

# **Thematic Network Project in the area of Languages**

## **Sub-project 9: Dictionaries**

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### **DICTIONARIES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS, NATIONAL REPORTS AND THEMATIC REPORTS FROM THE TNP SUB-PROJECT 9: DICTIONARIES**

**Sub-project 9: Dictionaries**

**Dictionaries in Language Learning**

**Appendix to the Final Report for Year Three**

**DICTIONARIES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

**RECOMMENDATIONS, NATIONAL REPORTS AND THEMATIC REPORTS  
FROM THE TNP SUB-PROJECT 9: DICTIONARIES**

**edited by R.R.K. Hartmann**

**Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages  
Freie Universität Berlin**

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## PREFACE

In formulating its original Policy Paper in 1996, the Sub-Project 9 (Dictionaries) of the Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages had found that there is still no dependable documentation on lexicographic training and research into dictionary-making and dictionary use; we therefore decided very early on to embark on a series of country-by-country surveys of the dictionary scene in Europe, with the aim of filling some of these gaps in our knowledge. To give the reader an impression of their contents, we present here the synthesis versions of these 13 National Reports, in alphabetical order of country abbreviations from Belgium to Sweden, using an agreed uniform template. No reports are available for Austria, Iceland, Switzerland and the Irish Republic. In each case, the authorship - sometimes multiple - is attributed; any references to the literature (including relevant dictionaries and other reference works as well as websites of interest) are specified in the Bibliography & Resource List at the end of the volume.

But even before the end of the first year, the Scientific Committee of the TNP Sub-Project 9 realized that such national reports were not enough, and began to commission a series of detailed enquiries into specific issues. In Year 2 we concentrated on the kinds of dictionaries language learners need and publishers offer, and in Year 3 we focused on the conditions of dictionary use in higher education. The first five of these Thematic Reports reproduced here relate to the identification of dictionary reference skills and their teaching to university language students: TR1 provides a brief overview of relevant research, TR2 presents a detailed case study of the dictionary situation in one particular university (in Southwest England), TR3 specifies the sorts of skills required by language learners, TR4 exemplifies the way some of these are taught in another university (in Northeast Spain), TR5 considers the implications of dictionary work for teacher training. The next two reports, TR6 and TR7, illustrate some new design features of monolingual and bilingual learners' dictionaries, and the last, TR8, is devoted to the teaching of the terminology of languages for special purposes.

By far the single most important component of this publication is the set of Recommendations of the Sub-Project on how to increase dictionary awareness and improve instruction in the required dictionary reference skills in higher education curricula for language learning in Europe. These appear at the beginning of the volume; they constitute the essence of our joint thinking in the course of the last three years. Towards the end of the volume, we list some ways in which they might be disseminated and implemented and suggest a possible follow-up to the work of our Scientific Committee.

Many people have contributed to this 'dossier'. The authors of the individual National Reports and Thematic Reports (who acknowledge their indebtedness to others separately), the members of the Scientific Committee, notably Jacques van Keymeulen, my Deputy, and Krista Varantola, who both helped with the editorial completion, and the Corresponding Members of our group (see Appendix). I would also like to record here my gratitude to colleagues and students at Exeter, particularly those who helped with the university-wide research project into dictionary use which furnished important new evidence on a neglected aspect of academic life.

Reinhard Hartmann  
September 1999

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## RECOMMENDATIONS OF TNP SUB-PROJECT 9: DICTIONARIES

### 1. Introduction

One of the aims of the TNP Sub-Project Nr. 9 on Dictionaries is to formulate recommendations with regard to the reference needs and reference skills of university students of foreign languages and the availability of dictionaries and other kinds of reference works, particularly for the European languages. The lexicographic situation in Europe is highly complicated and differs from country to country - the National Reports reproduced below bear witness to that fact - but the common observation is that 'dictionary awareness' is generally rather (too) low, and that explicit attention to the teaching of reference skills is needed in the curricula for foreign language learning (FLL) all over Europe.

The situation with regard to the responsibility of various authorities (national and European, universities and research councils, examination boards, publishing houses etc.) for university curricula and dictionary production also differs considerably, hence it is difficult to identify specific target groups for particular recommendations.

In the list below, recommendations of a more general nature are grouped under two headings, (a) Recommendations on raising dictionary awareness, and (b) Recommendations on better dictionary provision. For each recommendation, at least one target group and some 'good practice' are identified. Additional country- or language-specific recommendations are listed in the synthesis reports on the dictionary scene in the various European countries [reproduced in their summary versions as NR1 to NR13 below].

### 2. Recommendations on raising 'dictionary awareness'

The recommendations listed here focus on the raising of dictionary awareness at university level. It must be stressed, however, that the mastery of reference skills should build on dictionary knowledge acquired previously at primary and secondary school level, based on the linguistic foundations of mother-tongue acquisition. There should be a smooth transfer from monolingual dictionary skills to those required for FLL, supported by research on dictionary use, and such dictionary reference skills should be taught to students in language departments as well as in non-language departments.

**2.1 Research into dictionary use should provide the framework for all lexicographic production**, and more such research will be needed if the level of dictionary awareness is to be raised and the teaching of reference skills is to be improved.

(Target groups:  
Research councils, Universities)

(Examples of good practice:  
Presentation by Paul Bogaards [Leiden] on the 'user perspective', at the Lille ELC/TNP Evaluation Conference 1997 [revised version reproduced as TR1 below];  
Presentation by Reinhard Hartmann and Lan Li [Exeter] on a large-scale university-wide pilot project 'surveying dictionary use' among students, at the Exeter Workshop in January 1999 [reproduced as TR2];  
Report by Hilary Nesi [Warwick] on 'specifying learners' reference skills', for the Exeter Workshop in January 1999 [reproduced as TR3])

(Bibliographical references:

Wiegand, H.E. *Wörterbuchforschung. Untersuchungen zur Wörterbuchbenutzung, zur Theorie, Geschichte, Kritik und Automatisierung der Lexikographie*. Berlin 1998;  
Atkins, B.T.S. ed. *Using Dictionaries. Studies of Dictionary Use by Language Learners and Translators*. Tübingen 1998)

**2.2** Reference works are not just tools to be taken for granted, but sophisticated instruments that need high-level training. Hence, **FLL syllabuses in universities and examination boards should include the provision and testing of the reference skills required for advanced dictionary use**. Students should be made familiar with the value of thesauri and other conceptually organized reference materials, including electronic ones, for the development of productive skills such as composition and translation.

Pedagogically oriented workbooks and practice manuals should be made available for all major dictionaries. **Deliberate, explicit instruction in dictionary reference skills should be built into teacher training courses**.

(Target groups:

University authorities, Examination boards, Ministries)

(Examples of good practice:

Report by Cristina Gelpí [Barcelona] on the 'teaching of reference skills to language students' and presentation by Gérard Poulet [Exeter] on 'dictionary reference skills in teacher training' for the Exeter Workshop in January 1999 [reproduced as TR4 and TR5 below];

Presentations by Henning Bergenholtz & Sven Tarp [Århus] on 'teaching LSP lexicography' and by Rute Costa [Lisboa] on 'terminodactic principles', both at the Århus meeting 1998 [the latter reproduced as TR8 below])

(Bibliographical references:

Stark, M.P. *Dictionary Workbooks. A Critical Evaluation of Dictionary Workbooks for the Foreign Language Learner*. Exeter 1990;  
Berwick, G. & Horsfall, P. *Making Effective Use of the Dictionary*. London 1996)

### **3. Recommendations on better dictionary provision**

Dictionaries are essential tools for FLL. A full range of monolingual, bilingual and multilingual dictionaries and other reference works should be available for each language and language pair, serving both cultural and practical purposes. Gaps in this respect are particularly obvious for the less widely used languages. The development of common European standards could guarantee the comparability and quality of reference works.

With regard to dictionary production certain conditions have to be met. In the first place there should be lexicographic planning and sufficient funding. In the second place there should be professional training for lexicographers at university and college level. In the third place lexicographic tools such as databases, corpora and reference lexicons should be developed. All the following recommendations are interrelated.

**3.1** There should be at least **one comprehensive learner's dictionary for non-native speakers for each language**, paying due attention to cultural-encyclopedic information about the respective language community.

(Target groups:

Publishers, Ministries, European authorities, Examination boards)

(Examples of good practice:

Report by Mike Rundell [Canterbury, Kent] on 'publishing ELT dictionaries', for the Gent meeting 1998 [reproduced as TR6 below])

(Bibliographical references:

Zöfgen, E. *Lernerwörterbücher in Theorie und Praxis*. Tübingen 1994;

McCreary, D. & Dolezal, F. 'Language learners and dictionary users: Bibliographic findings and commentary' in Fontenelle et al. 1998)

**3.2 For each language pair and proficiency level, at least one pair of bilingual dictionaries** should be developed for foreign language students.

(Target groups:

Publishers, Ministries, European authorities)

(Examples of good practice:

Report by Wolfgang Worsch [München] on 'publishing pedagogical bilingual dictionaries', for the Gent meeting 1998 [reproduced as TR7 below])

(Bibliographical references:

Marello, C. *Dizionari bilingui con schede sui dizionari italiani per francese, inglese, spagnolo, tedesco*. Bologna 1989;

Piotrowski, T. *Problems in Bilingual Lexicography*. Wroclaw 1994)

**3.3** There is a great need for '**languages for special purposes**' (**LSP**) **dictionaries, especially for the less widely used languages**. In this respect, systematic cooperation between terminographers and subject specialists will be essential.

(Target groups:

Publishers, Ministries, Research bodies, European authorities)

(Examples of good practice:

Presentation by Rute Costa [UN Lisboa] on 'medical terminology' and by Henning Bergenholtz and Sven Tarp [HHS Århus] on 'LSP terminology in translator training', both at the Århus meeting 1998; cooperation in Finland between terminologists, lexicographers and subject specialists)

(Bibliographical references:

Bergenholtz, H. & Tarp, S. eds. *Manual i faglexikografi*. Herning 1995;

Pearson, J. *Terms in Context*. Amsterdam 1998)

**3.4** Every European language should have a dictionary which presents the (relatively complete) **description of the lexicon of the standard language**. These monolingual resources should be synchronic, covering a wide range of language aspects, including those often neglected, such as collocations. Such monolingual dictionaries should be regularly updated and could serve as reference lexicons for the production of bilingual dictionaries.

(Target groups:

Research bodies, Ministries, Publishers)

(Examples of good practice:

For French: *Le Robert*;

for Dutch: Martin, W. et al. *Referentie Bestand Nederlands*. Amsterdam 1998;

for English: *COBUILD English Collocations on CD-ROM* 1995)

(Bibliographical references:

Kabdebo, T. & Armstrong, N. *Dictionary of Dictionaries and Eminent Encyclopedias*. London 1994;

Dalby, A. *A Guide to World Language Dictionaries*. London 1998)

**3.5** Every European language should have a set of comparable (and interchangeable) **text corpora, concordances and databases** of both written and spoken material, which should be made available to lexicographers, language teachers and students.

(Target groups:

Research bodies, Ministries, Publishers, European authorities)

(Examples of good practice:

The British National Corpus and the (COBUILD) Bank of English)

(Bibliographical references:

Stubbs, M. *Text and Corpus Analysis*. Oxford 1996;

Kennedy, G. *An Introduction to Corpus Linguistics*. Harlow 1998)

**3.6** Pedagogically oriented **hypertext, multimedia and other electronic reference works** should be developed.

(Target groups:

Publishers, Research bodies, Ministries, European authorities)

(Examples of good practice:

Presentation by Gracieta Teixeira on the DICIOPEDIA, at the Lisbon meeting 1998)

(Bibliographical reference:

Marcos-Marín, F. ed. *La lengua española en las autopistas de la información*. Madrid 1996)

**3.7** Full **bibliographical details of dictionaries and other reference works** (including electronic dictionaries, corpora and thesauri) should be made available on the Internet and by other means.

(Target groups:

Research bodies, Universities, National and European authorities)

(Examples of good practice:

Websites of lexicographic centres at Madrid and Exeter)

(Bibliographical references:

Claes, F. & Bakema, P. *A Bibliography of Dutch Dictionaries*. Tübingen 1995;

Cabré, M.T. & Lorente, M. *Els Diccionaris Catalans de 1940 a 1988*. Barcelona 1991)

#### **4. Conclusions**

The recommendations listed above focus on (a) dictionary awareness and (b) dictionary production in Europe. They constitute minimal prerequisites for better FLL by means of improved dictionary reference skills.

Dictionary awareness is essential for FLL because it leads to an improved mastery of foreign languages. Of the measures proposed, **the inclusion of systematic training in information retrieval strategies at university level together with specific examination components which test the candidate's command in the successful use of reference works are of paramount importance.**



To achieve better dictionary production, specialist university courses and degrees in Lexicography (and Metalexigraphy) will be needed, together with the establishment of the necessary institutional infrastructure and finance. **A good learner's dictionary for each European language will be essential for improvements in FLL.**

The situation with regard to the relevant target groups for the recommendations listed above differs from country to country. The raising of dictionary awareness is largely the responsibility of people in charge of university curricula (Universities, Ministries). As to dictionary production, financial support at national and European level will prove necessary for initiating and promoting projects for the lesser used languages.

## **NATIONAL REPORT 1 (BE)**

### **The Dictionary Scene in Belgium**

#### *1. Introduction*

Country: Belgium

TNP Sub-Project: 9 (Dictionaries)

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#### *2. Language context*

There are 3 official languages, Dutch, French and German. About 5.9 million are Dutch speakers (Flanders and 15% of Brussels), 4.3 million French speakers (Wallonia and 85% of Brussels, plus minorities of about 3% in major Flemish cities) and c. 70,000 German speakers. Brussels is officially bilingual, part of a complex linguistic legislation in a federal state. Explicit language planning for Dutch in the Nederlandse Taalunie (Dutch Language Union Treaty with the Netherlands, 1987). Participation of French-speaking community in francophone summit meetings to promote French as international language. Minority immigrant languages in some areas and in major cities, especially Italian, Turkish and Arabic.

#### *3. Higher education context*

7 major universities (4 Dutch-medium, 3 French-medium) and 6 university campuses with reduced curriculum. Several specialized higher education institutions (e.g. for translator and interpreter training and business administration). University programmes with a Linguistics component normally lead to 'candidate' (2 years) or 'licentiate' degrees (4 years). Modern languages are considered highly important at all levels of education, especially Dutch, French, English and German; approximately 12,000 students take Classical or Modern Languages at university level. Multilingualism is an intellectual status symbol, especially in Flanders, and the government of the Communauté française de Belgique has made foreign-language teaching compulsory in primary schools.

#### *4. The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

There is little explicit training in dictionary-making or dictionary use, although attention is paid to (bilingual) dictionaries and how to use them, especially in programmes for translation and interpreting. An introduction to lexicographic theory and practice may form part of more general courses, e.g. English philology (computational lexicography and dictionary reference skills) at the University of Liège (cf. Doppagne 1998) or Dutch (biennial course on general lexicography) at the University of Gent. Optional courses in Terminology are offered at some translation and interpreting institutes (Gent, Brussels, Antwerp).

#### *5. Dictionary production*

The major publishers for Dutch, French or German dictionaries are situated in the Netherlands, France and Germany, respectively (see the National Reports 10, 6 and 2 on these three countries). With the support of the 'Commissie voor lexicografische vertaalvoorzieningen' of the Nederlandse Taalunie, a Dutch-Danish dictionary and an Arabic-Dutch/Dutch-Arabic learner's dictionary are being compiled at the Universities of Gent and Louvain, respectively. A monolingual encyclopedic Dutch dictionary (VGEW 1996) has been produced by the Standaard Company in Flanders. Many projects in

Belgium are internationally oriented, and some projects (especially those in computational lexicography) have received support from the European Commission. The bibliography by Claes and Bakema (1995) lists 4,863 dictionaries with Dutch; information on the Dutch dictionary scene can be found in publications issued by the Nederlandse Taalunie, e.g. Janssens (1988), de Vroomen (1990) and Vervoorn (1992).

#### 6. *Dictionary research*

Lexicological and lexicographical research (e.g. on the vocabulary of non-standard language varieties and technical terminology) is carried out at the universities of Louvain, Ghent and Liège. Journal: 'Terminologies Nouvelles'. On computational lexicology, see Fontenelle (1997). The 8th EURALEX Congress was held at Liège (proceedings ed. by Fontenelle et al. 1998).

