FWU Journal of Social Sciences, Summer 2026, Vol.20, No.2, 186-196
DOI: http://doi.org/10.51709/19951272/Summer2026/13

Exploring Collocation and Semantic Prosody of English and Urdu Translation Equivalents in Cross-linguistic newspapers

Nasir Hussain and Uzma Anjum
Air University, Islamabad, Pakistan

Tehseen Zahra
Bahria University, Islamabad, Pakistan

The present study aims to explore collocational behavior and semantic prosody of English content words and their Urdu translation equivalents using two newspapers from different languages. The English corpus was built based on the editorials from *The Sun* which is one of the most widely circulated English newspaper in UK and the Urdu corpus was extracted from the editorials in*Daily Jung* which is one of the most widely circulated Urdu newspaper in Pakistan. The analysis of semantic prosody was carried out using the latest version of #LancsBox. The identification and categorization of the semantic prosody are based on Stubbs (1995) classification of semantic prosody. The findings of the study indicate that semantic prosody and semantic environment of English lexical items and their Urdu first translation equivalents significantly vary. This led to the interpretation that the first translation equivalents identified in the widely used bilingual English to Urdu dictionaries are not equivalents as they convey entirely different semantic prosody. The findings of the study also highlighted the incorrect and inconsistent treatment of semantic prosody in the Monolingual Urdu and English dictionaries. Moreover, the present study emphasizes the pedagogical implications and presents recommendations intended to direct future research in this area .

Keywords*:* semantic association, semantic prosody, collocational behavior, corpus linguistics, Urdu corpus

Over the last three decades, corpus-based research has discovered evidence that words do not have fixed meanings in themselves. Instead, the meaning of a word is determined by how it is used with other words in contexts (Hanks, 2013; Thuratham & Namsaeng, 2025).This type of meaning which is formed through the co-text is referred to as semantic prosody (Louw, 1993; Partington, 2014). Semantic prosody in cross-linguistic studies reveals significant insight into how corpus-based contrastive studies enhance translation precision and understanding of cultural differences that affect the variation of collocational behavior and semantic associations.Studying semantic prosody in classroom settings, Stewart (2009) highlighted the issue of semantic prosody by stating that semantic prosody is “a reality that translators are required to address, otherwise important source text elements will be left unaccounted for” (p.29). It is observed that translation equivalents differ in collocational behavior and semantic prosody. The bilingual dictionaries show inconsistency with the treatment of semantic prosody especially in English-Urdu dictionaries. These observations underscore the need for a systematic cross-linguistic analysis of semantic prosody. Though, several studies in the literature explored the semantic prosody in parrell and comparable corpora to examine semantic prosody of translation equivalents and the inadequacy of semantic prosody in the dictionaries,the vast majority of these studies focus on English; there are a few studies that explored semantic prosody cross-linguistically. However, semantic prosody of English and Urdu translation equivalent has received less attention. To fill this gap, the present study seeks to explore collocations and semantic prosody

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Dr. Uzma Anjum, Associate Professor, Air University,Islamabad, Email: uzma.anjum@au.edu.pk

in English and Urdu newspapers and use two monolingual English and Urdu dictionaries as reference corpora to examine the inadequacy of the semantic prosody of the lexical items in the dictionaries. Moreover, it is important to note that the previous researchers believe that semantic prosody of a word may vary across genres. Therefore, in order to avoid this subtleness, the researcher has only incorporated the editorials as target corpora in both languages to compare the semantic prosody of English lexical words and their Urdu translation equivalents used in the same genre. The issue of non-equivalence in translation has been empirically demonstrated in corpus-based studies showing that English lexical items and their Urdu translation equivalents often diverge in semantic prosody and usage patterns (Ullah et al., 2023), highlighting limitations in bilingual lexicographic representation.

Literature Review

The concept of semantic prosody (SP) was first introduced to the public by Bill Louw in 1993 which he credited to Sinclair (1991). Louw defines semantic prosody as“a consistent aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates (Louw,1993, p. 57). In 1996, Stubbs expanded the concept of semantic prosody and argued that words can have collocational relationships not only with exclusively positive or negative semantic prosody but also with broader semantic sets. To support his point, Stubbs conducted a thorough analysis of various words using two different corpora. He categorized their collocates into positive, negative, or specific lexical sets. For example, he discovered a nuanced prosodic pattern in the word "job" which exhibited both positive and negative collocations. In contrast, "career" predominantly demonstrated positive associations.

