

LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF THE WORD HAPPINESS, LUCK AND JOY IN ENGLISH

Sevara Berdimuratova

Master of Termez State University Faculty of Linguistics

Abstract

Happiness is a popular daily topic and may be expressed in different ways of which no less important than others is utilizing linguistics items. In English, there are a lot of words and idioms denoting happiness which draw the author's attention. In this article, she discusses the most widely used English word denoting happiness - 'happy' in terms of grammar first and semantics later. Its grammatical features include syntactic functions and morphological features, and the semantics includes lexical meaning, synonyms, antonyms, collocations and idioms of which 'happy' is a component. Some suggestions in teaching and learning the word are finally provided in the article.

Keywords: Happy, translation, translation transformation, adequate translation, lexical additions.

Introduction

The English language abounds in the expressions of emotion, especially happiness. The state of happiness can be expressed by such linguistics items as 'happy', 'cheerful', 'gay', 'glad', 'merry', 'pleased', 'delighted', 'elated', and 'jubilant' (adjectives); 'bliss', 'ecstasy', 'euphoria', 'glee', 'joy' and 'rapture' (nouns); 'exult' and 'rejoice' (verbs); and 'walk on air', 'in seventh heaven', 'on cloud nine', 'on top of the world', 'over the moon' and 'thrilled to bits' (idioms). Of all these linguistic items, 'happy' is the most widely used. In this article, we shall first deal with the interesting points of 'happy' in terms of the grammatical features including syntactic functions and morphological features, and the semantics including lexical meaning, synonyms, antonyms, collocations and idioms of which 'happy' is a component.

Grammatical Features of 'Happy'. Syntactic Functions

'Happy' is a typical adjective, sharing the following syntactic functions of adjectives:

(a) the head of an adjectival phrase, pre-modified by such intensifiers of degree as 'very', 'so', 'so very', 'more than', 'extremely', 'too', etc., e.g. 'very happy', 'more than happy' (happy to a degree that is not adequately expressed by the word 'happy'), and other adverbs such as 'reasonably', 'completely', 'perfectly', etc. as in:

My early childhood was extremely happy[7].

or post-modified by the intensifier ‘enough’, e.g. ‘happy enough’;

(b) attributive as pre-modifier in a noun phrase, e.g. ‘a happy man’;

(c) predicative as subject complement with such verbs as ‘appear’, ‘be’, ‘become’, ‘feel’, ‘look’, ‘seem’ and ‘grow’, as in:

His brother grew happier gradually;

or object complement, exemplified by:

You will make me happy.

When ‘happy’ plays the predicative function, it can take complementation types of prepositional phrases with ‘about’, ‘in’, and ‘with’, that-clauses, and to-infinitive post-modification, e.g.:

He is happy about his exam results;

I was happy that he had come;

I am happy to be of service.

Also, for all these functions, it allows comparison structures of:

Equality:

He is as happy a teacher as my father;

Inequality:

I am not as/so happy as he is.

Comparative:

You will make me happier than I can tell you[8].

Superlative:

Now began the happiest time of my life.

Morphological Features

The lexeme ‘happy’ consists of one morpheme as a root[9]. It has two inflected word-forms: happier (comparative) and happiest (superlative) by means of inflection; and five derivatives ‘happiness’ (n), ‘happily’ (adv), ‘unhappy’ (adj), ‘unhappiness’ (n) and ‘unhappily’ (adv) by means of derivation; and such compounds as ‘happy event’(n), ‘happy hour’ (n), ‘happy medium’ (n), ‘happy-go-lucky’ (adj), ‘slap-happy’ (adj), ‘trigger-happy’ (adj) by means of compounding[10]. ‘Happy event’ consists of two roots happy and event; ‘happy hour’ two roots happy and hour; ‘happy medium’ two roots happy and medium; ‘happy-go-lucky’ three roots happy, go, luck and a suffix -y; ‘slap-happy’ two roots slap and happy; and ‘trigger-happy’ also two roots trigger and happy. ‘Happy’ can also combine with such nouns as ‘money’, ‘clothes’ and ‘bomb’ to form the compounds: ‘money-happy’, ‘clothes-happy’ and ‘bomb-happy’[11].