#### 7. *Recommendations*

- provide deliberate training in reference skills as part of the curriculum for language teacher training; stimulate dictionary awareness by making the teaching of (monolingual) reference skills compulsory from primary school level, and enhancing this at secondary school level with particular attention to bilingual (print and electronic) dictionaries;
- intensify research into the Belgian varieties of both French and Dutch;
- produce learner's dictionaries for foreign learners of Dutch and French and for speakers of minority languages such as Turkish;
- prepare a Dutch valency lexicon;
- prepare descriptions of the vocabulary of disappearing oral traditions, e.g. the Dutch dialects in northern France;
- intensify research into computerized dictionaries, their nature and availability.

(Prepared by Jacques van Keymeulen on the basis of a 35-page report by Jacques van Keymeulen & Filip Devos [Dutch-speaking Belgium] and a 7-page report by Thierry Fontenelle [French-speaking Belgium], with additional material by André Moulin.)

## **NATIONAL REPORT 2 (DE)**

### **The Dictionary Scene in Germany**

#### *1. Introduction*

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#### *2. Language context*

Of the total population of 81.9 million, 91.2% are native speakers of German and 8.8% speak 'regional' languages (such as Danish, Frisian and Sorbian) or 'minority' languages (such as Turkish, Serbian, Croatian, Italian, Greek, Polish, Spanish etc.). There are no central language planning activities, but special efforts are made in all the Länder to offer language courses to foreign workers and refugees and their families.

#### *3. Higher education context*

There are 113 universities, plus 6 Pädagogische Hochschulen in Baden-Württemberg, with a student population of around 1.8 million. The number of language students is not known. A distinction is often made between degree courses leading to a state certificate (Staatsexamen) and those ending with an M.A. diploma. For both, the regular study period is 8 or 9 semesters. There are no taught Ph.D. programmes (such higher degrees may take 3 to 5 years to complete), although the new 'Graduiertenkollegs' are bringing changes to the system.

#### *4. The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

Lecture courses on aspects of monolingual or bilingual lexicography are usually linked to staff research in departments of German or Modern Languages (such as English), including Translation, at fewer than half of all tertiary institutions, but there are no undergraduate or postgraduate programmes leading to a professional qualification in Lexicography. Information is not available on how many institutions provide explicit training in dictionary use, but a survey of teacher training establishments has revealed that little or no provision is made for dictionary awareness in the curricula for future teachers of German and English as a first foreign language, consequently it is safe to assume that explicit instruction in dictionary reference skills in both the mother tongue and in modern language classes is limited to some basic familiarization with a (spelling) dictionary at primary school and reference and study skills at secondary school levels (cf. Kühn 1987). Some foreign language programmes (esp. English) require familiarity with bilingual and monolingual dictionaries (in that order) and/or allow their use in final examinations.

#### *5. Dictionary production*

There are no reliable figures for dictionary production (the bibliography by Kühn 1978 is now dated). Wiegand (cited in Hartmann 1993) has given estimates for the 30-year period from 1965: 2,000 technical-terminological dictionaries, 100 dialect dictionaries, 80 spelling dictionaries, 70 general-explanatory dictionaries, 30 dictionaries of foreign words and 11 historical-etymological dictionaries. This excludes bilingual dictionaries, which must be in the region of several hundred. Scholarly dictionary products (e.g. historical, dialect and author dictionaries) are linked to universities and academies and occasionally supported by research foundations (for a report, see Arbeitsstelle Göttingen des DWB 1996).

The best-known commercial dictionary publishers are Bertelsmann, Brockhaus, Duden, De Gruyter, Langenscheidt and Klett; for bilingual dictionary projects, publishers

sometimes collaborate with foreign companies, e.g. for English with Oxford, Collins and Longman.

#### 6. *Dictionary research*

Dictionary research, e.g. at Berlin, Erlangen, Heidelberg and Augsburg, covers a wide range of languages, historical as well as synchronic aspects, linguistic as well as computational aspects, monolingual, bilingual and specialized dictionaries. Relevant publications: Wiegand (1990, 1998), Zöfgen (1994) and other volumes in the 'Lexicographica Series Maior' and its associated journal 'Lexicographica International Annual'.

#### 7. *Recommendations*

- develop more monolingual dictionaries (of varying sizes), including collocation dictionaries, for German as a foreign language;
- develop more bilingual learner's dictionaries for German and the languages spoken by immigrants and refugees;
- develop more pedagogical materials assessing existing dictionaries and teaching dictionary reference skills;
- raise public awareness of the need to increase teaching time allocated to dictionary use for language learners at schools, teacher training colleges and universities.

(Prepared by Gabriele Stein on the basis of a 4-page report, with additional material by Reinhard Hartmann.)

## **NATIONAL REPORT 3 (DK)**

### **The Dictionary Scene in Denmark**

#### *1. Introduction*

Country: Denmark

TNP Sub-project: 9 (Dictionaries)

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#### *2. Language context*

There are 5.2 million inhabitants, the majority speakers of Danish, which also plays a role in the Faroer Islands, in Greenland and in Northern Germany.

#### *3. Higher education context*

There are 5 'old' and 9 'new' universities. The number of language students is not known. Degree programmes include 3-year courses leading to the Bachelor's diploma, 2 to 3 years of further study lead to an M.A., 3 more years to a Doctorate.

#### *4. The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

Dictionary use is explicitly taught at B.A. and M.A. level at some business schools, two of which also offer modules on the theory and practice of terminological dictionaries, and one (Århus) a Ph.D. in lexicography. Textbooks used include Bergenholtz & Tarp (1994/95), Svensen (1993) and the NORDISK LEKSIKOGRAFISK ORDBOK (Bergenholtz et al. 1997). Journal 'LexicoNordica'.

#### *5. Dictionary production*

The publication of bilingual dictionaries predominates over that of terminological dictionaries (many of which include English) and monolingual Danish dictionaries. Significant publishers include Gyldendal, Gad, Munksgaard, Systime, Politiken and Clausen.

#### *6. Dictionary research*

Research on monolingual, bilingual, specialized and corpus lexicography is reported in the journal 'LexicoNordica' (Vol. 1-3, 1994-96) and in the proceedings of the 'Symposia on Lexicography' (e.g. No. 8, Copenhagen 1996: Zettersten et al. 1998) and the conferences of the Nordisk Forening for Leksikografi (e.g. No. 2 1993: Garde and Jarvad 1994). A chair of bilingual specialized lexicography has been established at Århus Business School.

#### *7. Recommendations*

- improve instruction in dictionary use at school and university levels;
- compile more bilingual terminological dictionaries;
- create more and larger general-language bilingual dictionaries.

(Based on 6-page report by Henning Bergenholtz.)

## NATIONAL REPORT 4 (ES)

### The Dictionary Scene in Spain

#### 1. *Introduction*

Country: Spain

TNP Sub-Project: 9 (Dictionaries)

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#### 2. *Language context*

Spanish, or 'Castilian', is the official language in Spain, spoken with dialect variations by the majority of the 40 million inhabitants. Other languages with official status in 'autonomous' regions are Catalan (7 million), Galician (3 million) and Basque (600,000 speakers), where language planning activities aim to promote these in relation to Standard Spanish. Romani or Calú is spoken by gypsy communities; in addition there are minority speakers of Arabic, English, Portuguese and other languages.

#### 2. *Higher education context*

There are 48 public universities in the state sector and at least 12 in the private sector, offering three levels of studies, the 2-year 'Diplomatura' followed by 2 more years for the 'Licenciatura' and 4 further years for the 'Doctorado', some with large student bodies (more than 120,000 at the 'open university' UNED and the 'public' university in Madrid and around or above 60,000 at Sevilla, Barcelona, País Vasco, Valencia and Granada, more than 35,000 at the 'autonomous' universities at Madrid and Barcelona).

Four-year language degrees with a common-core curriculum and a range of optional modules are concentrated in Faculties of Arts or Philology, where English dominates over other European modern languages (esp. French, German, Italian, Portuguese) and classical languages (especially Latin) as well as Oriental languages (especially Arabic), sometimes in combination with Linguistics or Translation, taught by many different and often traditional methods.

#### 4. *The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

Lexicography (and Terminology) are not taught in separate programmes (except at the PFU Barcelona), but as optional courses linked to such degrees as Spanish philology (e.g. Madrid Complutense and Granada), English language (Granada), Linguistics (UA Madrid), Translation studies (Málaga) or Education (La Laguna, Tenerife). There is little evidence for explicit instruction in dictionary reference skills.

#### 5. *Dictionary production*

Against the time-honoured but sometimes criticized 'Academy' tradition of Spanish dictionary-making, new methods are now being tried to develop a wider range of dictionary types, supported by information technology, metalexicographical scholarship and commercial publishing. Monolingual dictionaries for Spanish from school level to technical terminology are now more competitive, as are historical-etymological, encyclopedic and electronic genres. For modern languages, notably English, French and German, more indigenous bilingual dictionaries are coming on the market. Publishers: Anaya, Espasa-Calpe, Gredos, Planeta, Santillana, VOX-Biblograf, SGEL, Everest, Gili, SM.

## 6. *Dictionary research*

Metalexigraphy, in spite of forerunners centuries ago (some of whom are mentioned in the DLP by Martínez de Sousa 1995), has been developing slowly, with some impetus coming from outside Spain, e.g. Latin America and Germany (cf. Hernández 1994, Alvar Ezquerro 1996, Haensch 1997, Fuentes Morán & Werner 1998). Centres of research include the Institute of Lexicography of the Real Academia and the Universities of Málaga, Barcelona, La Laguna and Granada. Specific projects are linked to computational linguistics and electronic media at the UA Madrid (Marcos-Marín 1996) and to translation and terminology, with special reference to Catalan, at the PFU Barcelona (Cabré i Castellví 1993). The proceedings of the 4th EURALEX Congress at Málaga (Alvar Ezquerro 1992) also contain useful literature.

## 7. *Recommendations*

- enhance the profiles of lexicographers and terminographers;
- develop generic, multifunctional infrastructures (text corpora, lexical databases) for Spanish;
- apply these tools to the design of specialized dictionary types (learner's dictionaries, bilingual dictionaries, collocational dictionaries, NLP dictionaries, terminological dictionaries);
- support publishers who are developing new models for various types and users of dictionaries;
- promote research into dictionary use.

(Combination of two synthesis reports based, respectively, on a 26-page report by José M. Becerra Hiraldo and a 7-page report plus website information by Francisco Marcos-Marín.)



## **NATIONAL REPORT 5 (FI)**

### **The Dictionary Scene in Finland**

#### *1. Introduction*

Country: Finland

TNP Sub-Project: 9 (Dictionaries)

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#### *2. Language context*

The overwhelming majority of the population of 5 million are speakers of Finnish, for 6% Swedish is the native language, and about 5,000 Laps register Sámi as their mother tongue. Official language policies favour bilingualism, but Finnish predominates over Swedish in practice. Over 80% choose English as their first foreign language. Other languages typically offered as school subjects are Swedish/Finnish (compulsory at some stage), German, French, Russian, Spanish and Latin.

#### *3. Higher education context*

There are 20 university-level institutions providing all types of degrees from B.A. to Ph.D. Eight universities have language departments (typically English, Nordic languages and German, fewer French and other Romance languages and Russian). Four of these universities also offer translator training. Arabic and Asian languages are taught only at Helsinki University. University language centres offer both compulsory and optional service teaching to all university students.

#### *4. The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

There is no extensive training in Lexicography. Modules on aspects of lexicology, lexicography, terminology and dictionary use, where they are available, tend to be associated with translator training programmes (e.g. at Tampere) rather than traditional philological degrees. The 1992 EURALEX Congress (Tampere) and the 1997 Nordic Conference on Lexicography had dictionary use as a focus. In the Terminology sector, there is a Nordic umbrella organisation (NORDTERM) which coordinates work on term banks and organizes meetings, and the Centre for Technical Terminology in Finland (TSK) which produces systematic terminological glossaries and acts as the main supplier of Finnish equivalents for the EURODICAUTOM term bank. There is also an extensive programme in terminology at the University of Vaasa.

#### *5. Dictionary production*

The Research Institute for the Languages in Finland is responsible for producing the major monolingual dictionaries (the main recent achievement is a new 3-volume dictionary of Finnish, SUOMEN KIELEN PERUSSANAKIRJA, also available in electronic form) as well as pursuing some (Finnish-Swedish) language planning activities. There is one major commercial publisher of dictionaries, WSOY, issuing bilingual dictionaries for English, Swedish, German, French, Russian and Spanish and smaller, pocket-type dictionaries for minor languages as well as Finnish monolingual and specialized dictionaries, some in electronic form. Other major publishers, such as Otava and Gummerus, compete in the bilingual learner's field. Electronic publishing is on the increase, with WSOY as the main developer (for more on the early lexicography of Finnish see Korhonen & Schellbach-Kopra 1991).

#### 6. *Dictionary research*

Research may be linked, as in Jyväskylä, to specialization in Applied Linguistics or German (cf. Hyvärinen & Klemmt 1994). For examples of topics covered at university level, see the proceedings of the 5th EURALEX Congress (Tommola et al. 1992).

#### 7. *Recommendations*

- introduce some form of professional training for lexicographers;
- provide a monolingual learner's dictionary of Finnish and better coverage (and more frequent updates) of dictionaries;
- integrate instruction in dictionary use into language degree programmes.

(Prepared on the basis of a 3-page report by Krista Varantola.)

## NATIONAL REPORT 6 (FR)

### The Dictionary Scene in France

#### 1. *Introduction*

Country: France

TNP Sub-Project: 9 (Dictionaries)

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#### 2. *Language context*

The majority of the population of 58 million are native speakers of French, with two groups of local varieties in the north ('langues d'OÎl') and south ('langues d'Oc') and Franco-Provençal in between. Fringe 'regional' languages include Breton, Flemish, Franconian, Alsatian, Corsican, Catalan and Basque (recognized as a medium of instruction in some schools and universities); 'minority' languages of immigrant communities include Arabic, Polish, Portuguese, Italian, Turkish, Bosnian as well as some African languages from overseas territories. A number of agencies are active in language planning and terminology standardization, from the Académie Française and the Haut Conseil de la langue française to the Institut national de la langue française and the Réseau international de néologie et terminologie.

#### 3. *Higher education context*

There are 80 universities providing a wide range of language training linked to French, French as a Second Language, Linguistics, Modern Languages (notably English, German and Romance languages), African and Asian languages, Translation and Terminology, at various levels. No data are available on 'dictionary awareness', but the long tradition of French dictionaries and their popularity (e.g. in terms of sales) have often been commented on.

#### 4. *The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

There is only one postgraduate programme in Lexicography, at the University of Lille 3, but lexicographical topics can form part of courses elsewhere, such as Linguistics (esp. lexicology and word-formation, e.g. at Paris 3, Bourgogne, Nancy 2 and Picardie), the study of French (e.g. at Paris and Rouen), a modern foreign language (e.g. English at Lyon 2 and Caen, Spanish at Bretagne Occidentale, German at Strasbourg) or regional language (e.g. Breton at Rennes), Translation (e.g. at Toulouse, Strasbourg and Lyon 2), or Terminology and Terminography (e.g. at Nancy 2, Paris 3 or Rennes 2). At some institutions the use of and knowledge about dictionaries is encouraged, and some textbooks and workbooks are available (Rey 1982, Antoine 1992, Gouadec 1997). Journals such as 'Cahiers de Lexicologie', 'Lexique', 'Le Français aujourd'hui', 'Le Français dans le monde', 'Le Français moderne' and 'Etudes de linguistique appliquée' have devoted thematic issues to aspects of dictionary-making, metalexicography and dictionary use.

#### 5. *Dictionary production*

Although the French are still among the world's greatest dictionary consumers, sales of dictionaries have recently declined; consequently there is strong competition in the

private sector between publishers such as Hachette and the group Vivendi (Le Robert, Larousse, Bordas and Harraps), all specializing in various kinds of dictionaries (monolingual and bilingual, general and technical, print and electronic). Dictionaries such as the Dictionnaire de l'Académie (distributed by Fayard) and the TLF (Gallimard) belong to the public sector of dictionary production. The demand for terminographic products has risen sharply, according to publishers such as La Maison du Dictionnaire. For the background to French lexicography, see Rey (1990).