Gabrovšek (2007) laments that the treatment of semantic prosody in dictionaries is often inconsistent or inadequate. Resultantly, ESL/EFL learners frequently choose inappropriate word choices because they rely upon the dictionaries (Alzahrani, 2021; Nezhad, 2021). Similarly, Sardinha (2000)explored the inadequacies of contemporary dictionaries through a corpus-based study. The researcher concludes that semantic prosody should be part of glossaries and dictionaries. Especially, this phenomenon should be part of bilingual dictionaries because the translators always rely on them. Thus, semantic prosodic description can be an important part of lexicography (Šorli, 2013). Ji and Wu (2000) investigated the semantic prosody of three content words *set in*, *rife*, and *propaganda* in three contemporary bilingual English-Chinese dictionaries. The semantic prosody of these lexical items were previously examined by Sinclair (1991) and he had established that these lexical items often carry negative semantic prosodies. However, the findings of the study of Ji and Wu (2000) show that none of the bilingual dictionaries they examined accurately reflected the negative semantic prosody of the phrase *set in*. Additionally, the dictionaries even provided incorrect information about the semantic prosodies of *rife* and *propaganda*, potentially misleading their users. Safeer et al., (2024) examine gender-based variation in paired monophthongs in Pakistani English, offering sociophonetic insights that support broader analyses of linguistic variation relevant to cross-linguistic studies of English and Urdu newspaper discourse.

Hunston (2007) emphasizes that in the context of translation, the translators and the translation studies scholars should understand the evaluative meaning or more specifically attitudinal meaning associated with words and text. Several linguists have investigated the attitudinal meaning or semantic prosody of translation equivalents in cross-linguistic corpus. Partington (1998) investigated the Italian word ‘impressionante’ and its English translation equivalent ‘impressive’ in English. The finding of his study show that the English translation equivalent *impressive* frequently co-occur with positive collocate like ‘talent’, ‘achievement’, and ‘dignity’ which contribute to the positive semantic prosody of the node. However, the Italian translation equivalent ‘impressionante’ often appear in negative and neutral semantic environment like ‘series of price rises’ and ‘assassination attempts’ which exhibit unfavorable associated meaning. The finding of the study thus confirms that translation equivalents can form opposite meaning, therefore, when translating a text into another such features of word meaning should be incorporated. Similarly, Sardinha (2000) conducted a corpus-basedcontrastive analysis of various Portuguese lexical items and their English translation equivalent to explore semantic prosody of these translation equivalents focusing on their translatability and

inadequacies in the bilingual dictionaries. Utilizing a large corpus of 140 million words in Portuguese and 100 million words English corpus, the study reveals that semantic prosody of translation equivalent words vary across languages and this phenomenon cannot easily be identified through intuition. Moreover, this study emphasizes the need for translators to access corpus-based information on semantic prosody to ensure accuracy in the attitudinal meaning. McEnery and Xiao (2010) also investigated the verb 'cause' and its Chinese translation equivalent. The finding of his study strongly corroborates with the finding of the study of Sardinha (2000). The researchers have also investigated several other words in English and their Chinese translation equivalents and based on the findings of their study they contend that semantic prosody and semantic preferences are potentially be observed in English. They highlight that the English near synonymous words and their Chinese equivalents exhibit similar semantic prosody and collocational behavior. Dam-Jensen and Zethsen (2007) explored the Danish verbs 'medføre' and 'forårsage' and their English translation equivalents lead *to* and *cause.* The findings of their study show that the Danish verbs 'forårsage'/'medføre' and their English translation equivalents *lead to* and *cause* show similar semantic prosody and semantic preferences. However, Dam-Jensen and Zethsen (2007) argue that in different languages semantic prosody and semantic preferences of lexical words and their equivalent in other languages may demonstrate different semantic prosody and collocational behavior. This argument was supported by the study of Wu and Li (2016) that through a corpus based study they explored the differences and similarities in semantic prosody of the Chinese adverb *shaowei* and its English translation equivalent *a little*. The node words were processed in a Chinese corpus built by the Center for Chinese Linguists which is consist of 477 million word and the Brown Corpus. The finding of the study show that the Chinese adverb *shaowei* appears in neutral semantic environment which contribute to the neutral semantic prosody of *shaowei.* Contrarily, the English adverb*a little* tends to co-occur with negative collocations demonstrating negative semantic prosody of *a little*. Based on the finding of the study the researchers suggest the lexicographers to compile dictionaries in which words are defined based on the evaluative meaning or semantic prosody.

In the Pakistani context, Khatoon et al., (2021) investigated semantic prosody in corpora of American and Pakistani English songs using the corpus tool LancsBox. The findings of their study show that the semantic prosody of a word is influenced by other words in the environment or context. For example, the node word 'love' has positive semantic prosody, but when combined with the collocate 'bleeding,' its semantic prosody becomes negative. It demonstrates how words impact each other's meaning and semantic prosody when they co-occur. Further findings of the study showed that in the corpus of Pakistani songs, the word love was found in a negative environment however, in the corpus of American songs love was found to have a positive semantic prosody.