Feeling or Showing Pleasure and Contentment. ‘Happy’, in this sense, denotes an emotion of positive pleasure that human beings feel. It is a neutral, generic and all-inclusive term, and we use it to describe the feeling of pleasure in all circumstances: life, marriage, work, social relationships, etc. People have this feeling of pleasure when something good has happened, for example:

My mother was happy about my exam results[12].

‘Happy’ is frequently used, informally, formally and in literature. In this sense of feeling of pleasure, it is descriptively synonymous with ‘glad’, ‘pleased’, ‘delighted’, ‘ecstatic’, ‘elated’, and ‘overjoyed’, whereas it is antonymous with ‘sad’ – “negative feeling of pleasure” and its derivative ‘unhappy’.

As ‘happy’ denotes the feeling of pleasure of human beings, it can collocate with nouns denoting various classes of people, e.g. ‘child’, ‘doctor’, ‘teacher’, etc.

It can occur with different prepositional phrases with ‘about’, ‘in’, ‘with’ and ‘for’, e.g.:

I am so happy for you. I know how much you wanted the job.

Apart from the meaning of ‘happy’ – feeling of pleasure, ‘happy’ can be used to describe people who feel pleasure most of the time[13]. ‘Happy’ applies to a pleasurable feeling of contentment, as from a sense of fulfillment. In this meaning, it is near-synonymous with ‘cheerful’, which suggests the good spirits characteristic of a person who is pleased with something or who has a naturally outgoing nature.

‘Happy’ collocates with nouns denoting classes of human beings and even with ‘disposition’, as in:

Marcia is a lovely girl with a happy / cheerful disposition.

The first sense of ‘happy’ is commonly used not only in daily life but in literary works as well; and also not only a long time ago but at present as well.

Causing or Giving Pleasure and Contentment. The second sense of ‘happy’ is used as much as the first sense and describes an occasion, a situation, or a period of time when someone feels happy. ‘Happy’ here is a near-synonym of the adjective ‘blissful’. ‘Blissful’ is used for an occasion, a situation, or a period of time when someone feels extremely happy and not worried by anything as in:

‘Happy’ can occur with ‘childhood’, ‘life’, ‘marriage’, ‘days’, ‘age’, etc.

In the last example, ‘happy’ and ‘merry’ are near-synonyms. ‘Merry’ can substitute for ‘happy’ in the similar meaning, but it cannot in the first two examples[14].

‘Merry’ conveys the idea of festivities. We say ‘Merry Christmas’ because Christmas is a feast -- a festival whereas when we say ‘Happy New Year’, we are wishing the new year to be a happy and prosperous year. ‘Merry’ has a very restricted collocational range. ‘Happy’, by contrast, has a much broader collocational range: it collocates with any word denoting events

or occasions to form greetings or wishes such as New Year / Christmas / Anniversary / Wedding Party, etc.

‘Happy’ can also collocate with ‘days’ and ‘landings’ to form good wishes. ‘Happy days!’ is an expression wishing somebody well, e.g. in a toast while ‘Happy landings!’ is a good wish for a journey, but it is now very dated[15].

Fortunate, Lucky

‘Happy’ here, functioning as pre-modifier of noun phrases only, has such descriptive synonyms as ‘fortunate’ (a formal word), and ‘lucky’ (an informal one). The central meaning shared by these adjectives is “attended by luck or good fortune”: ‘a happy outcome’; ‘a fortunate omen’; and ‘a lucky guess’ as in:

He is in the happy position of never having to worry about money.

Its antonym is ‘unhappy’ meaning “not attended by or bringing good fortune; unlucky”[16].

Suitable, Appropriate

‘Happy’, in this sense, functioning as pre-modifier of noun phrases only, is a formal word, descriptively synonymous with ‘suitable’ – a neutral word and ‘appropriate’ – a formal word. It is antonymous with ‘unhappy’, which means “not suitable, inappropriate”: ‘a happy / an unhappy choice of words’. Other examples of collocations of ‘happy’ are with ‘combination’ as in ‘a happy combination of colours’, ‘a happy combination of food and wine’, with ‘coincidence’ as in ‘(by) a happy coincidence’, with ‘thought’ in ‘a happy thought’, and with ‘idea’ in ‘a happy idea’[17].