#### 6. *Dictionary research*

Research is carried out on a variety of lexicographical and metalexicographical topics (such as the morphological and semantic properties of general and specialized vocabulary, its computer-assisted analysis and its treatment in various types of reference works) at some of the institutions mentioned above as well as at the Universities of Bordeaux and Limoges. A proportion of such projects are aimed at producing glossaries or dictionaries, monolingual as well as bilingual and even polyglot, many with a linguistic or terminological slant, but very few if any within the pedagogical perspective of the language-learning dictionary user.

#### 7. *Recommendations*

- improve instruction in dictionary use at school and university levels;
- develop lexicographical (and terminological) training;
- foster international collaboration in dictionary-making;
- design guides for the compilation and use of dictionaries;
- create a European university network for the promotion of lexicology, lexicography and terminography;
- take into account other European initiatives so as to avoid repetition.

(Based on an English summary by Alison Winton of a 23-page report by Daniel Gouadec incorporating the results of a questionnaire survey of teaching and research in French universities and supported by La Maison du Dictionnaire and other dictionary publishers and terminological agencies, with additional material by Pierre Corbin and Julia Antypa.)

## **NATIONAL REPORT 7 (GB)**

### **The Dictionary Scene in the United Kingdom**

#### *1. Introduction*

Country: The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

TNP Sub-project: 9 (Dictionaries)

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#### *2. Language context*

55 million (of the total population of 57 million) are speakers of English, which is the dominating language, although there is some dialect variation and a presence of 'regional' languages (Welsh, Scots Gaelic) and 'minority' languages (Hindi, Urdu, Cantonese and Arabic), but without any central language planning.

#### *3. Higher education context*

There are 84 'old' and 32 'new' universities, plus some specialized higher education institutes. There are at least 60,000 students in classical or modern foreign languages, English and Linguistics courses, typically in 3- or 4-year programmes leading to a Bachelor's degree and a further 1, 2 or 3 years' study leading to higher degrees at M.A., M.Phil. and Ph.D. levels. No concrete data are available on 'dictionary awareness' in these, but limited findings suggest a surprising indifference among staff and students to the availability and usefulness of various reference works.

#### *4. The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

There is an M.A. programme in Lexicography (developed originally in conjunction with the University of Lille 3 and the Free University of Amsterdam) at Exeter, where EURALEX was founded (Hartmann 1984) and research has focused on dictionary use. Some undergraduate courses (e.g. those linked to English or some Modern Languages, including translator training) may have small components devoted to the subject of dictionaries, but there is little evidence of deliberate teaching of lexicography or instruction in dictionary reference skills. Some published text-books on Lexicography exist (Béjoint 1994, the DoL by Hartmann & James 1998 and the WWL compiled by McGill 1996), as well as the 'International Journal of Lexicography'. Stark (1990) provides an evaluation of dictionary workbooks.

#### *5. Dictionary production*

There are no bibliographies or figures on an apparently healthy market and vigorous competition among publishers of general (and English learners') dictionaries (see Ison 1990), slightly less in bilingual and technical dictionaries (for listings of specific dictionaries and dictionary types see the reference books OCELang 1992 and DDEE 1997). Significant publishers include Oxford U.P., Cambridge U.P., Chambers-Larousse, Collins, Longman, Macmillan, Bloomsbury and Routledge. There is an increasing demand for electronic dictionaries, encyclopedias and other reference works.

#### *6. Dictionary research*

Some staff and student research is linked to Lexicography at Exeter, limited studies are pursued elsewhere (Universities of London, Leeds, Birmingham, Lancaster, Warwick, Surrey, Glasgow), especially on learners' dictionaries, dictionary history, corpus linguistics and terminology. Some scholarly dictionary projects at various university centres are funded by the British Academy.

7. *Recommendations*

- raise the general standard of dictionary awareness at all levels;
- bridge the gap between commercial-popular and scholarly-academic lexicography;
- develop more and better training in dictionary skills;
- develop more dictionary research, especially on the user perspective.

(Based on an 8-page report by Reinhard Hartmann.)

## **NATIONAL REPORT 8 (GR)**

### **The Dictionary Scene in Greece**

#### *1. Introduction*

Country: Greece

TNP Sub-Project: 9 (Dictionaries)

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#### *2. Language context*

10 million speakers of Modern Greek (an extended variety of Demotic), the national language, with several dialects (Pontic, Tsakonic and Cretan). Minority regional languages include Pomak and Turkish in Thrace, Slavomacedonian in the north and Romany (Gypsy); immigrant languages include Armenian, Bulgarian and Albanian. Some language planning and terminological activities by the Academy of Athens, ELETO (Hellenic Society for Terminology). Foreign languages include (taught at primary level) English, (at secondary school) English, French and German, (in higher education) English, French, German and Italian, and (in private schools) English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Russian, Bulgarian, Rumanian, Albanian and Turkish. Some state provision of Greek courses for refugees.

#### *3. Higher education context*

There are 18 state universities offering 4-year B.A. courses, 2-year M.A. courses and 3-year Ph.D. programmes in Modern Greek, English, French, German, Italian and some minor European and Asian languages, particularly at the two universities with Modern Language Departments, Athens and Thessaloniki. The Ionian University in Corfu and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki offer a degree in Translation Studies. No concrete data are available on 'dictionary awareness' or the teaching of reference skills in higher education.

#### *4. The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

A one-semester course on Metalexigraphy is offered as part of the B.A. or M.A. programme in Linguistics at Thessaloniki, otherwise modules on this subject are rare (e.g. linked to courses in semantics and/or lexicology at Athens, Thessaloniki and Ioannina). No specific training in dictionary-making or dictionary use is given, neither are there any manuals or exercises accompanying dictionaries.

#### *5. Dictionary production*

Lexicographic production is limited, and no systematic bibliographies of dictionaries exist. There are two centres specializing in scholarly Greek dictionary projects at Athens (where the NEL by Kriaras and the LNEG by Babiniotis were issued) and three at Thessaloniki (where the LKN was published by the Institute of Modern Greek Studies). The main commercial publishers in the field are Patakis and Ekdotiki Athinon. The production of bilingual and terminological dictionaries is more limited than that of general dictionaries, dictionaries for children or specific learner groups are not available. For the background to Greek lexicography see Georgacas & Georgacas (1990), for three more recent critical evaluations of Greek dictionaries see Charalambakis (1994), Iordanidou (1996) and the thematic issue No. 429 of 'Anti' (on the ISTORIKON LEXIKON of the Academy of Athens).

#### *6. Dictionary research*

What little research there is concentrates on monolingual and bilingual lexicography (at the Universities of Thessaloniki and Patras) or computational lexicography (at

Thessaloniki, Patras and the Athens Institute for Language and Speech Processing which publishes the journal 'Logoploigisi').

7. *Recommendations*

- raise the standard of dictionary awareness at all levels;
- develop corpora for both written and spoken language to benefit more and larger monolingual general dictionaries;
- establish criteria for the evaluation of lexicographic products;
- develop training in lexicography;
- develop metalexicographical research;
- improve the range of pedagogical and terminological (bilingual) dictionaries;
- improve the range of bilingual general language dictionaries.

(Prepared on the basis of a 3-page report by Anna Anasstasiadis-Symeonidis.)



## **NATIONAL REPORT 9 (IT)**

### **The Dictionary Scene in Italy**

#### *1. Introduction*

Country: Italy

TNP Sub-Project: 9 (Dictionaries)

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#### *2. Language context*

51 million (of the total population of 57 million) are native speakers of Italian. Many dialects with varying percentages of the regional population, from 5.8% in Tuscany to 63.6% in Venetia. Minority regional and immigrant languages include German, Provençal, Ladin, Slovenian, Sardinian, Albanian, Greek and Catalan. There is no central language planning.

#### *3. Higher education context*

There are 47 universities and specialized higher education institutes, many of which offer courses in Modern Languages (2 with interpreter and translator training programmes). There are about 100,000 students following a four-year curriculum in one foreign language (most popularly English) and three-year courses for a second foreign language (typically Spanish, French or German); all of these favour literature over language.

#### *4. The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

No degree programme in Lexicography is available. Only three Italian universities (Roma Sapienza and the Universities for Foreign Students at Siena and Perugia) offer courses on lexicography and lexicology; modules in semantics and lexicology are taught at the Universities of Florence, Genoa and Naples and elsewhere as part of programmes in Linguistics. Dictionary use is taught rarely (e.g. at Roma 3; see Nuccorini 1993), and never systematically. Dictionary workbooks are occasionally issued by publishing houses specializing in lexicographical works, but they are usually directed at secondary-school rather than higher-education students.

#### *5. Dictionary production*

There are no systematic bibliographies, but lexicographic production is rich, especially of monolingual dictionaries of Modern Italian (see Duro 1990 and Serianni 1994), the main publishers being Garzanti, Loescher, Le Monnier and Zanichelli. There is an increasing market for electronic dictionaries, such as the multimedia dictionary DISC (1997). Various bilingual dictionaries (especially with English, German, French and Spanish) are available for Italian learners and translators (cf. Marellò 1989), but only few monolingual learners' dictionaries have been published (DIZIONARIO ITALIANO DI BASE 1997).

#### *6. Dictionary research*

Research into dictionary criticism and dictionary history is actively pursued (Marellò 1996), but there are only few specialized centres: the Accademia della Crusca (which publishes the journal 'Studi di lessicografia italiana') and the CNR institutes Opera del Vocabolario in Florence and Linguistica Computazionale in Pisa. In 1991 the Associazione italiana di terminologia was founded in Rome. Increasingly more attention is paid to frequency dictionaries (e.g. LIP 1993) and to dictionaries based on text corpora (e.g. the 'Atlante lessicale dell'italiano scritto contemporaneo' project at Pisa SNS and the list of neologisms, ALCI).

7. *Recommendations*

- raise standards of dictionary awareness;
- promote research in areas where dictionary production is scarce (learners' dictionaries, dictionaries of collocations and verb valencies);
- publish systematic bibliographical catalogues;
- offer university curricula specializing in Lexicography.

(Prepared by Patrizia Cordin on the basis of a 4-page report by Stefania Nuccorini.)

## **NATIONAL REPORT 10 (NL)**

### **The Dictionary Scene in the Netherlands**

#### *1. Introduction*

Country: The Netherlands

TNP Sub-project: 9 (Dictionaries)

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#### *2. Language context*

The Netherlands has 15.6 million inhabitants of whom 4.4% are not of Dutch nationality. The majority of immigrants are from Turkey, Morocco, the Moluccas, Surinam, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. There are also Chinese communities, groups from former Yugoslavia, and speakers of many other European languages. The national language is Dutch; Frisian is spoken in Frisia (by half a million inhabitants) as a second official language.

#### *3. Higher education context*

Half of the 14 Dutch universities have Faculties of Arts of which 6 offer courses in Modern Languages (Free University of Amsterdam and Universities of Amsterdam, Utrecht, Leiden, Groningen and Nijmegen), notably Dutch and English (about 2,000 students each) and other Germanic languages, French and other Romance languages, plus Scandinavian, Slavonic and Middle Eastern, African and Asian languages (the latter chiefly at Leiden), a number in combination with (Applied) Linguistics. Foreign language courses are also offered at a number of specialized higher education colleges, including one (at Maastricht) for translator and interpreter training.

#### *4. The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

A small number of language degree programmes offer modules on lexicology and lexicography (especially at Utrecht and Leiden, at the latter linked to the study of Dutch). The only fully-fledged programme in Lexicography (originally developed in conjunction with the Universities of Exeter and Lille 3) is available at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam as a four-year degree course in Lexicology/Terminology or a postgraduate Diploma added on to an Applied Linguistics or Language Studies degree, including a practical placement, and Terminology as an alternative specialization. Courseware on lexical/dictionary using skills are also being developed. The 6th EURALEX Congress was held at Amsterdam (proceedings ed. by Martin et al. 1994). Elsewhere no explicit training in dictionary use is provided.

#### *5. Dictionary production*

Lexicographical production is mainly in the hands of major publishers (such as Van Dale, Wolters-Noordhoff, Rodopi, Elsevier, Het Spectrum and Sdu) concentrating on monolingual Dutch dictionaries (see the bibliography by Claes & Bakema 1995) and a good range of bilingual dictionaries with English, French, Spanish and German. A number of scholarly dictionaries have also been compiled by academics for minority languages and specialized subjects. With the financial support of the Dutch and Flemish governments and under the auspices of the 'Commissie voor lexicografische vertaalvoorzieningen' (CLVV) of the Nederlandse Taalunie (The Hague), several projects (see Martin 1995) have been launched to compile bilingual dictionaries for 20 'minor' languages with Dutch (e.g. Swedish, Arabic and Turkish).

#### 6. *Dictionary research*

Lexicological and lexicographical research is carried out at several centres (U Amsterdam, VU Amsterdam, U Groningen, INL Leiden, OTS Utrecht, CELEX Nijmegen). Staff and student projects in terminology and computational lexicons exist at the VU Amsterdam (Lexicology Group coordinated by W. Martin). The CLVV also sponsors research, some in collaboration with other institutes and supported by EU funds.

#### 7. *Recommendations*

- make the profiles of lexicology, lexicography and dictionary use better known to language departments;
- develop generic multifunctional infrastructures (such as a lexical database for Dutch) for deriving specialized monolingual and bilingual dictionaries;
- develop new models for dictionaries (such as collocational, learners' and multimedia dictionaries), and promote their production;
- develop tools and models for efficient dictionary-making and appropriate dictionary use;
- further stimulate bilingual dictionary production for Dutch with so-called minor languages.

(Based on an 8-page report prepared by Willy Martin & Jeannette Ploeger, with supplementary material by Werner Abraham.)

## **NATIONAL REPORT 11 (NO)**

### **The Dictionary Scene in Norway**

#### *1. Introduction*

Country: Norway

TNP Sub-Project: 9 (Dictionaries)

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#### *2. Language context*

4.2 million (or 99% of the population) are native speakers of Norwegian, which has two co-official standards, Bokmål (used by 80-85%) and Nynorsk (10-15%, mainly in Western Norway). Active corpus planning for both varieties by the Norwegian Language Council. Dialects, mostly mutually intelligible, are widely spoken. The main regional minority languages are North Sámi (c. 20,000 speakers, in the far north), two other Sámi speech communities and Finnish. Immigrant languages include Punjabi and Urdu (c. 10,000 speakers).

#### *3. Higher education context*

There are three general universities and three specialized ones (of science and technology, economics and agriculture) as well as a number of regional colleges offering (mostly lower) university degree courses and two commercial colleges. Language studies normally require two years for a lower degree and two or more further years for a higher degree. Most language students become secondary school teachers. The most important foreign languages are (in this order) English, German and French; a wide range of 'exotic' languages are taught, especially at Oslo. In most academic fields (notable exceptions: humanities and law) English is the dominant curriculum language.

#### *4. The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

A one-semester course in Lexicography is offered at Oslo University every autumn, and students of Norwegian Linguistics may choose the subject for their M.A. degree (among the textbooks used is Svensén 1987). Little is known about the teaching of dictionary skills to foreign-language students, and the general impression is that no systematic instruction is given.

#### *5. Dictionary production*

A limited, but reasonable range of general bilingual dictionaries, especially with English, German and French, is available, as are two one-volume general monolingual dictionaries for Bokmål and one for Nynorsk, together with a selection of spelling dictionaries for both varieties of Norwegian. A number of more restricted dictionaries exist for 'peripheral' languages and specific purposes, but many genres are lacking because of the very small market, and there is no systematic bibliography. The leading publishers are Kunnskapsforlaget (which has also issued electronic versions of some of its monolingual and bilingual English dictionaries), Universitetsforlaget, Cappelen and Det Norske Samlaget.

#### *6. Dictionary research*

Very little work is done, especially in theoretical lexicography. Some research is linked to chairs in computational linguistics at the three largest universities. Among the activities pursued in the Lexicography Section at Oslo University are the production of scholarly dictionaries and the development of text corpora. The Nordic yearbook 'LexicoNordica' and the proceedings of the biennial conferences of the Nordisk Forening for Leksikografi

(e.g. Fjeld 1992) contain Norwegian contributions, as does the pan-Nordic Dictionary of Lexicography, NLO (1997). See also Berkov 1997.