After reviewing the existing literature on the topic, it can be concluded that the previous studies have investigated the semantic prosody of English words as well as in other languages, however, little attention has been given to the semantic prosody of English and Urdu translation equivalents. Therefore, the current study aims to investigate the semantic prosody of the target words in English and their Urdu translation equivalents using English and Urdu editorials and two bilingual dictionaries as reference corpora.

Method

The present study utilizes a corpus-based methodological framework, drawing upon two cross-linguistically comparable, tailor-made corpora of English and Urdu, to explore the collocational behavior and semantic prosody of selected English lexical items and their corresponding Urdu translation equivalents. In terms of building the corpus, the researcher selected two newspapers based on their top ranking of yearly circulation and popularity. The English corpus is based on *The Sun* which is one of the most read English newspaper in the United Kingdom (Leone, 2023) and is based on *Daily Jung* which is one of the most read Urdu newspaper in Pakistan (Pahore et al., 2021). However, the genre was delimited to only editorials for both newspapers in order to explore semantic prosody of English lexical items and their Urdu translation equivalent across same genre. The second reason for choosing editorials was that as compared to opinion articles, headline news and magazines, editorials presents a more balanced view while incorporating both

factual information and opinions. This approach provides a deep understanding of semantic prosody in a language which is shaped by both subjective and objective elements.

Table 1
Overview of the Corpora

Name	Language	Time span	Files	Corpus size
Daily Jung	Urdu	2020-2023	165	**100510**
The sun	English	2020-2023	165	**101397**

The Target Words

The target words were selected based on two criteria. Firstly, the target words should have high-frequency occurrences in both corpora because high-frequency occurrences of the target words would be representative data. This helps ensure the relevancy and applicability of the results to a broader range of linguistic situations. Secondly, the target words should not be homonyms. The aim of investigating semantic prosody is to explore the underlying positive, negative, and neutral connotations linked with a specific word in a given context and if the target word is a homonym, it will certainly carry different semantic prosody, leading to confusion in the analysis. Therefore, to avoid ambiguity and ensure clarity in the interpretation of the results, homonymous words were excluded. Based on the above given criteria, the target words for the analysis were selected after going through following several steps. First of all, the researchers generated wordlists of both corpora in #Lancsbox and identified 50 high-frequency lexical items in both corpora. In the second step, the researchers manually identified all the frequently occurring English lexical words from the wordlist that have translation equivalents in the Urdu corpus wordlist. Thus, the researchers found 12 English content words that had translation equivalents in Urdu corpus wordlist. However, to choose the target words through a proper process, in the third step, the translation equivalents were also compared with definitions in two widely used bilingual (English-to-Urdu) dictionariesfor the reliability and validity of the selection of translation equivalents. After searching the translation equivalents in both bilingual dictionaries, only the content words that had same first translation equivalent in both dictionaries were selected as it represents the primary meaning, which is more likely to show consistent prosodic patterns across languages and ensures greater reliability and comparability in the analysis. Thus, the researchers selected the following English lexical words (Table 2) which have same Urdu translation equivalents in both bilingual dictionaries and they have close frequency in both corpora.

Table 2
Selected target words

S.No	English Lexical Words	Frequency in The Sun	Urdu Translation Equivalents	Frequency in Daily Jung
1	Time	165	وقت /ʊəqt/	**172**
2	decision	44	فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/	**81**
3	world	90	دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/	**89**
4	public	47	عوام /əʊɑːm/	**106**

Corpus analysis tool

The corpus analysis tool #LancsBox 6.0 (Brezina et al., 2015) was primarily utilized for the investigation of collocation and semantic prosody of English lexical items and their Urdu translation equivalents. However, as#LancsBox does not fully support Urdu corpora in several cases as the concordance lines of Urdu text have to be read from left to right in Lancsbox though Urdu is a right-to-left language. In order to compensate the limitation the researchers used Antconc corpus tool for the extraction of KWIC of Urdu node words, so that the precision of Urdu language be maintained.

Data Analysis Procedure

The identification and analysis of semantic prosody have been carried out based on a combined analytical framework of Louw (2000) and Stubbs, (1995) approaches. Following the Louw's analysis approach, the target words were analyzed through concordance lines within the span of 5 words to the both left and the right of the node. Reading concordance lines of the nodes, the researchers identified the collocates of the node whether the collocates are positive, negative, or neutral in the context. However, following Stubbs' approach, the node words were analyzed looking at the collocates that have strong association with them. For this purpose, unlike Stubbs, the researchers utilized Graph Coll tool under #LancsBox to extract first order collocation network which is suitable and more advanced tool for the statistical measures of the collocates. The three strongest associated collocates werethen analyzed separately through the second order collocates to look at the general associated meaning of the node words in the corpus. The parameter for using Graphcoll given by Brezina et al., (2015) was modified based on the objectives of the study to improve the reliability of the analysis. The collocates for the node words were extracted from a span of four words to the left and four words to the right of the node. However, the parameter has been modified when the graph is jumbled up for a clearer collocation network. The statistical measurement tool MI-score with the statistic value 3 was chosen for the extraction of the collocation network. The MI score is used to determine the strength of the association between two items. A higher MI score indicates a stronger link between the items, while a score closer to 0 suggests that the two items are more likely to co-occur by chance. Therefore, the MI score is effective in identifying such collocation pairs. Moreover, the functional words have been removed to extract clearer graphs of the nodes. (see Table 2)