Willing

‘Happy’ in this sense is also a formal word, denoting the property of willingness to do something. It is synonymous with ‘willing’ in terms of descriptive meaning, but ‘willing’ is a neutral word. Other synonyms of ‘happy’ in this sense are ‘pleased’ and ‘glad’, which are formal words, too, used to express the willingness. ‘Happy’ in this sense can function as subject complement taking the complementation type of to-infinitive post-modification but cannot take comparison structures:

I am happy / pleased / glad to help you.

‘Happy event’ (n) is used in British English to denote the birth of a child. ‘Happy hour’ (n) is informally used especially in the United States to denote a period of time, usually in late afternoon and early evening, during which a bar or lounge features drinks at reduced prices. This noun does not accept the change in number of ‘hour’. ‘Happy medium’ (n) means “a proper balance between too much and too little of something, between two extremes or two

qualities either of which would be undesirable in excess”[18]. This noun does not accept the change in number of ‘medium’ and it can collocate with such verbs as ‘attain’ / ‘achieve’ / ‘be’ / ‘find’ / ‘seek’ / ‘strike’ / ‘hit’ and ‘provide’.

‘Happy-go-lucky’ (adj) means “not planning or worrying about the future”. ‘Slap-happy’ (adj) is a slang word, having two senses: “dazed, silly, or incoherent from or as if from blows to the head; punch-drunk” and “cheerfully irresponsible or carefree”. ‘Slap-happy’ in the second sense is a descriptive synonym of ‘happy-go-lucky’. ‘Trigger-happy’ (adj) is also a slang word with two senses of “having a tendency or desire to shoot a firearm before adequately identifying the target” and “inclined to react violently at the slightest provocation or without thinking”[21].

The terms ‘money-happy’ and ‘clothes-happy’ refer to a major preoccupation with money or clothes to the exclusion of almost everything else[19]. They are not common and have nothing very much to do with 'happiness'. ‘Money-happy’ means “preoccupied with making, saving, talking about money”. ‘Clothes-happy’ refers to “crazy for clothes”. The inference may be that one is only happy when thinking about clothes but that is weak. A person who is always concerned with more clothes and clothes shopping would be referred to as clothes-happy. ‘Bomb-happy’ was a term used in the military to describe someone who had been in action too much and was a little crazy / neurotic because of it[20].

All the compounds with ‘happy’ as a constituent have their meanings which cannot be deduced from their components.

Conclusion

The English word denoting happiness 'happy' is very interesting to study. We have discussed its grammatical features and semantic structure together with its synonyms, antonyms and collocational range as well as idioms with ‘happy’ included. As ‘happy’ is polysemous with its central meaning of describing positive pleasure that people have, it has its partial synonyms, near-synonyms, antonyms and wide collocational range for each sense. Many idioms of which ‘happy’ is a constituent have been concerned. ‘Happy’ is a neutral, generic term, used informally, formally and in literature.

In teaching and learning the word 'happy', different ways of presenting the meaning of words should be taken into account. According to Ur (1996: 63), there are different ways such as concise definition, detailed description, illustration, demonstration, context, examples (hyponyms), synonyms, antonyms, translation and associated ideas or collocations. It would be best to combine some ways rather than only one. The teaching of ‘happy’ by means of synonyms cannot be conducted alone for it has no absolute, but descriptive, synonyms. By means of the context, both the descriptive meaning and connotation can be conveyed. Other

meanings should be introduced to the English learners after they have mastered the central meaning of denoting happy states. The compounds and idioms of which 'happy' is a constituent should be provided then. The teaching of other meanings and the compounds or idioms should be dependent on the learner English level and interest; otherwise the learners will be overwhelmed, failing to learn any words or idioms successfully.