#### *7. Recommendations*

- improve lexicographic training, both for professionals and users, to heighten dictionary awareness;
- enhance electronic equipment, including machine-readable text corpora, and improve databases of Norwegian as a source language for bilingual dictionaries;
- develop more types of dictionaries, e.g. bilingual dictionaries for new immigrant languages, bilingual dictionaries with Nynorsk and dictionaries for special fields such as phraseology and Middle Norwegian.

(Based on a 10-page report by Lars Vikør.)

## **NATIONAL REPORT 12 (PT)**

### **The Dictionary Scene in Portugal**

#### *1. Introduction*

Country: Portugal

TNP Sub-Project: 9 (Dictionaries)

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#### *2. Language context*

The official language is Portuguese, spoken by the majority of the population of nearly 10 million. Minority speech communities of Spanish, English and a number of African languages.

#### *3. Higher education context*

There are 9 major universities and several specialized higher education institutions providing a range of foreign language courses, notably in English, French, German and Spanish, typically in the form of 4-year 'licenciante' programmes.

#### *4. The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

Lexicology, Lexicography and Terminology are taught as autonomous subjects only at the Universidade Nova de Lisboa at licenciante, M.A. and Ph.D. levels. Elsewhere, they may form part of programmes in Linguistics or Modern Languages (Universidade Clássica de Lisboa and the Universities of Porto, Coimbra, Aveiro, Minho and Évora).

#### *5. Dictionary production*

There are no systematic bibliographies of published dictionaries. Most dictionaries are monolingual general-purpose, but some are bilingual with Portuguese, technical-terminological or encyclopedic, the two main publishers being Porto Editora and Texto Editora. CD-ROM and other electronic dictionaries are also available, e.g. the DICIOPIEDIA (1996).

#### *6. Dictionary research*

Some metalexicographic work has been published in connection with monolingual and bilingual lexicography, dictionary history, terminology, lexicomputing and the development of corpus linguistics (see Vilela 1994, Verdelho 1995, Contente 1998 and the journal 'Terminologias').

#### *7. Recommendations*

- develop dictionary research;
- develop linguistic and computational tools for the improvement of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries.

(Prepared by M. Teresa Rijo da Fonseca Lino and supplemented by a 42-page survey of electronic dictionaries by M.Teresa Rijo da Fonseca Lino and M. Rute Vilhena Costa.)

## **NATIONAL REPORT 13 (SE)**

### **The Dictionary Scene in Sweden**

#### *1. Introduction*

Country: Sweden

TNP Sub-Project: 9 (Dictionaries)

Member of Scientific Committee: None

#### *2. Language context*

There are 9 million speakers of Swedish (97% of the population). Corpus planning by the Swedish Language Council. The chief minority languages are Finnish (c. 200,000 speakers) and four varieties of Sámi; immigrant languages include Serbo-Croatian, Persian, Turkish, Spanish, Polish and German.

#### *3. Higher education context*

There are 9 universities (Stockholm, Uppsala, Göteborg, Lund, Linköping, Karlstad, Växjö, Örebro and Umeå) and a number of regional colleges. All universities provide courses in Modern Languages (notably English, German, French and Spanish), most offer Slavonic Languages and Finnish, and some specialize in lesser used and non-European languages, e.g. Arabic and Chinese at Stockholm, Southeast Asian languages at Lund, some African languages at Uppsala and Göteborg.

#### *4. The teaching of lexicography and dictionary use*

A course in Lexicography is taught at the University of Stockholm. Very little is known about the use of dictionaries in higher education.

#### *5. Dictionary production*

A wide range of dictionaries are available. Among the monolingual dictionaries are a fairly comprehensive general dictionary of Modern Swedish, an official spelling dictionary, a phraseological dictionary and a large national historical dictionary compiled under the auspices of the Swedish Academy. Bilingual dictionaries of various sizes and for various user groups cover all the important European languages. A series of 'societal' dictionaries for speakers of immigrant languages has been issued from a common Swedish database at the University of Göteborg. The chief dictionary publishers are Norstedt, Bra Böcker and Bonnier, with some links to the universities, especially Göteborg.

#### *6. Dictionary research*

The largest project, at the University of Göteborg, is concerned with lexicographic traditions in Sweden. Swedish research is represented in the Nordic dictionary of lexicography (NLO 1997), the annual journal 'LexicoNordica', the proceedings of the biennial conferences of the Nordisk Forening for Leksikografi (5th Göteborg 1999) and the 7th EURALEX congress (Gellerstam et al. 1996).

#### *7. Recommendations*

- develop dictionaries from the immigrant languages to Swedish.

(Prepared by Lars Vikør with assistance from Sven-Göran Malmgren.)



## THEMATIC REPORT 1

### RESEARCH ON DICTIONARY USE: AN OVERVIEW

**Paul Bogaards**

Universiteit Leiden

At the 1960 Dictionary Conference in Bloomington, Indiana, the first resolution was as follows (Householder & Saporta 1962:279):

Dictionaries should be designed with a special set of users in mind and for their specific needs.

We should ask ourselves

- why this demand has been repeated so often since;
- what makes a set of users 'special';
- what are their needs, skills and motivations;
- what is meant by 'in mind'.

At the 1986 ANELA Symposium on Lexicology, where I contributed to a Section on Dictionaries and Language Teaching, I found only five or six studies (e.g. Béjoint 1981, Hartmann 1982 and Galisson 1983) that presented empirical evidence on language students' actual dictionary use. And it was not easy to draw conclusions, as they were rather heterogeneous as to subject groups observed, types of questions asked and types of dictionaries investigated, and they also displayed several methodological flaws.

Ten years later, at the 1996 AILA Symposium on Dictionary Use, organized by the Scientific Commission on Lexicology and Lexicography (Batia Laufer, Krista Varantola and Paul Bogaards), Jan Hulstijn presented a survey of empirical research on dictionary use in foreign-language learning which reviewed more than 60 publications (a version of this paper has now been published as Hulstijn & Atkins 1998), but found that many of these were not part of a systematic research programme, and there are still many gaps, e.g. on L1 situations and non-educational contexts.

Hulstijn classified user research under seven headings:

- (1) dictionary users' attitudes, needs, habits and preferences;
- (2) dictionaries and text comprehension;
- (3) dictionaries and text production;
- (4) dictionaries and vocabulary learning;
- (5) dictionaries and language testing;
- (6) teaching dictionary skills;
- (7) critical dictionary comparisons.

On the first point, several aspects had been studied, such as frequency of use (more often for written than for oral purposes), type of information sought (meaning and translation equivalents rather than grammar and pronunciation) and degree of satisfaction (the thing most people object to is missing words). We should note, however, that this type of research is often based on the indirect evidence gathered by means of questionnaires (what people think rather than what they do), and that the data are often inconclusive.

On the second point, text comprehension, we are beginning to get some answers to questions about which type of dictionary (monolingual, bilingual, bilingualized or electronic) can help which type of user (intermediate learner, advanced learner, translator), and which information categories inside dictionary entries can serve the reference needs of readers best (definitions, authentic or made-up examples, grammatical information, translations, or a combination of all these). However, the fact that the dictionary entry is itself a text to be interpreted creates a paradox: a user who is a bad reader cannot be helped by the dictionary!

On the third point, text production, the questions are similar, but they are more difficult to turn into appropriate research designs. The emphasis has been on the use of dictionary examples in translating and essay writing, e.g. in the first international comparative study of European language learners by Atkins et al. (1987).

On the fourth point, the dictionary has been found to be conducive to vocabulary learning, although this is not its primary function. Subjects who did not use any dictionary during the translation of a text acquired fewer words than those working with a dictionary (Bogaards 1991), but the implications of this are not clear: What exactly can the dictionary do in order to help the user? Are monolingual dictionaries better than bilingual ones? Should dictionary recommendations be accompanied by additional teachers' guidance, e.g. in the form of marginal glosses or specific word-lists?

On the fifth point, what is the effect of dictionary use on test scores?, two rather contradictory studies of the issue of dictionaries in examinations are by Bensoussan et al. 1984 and Nesi & Meara 1991.

On the sixth point, the teaching of dictionary skills, we cannot be sure whether deliberate instruction actually makes a difference until we know where the problems are and how users tend to solve them.

On the seventh point, dictionary criticism, it is important to agree on objective criteria for evaluating dictionaries, but who is to provide these: academic reviewers, lexicographers, or those who have an understanding of how these dictionaries are actually used?

Hulstijn's review of the research does not touch on the look-up process itself, although it is implicit in Points 2 to 5 above. We certainly need more details, or at least a better model (see the accompanying Figure based on Hartmann 1989 and Bogaards 1993) of the operations performed by typical dictionary users in typical consultation acts before we can address Point 6, dictionary teaching. Some research has been done on some of these steps, but it has focused on receptive purposes rather than productive uses and has taken many aspects of this complex process for granted.

Many of the studies carried out so far lack a clear research paradigm based on a generally accepted 'theory of dictionary use'. Fortunately, standards of scholarship are rising thanks to increased international contacts (witness four recent surveys of the field by Wiegand 1998, Tono 1998, McCreary & Dolezal 1998 and Atkins 1998).

Not all problems will be solved by the emergence of electronic dictionaries. While space is generally unlimited and, thanks to progress in corpus lexicography, more material can be made available, the restrictions of the computer screen may impose new limits on the efficient use of reference works.

More research is certainly needed. The following outline is intended to serve as a basis for parallel investigations to be carried out in different countries. Their joint aim should be to study the effect of various types of dictionaries on the performance of learners in certain tasks and any incidental vocabulary learning that might occur under varying

conditions. The specific factors (the so-called independent variables) to be isolated should include:

- word type;
- dictionary type;
- the subjects' educational level;
- the subjects' L1;
- the subjects' L2 proficiency.

The design of such projects should include tasks such as the translation of two or more short texts from L2 (English or French) into L1 (a variety of mother tongues). One of these texts should be the same for all subjects in all experiments in order to determine the effect of proficiency level; the other text(s) should vary according to the subjects' L2 proficiency level. All texts should contain a number of target words from a series of pre-established categories such as function/content, frequent/infrequent, well-known words in unknown senses, good/false cognates, monosemes/polysemes etc.

The following conditions of use should be observed:

- using no dictionary;
- using a traditional monolingual dictionary;
- using a monolingual learner's dictionary;
- using a bilingualized dictionary;
- using a traditional bilingual dictionary;
- using an electronic dictionary.

The subjects should be randomly spread over at least two of the above conditions (between-subject design) and they should be asked to perform a task under at least two of these conditions (within-subject design). They could be pre-university or first/second-year university students (mean ages from 16 to 20) within certain given ranges of language instruction (in terms of teaching hours) and certain proficiency levels (measured e.g. by standardized comprehension tests). The dependent variables should be of three kinds: number and types of words looked up in the dictionary, number and types of words correctly translated, and number and types of words learned (for an illustration of this kind of investigation, see Bogaards 1998).

[picture]

## **THEMATIC REPORT 2**

### **CASE STUDY: THE EXETER UNIVERSITY SURVEY OF DICTIONARY USE**

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#### **1. Introduction**

Sub-Project 9 of the Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages detected and deplored a relatively low level of 'dictionary awareness' among university teachers and students of Modern Languages and a lack of empirical evidence on the use of dictionaries and other reference works in higher education. Thus I was fortunate in 1998, at just the right time for the purposes of the TNP Sub-Project, to obtain a research grant which enabled me to collect appropriate data by means of a survey of dictionary use across the University of Exeter.

There are very few precedents for such a large-scale project. Of the nearly 500 studies annotated in the bibliography by Fredric Dolezal & Don McCreary (forthcoming), only about 60 report on dictionary use in university settings; similarly, of the 86 empirical papers mentioned in Herbert Ernst Wiegand's magnum opus (1998) and of the 70 studies cited in the collection of papers edited by Sue Atkins (1998), only a relatively small proportion are concerned with higher education. Of all these, the vast majority relate to university students in a small number of (predominantly English-speaking) countries, and none cover more than one set of users (typically students or teachers of a particular subject, such as English as a native or foreign language, rather than a cross-section of users across several subject fields).

Examples include Clarence Barnhart's (1962) questionnaire survey of American college students and their teachers, and Randolph Quirk's (1974) study of British undergraduates' attitudes to dictionaries (replicated at an American university by Sidney Greenbaum et al. 1984). More specific studies have focused on such topics as French students' familiarity with the conventions of monolingual English learners' dictionaries (Henri Béjoint 1981), German students' views of etymological dictionaries (Wolfgang Hoffmann 1978), the difficulties faced by Dutch students of French looking up multi-word expressions (Paul Bogaards 1990), the relative usefulness of monolingual or bilingual or bilingualized dictionaries for Israeli students of English (Batia Laufer & Linor Melamed 1994), the reference needs and skills of ESP staff and students in a Chinese technological university setting (Lan Li 1998), and the effect of dictionary use on a vocabulary test following a reading task by ESL students at an American university (Don McCreary & Fredric Dolezal 1999). The most recent British study of relevance to the user perspective (Graham Bishop 1998) is a comparative questionnaire survey of the use of bilingual dictionaries among 25 Open University students and 25 A-level school pupils taking non-beginner's French courses.

#### **2. The project**

None of the above-mentioned studies have contributed significantly to a revealing profile of (British) university students as dictionary users. So it was a great challenge to attempt a survey of the whole range of issues across departmental or faculty boundaries. The project was entitled 'University Reference Skills: A Case Study of Dictionary Use in Higher Education', and its declared main aim was to 'collect valuable data about levels of reference provision and reference proficiency in several Schools and Services at our University, by a combination of student-based questionnaires and staff-based interviews'.

This made it an interdisciplinary investigation, with important local implications for teaching quality and national and international implications for assessing and comparing dictionary awareness.

The work would be spread over the whole 1998-99 academic year, but the bulk of the empirical survey was to be carried out in the autumn term 1998 so that preliminary findings could be presented at a workshop held in January 1999 which had been planned to coincide with the Exeter meeting of the Scientific Committee of the TNP Sub-Project 9, 'Dictionaries'. The latter had already declared, in its 1997 Interim Report, that 'findings from user studies suggest a surprising indifference among staff and students to the availability and usefulness of various kinds of reference works' and, based on synthesis reports on the lexicographic scene in several countries of the European Union, had agreed to make the following recommendation (the first of nine, under two main headings, see p. 1 above):

Research into dictionary use should provide the framework for all lexicographic production, and more such research will be needed if the level of dictionary awareness is to be raised and the teaching of reference skills is to be improved.

The Exeter survey was therefore both timely and welcome. Supported by regular and minuted meetings (eight were held between 2 September 1998 and 12 January 1999, and a further five in the period up to 24 June 1999), the Project Group first considered a draft questionnaire (prepared by Lan Li on the basis of her own Exeter Ph.D. on dictionary use in China) which incorporated a number of items previously investigated by others and, after piloting it with over 100 students in the English Language Centre, modified it several times, confirming Wiegand's (1998) experience with the elaboration of a questionnaire progressively refined by a Heidelberg project team. Version 4 of the Exeter questionnaire was then distributed between late October and mid-November to large numbers of both undergraduate and postgraduate students (a sample of just over 2,000 or nearly a fifth of the student population) in five Schools (Business & Economics, Education, Engineering & Computer Science, English, and Modern Languages) and two Centres (Foreign Language Centre and English Language Centre). To test the methodological effectiveness of computer technology in this process, an electronic version of the same questionnaire was also distributed to 60+ postgraduate students, chiefly in the School of English and part of the School of Engineering. The questionnaire survey was supplemented by 17 interviews with representatives of the staff in these departments, schools and centres (see Section 5 below).

### **3. The questionnaire: questions**

There were 30 questions to be answered by students filling in the questionnaire. The intention was that subjects should be able to complete the task in about half an hour, that they should all be given similar deadlines for returning the forms (i.e. one week), and that the whole operation should not take more than one month. On the whole, these conditions were met, but there were exceptions. Some departments were late in starting (e.g. Italian), some (e.g. Business & Economics) did not pass on the instruction that the questionnaires should be returned within a week, consequently some respondents may have taken longer than others or may have communicated their opinions to others still engaged in the process. One School sent questionnaires out by post to the home addresses of students (postgraduates in English), where conditions of completion may have differed markedly from those of the average undergraduate student resident at Exeter. It proved impossible to guarantee supervision of the process, except in the School of Engineering where the librarian took it upon herself to introduce and distribute the questionnaires in classroom tutorials. By the time of the final cut-off date (8 December 1998), forms were still arriving, but these were discarded in the analysis.