Table 3

GraphColl Parameters

Notation Categories	Statistic ID	Statistic Name	Statistic cut-off value	L and R Span	Minimum collocate freq. (C)	Minimum collocation freq. (NC)	Filter
Example	3a	MI	3	L4 R4	3	3	Function words Removed

Note: Adapted from Brezina et al. (2015)

After analyzing the collocates of node words through graphs and concordance lines, the results from the two analysis approaches were analyzed together in terms of prosodic strength to classify and categorize the types of semantic prosody of the node words. After that, the results were categorized based on Stubbs (1995) classification of semantic prosody. According to Stubbs (1995), if a word attracts collocates primarily by strong negative semantic characteristics, it has a negative semantic prosody. If the collocates are mostly positive, the word has a positive semantic prosody. When both positive and negative collocates are present in the context, the word is said to have neutral or mixed semantic prosody. Moreover, the definitions of the node words were also checked against two widely used monolingual dictionaries in Urdu and English as reference corpus to check the denotative meaning and the kind of semantic prosody of the nodes reflected in the monolingual dictionaries.

Results and Discussion

Time وقت /ʊəqt/

The word *time* is an abstract noun which exhibits a neutral semantic prosody in the OLD. The word وقت /ʊəqt/ found to be the first Urdu denotative translation equivalent of *time* in the bilingual dictionaries. The word وقت /ʊəqt/ in the UL also conveys a neutral semantic prosody. However, based on the findings of the study, the word time and its Urdu translation equivalent وقت /ʊəqt/ show different collocational behavior and semantic prosody. *Time* conveys a strongly positive semantic prosody in the English corpus while وقت /ʊəqt/ appeared in both negative and positive semantic environment. Based on the MI score,*time* was primed to co-occur with the collocates like*spend*, *right* and *test* in the English corpus. When *time* is collocated with the word *spend* it conveys a strong positive associated meaning that reveals a theme of love and care. The

priming of *time* and *right* also appeared in pleasant semantic environments that highlighted the themes of seizing opportunities while waiting and making choices on the suitable time. Similarly, the combination of *time* and *test* which is an unusual priming,found to have explicitly positive connotative meaning which emerges themes like triumph or success. However, the Urdu translation equivalent وقت /ʊəqt/ had distinctive collocational behavior that it was found to be primed with the collocates likeروٹی /roːʈiː/, مقرر /muqərrər/, تقاضہ /ʈəqaːzɑ/. One of the most interesting findings is that the word وقت /ʊəqt/ has neutral semantic prosody in the UL while its collocateروٹی /roːʈiː/ has positive semantic prosody. However, the combination of وقت /ʊəqt/ andروٹی /roːʈiː/ conveys a strong negative semantic prosodyas the collocate *دو وقت کی روٹی*is associated with the themes like hardship, inflation and poverty which is further strengthened by other collocates such as*مشکلات* (difficulties),*مسائل* (problems), and*معاشی*(economic). This fining corroborates with the finding of the study of Hu, (2015) that according to him a word's distinctive semantic prosody cannot be correctly determined unless its collocates are thoroughly examined in context which means that semantic prosody extends beyond single words and collocates. However, this finding contradicts Stubbs' (1995) argument that when a word in a sentence attracts collocates that are predominantly associated with negative semantic traits, the word has strong negative semantic prosody. Conversely, if the collocates are mostly positive words, the word is considered to have a positive semantic prosody. However, in this case the collocate روٹی /roːʈiː/ has positive semantic prosody but the combination of it with وقت /ʊəqt/ exhibits intense negative semantic prosody. This discrepancy occurred due to the social context and linguistic influence. The second important and interesting finding is that the combination of *time* with *test* in the English corpus explicitly shows strong positive semantic prosody. Conversely, in the Urdu corpus, the collocate امتحان/ɪmʈhɑːn/which is first translation equivalent of *test*,intensifies the negative semantic prosody of the combination of وقت /ʊəqt/ andروٹی /roːʈiː/. The other strongly associated collocates of وقت /ʊəqt/ in the Urdu corpus are مقرر /muqərrər/ and تقاضہ. The combination of وقت /ʊəqt/ and مقرر /muqərrər/ imply a favorable semantic prosody. However, it has a unique semantic environment of *politics* that it has been only used in the context of politics. Moreover, the combination of وقت /ʊəqt/ and تقاضہ/ʈəqaːzɑ/ (demand) also found to be appeared in positive semantic environment which highlight a sense of responsibility and urgency. These two combinations وقت /ʊəqt/- تقاضہ /ʈəqaːzɑ/ and وقت /ʊəqt/ -مقرر /muqərrər/ appeared in unique semantic environment of politics. However, the combination of *time* and the strongly associated collocates found to be used in different semantic environment.

