylistic synonymy, certain features specific to each language emerge, reflecting cultural and structural linguistic differences.

Keywords: Corpus, Parallel, Stylistics, NCRL

1. Introduction

Synonymy is a fundamental concept in both lexicology and translation studies, referring to the relationship between words that share a similar meaning. Stylistic synonyms, in particular, are words that convey the same denotative meaning but differ in tone, formality, or emotional coloring [1]. These differences often pose challenges not only in translation but also in the comparative study of languages.

In both Russian and English, stylistic synonyms exist across a spectrum, from colloquial expressions to formal language. This study seeks to explore how these stylistic differences are represented in a parallel corpus English languages with other languages, where English texts are aligned with their other language translations [2]. Parallel corpora, which consist of texts in one language paired with their translations in another, offer a rich resource for analyzing cross-linguistic and stylistic variations. By focusing on stylistic synonyms, we aim to uncover patterns of synonym usage and explore potential translation strategies used by bilingual speakers [3].

2. Materials and Methods

For this study, we utilized the Russian-English Parallel Corpus from the National Corpus of the Russian Language (NCRL). The corpus consists of literary texts from both languages, aligned at the sentence level. This corpus was chosen because literary texts often exhibit a rich variety of stylistic synonyms, making it an ideal source for analysis. The corpus contains approximately 1 million word pairs, which provides a robust dataset for examining stylistic variation [4].

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Data Extraction: We extracted pairs of stylistic synonyms by focusing on specific word classes, such as adjectives and verbs, which tend to exhibit a higher degree of stylistic variation. Using a keyword search, we identified cases where the Russian text contained stylistic synonyms, and we examined how these were translated into English. For example, the Russian verbs “говорить” (govorit’, “to speak”) and “молвить” (“to utter”) are stylistic synonyms, with the latter carrying an archaic tone. We then checked how these were rendered in English translations [5].

Analytical Approach: To analyze the data, we used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. First, we calculated the frequency of stylistic synonyms in both languages by tagging synonymous pairs in the corpus [6]. We then conducted a qualitative analysis to investigate whether the stylistic differences in Russian were maintained or neutralized in English translation. For translation equivalence, we examined the use of literal vs. adaptive translation strategies [7].

3. Results

Frequency of Stylistic Synonyms: Our quantitative research found that stylistic synonyms are more commonly marked in Russian than in English. Russian language differs between formal and informal names for the same notion, such as “ребёнок” (rebenok, “child”) and “дитя” (ditya, “child,” archaic or poetic). In many situations, English translations neutralized the stylistic distinction, instead using the more common phrase “child.”

Stylistic Synonym Pair	Russian Term 1	Russian Term 2	English Translation	Potential Uzbek Potential
Child (neutral vs. archaic)	ребёнок	Дитя	child	Go’dak
Speak (neutral vs. formal)	говорить	Молвить	speak	Gapirmoq/so’ylamoq
Friend (informal vs. formal)	друг	Товарищ	Friend/comrade	Do’st/birodar

Cross-Linguistic Differences: one major finding is that Russian tends to have a wider array of stylistic synonyms for the same concept, often reflecting differences in register or emotional tone [8]. For instance, Russian has multiple words for “speak” or “say” (e.g., “говорить,” “молвить,” “изрекать”), in Uzbek gapirmoq, “so’ylamoq” mainly used in poetry. In contrast, English often lacks direct stylistic equivalents, and translators frequently resort to neutral terms, as seen in the case of “speak” or “utter.”

Additionally, while Russian employs more archaic and poetic synonyms, English translations often fail to capture these nuances fully, potentially due to differences in literary traditions or stylistic preferences. For example, while Russian uses “дева” (deva, “maiden”) in poetic contexts, English translations often simplify this to “girl” or “woman,” losing the archaic or poetic flavor [9].

Neutralization: As seen in the translation of “дитя” and “ребёнок” into the single English word “child,” stylistic distinctions are often neutralized.

Contextual Adaptation: Some translations added contextual markers to indicate formality or tone. For example, “молвить” was sometimes translated as “to utter solemnly” to preserve the formality of the Russian term [10].

Cultural Substitution: In certain cases, translators used culturally appropriate English terms that approximate the stylistic tone of the Russian synonym. For instance, “товарищ” (tovarishch, “comrade”) was occasionally rendered as “friend,” depending on the context. Through Uzbek explanatory dictionary of synonyms it is evident that In Uzbek “do’st” is used in wide context while “birodar” is used in narrow context. Through

investigation of linguistic data we will be able to collect potential synonyms and create English and Uzbek parallel corpus that helps scholars to carry out further investigations.

4. Discussion

The findings suggest that while Russian and English both utilize stylistic synonymy, Russian tends to maintain more explicit distinctions between formal, informal, and poetic registers. English, in contrast, often simplifies these distinctions, particularly in translation from Russian texts. This results in a loss of stylistic nuance in the translated text, although translators sometimes compensate by using contextual clues or adaptive strategies [11].

The challenges identified in translating stylistic synonyms highlight the importance of cultural context and literary tradition. Russian literature has a long history of employing stylistic variations to convey subtle nuances – something that may not always have a direct equivalent in English [12]. Thus, translators must balance fidelity to the original text with the readability and naturalness of the target language.

5. Conclusion

This study explored stylistic synonyms in Russian and English using a parallel corpus. The analysis revealed that Russian often employs a broader range of stylistic synonyms, with more explicit distinctions between formal, informal, and poetic registers. English, in contrast, tends to neutralize these distinctions, especially in translation [13]. These findings underscore the importance of understanding cross-linguistic differences in synonymy and highlight the challenges of preserving stylistic nuance in translation [14]. This investigation into English and Russian stylistic synonym usage in parallel corpora serves as a foundational step toward creating a robust Uzbek-English parallel corpus. By analyzing synonym patterns across these languages, we aim to deepen the understanding of stylistic nuances, paving the way for a dedicated resource that not only captures linguistic parallels but also enhances insights into the unique stylistic conventions of Uzbek writing. Such a corpus will become a valuable tool, supporting learners and researchers in navigating Uzbek and English stylistic subtleties and fostering a richer, more integrative approach to language learning and analysis [15].

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