To investigate dictionary awareness, we chose to concentrate on the following 14 topics:

(1) *General personal details* (Questions 1 to 3)

In line with the principle that anonymity should be respected, students were not asked for their names, but we did want to elicit information on the subjects' sex, age and native language, factors which have not been systematically studied. One of the few research reports of relevance here is Martha Ripfel's (1990) on the results of her questionnaire survey of native speaker users of German dictionaries, in which she concluded that sex and age are not correlated with dictionary ownership to the same extent as level of education, while John Battenburg's (1991) study of foreign students in an American university established that dictionary use is less affected by their native language and cultural background than by their proficiency level in the target language, English.

We wanted to determine the relative proportions (out of the total Exeter student population of about 10,500) between male and female students, between native speakers and foreign learners and between younger and older students, and find out whether their opinions on dictionary use showed significant differences in these respects.

(2) *Foreign language(s) studied* (Question 3)

It is self-evident that dictionary use differs according to whether it involves monolingual native-speaker (L1) activities or interlingual foreign-language learning (L2) tasks. Some research has addressed this issue (e.g. Robert Galisson 1983 who contrasted dictionary use among students of French inside and outside France), and independent evidence comes from the various demands for and designs of the '(foreign or L2) learner's dictionary' in opposition to the model of the traditional 'native speaker (mother-tongue or L1) dictionary' (cf. A.S. Hornby 1965, Michael Rundell 1988, John Battenburg 1991, Henri Béjoint 1994 and Ekkehard Zöfgen 1994).

In a university context, we would want to know whether there are further differences between individual foreign languages studied (e.g. French v. German v. Arabic) or between the specialization in Modern Languages and other subjects studied (e.g. French v. English v. Engineering).

(3) *Level of study and subject(s) taken at Exeter* (Questions 4 and 5)

It may be natural to assume that reference proficiency increases in proportion to experience and education, but empirical proof for this is hard to come by (some is offered in the studies of the Jordanian and Chinese university contexts by Diab 1990 and Li 1998).

Specifically, we wanted to know whether there is a tendency for dictionary ownership and reference skills to rise as students progress through the university, from first-year undergraduate studies to postgraduate research level, and whether there was any variation in the perceived dictionary 'image' (as Quirk 1974 found between Arts-based or Science-based students).

(4) *Start of dictionary use and ownership* (Questions 6 and 7)

No longitudinal studies exist of prototypical modes of dictionary use throughout a young person's maturation, from nursery and primary school to further and higher education. We hypothesized that dictionary use is normally associated with reading and writing in primary school (practically nothing is known about children's dictionaries at kindergarten and in the family home before that), and that it progresses and expands gradually along the educational hierarchy. Given the vagaries of personal memory, questionnaires may not be completely reliable records of early use and first ownership of reference works, but they can illustrate tendencies based on a large sample.

(5) *Type(s) and number of dictionaries owned* (Questions 8 to 10)

Distinctions such as monolingual v. bilingual dictionaries, general v. specialized dictionaries and alphabetical dictionaries v. thematic thesauruses are often discussed in the literature, but their respective appreciation among various users has not been adequately surveyed. Sidney Greenbaum et al. (1984) report that 97% of their sample of American college students own at least one dictionary, while Toshikazu Hatakeyama (1998) mentions that 80% of his Japanese students of English own one or two bilingual dictionaries and 20% own three or more.

We were interested in the whole range of reference works, including electronic types, their ownership and (in combination with data elicited by other questions) their use among different student groups.

(6) *Type(s) and title of dictionary used most frequently* (Questions 11 to 13)

Several researchers have remarked on the striking ignorance displayed by users about the contents of their dictionaries, even their inability to remember the correct titles of the ones they consult on a regular basis.

We wanted to pursue this line of enquiry with particular reference to Exeter students, and to determine in addition the extent to which electronic dictionaries are known.

(7) *Conditions of dictionary purchase* (Questions 14 and 15)

In a pioneering study which combined group interviews with questionnaires, Martha Ripfel (1989) asked four groups of Modern Language students at Heidelberg University about their familiarity with and evaluation of their dictionaries. Students of English tend to own a greater number of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, students of Translation and Interpreting own and use such dictionaries more than students of Language and Literature. The following rank order emerged for their priorities of dictionary purchase: recommendation by university tutors, usability in examinations (where only monolingual dictionaries were permitted), personal preference, etc. Monolingual dictionaries were apparently bought after bilingual ones, and the price was given as the main reason why a purchase was resisted.

In the Exeter survey, we added more categories for reasons ('suggestion by a friend or relative', 'impulse buy') and criteria ('convenience', 'relevance').

(8) *Awareness of appendices and user guidance* (Questions 16 and 17)

The research literature is generally sceptical (but also relatively vague) about the average dictionary user's (in)competence regarding front-matter and back-matter information. Graham Bishop (1998) found, for example, that more mature Open University students are more likely than 16- or 17-year-old secondary-school students to have come to grips with such material, but phonetic symbols and part-of-speech indicators are the only examples given for what his questionnaire simply calls 'the introduction'.

We wanted to establish whether and to what extent Exeter students were familiar with several types of appended information and whether or not they bothered with the explicit instructions provided in the prelims of their dictionaries.

(9) *Contexts and frequency of dictionary use* (Questions 18 to 21)

The next set of questions addressed some of the most important issues investigated since Barnhart's famous 1962 study. According to their teachers, American college students tend to rank information on meaning and spelling higher than pronunciation and synonyms, with usage and etymology coming last (note that encyclopedic information was not among the items mentioned). But information categories are only one factor in the complex process of dictionary consultation; other factors analyzed since the 1960's include purpose, context and type of activity engaged in by the learner-user, often



expressed in terms of frequency scales between the two extremes '(very) often' and '(almost) never'.

We suspected that there would be differences in dictionary use according to the occasion (in class or exams, study at home or in the library?), activity (reading or writing, work or play?) and motivation (look up or ask others?) as well as the particular information type sought (meaning, grammar, encyclopedic fact etc.). We expected work-based and written activities to dominate over entertaining and oral interchanges, but kept an open mind on the possible breakdown of these by such factors as proficiency level, native language and subject specialization, the latter topic never having been investigated before.

(10) *(Dis)satisfaction with the dictionary* (Questions 22 and 23)

Whether or not users are satisfied with their dictionary has certainly been asked before, e.g. by Quirk (1974) and Greenbaum et al. (1984) who discovered that American students tend to rely on (and be content with) their dictionaries more than British students, and they criticize different design features, such as completeness of the word-list (insisted on by Americans) and the transparency of definitions (demanded by the British).

We wondered whether we could obtain more specific data on the students' own ability to use a dictionary and, conversely, their frustration at any unsuccessful searches.

(11) *Difficulties of use* (Questions 24 and 25)

If we are willing to admit that the user perspective is worth exploring as much as the compiler perspective, we are faced with the problem of topicalizing the process of dictionary consultation. Is it straightforward, or is it difficult? Is it a singular or complex act? Are the difficulties inherent in the material sought, or are they dependent on the users' navigational skills?

We decided to subdivide this question into two, 'problem words' and 'sources of difficulty'. Drawing on findings by Lan Li (1998), we suspected that there would be differences in the way British (rather than Chinese) students rank 'general words', 'technical terms', 'common words in technical fields' and 'idioms and phrases' as motivating dictionary searches. Do native speakers have more (or less) trouble with technical vocabulary or idiomatic expressions than foreign learners? And, if difficulties of navigation arise during a search, are these due to the users' relative inexperience or the nature of the dictionary text? Indeed, in view of the inconclusive evidence of previous research, is it sensible to attach a blame to either inadequate user skills or inadequate dictionary design?

(12) *The joys of dictionaries* (Questions 26 and 27)

Is there a popular folklore about dictionaries, and where in any case do people's opinions about the dictionary come from? We started with the premise that 'dictionary awareness' is low even among academics (see also Points (3), (6) and (8) above), and wanted to find out more about the students' reactions to a range of statements about the nature and personal benefits of dictionary use.

(13) *Instruction in dictionary use* (Questions 28 and 29)

The most 'practical' part of the questionnaire was concerned with an issue that has troubled many authors of research papers on the theme of dictionary use: whether (and how) to provide deliberate instruction in the required reference skills. This statement by Sue Atkins and Krista Varantola (1998:115) is representative:

We believe that dictionary skills must be taught, carefully and thoroughly, if users are to extract from their dictionaries the information which lexicographers have put into them. Teachers will be better able to carry out

such teaching if they are fully aware of exactly what their students are doing with their dictionaries, what they expect from them, and how easily they are satisfied during the process of consultation.

Hence, exercises and workbooks (see Martin Stark's 1990 evaluation of these) cannot be designed properly until we know more about what real users do in real situations of dictionary reference. With Questions 28 and 29 we wanted to elicit data on whether students had received some instruction before and how important they judge such teaching to be in the context of their present degree course. We expected the answers to have a bearing on current and future departmental policies on dictionary use within the wider context of teaching quality.

(14) *Other (open) points* (Question 30)

Most questionnaire surveys include 'open' questions with the intention of encouraging respondents to use their own words on one of more aspects of the field investigated. We limited this to the last question, expecting critical comments from a vocal minority of Exeter students.

#### **4. The questionnaire: answers**

The analysis of the questionnaire data was undertaken by Dr. Lan Li, using standard statistical and computational techniques and drawing on the facilities of the 'Pallas' (Arts and Humanities) section of the University I.T. Services. The response rate of 35% (710 completed out of 2,040 distributed questionnaires) is extremely satisfactory for a study of this kind, although it varied considerably by departments, ranging from 81.7% (German) through 53.2% in English and 42.5% in Computer Science to 15.8% (Business and Economics).

This section summarizes the results, discussing the wording of the respective question (and the choices offered), relating the answers to our expectations (as outlined in the previous Section) and drawing inferences from the Exeter data to the wider pedagogical, linguistic and lexicographical context.

*Question 1: Gender*

The 39.7 to 60.3% ratio of male to female had been expected. It reflects the university-wide sex distribution although there is some variation by departments, with female students outnumbering male students in all Schools except Engineering and Computer Science.

*Question 2: Age*

Four age ranges had been specified, and the percentage figures were roughly as expected:

17-25:	78.7%
26-35:	12.3%
36-45:	4.9%
over 45:	3.9%

*Question 3: What is your native language? Which foreign language(s) have you studied?*

As expected, the vast majority (579 of 710, or nearly 81.5%) of the subjects are native speakers of English. The rest (131 of 710, or 18.5%) claim 29 different mother tongues, (in numerical order) from French, Greek, German and Japanese to 'Scottish', Gujarati, 'Creole' and Serbo-Croatian. The percentage of non-English speakers is higher than the overall proportion of foreign students in the University (c. 660 out of over 10,000, or 12%), probably because the survey had targeted a greater number of students in the English Language Centre and the Foreign Language Centre.

9 students (1.3%) said they had not studied any foreign language at all; the rest mention 20 languages, notably the European ones studied in British schools (French 83.7%, German 51.4%, Spanish 38.5%, Latin 8.3%, Italian 7.2%, Russian 7.0%) followed by Arabic (3.0%), Japanese (1.5%) and Chinese (1.3%). However, as this sample includes foreign students, nearly 18% mention English as L2, and the number of (European as well as non-European) languages studied is probably also higher for the same reason. It is also necessary to point out that the number of (European) languages other than English is greater than the average across the University because of the relatively high proportion of students sampled in the School of Modern Languages.

*Question 4: Please indicate which level of study you are in*

There were seven possible levels to choose from:

1st year:	20.7%
2nd year:	24.9%
3rd year:	12.5%
4th year:	12.3%
Master:	6.2%
Ph.D.:	7.2%
other:	16.2%

This distribution was as expected, and is in line with general university student figures, except perhaps for the relatively low representation of M.A. students which constitute well over twice the above percentage. In the School of Education the proportion of postgraduate students (78%) is higher than in other parts of the University because of the emphasis on teacher training.

*Question 5: Which subject(s) are you studying at Exeter?*

The following special subject distribution emerged:

English:	20.0%
Modern Languages:	29.4%
Business & Economics:	8.5%
Education:	16.9%
Engineering & Computer Science:	18.3%
other (including English Lang. Centre):	5.9%

The relative predominance of Modern Languages over the other Schools turned out to be an advantage for the purposes of this project, as we were particularly interested in eliciting data for dictionary awareness levels among students under the aegis of the 'TNP in the Area of Languages'.

*Question 6: When did you start to use a dictionary?*

Four choices were offered, and ticked as follows:

at primary school:	72.5%
at secondary school:	25.8%
at further education college:	1.5%
at university:	0.1%

The figure for 'primary school' is high (interestingly even higher, 81.7%, among teacher trainees in the School of Education), but makes sense in view of the importance of reading and writing in early education, and contrasts sharply with the very low percentages for further and higher education.

*Question 7: If you OWN a dictionary, when did you first acquire it?*

Dictionary ownership is not necessarily identical with dictionary use, which is proven by these data on the different school levels at which the first dictionary was reported to have been acquired:

at primary school:	39.9%
at secondary school:	49.2%
at further education college:	4.1%
at university:	3.9%

*Question 8: What type(s) of dictionary do you OWN?*

Five choices were offered (and more than one could be ticked), producing the following figures:

general dictionary (e.g. Dictionary of English):	94.7%
special subject dictionary (e.g. Dic. of Music):	37.8%
bilingual dictionary (e.g. English-French Dic.):	77.2%
thesaurus (e.g. Dictionary of Synonyms):	66.2%
encyclopedia:	40.5%

We had not expected the high percentages for the 'general dictionary' (justifiable by the correlation with results for Question 6), for the 'bilingual dictionary' (accounted for by the high proportion of students specializing in Modern Languages) and for the 'thesaurus' (for which we cannot at this stage offer a sensible explanation. Nor were we prepared for the relatively low figures for the 'special subject dictionary'.

*Question 9: Do you OWN any electronic dictionaries?*

We offered four choices, and the answers were as follows:

in the form of a pocket calculator:	7.1%
in the form of a personal computer:	22.3%
other format (to be specified):	3.5%
NO:	65.5%

As we had expected, the electronic dictionary has not yet fully 'arrived': less than a quarter (in the School of Education slightly more, 25.8%) of our student sample have a PC, and nearly two thirds do not own any electronic reference aids at all.

*Question 10: How many dictionaries do you OWN?*

The number of dictionaries owned (average: 5.9) varies by several factors:

- sex (6.55 male, 5.51 female),
- age (17-25: 4.5; 26-35: 12.3; 36-45: 12.3; over 45: 8.8),
- native language (4.99 English, 10.16 non-English) and, most notably if expectedly, by
- subject studied:

English:	10.47
Modern Languages:	6.15
English Language Centre:	5.52
Education:	4.93
Business & Economics:	3.95
Engineering & Computer Science:	3.09

98.3% of Exeter students own at least one dictionary, 48% have more than four, Language and Humanities students on average own more than twice as many as Science students.

*Question 11: Which type(s) of dictionary do you USE most frequently?*

Only one choice out of the five given in Question 8 was allowed here, to concentrate the subjects' minds on what they would consider the most important single dictionary type (although the plural in parentheses may have confused them):

general dictionary:	50.4%
special subject dictionary:	3.7%
bilingual dictionary:	39.8%
thesaurus:	5.1%
general encyclopedia:	0.9%

This helped to relativize the data obtained in Question 8, showing the dominance of the general dictionary (especially in English, Education and Science) and the bilingual dictionary (especially in Modern Languages and, to a lesser extent, in Education) and confirming the expectedly low ranking of the special-subject dictionary and the thesaurus. Much less expected was the very low-level position of the general encyclopedia, a fact which matches the opinion, expressed in interviews with a university librarian and a School librarian, that students have to be reminded of the existence of general encyclopedic and specialized subject-based reference works.