Decision فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/

The English word*decision* in OLD refers to a choice or a judgment which is made while pondering upon a matter. It explicitly exhibits a positive semantic prosody in the OLD as the predominant collocates of *decision* found in the OLD are *right* and *final* which combining with the *decision* convey a strong sense of perseverance and support. On the other hand, فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/ is the Urdu translation equivalent of decision which is also found to have strong positive semantic prosody in the UL that refers to an act of resolving or settling a dispute, conflict and lawsuit. The findings of the study show significant differences in the semantic prosody and collocational behavior of فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/ and *decision* not only in the English and Urdu comparable corpora but also exhibit opposite semantic prosody in the monolingual dictionaries. The word *decision* in the English corpus appeared in predominantly negative semantic environment forming a strong native associated meaning. *Decision* was strongly collocated with the word *leave* and *close.* When *decision* collocated with the word *leave* it demonstrated a negative semantic prosody and highlighted a theme of loss. It is worth mentioning that the combination of *decision* and *leave* appeared in a unique semantic environment of profession. On the other hand, when *decision* collocated with the word *close*, it also conveyed a negative semantic prosody highlighting a theme of deprivation. However, the translation equivalent فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/ appeared in both negative and positive semantic environment slightly leaning to negative semantic prosody in the Urdu corpus. The frequent collocates of فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/ in the Daily Jung were معطل /moʔatʈal/ (cancel)and عدالتی /əɖɑːləʈiː/ (judicial). The combination of فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/ and معطل /moʔatʈal/ exhibits a strong negative semantic prosody which was associated with the meaning of inconsistency and incompetency. On the other hand, the combination of فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/ and عدالتی /əɖɑːləʈiː/ found in both negative and positive semantic environment stating a mixed semantic prosody. Thus, if we compare overall semantic prosody of فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/

and *decision* we can see that the word decision has been used explicitly in negative semantic environment which forms a negative associated meaning of decision. However, the Urdu translation equivalent فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/ had mixed semantic prosody leading slightly towards negative semantic prosody. Though, both words found to imply negative evaluative meaning, they significantly differ in its collocational behavior. The word *decision* was found in different contexts, most dominantly in the context of profession and job while the word فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/ had a unique semantic environment of judiciary in the Urdu corpus which imply that Pakistani news media prioritizes news and discussion about court or lawsuits. One of the interesting findings here is that in the both widely used monolingual English and Urdu dictionaries, the word *decision* and its translation equivalent فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/ found to have positive semantic prosody; however, the findings of the study show that both *decision* and فیصلہ /fɛslɑː/ exhibit negative semantic prosody. This finding corroborates with the study of Gabrovšek(2007) and Lee (2011) that according to them, the treatment of semantic prosody in dictionaries is often inconsistent and sometimes even (Ji & Wu, 2000) the dictionaries provide incorrect information.

World دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/

The English word 'world' in OLD found to have neutral semantic prosody that refers to the earth where all the creatures like human and animals exist and it includes all the countries and the natural existence. On the other hand the word دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/ is the first Urdu translation equivalent of *world.* The word دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/ also exhibits a neutral semantic prosody in the UL that refers to the existing universe or world, the present time or the opposite of hereafter. Although, both 'world' and دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/ revealed to have neutral semantic prosody in the respective monolingual dictionaries. Both have significant differences in their semantic environment and collocational behavior. The word *world*appeared with the words such as *woman, war* and *sport*. The combination of *world* and *woman* showed a mixed semantic prosody which highlighted the themes such as woman empowerment and gender inequity. When the word *world* combined with *war* it explicitly showed negative semantic prosody that highlighted themes like destruction, loss deprivation. However, in a context the combination of *world* and *war* was used metaphorically that implied sense of intense competition in the sport. Similarly, the combination of *world* and *sport* was used with a pleasant semantic prosody. On the other hand, the Urdu translation equivalent دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/ also found to appear in both positive and negative semantic environment with a slight lean towards positive semantic prosody. The combination of دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/ and برقرار /bərkərɑːr/ exhibited a strong positive semantic prosody that highlighted themes like perseverance and consistency. However, the combination of دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/ with پوری /puːriː/ (entire) and مسلم/mʊslɪm/ (Muslim) appeared in both positive and negative semantic environment forming mixed semantic association. One of the interesting findings is that the word 'world' found to have a unique semantic environment in the English corpus that it had predominantly used in sports. On the other hand, the word دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/ was used with a unique semantic prosody of politics. This shows how a news media prioritizes semantic environment. The second important finding here is that both *world* and*دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/*exhibit neutral semantic prosody in the monolingual dictionaries. However, the findings of this comparative study showed that in both comparable corpora *world* and*دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/*conveyed mixed semantic prosody.Similar to Lee's (2011) observations, this finding reveals that dictionaries frequently fail to accurately present the semantic prosodies of lexical items.