REFERENCES

1. Cowie, A. P., Mackin. R. & McCaig, I. R., Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1993.
2. Dictionary of English Language and Culture, Longman, Essex, 1992.
3. Fernando, C., Idioms and Idiomaticity, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 1996.
4. Lyons, J., Semantics, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1977.
5. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English, Encyclopedic Edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992.
6. Palmer, F.R., Semantics, Second Edition, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981.
7. Умбетова, Н. (2023). Межкультурная коммуникация в литературе Востока и Запада. Innovations in technology and science education, 2(16), 7-11.
8. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2022). ТЮРКОЯЗЫЧНАЯ ЛЕКСИКА КАК ПРОЯВЛЕНИЕ ПАТРИОТИЗМА В ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЯХ ОО СУЛЕЙМЕНОВА И ЧТ АЙТМАТОВА.
9. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2022). Казахская душа в русском поэтическом тексте ОО Сулейменова. Русский язык в поликультурной среде. ББК 812Р Р-88, 277.
10. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2022). Лингвостатистические свойства глагольной лексики в поэзии ОО Сулейменова. Educational Research in Universal Sciences, 1(3), 19-25.
11. УМБЕТОВА, Н. Ж. (2020). ПОЭТИЧЕСКИЙ ТЕКСТ, РОЖДЁННЫЙ ХУДОЖНИКОМ СЛОВА-БИЛИНГВОМ (НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ ПОЭЗИИ ОО СУЛЕЙМЕНОВА). Иностранные языки в Узбекистане, (6), 61-74.
12. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2013). Стилистические особенности глагола в творчестве ОО Сулейменова. SCIENCE AND WORLD, 22.
13. Умбетова, Н. (2023). Проблемы литературных связей и взаимовлияние культур. Традиции и инновации в исследовании и преподавании языков, 1(1), 697-701.
14. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2022). СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТ ГЛАГОЛЬНОЙ ЛЕКСИКИ В ПОЭЗИИ ОО СУЛЕЙМЕНОВА. ББК 83.3 р М 34, 334.
15. УМБЕТОВА, Н. Ж. (2022). Стилистическое своеобразие глагола (на материале поэзии ОО Сулейменова). In Язык и ментальность в диахронии (pp. 198-203).

16. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2020). Глагольная лексика: классификация, лексико-семантические группы (на материале поэзии ОО Сулейменова). Наука и мир, 1(5), 57-60.
17. Умбетова, Н. (2024). ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННАЯ КАРТИНА МИРА КАК ОТРАЖЕНИЕ МЕЖЛИТЕРАТУРНЫХ СВЯЗЕЙ. Innovations in Technology and Science Education, 3(19), 140-147.
18. Умбетова, Н. (2024). МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНАЯ КОММУНИКАЦИЯ ОО СУЛЕЙМЕНОВА И ЧТ АЙТМАТОВА. UNIVERSAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH, 2(10), 67-71.
19. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2023). КУЛЬТУРОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ В ПОЭЗИИ ОО СУЛЕЙМЕНОВА. ББК 812Р Р-88, 206.
20. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2022). МОГУЩЕСТВЕННАЯ СИЛА МАТЕРИ В ТВОРЧЕСТВЕ ФМ ДОСТОЕВСКОГО.
21. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2022). Функционально-стилистическая окраска глагольной лексики (на материале поэзии ОО Сулейменова). In Современное высшее образование в условиях многополярного мира (pp. 493-497).
22. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2022). БЫТЬ МАТЕРЬЮ-ВЕЛИКОЕ СЧАСТЬЕ И ВЕЛИКАЯ ОТВЕТСТВЕННОСТЬ (НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ ПОВЕСТИ ЧТ АЙТМАТОВА" МАТЕРИНСКОЕ ПОЛЕ"). In Научный форум: филология, искусствоведение и культурология (pp. 20-26).
23. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2022). Роль глагольной лексики в поэтическом тексте ОО Сулейменова. In XVIII Виноградовские чтения (pp. 91-93).
24. Умбетова, Н. Ж. (2022). ЛЕКСИКО-СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ ПРИ ИЗУЧЕНИИ ПОЭТИЧЕСКОГО ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЯ (НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ ПОЭЗИИ ОО СУЛЕЙМЕНОВА). In Технологии обучения русскому языку как иностранному и диагностика речевого развития (pp. 465-469).
25. Алимарданова, Р. Н. ОИЛАДА СОҒЛОМ ПСИХОЛОГИК МУНОСАБАТЛАРНИ ТАЪМИНЛАШНИНГ МУҲИМ ОМИЛЛАРИ. PSIXOLOGİYA Учредители: Бухарский государственный университет, (S2), 34-38.
26. Алимарданова, Р. Н. (2016). Словесные методы обучения психологии. Вестник современной науки, (6-2), 153-155.
27. Алимарданова, Р. Н. (2016). Словесные методы обучения психологии. Вестник современной науки, (6-2), 153-155.