*Question 12: If you remember, can you provide the following information about this dictionary?*

This question was intended to contribute to the debate on dictionary users' reference competence, regarded by many researchers as seriously deficient. Seven choices were offered, and the percentage answers were as follows:

its title:	80.2%
its editor:	35.9%
its publisher:	62.3%
the year of publication:	57.0%
the number of entries included:	30.0%
its size:	59.7%
its colour:	76.1%

It is difficult to verify these data (some students completing the questionnaire on their desks may have taken the opportunity of looking at their dictionaries for this information), but it confirms our guess based on the findings of other studies that apart from the title, the most readily remembered features are 'colour', 'name of publisher', 'size' and 'year of publication', with 'name of editor' and 'number of entries' coming last. One by-product of this question was the inference that most dictionaries owned are of relatively recent vintage (the date 1957 was the earliest given).

*Question 13: If you USE an electronic dictionary, which type is it?*

The answers to this question cross-correlate with those in Questions 8, 9 and 11 on ownership and use. Of the five (electronic) dictionary types mentioned, the general dictionary (19.3%) by far outstrips the others: thesaurus 8.3%, general encyclopedia 6.2%, bilingual dictionary 4.1% and special subject dictionary 0.1%.

Although we had failed to ask explicitly about computer-based spell-checkers and thesauruses, answers to this question may give a clue to their increased use, a trend also confirmed by the interview with a member of the Arts Computing service. Cross-tabulation also shows that electronic dictionaries are more prevalent in the Sciences than in the Arts.

*Question 14: When you last BOUGHT a dictionary, was it ...*

A choice of six reasons for dictionary purchase was offered, producing the following answers:

because a teacher of tutor recommended it:	30.6%
because a friend or relative suggested it:	7.2%
as a result of your own deliberate choice:	55.5%
as a result of an advertisement:	1.3%
due to an impulse:	4.6%
I cannot remember:	9.4%

We had expected a higher incidence of tutor recommendation, but the figures confirm the impression, strengthened by several interviews, that apart from Modern Languages very little guidance is actually given to (and taken by) students in this respect. Consequently there is room for much more personal initiative than we had thought to be the case. We were also surprised at the relatively low incidence of advertisements and buying on impulse.

*Question 15: What is your priority when you BUY a new dictionary?*

More specifically, we asked students to rank the priorities under six headings, which turned out to be as follows (averages out of 6):

its relevance to my needs:	4.04
the number of words:	3.39
the number of examples:	3.25
a reasonable price:	3.21
the reputation of the publisher:	3.15
convenient to carry about:	2.84

That there may be unexpected (and unexplainable?) variation between students in different subjects is suggested by an analysis of the rank order in the School of Education, where the criterion of 'price' takes second place, before 'number of words'. If the figures are statistically adjusted along a six-point scale from 'most important' and 'very important' to 'least important' and 'not important', they allow different interpretations according to which several of the criteria may be simultaneously 'most' and 'least' important, which indicates that respondents may have been confused by the wording of the question: some may have ranked these criteria from 6 to 1, others from 1 to 6. These figures must therefore be considered extremely tentative, requiring further analysis and/or empirical work (which also appears to be the case for Question 20 below).

*Question 16: Do you ever use information contained in the appendices?*

Five choices were offered here, and the following answers were given:

lists of abbreviations:	52.6%
lists of irregular verbs:	46.5%
units of measurement:	33.5%
proper names:	16.3%
other (to be specified):	12.0%

On the whole, these findings did not surprise us, nor the tendency for (predominantly female) students of Modern Languages to pick out irregular verbs, while (male) students of Science ranked units of measurement higher. As expected, foreign students seem to be more aware of back-matter information than English students.

*Question 17: If you are aware of the user guidance notes at the front of the dictionary, do you ...*

Three choices were offered, prompting the following answers:

study them?	10.2%
find them user-friendly?	21.8%
manage without them?	70.9%

We expected something like this, but the extent of the students' antipathy towards guidance from the dictionary front-matter is emphatic, and must be interpreted in the light of answers to other Questions such as 25 (on causes of 'difficulties') and 28 (on training in 'reference skills'). In general, awareness tends to be greater among foreign rather than English students, and avoidance more pronounced in Science than Arts students.

*Question 18: When do you use a dictionary?*

Five choices were offered here, producing the following response:

during a class:	17.8%
during an exam:	10.6%
studying at home:	97.7%
studying in a library:	58.6%
other (specify):	8.2%

That 'studying' produced a high score was not surprising, but we did not expect the percentages to be so much higher for studying 'at home' than for studying 'in a library'. In view of the general university rule that dictionaries are not usually permitted in examinations we would not have expected a percentage above 10% (in Education it was only 5.8%) although those who are entitled to this, foreign students who are not native speakers of English, constitute about 18% of our sample.

*Question 19: Do you use a dictionary while you ...*

Seven activities were on offer, and students made the following multiple choices:

read newspapers and magazines:	26.2%
read textbooks:	68.3%
read academic journals:	39.1%
read a book for entertainment:	26.9%
work on a written assignment:	91.2%
work on a translation exercise:	60.0%
play word games:	40.4%

There may be some variation between subject specialisms and overlap between the categories, but the overall tendency is clear and roughly in line with our expectations. Work-related writing (including translating, more in Modern Languages than in other Schools) and reading (of textbooks more than of journals and newspapers) outrank entertaining activities. Foreign students use dictionaries more than home students, except for playing word games (in Education at higher than average 47.5%), which apparently motivates dictionary consultation more often than reading academic journals.

*Question 20: What do you do when you notice a new or difficult word while reading?*

Four alternative responses had to be given in rank order, and students supplied the following average values:

look it up in a dictionary:	2.71
guess the meaning:	2.53
ask other people what it means:	2.46
ignore it and go on reading:	2.06

Looking up a word in the dictionary is (just) ahead of the other alternatives. Using an alternative calculation already mentioned under Question 15 produces inconclusive

figures and raises doubts as to whether students may have had difficulties ranking these items from 1 to 4 or from 4 to 1.

*Question 21: How often do you use a dictionary?*

Subjects were asked how often and for which (four) activities and (eight) information categories they consulted their dictionaries, and they gave the following responses (averages are listed here in preference to the four-fold frequency scale as tabulated in the questionnaire):

<i>when you write:</i>	2.95
<i>when you read:</i>	2.46
<i>when you listen:</i>	1.53
<i>when you speak:</i>	1.29
<i>to look up a meaning of a word:</i>	3.16
<i>to look up a spelling of a word</i>	2.98
<i>to look up synonyms/words of similar meaning:</i>	2.38
<i>to look up examples of a word's use:</i>	2.13
<i>to look up a grammar point, e.g. part of speech:</i>	1.95
<i>to look up encyclopedic information:</i>	1.87
<i>to look up the pronunciation:</i>	1.64
<i>to look up a word origin/etymology:</i>	1.63

There are minor variations by Department or School (e.g. in Education encyclopedic information comes before grammar, and etymology before pronunciation), but in general the ordering of activity types and information categories is as expected and in accordance with responses to other questions, e.g. 19 which established writing and reading as the main triggers of dictionary reference. Encyclopedic information, pronunciation and etymology are apparently in much less demand than meaning and spelling.

Whether there are significant differences by sex, native language or level of study is not yet clear and will require further analysis.

*Question 22: Are you, on the whole, satisfied with your ability to use a dictionary?*

This simple question produced an unequivocal, but somewhat surprisingly high preponderance of 'yes' answers (90.6%) over 'no' answers (6.4%), which may suggest an exaggerated feeling of self-confidence. This in turn needs to be balanced against other overlapping issues such as ignoring other people's advice on purchasing a dictionary (Question 14), managing without the guidance provided by the dictionary (Question 17), specifying causes of difficulties in finding information (Question 25) and considering the importance of deliberate instruction (Question 28).

*Question 23: Do you ever consult a dictionary WITHOUT being able to find the information you need?*

Four options were treated as follows:

very often:	0.7%
often:	8.6%
sometimes:	74.1%
never:	13.5%

These answers indicate that users take dictionaries for granted, which goes with the feeling of self-satisfaction diagnosed in Question 22 and the tendency to blame the dictionary rather than themselves for any shortcomings in the look-up process (Question 25).



*Question 24: What type of information is most difficult to find?*

Four choices were offered and answered as follows:

general English words:	6.4%
specialized technical terms:	52.2%
common English words in a special subject area:	29.1%
idioms and phrases:	42.3%

Modern Language and Humanities students mentioned idioms more than Science students, who seemed to find technical terminology more problematic.

*Question 25: What to you think are the causes of these difficulties?*

Five options were taken up as follows:

my lack of dictionary skills:	8.0%
my lack of dictionary knowledge:	8.2%
not enough information in the dictionary:	63.7%
unclear layout of the dictionary:	19.7%
I don't read the instructions to the user:	12.0%

It was interesting to find that students attribute the bulk of their difficulties to the dictionary rather than their own limitations in terms of 'skills' or 'knowledge' (if indeed they appreciated any distinction between these two notions, which admittedly perhaps we should have explained). The fact that they 'don't read the instructions' tallies with the responses to Question 14 on self-reliance in dictionary purchase, 17 on aversion to guidance notes, 20 (although the data may be inconclusive) on alternatives to dictionary look-up, 22 on their own high ability rating and 23 on the rarity of admitted search failures.

*Question 26: In your opinion, using dictionaries is ...*

To prompt the subjects' opinions, we asked for reactions to six descriptive statements about dictionary use:

easy:	58.3%
difficult:	3.2%
exciting/fun:	12.1%
tedious/boring:	10.6%
worthwhile/informative:	77.2%
of little help/not worth the trouble:	2.0%

These figures display a positive attitude towards dictionaries which took us by surprise. There are marked but unexplained differences here between foreign students and native English speakers, the former being more willing than the latter to regard dictionary use as 'exciting', 'tedious' and 'difficult'.

*Question 27: Based on your experience, which of the following statements do you agree with?*

We used the same technique as in Question 26 to elicit reactions to four ways in which dictionaries can be of use:

using dictionaries can improve my reading:	64.7%
using dictionaries can improve my writing:	83.2%
using dictionaries can help my speaking:	37.0%
using dictionaries can help me perform better in my studies:	77.3%

These results not only seem to confirm the great value of dictionaries for writing and reading (already established, in this order, in Questions 19 and 21), which we had

expected, but also demonstrate an appreciation for their benefits to the job of studying, which we had not. This may be an area worth pursuing in greater detail.

*Question 28: Have you ever been taught how to use a dictionary?*

Answers were given in terms of three alternatives:

yes:	21.0%
a little:	43.2%
never:	34.6%

More specifically, Science students had received less training (43.8% 'never') than students in Modern Languages (33.4% 'never'); the group that seems to have had least instruction are foreign students (16.9% 'yes' and 42.3% 'never'). In the School of Education the situation is much better (25.8% 'yes', 50.8% 'a little' and 21.7% 'never'), but we do not know whether this reflects a recent trend to incorporate dictionary reference skills into teaching and examination syllabuses.

*Question 29: Do you think it is important for students in your subject to be taught how to use dictionaries?*

Four ways of answering this question were suggested:

it is very important:	30.2%
it is important:	39.4%
it is not important:	15.5%
I don't know:	13.7%

We were surprised by the high rating of this desideratum, which is even higher in the School of Education: 46.7% 'very important', 40.0% 'important', 5.0% 'not important' and 5.8% 'don't know', while in the Science area students do not seem to be in favour of any training schemes (8.0% 'very important' and 32.8% 'not important').

In conjunction with the obvious deficiencies diagnosed in earlier Questions, particularly 14, 17 and 20 to 25, it makes sense to build on the students' own assessment and review current teaching arrangements in Departments, Schools and Centres in an effort to raise dictionary awareness across the whole University.

*Question 30: Add any other points you want to make about your experience with dictionaries.*

Only 22.6% of the respondents took advantage of the opportunity to add some personal comments. Ian Spackman who analyzed these for the Project Group characterizes them as generally favourable towards dictionaries, although there are a small number which contain jocular and critical points.

Many draw on their own (often limited but occasionally enjoyable) experience with dictionary use and, perhaps because of the proximity of Question 29, stress that teaching of relevant skills is important. Various look-up difficulties are mentioned, as are some dictionary types and alternatives (e.g. spell-checkers on computers) as well as specific features of dictionaries (such as size and cost). Certain dictionaries are cited by name, several commentators pass on tips on techniques they have discovered or developed, one student who claims to have made his own 7,000-word French dictionary by computer offers his telephone number for possible contact. One or two comments concern the questionnaire itself, one respondent wished good luck. Thank you!

## **5. The interviews**

Concurrent with the distribution, collection and analysis of the student questionnaires, personal interviews were conducted by the principal researcher with representative

members of staff in each of the Schools and Centres (heads of schools and directors of centres had previously been asked to nominate 'coordinators' for this task) as well as the Director of the 'Pallas' Arts Computing Service, the Examinations Officer and a University Librarian. The following check-list of questions was used, both to keep the time spent to a minimum and to ensure comparability of the statements:

- (1) Do you need more details on the Project (or have you got enough background information)?
- (2) Will you have (or have you had) difficulties with the distribution and collection of the Questionnaires?
- (3) Will completion by (early) November be feasible?
- (4) What are the issues of dictionary use for you, in terms of (a) the students experiencing problems with dictionaries, (b) the School's/Department's/Centre's policy on reference works, or (c) any explicit guidance given to students?
- (5) Any other comments?

This worked reasonably well; no interview lasted longer than 30 minutes, with the exception of the one with the Coordinator for the School of Education who expressed interest in contributing a paper on the position of dictionaries in the recently revised National Curriculum (and its implications for teacher training) to the report on the survey results and/or the presentation planned for the Workshop. The interviews were held between 13 October and 10 December 1998 with coordinators in 12 constituent Departments of the 5 Schools targeted (representing approximately 4,000 students), two Language Centres and three other units (Arts Computing, Examinations Office and University Library). All interviewees were extremely cooperative, showing a willingness to understand the foundations of the Project and to appreciate its potential usefulness to the departmental teaching context.

When prompted by the reaction to Question (1), the interviewer supplied more background details, pointing out the relevance of the expected findings to local reference needs of staff and students and the wider implications of data-gathering for pedagogical and lexicographical purposes. Several coordinators mentioned that the project had heightened their 'dictionary awareness' and that the results might influence future debates on issues of teaching quality.

Questions (2) and (3) on the distribution, collection and completion of student questionnaires brought out the variable nature of Departments and Schools in the University. Some (like Computer Science) used a system already in place to copy and hand out personal copies to (half of the) student pigeon-holes, others needed specially negotiated services (such as clerical staff in English, a departmental librarian in Engineering, and tutoring staff in most other departments) and implements (such as a prominently displayed labelled box for collecting the forms) or the assistance of volunteer helpers from among our own Project Group. These varying practices, which could not have been foreseen, explain delays experienced across the board and the falling behind schedule of the processing of data collected.

When asked (in Question 4) about problems with dictionary use, most interviewees could not recall many. Dictionaries and other reference works do not figure prominently in staff meetings, they are rarely part of a departmental policy, or specified in student handbooks or module descriptions. In this latter respect, the School of Modern Languages has devoted more attention to the subject of dictionaries than other sections of the University. Several coordinators mentioned that informal guidance was provided by individual (but not all) tutors when the need arises, e.g. when student exercises

reveal errors that could have been avoided if an appropriate dictionary had been consulted. When pressed, such interviewees remember occasions where such practices have led to tutorial help given to individuals or seminar groups, but the comment recurred, even among language tutors, that 'dictionaries are taken for granted' (Librarian), or 'dictionary use is not a priority' (Education), and deliberate instruction is (therefore?) not generally provided except where it may form part of a course in Linguistics (e.g. Spanish) or Lexicography (postgraduate programme in English).

The majority of Modern Language departments mention dictionaries (in passing) in their student handbooks, or list specific titles in module descriptions and book-lists. Some interviewees admitted that this is a 'neglected area' and that there was 'room for improvement' in this respect, particularly in terms of advice that could be offered on the advantages of the monolingual over the bilingual dictionary, of specialized over general-language dictionaries, or of electronic dictionaries over print dictionaries. The Foreign Language Centre mentions some dictionaries as part of its course descriptions on the website; one section of the School of Modern Languages (Russian) has experimented with a 'dictionary quiz' to encourage library and reference awareness; another section (Arabic) recommends a dictionary workbook with exercises to its first-year students; one Lecturer (in French) has designed written practice material for solving 'dictionary problems'.