Public عوام /əʊɑːm/

The term *public* in OLD exhibits strongly positive semantic prosody that refers to the ordinary people living in a society or community. The strongly associated collocates of *public* in OLD are *safety* and *health* which reveal that it has unique semantic environment of health and medicine. However, عوام /əʊɑːm/found to be the first Urdu translation equivalent of the English word *public* in bilingual dictionarieswhich in contrast,exhibits negative semantic prosody in the Urdu monolingual dictionary. In the UL عوام /əʊɑːm/ refers to common people, layman, opposite to elites and ignorant. In the UL عوام /əʊɑːm/ has a predominantly negative semantic prosody as it defines عوام /əʊɑːm/ as a person who is not rich or elite and less educated. This finding is in line with Sardinha (2000) that semantic prosody of translation equivalent words vary across languages. In the comparable corpora, both *public* and عوام /əʊɑːm/ found to have mixed semantic prosody. It is also worth mentioning that both *public* and عوام /əʊɑːm/ predominantly appeared with a unique semantic

environment of politics in the both comparable corpora. The word *public* was found to have strong association with the collocates *opinion* and *think* in the *Sun* corpus. The combination of *public* and *opinion* appeared in unpleasant semantic environment that implied a sense of domination and use of power and authority to manipulate public narratives. However, when the word *public* combined with the collocate *think* it conveyed a positive associated meaning. On the other hand, the word عوام /əʊɑːm/ frequently occurred with collocates such asچکی/tʃəkiː/ (Mill), خوشحالی/xʊʃhaːliː/ (Prosperity) and بوجھ /boːdʒʱ/ (Burden). When the word عوام /əʊɑːm/ collocated with the wordچکی/tʃəkiː/, it gives a metaphorical interpretation of the suffering and hardship of people who were ground in difficulties. The combination of عوام /əʊɑːm/ and بوجھ/boːdʒʱ/ appeared in both positive and negative context revealing themes such as hardship and relief. However, the priming of عوام /əʊɑːm/خوشحالی /xʊʃhaːliː/ found to have strong positive semantic prosody.

Based on these findings and interpretations, the researchers therefore conclude the discussion that semantic prosody and semantic environment of English lexical items and their Urdu first translation equivalents significantly vary. This led to the interpretation that the first translations equivalents identified in the widely used bilingual English to Urdu dictionaries are not equivalents as they convey entirely different semantic prosody such as the word *decision* in the English corpus found to have strong negative semantic prosody which was primed to co-occur with a unique semantic environment of profession or job. On the other hand the word فیصلہ /fɛslaː/ (the first translation equivalent of decision)conveyed mixed semantic prosody in the Urdu corpus which was primed to co-occur with the unique semantic environment of judiciary. It can be interpreted that the semantic environment of a word significantly influenced its semantic prosody. However, the semantic environment of translation equivalents considerably vary in different languages because the associated meaning of words are influenced by its culture and language. Therefore, we cannot blindly rely on the translation equivalents in the bilingual dictionaries without knowing its semantic environment in the target language. This interpretation has been supported by one of the findings of the study that the word *public* was found to have strong positive semantic prosody in the OLD that it was appeared in positive semantic environment; however, its translation equivalent word in Urdu عوام /əʊɑːm/ found to exhibit negative semantic prosody in the UL. When both publicand عوام /əʊɑːm/were examined respectively in the comparable corpora, both of them found to appear in different semantic environment and exhibited different semantic prosody. This not only shows the language and cultural influence on the usage of these words but also highlighted the incorrect and inconsistent treatment of semantic prosody in the dictionaries. However, the semantic prosodic strength of these English lexical words and their Urdu translation equivalents can serve as an indicator to translation equivalence. For example the word *world* and its translation equivalent دنیا /ɖʊn.jɑː/ both found to have mixed semantic prosody in the comparable corpora and they also found to exhibit neutral semantic prosody in the both monolingual dictionaries respectively. Therefore,the two corresponding words can be interpreted to have higher semantic and pragmatic equivalence and may not be considered complete untranslatability. This finding is in line with Wei, and Li (2014) who claimed that the stronger prosodic alignment generally corresponds to higher semantic and pragmatic equivalence, whereas divergence in prosodies suggests limited equivalence but not complete untranslatability. Moreover, the findings of the study confirm the finding of Hu, (2015) that he holds that a word's distinctive semantic prosody cannot be correctly determined unless its collocates are thoroughly examined in context. All the four English words and their Urdu translation equivalents only exhibited the associated meaning through its semantic environment. Therefore, it is important to note that semantic prosody extends beyond single words and collocates.