Specific difficulties did emerge in the course of the interviews, such as price, size and availability of good foreign-language dictionaries (e.g. Arabic and Russian), limited library budgets (French and German) or lack of space where a reference library could be installed (Italian). Two large departments and the Foreign Language Centre possess their own libraries, but provision of dictionaries and other reference books is limited (to at least a dozen items each in the Business & Economics and Engineering Libraries) and their use is not monitored systematically. A separate interview was held with a University Librarian who stated that (a) staff and students in Modern Languages tend to be more aware of dictionaries than those in other disciplines, (b) general English dictionaries are in general use, but knowledge about other dictionary types (including electronic reference sources) is limited, and (c) 'most people's information gathering skills are haphazard', and need to be strengthened.

In reply to Question (5), the problem of dictionary use in examinations was mentioned by several departmental representatives. The topic was explicitly addressed in an interview with the Examinations Officer, who confirmed (a) that the majority of taught modules were still assessed by written examinations, (b) that normally the use of dictionaries is NOT permitted in examinations, but (c) that international students whose first language is not English are allowed the use of a (monolingual or bilingual) dictionary for their examinations. Interestingly, she could not say which particular (types of) dictionaries are currently prescribed or proscribed, nor was she aware of the results of an e-mail survey conducted by Raphael Salkie (Brighton) earlier this year which had recommended that in general, dictionaries should NOT be allowed in examinations [in British universities], but any module tutor could apply for an exemption from the general rule provided good academic reasons can be given. In that case, particular dictionaries should have been specified and prior training in their use should have been provided.

Finally, an interview was also held with the Director of the 'Pallas' Arts Computing Service. He said that staff and student demand for dictionary reference appears not to have increased over the years, but that automatic spelling checkers and thesauruses are now generally accessible on most computers (except for e-mail). No formal instruction is provided, but developments in the field of electronic dictionaries are being monitored.

The interviews complement the results of the questionnaire survey. On the assumption that the nominated staff members are representative, they show a range of views from interest to indifference. They generally have an open mind towards dictionaries and other

reference works, but do not consider them a major problem and therefore part of normal departmental policy. When difficulties arise, they tend to be met by occasional personal guidance rather than systematic instruction, although a minority (especially in Modern Languages) admit the possibility of change, particularly if the questionnaire results of this project should suggest a case for it. Areas for such action might be the specification of the role of particular types of dictionaries (and other reference works) in module descriptions, handbooks and book-lists, and an evaluation of the links (at staff, postgraduate and undergraduate levels) with the Library, the Examinations Office and I.T. Services.

## **6. Conclusions**

These preliminary results are encouraging in their breadth, complexity and direction. Although response rates, coverage and administration of the questionnaire varied considerably across the constituent units, a mass of data emerged which gives food for thought.

Many of the results had been expected (such as the relative indifference to questions of dictionary use among some staff and the indirect evidence of low dictionary competence among many students), but many also surprised us (such as the high degree of user self-confidence in the face of dictionary 'difficulties'). We were heartened by the students' recognition that some teaching of reference skills might be helpful and the willingness among staff to consider changes in the way dictionaries and other reference works might be treated in various study programmes in the future.

The overriding impression that reference provision and reference proficiency in this University is still (too) low leads us inevitably to ask what the implications of this conclusion might be. Locally, the implication is that more attention should be paid to deliberate instruction in the basic tools and skills of information-gathering via reference books (and I.T. systems). Nationally, an attempt should be made to see whether the Exeter 'reference profile' could - and should - be generalized: what are the benchmarks on the basis of which comparisons can be made? Are the reforms currently underway in the national school curriculum (see Thematic Report 5 below) going to have an effect on attitudes in higher education? For lexicography, the implication is that learners (not only language learners, but all students) need reference works that provide information in formats that are user-friendly. Finally, for dictionary research, the implication is that projects of this kind can provide some answers to old and new questions, but that the methods we have employed need to be further refined (e.g. questionnaires and interview supplemented by direct observation and in-action tests). We have experimented with such techniques in the School of Education and the English Language Centre and are hoping to follow up this work during the 1999-2000 session.

I wish to end this report by acknowledging the help I have received from many people: the members of the Project Group, notably Lan Li (who did most of the data analysis), Gérard Poulet (who opened a door into Education and exciting new developments in school teaching and teacher training), the Schools, Centres and Services (and their staff and students) who contributed to the survey, and finally to the School of English and the University of Exeter for the research grant that enabled me to carry out this exciting enquiry.

## **THEMATIC REPORT 3**

### **THE SPECIFICATION OF DICTIONARY REFERENCE SKILLS IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

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#### **1. Introduction: A taxonomy of reference skills at university level**

This report is in three parts. The first part lists the dictionary skills that might be taught at university level, the second part reports on the way these skills are actually being taught by informants at a range of universities in the UK and overseas, and the third part reports on my informants' attitudes and beliefs relating to the teaching of dictionary skills.

The following list aims to be exhaustive, including all the skills that a university-level language student might need in order to use dictionaries effectively. The skills vary in difficulty and degree of abstraction but are grouped chronologically rather than according to level, the first five groups representing stages in the process of dictionary use, starting with the choice of which dictionary(-ies) to have available for consultation, and ending with the application and recording of dictionary information. Skills that are independent of the consultation process are listed at stage six.

##### **Stage one: Before study**

1. Knowing what types of dictionary exist, and choosing which dictionary/ies to consult and/or buy
2. Knowing what kinds of information are found in dictionaries and other types of reference works

##### **Stage two: Before dictionary consultation**

3. Deciding whether dictionary consultation is necessary
4. Deciding what to look up
5. Deciding on the appropriate form of the look-up item
6. Deciding which dictionary is most likely to satisfy the purpose of the consultation
7. Contextual guessing of the meaning of the look-up item
8. Identifying the word class of the look-up item

##### **Stage three: Locating entry information**

9. Understanding the structure of the dictionary
10. Understanding alphabetization and letter distribution
11. Understanding grapho-phonemic correspondence (and the lack of it)
12. Understanding the use of wildcards in electronic dictionary searches
13. Choosing amongst homonyms
14. Finding derived forms
15. Finding multi-word units
16. Understanding the cross-referencing system in print dictionaries, and hyperlinking in electronic dictionaries

##### **Stage four: Interpreting entry information**

17. Distinguishing the component parts of the entry
18. Distinguishing relevant from irrelevant information
19. Finding information about the spelling of words

20. Understanding typographical conventions and the use of symbols, numbered superscripts, punctuation
21. Interpreting IPA and pronunciation information
22. Interpreting etymological information
23. Interpreting morphological and syntactic information
24. Interpreting the definition or translation
25. Interpreting information about collocations
26. Interpreting information about idiomatic and figurative use
27. Deriving information from examples
28. Interpreting restrictive labels
29. Referring to additional dictionary information (in front matter, appendices, hypertext links).
30. Verifying and applying look-up information

#### **Stage five: Recording entry information**

31. Sifting entry information
32. Deciding how to record entry information
33. Compiling a vocabulary notebook or file of index cards
34. Using the notebook section of an electronic dictionary

#### **Stage six: Understanding lexicographical issues**

35. Knowing what people use dictionaries for
36. Knowing lexicographical terminology
37. Understanding principles and processes of dictionary compilation
38. Recognizing different defining and translating styles
39. Comparing entries
40. Dictionary criticism and evaluation

### **2. The specification of dictionary skills at university level**

The primary source of data for this report was the response to an e-mail query sent to five mailing lists: *sysfling* (for academics with an interest in Systemic Functional Linguistics), *baleap* (for members of the British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes), *baalpg* (for postgraduate researchers belonging to the British Association for Applied Linguistics), *lang-asst-trg* (for those involved in the training of language assistants), and *ucml-teaching* (for university lecturers in modern languages). For website information see the Bibliography and Resource List at the end of the volume.

In each case I initially asked list members for information regarding the specification of dictionary skills in university language syllabuses and/or course materials. Responses were received from 35 lecturers, who taught one or more of the following subjects: Linguistics, Chinese, English (EFL, ESL, EAP and ESP), French, German, Italian, Japanese and Spanish. Most of my informants were based at UK universities, but messages also arrived from Australia, Brunei, Denmark, France, Israel, Japan and Russia. All those who responded are gratefully acknowledged at the end of this report.

In some cases informants wrote to tell me that little or no dictionary user training was taking place in their department. In other cases the initial query resulted in extensive discussion of skills specifications, and some informants also cited (or sent me) relevant articles and materials they had written and/or had used for the teaching of dictionary skills. Because the amount of information received from each informant varied, and because my informants were self-selecting and therefore had a particular interest in the teaching of dictionary skills, this report does not present quantitative information about the extent of dictionary skills training at university level. Trends do emerge, and there are many examples of good practice, but the informants are not treated as a representative sample of the entire population of language lecturers at university level. Where numbers of informants are mentioned, they are not intended to indicate a percentage of the entire population of informants, or of language lecturers generally;

informants volunteered information on topics that they considered important, and none chose to comment on every possible dictionary skill.

As a secondary source of data for this report I also referred to other published syllabuses and lists of skills. The most notable of these are Gethin & Gunnemark's advice to undergraduate dictionary users (1996), Berwick & Horsfall's guide to the teaching of dictionary skills at secondary level (1996), and, although intended for use in primary schools, the specifications in *The National Literacy Strategy: Framework for Teaching* (1998). I did not examine a broad range of dictionary workbooks or university-level language textbooks (this would require two further reports at least), but I have drawn on Stark's (1990) survey review of 40 dictionary workbooks, and I have also looked at the dictionary skills specified in the textbooks the informants themselves said that they used for university-level language teaching.

## **2.1 Stage one: Before study**

Choosing a dictionary is the first operation in the process of dictionary consultation, according to Scholfield (1982). Training in this skills area might include discussion of bi-directional bilingual dictionaries, 'mono-bilingual' or 'bilingualized' dictionaries intended for native speakers of only one of the two languages featured, monolingual dictionaries for native and non-native speakers, specialist and technical dictionaries, thesauruses, thematic dictionaries, and dictionaries in electronic form. Such training would enable students to make informed choices about dictionary purchase, and would be particularly useful to learners of popular modern languages who have a wide choice of dictionaries to choose from.

Published materials do not cover this skills area well. According to Stark (1990:202), 'few workbooks have provided guidance on the range of dictionaries and their individual purposes'. Guides to dictionary use such as Gethin & Gunnemark (1996) and Berwick & Horsfall (1996) tend to concentrate on the monolingual/bilingual distinction, without much reference to other types of dictionary, and EAP textbooks providing dictionary skills training make little mention of bilingual dictionaries and technical dictionaries, despite the fact that English for Academic Purposes is often geared to the needs of students of science and technology.

There are good reasons why published sources provide such a limited picture of dictionary provision. Most dictionary workbooks are designed to support the use of one particular dictionary, rather than encourage the use of a wide range of reference books. Some textbooks are written for use by native-speakers of different languages, so they cannot treat bilingual dictionary skills in any depth. Moreover, most textbooks are designed to be used in all kinds of educational environments, with or without library and bookshop facilities.

One respondent involved in distance education gave lack of resources as a reason for not including 'choosing a dictionary' as a syllabus item: 'We cannot assume that our students have access to a whole range of reference books'. She also noted that, despite the fact that colleagues were interested in IT, 'we must always keep in mind those of our students who have no access to the Internet or even to individual electronic aids. We function on a very strict Equal Opportunities system!'

Although the majority of respondents seemed to centre dictionary skills training around one or two dictionaries that all students were recommended to buy, some respondents did report that they provided training in the skill of choosing a dictionary. In four cases it was reported that students were introduced to a limited range of reference books as the need arose, because they were 'scattered about' in the classroom, or because tasks were set which required the consultation of a variety of dictionaries. In other cases course outlines included an introduction to a broader range of dictionary types, with specific



reference to thesauruses, encyclopedias, bilingual dictionaries, monolingual dictionaries for native and non-native speakers, specialist dictionaries and, in one case, parallel concordances. One informant provided students with a computer printout of all the dictionaries in the library, which constituted a good selection of modern works.

In his textbooks for first year undergraduates studying French, Nott (1993 and 1998) discusses the roles of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries and points out that larger dictionaries will provide more guidance on meaning and use. Wise's (1997) university-level French vocabulary coursebook contains projects involving the use of many types of reference materials, including encyclopedias, thesauruses, etymological dictionaries, dictionaries of place names, dictionaries of Anglicisms, the ROBERT ÉLECTRONIQUE on CD-ROM, multimedia encyclopedias, and on-line corpora.

The CELTE Self-Access Centre website developed at Warwick University with sponsorship from the British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes (BALEAP), is primarily intended for EAP students attending pre-sessional and in-sessional courses at British universities. The dictionary section of the site is designed to help students and their families choose what dictionaries they should buy or access, and provides information about a very wide range of English language dictionaries, including the major dictionaries for advanced learners of English, visual and photo dictionaries, specialist and technical dictionaries for native and non-native speakers, and dictionaries on CD-ROM and on the World Wide Web.

A number of other university language departments have websites with links to on-line dictionaries, although they do not evaluate these links or compare them to print-based resources. Examples of such sites are the English Language Unit at the University of Kent, and *Recursos* at the Language Centre, University of Brighton (website addresses listed at the end of the volume).

## 2.2 Stage two: Before dictionary consultation

According to Horsfall (1997:7), 'one of the most useful dictionary skills is to know when **not** to use a dictionary'. Berwick & Horsfall (1996:18-20) pay the skill some attention, and specify the questions that English-speaking language learners at secondary school should ask themselves before they use a dictionary. These include, while reading:

- *Do I really need to know the meaning?*
- *Can I work out the meaning from context, using my common sense?*

Textbooks commonly teach contextual guessing as a strategy for dealing with unknown words, either as an alternative to dictionary consultation or as a necessary pre-consultation stage. For example Nott (1993:16, 1998:22) provides exercises of the following type:

*Pour chacun des mots ci-dessous....*

*(a) essayez de vous faire une idée de son sens en étudiant son contexte immédiat (la phrase où il se trouve)*

*(b) consultez un dictionnaire français/français pour vérifier le sens du mot dans le contexte où il se trouve.*

One informant sent me a course outline for an EAP programme which listed, along with other types of contextual guessing strategy, the recognition of 'lexical familiarization' while reading. 'Lexical familiarization' (a term coined by Williams 1980) is a technique used in subject textbooks to explain unknown technical terms to non-specialist readers. Before reaching for the dictionary, EAP readers were urged to check that new terminology was not defined by the textbook writer within the text itself.

Some of my informants reported wariness about unnecessary dictionary consultation. Two believed that dictionary skills teaching was unnecessary on ab-initio courses 'I discourage the use of dictionaries, urging students to apply their knowledge of related languages instead'. One mentioned that students on a self-study programme were 'encouraged to break words down into their components and also to refer to the context as well as cognates before reaching for the dictionary'. Nott (1998:22) advises students that 'If you use a dictionary too often, you will spoil the pleasure of the text you are reading or listening to'. Fears were expressed more strongly by a respondent who wrote of a departmental perception that dictionaries might be 'dependence-generating' and counter-productive if used to fill in basic gaps in language knowledge.

Bishop (1998:7) thinks that tutors are happier about monolingual dictionary use, but 'fear that the bilingual dictionary somehow has a negative effect on learning'. He notes that 'most teachers do encourage students to think about the exact meaning of the words they are about to look up', but in a survey of 25 Open University students of French he found that a third 'simply open their dictionary' when they encounter an unknown word, without giving any prior thought to context or likely meaning.

For Scholfield (1982), the second step in the dictionary consultation process is 'identifying the problem area, word or phrase'. Stark (1990:197) reports that dictionary workbooks do not deal with the skill of establishing which lexical item poses a problem, but notes that this 'is not disturbing ...since it is not exclusive to dictionary use'. None of my informants referred to this skill and it is not specified in any of the published sources I examined, perhaps because it is regarded as one of the subskills needed to decide whether or not to consult a dictionary. Choosing between a word or a phrase as the look-up item has important implications for the look-up process, however, and tasks which pre-identify the phrases that learners must look up (see stage three below) may not do much to develop the skill of recognizing multi-word units in context.