Implications of the study

Despite the fact that the phenomenon of semantic prosody has been paid much attention at both monolingual and cross-linguistic level for the last three decades showing that semantic prosody of translation equivalents differ in different languages, no effort was put to explore semantic prosody in Urdu translation equivalent and the treatment of semantic prosody in the Urdu dictionaries. Therefore this comparative study was conducted to explore English and Urdu translation equivalents using comparable corpora. The findings of the study has some linguistic and methodological implications. First of all, the present study is the first to explore semantic prosody in Urdu and English using comparable corpora utilizing cutting-edge corpus tools.

By utilizing comparable corpora and a mixed method research the present research provides a foundation to conduct corpus-based studies in Urdu language. The findings and the methodological approaches employed in this study pave the ways for the future researchers in areas such as translation, sociolinguistics and data driven language learning and teaching. Moreover, this research also gives a guideline to use cutting edge corpus tools for the Urdu linguists and researchers that they can apply this model to build Urdu corpus and study linguistic intricacies using these effective corpus tools.

Secondly, the findings of the study have significant implications for both monolingual and bilingual English to Urdu dictionaries. The prosodic description of the key words can be significant part of dictionary entries (Khan et al., 2015). This will help the bilingual dictionary users to choose appropriate translation equivalent when translating into English while maintaining the translation precision. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitation of the data that due to the small sample size, and the potential idealogical bias of the slected newspapers, the findings cannot be generalized broadly.

Thirdly, this study has a methodological implication that the previous researchers have used diverse approaches to the identification and analysis of semantic. For example, Louw (2000), used concordance reading to identify collocates of nodes, whereas Stubbs (1995) utilized purely statistical measures for this purpose. In this study, the researchers adopted a combined analytical framework that integrates both statistical and textual approaches for the identification and analysis of semantic prosody. The rationale for employing this approach was because semantic prosody is complex and cannot be fully captured through statistics alone. While collocation analysis shows word patterns, understanding meaning requires examining words in context. Therefore, combining both methods proved to provide a clearer picture of how language is used, making this approach valuable for future research (Rauf et al., 2014).

Future Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that bilingual dictionaries, especially English-to-Urdu, include semantic prosodic descriptions. Many contemporary dictionaries do not focus enough on these aspects of word knowledge, which are important for understanding how words are used in context. With modern tools like large corpora and concordance software, it is now possible to add this kind of information. Therefore a new type of dictionary should be developed where each word is reviewed and labeled according to its typical semantic prosody.

Secondly, the translators should adopt corpus-based translation methods to improve accuracy and preserve the semantic prosody of the original text. This approach would help preserve subtle meanings and cultural nuances in translation. It is also recommended to build an online Urdu corpus, which would help translators, researchers, and linguists to explore the Urdu language more effectively with advanced tools. Building an online Urdu corpus would also contribute to linguistic research. This resource would give researchers the ability to analyze the language in greater depth and use modern tools to better understand its structure and usage.

It is also recommended that the future researchers can explore other aspects of lexical priming theory that were not covered in this study. This would provide a more complete picture of the theory and its applications.

This study focused on editorial texts and the sample was limited; however, the future researcher can include other genres and select huge sample size to make the findings more inclusive and widely applicable. Studying a variety of genres would give a broader view of how semantic prosody works across different contexts.

Finally, while this study used Urdu and English newspapers as comparable corpora, future research can use parallel corpora to study semantic prosody in translated texts. Parallel corpora would allow for a

clearer comparison between the source and translated texts, helping to better understand how meaning is transferred and preserved.

References

Alzahrani, A. A. J. (2021). *Employing a parallel corpus-based approach in teaching semantic prosody and collocational behavior to Arabic EFL learners* [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas Arlington]. UTA Libraries Research Common. http://hdl.handle.net/10106/29980

Brezina, V., McEnery, T., & Wattam, S. (2015). Collocations in context: A new perspective on collocation networks. *International journal of corpus linguistics*, *20*(2), 139–173. https://doi.org/10.1075/ijcl.20.2.01bre

Sardinha, T. B. (2000). Semantic prosodies in English and Portuguese: A contrastive study. *Cuadernos de filologia Inglesa*, *9*(1).

Dam-Jensen, H., & Zethsen, K. K. (2007). Pragmatic patterns and the lexical system: A reassessment of evaluation in language. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *39*(9), 1608–1623. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2006.11.009

Gabrovšek, D. (2007). Connotation, semantic prosody, syntagmatic associative meaning: three levels of meaning? *ELOPE: English language overseas perspectives and enquiries*, *4*(12), 9-28. https://doi.org/10.4312/elope.4.1-2.9-28

Hanks, P. (2013). *Lexical analysis: Norms and exploitations*. Mit Press. https://doi.org/10.1075/ijcl.21.2.06teu

Hu, H. M. (2015). A semantic prosody analysis of three adjective synonymous pairs in COCA. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, *11*(2), 117–131. https://www.jlls.org/index.php/jlls/article/view/418

Hunston, S. (2007). Semantic prosody revisited. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, *12*(2), 249–268. https://doi.org/10.1075/ijcl.12.2.09hun

Ji, Y., & Wu, J. (2000). Research into semantic prosody: Targets, methodology and application. *Journal of Xiamen University (Arts and Social Sciences),14*(3), 63–68. https://shorturl.at/9TvQ6

Khatoon, M., Zahra, T., & Abbas, A. (2021). Exploring semantic prosody and collocation networks in Pakistani and American English songs through corpus approaches. *Pakistan Journal of Society, Education & Language*, *8*(1), 75–88. https://zt.ms/Kv1

Lee, S. (2011). Semantic prosody in bilingual dictionaries and EFL learners' sentence writings. *English Teaching*, *66*(2), 253-272.

Leone, L. (2023). The representations of freedom in The Sun newspaper between 2019 and 2021: A corpus-based study. *Topics in Linguistics*, *24*(1), 43-54.

Louw, B. (1993). Irony in the text or insincerity in the writer? The diagnostic potential of semantic prosodies. In M. Baker, G. Francis, & E. Tognini-Bonelli (Eds.), *Text and technology: In honour of John Sinclair* (pp. 157–176). John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/z.64.11lou

Khan, Q., Naz, A., Anjum, U., & Khan, F. (2015). Ordering the social world: A sociolinguistic analysis of gender roles in Pakhtun folk wisdom. *FWU Journal of Social Sciences, 9*(2), 14–21.

McEnery, T., & Xiao, R. (2010). *Corpus-based contrastive studies of English and Chinese*. Routledge.

Nezhad, M. R. (2021). Investigation on productivity of synonym words with different semantic prosody in English. *International Journal of Linguistics and Translation Studies, 2*(3), 65–75. https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlts.v2i3.146

Pahore, M. R., Memon, S., & Khan, Q. (2021). Fall or rise? Mapping the development of traditional and digital newspapers. *Progressive Research Journal of Arts and Humanities*, *3*(1), 117-128.

Partington, A. (1998). *Patterns and meanings*. John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/scl.2

Partington, A. (2014). Mind the gaps: The role of corpus linguistics in researching absences. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics, 19*(1), 118–146. https://doi.org/10.1075/ijcl.19.1. 05par

Rauf, N. K., Aslam, N., & Anjum, U. (2014). Characteristic symptoms and adaptive behaviors of children with autism. *Journal of the College of Physicians and Surgeons--Pakistan: JCPSP*, *24*(9), 658-662.

Safeer, N., Anjum, U., & Saleem, T. (2024). *Gender-based study of paired monophthongs: A sociophonetics approach*. 3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature, 30(2), 231–262.

Sardinha, T. B. (2000). Semantic prosodies in English and Portuguese: A contrastive study. *Cuadernos de filologia Inglesa*, *9*(1), 93–110. https://shorturl.at/zwdTT

Sinclair J. M. (1991). *Corpus, concordance, collocation*. Oxford University Press.

Šorli, M. (2013). Forms of encoded pragmatic meaning: semantic prosody. A lexicographic perspective. *Lingue e linguaggi*, *10*(2), 95–112. https://doi.org/10.1285/i22390359v10p95

Stewart, D. (2009). Translating semantic prosody. In A. Beeby, P. Rodríguez Inés, & P. Sánchez-Gijón (Eds.), *Corpus use and translating: Corpus use for learning to translate and learning to translate* (pp. 29–46). John Benjamins Publishing.

Thuratham, W., & Namsaeng, P. (2025). Challenges in English communication skills of university-level EFL learners. *FWU Journal of Social Sciences*, *19*(3), 26–40.*https://doi.org/10.51709/19951272/Fall2025/3*

Wei, N., & Li, X. (2014). Exploring semantic preference and semantic prosody across English and Chinese: Their roles for cross-linguistic equivalence. *Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory*, *10*(1), 103–138. https://doi.org/10.1515/cllt-2013-0018

Ullah, S., Anjum, U., & Saleem, T. (2023). Voice onset time of Mankiyali language: An acoustic analysis. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, *23*(2), 256–274.

Wu, Z., & Li, L. (2016). A contrastive study on semantic prosodies of minimal degree adverbs in Chinese and English. In *Semantic Technology: 5th Joint International Conference, JIST 2015, Yichang, China, November 11–13, 2015, Revised Selected Papers 5* (pp. 209-215). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.54097/ehss.v8i.4221