Scholfield (1982) also regards 'guessing what form the word will be listed under' as a separate skill, and this is specified in more detail by Barnard (1989:25), who points out that 'knowledge of morphology and syntax' and 'the ability to use existing knowledge of the language to make intelligent guesses' are needed by users of English dictionaries to determine which form will be given headword treatment. Several EAP textbooks, such as O'Brien & Jordan (1985), train users to refer to context to establish the word class of the look-up word. This may be a more important skill for English language users than for users of languages where word morphology gives greater indication of word class. Nott's textbooks (1993, 1998) warn users of bilingual dictionaries that they should work out the word class of the English word before searching for its French equivalent, 'afin de distinguer entre *une goutte* et *laisser tomber* ("drop") ou *un bâton* et *coller* ("stick")'.

Lecturers in Japanese and Chinese drew attention to the special demands of non-alphabetic dictionary use, and differentiated between two methods of locating dictionary information in Japanese and Chinese dictionaries - via phonological form, and via the radical parts and strokes of the written character. One informant also mentioned the use of an alphabetized index, as discussed in Mair (1991).

Berwick & Horsfall (1996:6) point out that users 'need to understand how headwords operate and how they are marked out in their dictionary', and suggest some activities to help learners distinguish likely headwords (such as infinitives and uninflected adjectives) from forms that are unlikely to be given headword status (such as parts of a verb paradigm, or inflected nouns). Policy varies from dictionary to dictionary, however. For example, according to Barnard (1989:26), transparent compounds and predictable derived forms are more likely to be given headword status in learners' dictionaries than in dictionaries designed for native speakers.

A further skill at this stage in the look-up process is that of deciding which dictionary to use. Whitcut (1986:121) advocates that 'people should become aware of which dictionary is most suitable for a particular purpose: monolingual native speaker, monolingual learners', bilingual, specialized and technical'. Dictionary users with this skill can identify the type of information they want to find out, and apply prior knowledge of different dictionary types to decide which dictionary is most likely to supply this information. The skill involves predicting not only the quantity and quality of information that a given dictionary is likely to provide, but also whether the dictionary is likely to list the look-up item. For writing tasks, Nott (1993:15) advises bilingual dictionary use 'pour certains mots techniques, spécialisés, etc.' and monolingual dictionary use 'pour les autres mots ou expressions'. Barnard (1989:25) points out that dictionary users need 'knowledge of what not to look up' and should learn to avoid consulting the dictionary for the meaning of proper names, which will not be listed.

### 2.3 Stage three: Locating entry information

Dictionary skills specifications tend to concentrate on stages three and four of the consultation process, and direct or indirect teaching about dictionary macrostructure is mentioned both in the literature and in comments from my informants.

Published materials frequently teach alphabetical ordering. This is probably the most extensively treated dictionary skill in the EAP study skills textbooks, and there are also exercises to practise letter order and distribution in Berwick & Horsfall (1996) and on the CELTE Self-Access Centre website. Stark (1990) found that 57.1% of the dictionary workbooks he examined provided some practice in the alphabetic ordering of entries. He noted, however, that workbooks did not always deal with variations from strict alphabetic organization, and 'often overlooked' issues concerning the placing of compounds, fixed expressions, short forms, and phrasal and prepositional verbs. Two of my informants treated alphabetical ordering as a priority in dictionary skills training. Both of these were based overseas, and one taught students whose first language did not use the Roman alphabet.

Allied to the skill of alphabetical ordering is an understanding of the relationship between sound and spelling in the target language. This is regarded by Stark as 'basic information', and he found that it was largely ignored in dictionary workbooks. Clearly the relationship is more straightforward in some languages than in others; Barnard (1989:26) comments on the difficulty learners of English face, for example, when searching for words according to pronunciation, or pronouncing words with reference to their form. *Accent Français*, an interactive CD-ROM developed at the University of New England in Australia (Epps, forthcoming) practises strategies for deducing the pronunciation of written French words, and the self-access tasks sent by one informant for use with the ROBERT ÉLECTRONIQUE also provided lots of opportunities to consider French sound-spelling correspondence. Wise's textbook (1997:57) contains tasks to investigate the link between morphology and spelling. For example:

- Identify the orthographic elements in the following words which:*
- (a) reflect their etymological origins rather than their pronunciation*
  - (b) serve to disambiguate the word from a homophone*
  - (c) connect it with morphologically related forms*

Barnard (1989:26) draws attention to the fact that 'different words with the same spelling, the same sound, or with both the same spelling and sound may present problems to the user of the dictionary'. Homonyms, and the distinction between homonymy and polysemy, are the topic of projects suggested by Wise (1997:129), and are featured in the outline for an undergraduate language and linguistics course sent by

one informant, and in the self-access course another informant used with the ROBERT ÉLECTRONIQUE.

Many informants set their learners tasks to practise locating entry information, and although Stark found that dictionary workbooks neglected multiword lexical items, several of the tasks described to me by informants involved looking up the meaning of idioms, colloquialisms and jokes. Even if the problem of deciding which word in the idiom to look up (as discussed in Béjoint 1981, Bogaards 1990) was not openly discussed, exercises of this type must alert users to systems of organizing information in their dictionaries. Published sources tend to neglect this aspect of user knowledge, as Stark (1990:198) points out.

Stark also found that 'the location of derivatives within the alphabetic list tends to be overlooked by workbooks' (1990:201). Attention was paid to this area by some informants, however. One sent me a course outline including the item 'derived words: where to find them in the dictionary', and Wise (1997:19) draws attention to both the separate lists of affixes and Latin and Greek morphemes in the larger French dictionaries, and the ROBERT MÉTHODIQUE (1990) 'which lists lexical morphemes - roots, prefixes and suffixes - as well as words, with indications of how these elements combine'.

Berwick & Horsfall (1996) mention the skill of recognizing the two part structure of a bilingual dictionary - a skill that cannot be transferred from monolingual dictionary use. Most learners at university level are already familiar with the organization of a bilingual dictionary, and this is probably why it is not mentioned as a training need by my informants. The semi- or mono-bilingual dictionary, which is weighted heavily towards the target language, might be a new concept for university level students, however. Most dictionaries of this kind are designed for English language learners, but they were not mentioned by any of the English language lecturers who contacted me, many of whom concentrated on monolingual dictionary use because they taught multilingual groups in an English-speaking environment.

Some course outlines referred to the use of thesauruses, and one informant teaching on a foundation course in English for overseas students made particular use of the LONGMAN ESSENTIAL ACTIVATOR (Willis 1998). Both the LONGMAN ESSENTIAL ACTIVATOR and the *dictionnaires analogiques* mentioned by Wise (1997:20) group words and phrases in semantic areas under alphabetically organized key concepts.

Non-alphabetical photo dictionaries and picture dictionaries were not mentioned in the literature or by any informants (although featured in the lists of dictionaries provided by the CELTE Self-Access Centre). In order to consult dictionaries of this type learners need to understand their structure, interpret thematic headings, and predict subordinate lexical sets (Nesi 1989).

The skill of identifying and using cross-references was covered by only 20% of the dictionary workbooks examined by Stark (1990). Berwick & Horsfall (1996:11) draw attention to the cross-referencing skill of checking a word in both parts of a bilingual dictionary, and/or proceeding from a bilingual to a monolingual dictionary, but these kind of skills were not mentioned explicitly by my informants.

Electronic dictionaries on CD-ROM often have a complex hypertextual macrostructure, and each one is organized differently, so even expert dictionary users need to learn how to access information in a new product. Users without prior experience of hypertext may need particular support (Nesi 1996, 1999). English learners' dictionaries such as ALD and COBUILD on CD-ROM are often available for self-access use by EAP pre-sessional and in-sessional students, and two informants reported using the ROBERT ÉLECTRONIQUE as part of a dictionary skills training course. A simple search skill taught on one of these courses was the use of the wildcard (or *joker*) to substitute for one or more letters of the

search term. This course also included 'tasks such as finding synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms'. As Guillot & Kenning (1994:65) point out, early versions of the ROBERT ÉLECTRONIQUE do not offer the complex search options available to users of English learners' dictionaries on CD-ROM. The particular additional and alternative skills required to master the macrostructure of more complex electronic dictionaries were not specified in the literature, however, or by any informants.

#### **2.4 Stage four: Interpreting entry information**

As a first step in interpreting entry information, learners must be able to distinguish the various component parts of the entry. Several informants referred to exercises to practise this, and two English language textbooks used by informants (O'Brien & Jordan 1985 and Soars & Soars 1989) examine the organisation of the dictionary entry in detail. The skill seems to be associated with the teaching of low-level students, or students who have not been taught dictionary skills prior to university study, as is often the case with speakers of English as a second language who have acquired their language knowledge informally.

Checking spelling in the dictionary is a common but relatively simple look-up activity, which does not require the user to interpret the dictionary entry in any detail. It is necessary when only part of word form is known, or when information is required about inflected forms, hyphenation, or capitalization. Stark (1990) notes that in dictionary workbooks 'many aspects of spelling are under-represented', but O'Brien & Jordan (1985) contain a section on 'using the dictionary to help you spell', and the self-access tasks for use with the ROBERT ÉLECTRONIQUE which were sent by one informant contained activities for checking spelling (made even simpler in electronic dictionaries because of the wildcard or *joker* facility). One (EAP) informant included discussion of the use of computerized spell-checkers in a Study Skills course outline. The dangers of over-reliance on this type of 'dictionary' information are obvious, yet spell-checker use was not mentioned as a dictionary skill topic by other informants, or in the literature.

Many informants mentioned that they used the dictionary front matter or companion workbooks to train their students in dictionary skills. The use of typographic conventions, numbered superscripts and symbols are usually explained in documents of this type rather than in independent coursebooks, because they vary from dictionary to dictionary. Barnard (1989) refers to codes and superscripts, and O'Brien & Jordan (1985) explain the function of some codes and punctuation marks with reference to the (OXFORD) ALD. They also draw learners' attention to the role of different typefaces (for example 'the headword ... is printed in very black ink'). This kind of information may be particularly important for users who are not familiar with the conventions of the Roman alphabet, and who find it difficult to distinguish variations in font.

Stark (1990:199) found that 54.3% of workbooks mentioned pronunciation information, but 'learners are seldom instructed in depth as to how they should approach [IPA] symbols'. Although most EAP textbooks ignore the International Phonetic Alphabet, O'Brien & Jordan (1985) examines IPA and stress patterns in some detail. Soars and Soars (1989), another textbook mentioned by informants, also contains exercises to practise interpreting IPA. The introductory section of the interactive CD-ROM developed by Epps (forthcoming) consists of a tutorial on the IPA information contained in dictionaries.

For several informants training in IPA was a top priority. One informant described a course of six lectures in basic phonetics which constituted the only dictionary skills training provided for a group of near-fluent advanced ESP learners. Another informant sent me an outline for an undergraduate language and linguistics course which described different transcription systems including IPA, and considered the relationship between

citation forms and the pronunciation of connected speech - an aspect of dictionary skills training that was not mentioned by other informants.

According to Stark (1990), dictionary workbooks pay very little attention to etymological information. Indeed, Stark himself was wary of the danger of giving learners the historical meaning of words, because it may differ from their current meaning. Monolingual English learners' dictionaries do not provide etymological information, and published materials for the training of EFL/EAP/ESP students almost entirely ignore this aspect of dictionary use. Many of the tasks in Wise (1997), however, involve study of the origin and development of French words. Papers by Ilson (1983) and Pierson (1989) argue that etymology can be a very useful tool in the language classroom. Pierson describes how he required Hong Kong university students in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences to use etymological or large collegiate dictionaries in order to examine the origins of technical terms, and make connections between words which have the same origin. Pierson also advocates that Chinese language learners should study the history of the Chinese written characters.

A similar approach to Pierson's was adopted by one of my informants, who required second year English Language Studies students to consult dictionaries while studying 'abstraction and technicality in academic discourse'. This included a workshop on Greek and Latin influences on technicality, where 'students are introduced to the etymological listings in dictionaries, the abbreviations etc.'. Another informant included etymology in a course outline for language and linguistics students, and I was sent self-access materials for use with the ROBERT ÉLECTRONIQUE which contained questions about *étymologie*.

Although the interpretation of etymological information might appear to be an advanced skill, only to be included in courses for serious linguists, Pierson's experience with ESP students in Hong Kong suggests that it may be relevant to a broader range of learners. The dictionary skills specifications for the National Literacy Strategy even require children in the upper primary school (year 6) to be familiar with the function and use of etymological dictionaries.

Grammar and syntax information is usually explained in the dictionary front matter and/or in companion workbooks which a number of informants said they used to train their students in dictionary skills. Coursebooks used by informants (O'Brien & Jordan 1985, Soars & Soars 1989, Nott 1993 and 1998) included exercises to practise the transitivity information in dictionaries, and teaching materials and course outlines sent to me also variously mentioned the interpretation of dictionary information concerning countability, gender, conjugation, irregular verbs, reflexive verbs and verb complementation patterns. Berwick & Horsfall (1996:7), however, writing primarily for secondary school teachers, downplay the need to understand the more difficult grammar coding:

Most abbreviations regarding parts of speech are straightforward. More complex ones, such as vt and vi, probably need not be explained - all most pupils need to know is that the word is a verb.

A companion skill to that of recognising the component parts of a dictionary entry is that of distinguishing between what is relevant and what is irrelevant to a given consultation. This may involve identifying the appropriate sense in a polysemous entry, and sifting information in a long definition to find key words. If users do this badly they may mistakenly believe that the dictionary consultation has been satisfactory, and misapply the information they have gathered. Mitchell (1983) and Miller & Gildea (1984) both found that primary school age children tended to avoid reading the whole dictionary entry, and picked out just one familiar-looking part of the definition instead. This resulted in some amusing but potentially disastrous errors in the children's own language production. Tono 1984 (cited in Béjoint 1994), Müllich (1990) and Nesi & Meara (1994)

found the same 'negative choice strategy' in university students, who often misread dictionary entries because they did not select information appropriately. Barnard (1989) points out that it may be necessary for the user to search a long way down a dictionary entry to find the meaning that he or she requires.

Many of the tasks set by informants required students to discover one correct answer by sifting through a complex entry, although this skill was not explicitly stated. The NEAB University Entrance Test in English for Speakers of Other Languages (UETESOL), which is taken by many students on university foundation courses in Britain, also sometimes tests this skill in the editing section of the written paper by requiring candidates to match a word in context with one of several meanings in a given dictionary entry.

Tasks to find one correct answer in a dictionary or collection of reference books also involve interpreting definitions. Some informants indicated that this kind of task was the only type of dictionary skills training students received. Such tasks, however, do require students to apply many skills, especially if the look-up items are culturally loaded, as some informants reported. The look-up items they mentioned included faux amis, popular expressions, idioms and phrases, sometimes necessitating the consultation of more than one dictionary, or a dictionary and an encyclopedia. Wise (1997) suggests tasks to interpret turns of phrase and advertising slogans, and to investigate the origins of idiomatic expressions.

According to Stark (1990:200), many workbooks include references to style labels, but do not mention their limitations. Soars and Soars (1989) teach the meaning of geographical and register labels, but Wise (1997:199) invites more sophisticated comparative examination of labelling, addressing some of the issues that the workbooks in Stark's survey failed to cover.

Stark (1990:200) found only 22.9% coverage of collocation in dictionary workbooks, and few EAP textbooks mention it. Barnard (1989:17), however, suggests an activity to compare the collocates of intensifiers in Japanese and English, and Wise (1997:24) sets projects to compare English and French collocational restrictions. Collocations were mentioned in one or two course descriptions, particularly in connection with the extraction of information from dictionary examples. Barnard (1989) attaches great importance to collocational information in the dictionary, and claims that 'the learner who is satisfied with knowing at a level below the collocation is probably not learning effectively because he is not regarding the language as an interconnected system'. He draws attention, however, to the difficulty of interpreting examples correctly.

Because examples are the least abstract way of giving information, they are also the least explicit. The user has to infer the usage or grammatical "rule" from an example of realistic language. ....The danger is that an inexperienced or unskilful user of the dictionary may have no idea of what grammatical information is conveyed in an entry.... (1989:15)

One outline that was sent me for a language and linguistics course included 'examples of usage: their function and how to select good ones', and another informant specified the skill of knowing 'how to adapt examples', including a consideration of whether the example is given 'as an illustration, or as an exception'. Such a skill would involve recognition of collocational information in the dictionary, and possibly also the understanding that collocational information is not always clearly signalled.

None of my informants made particular reference to information in dictionaries listed independently of the main A-Z listing, such as usage notes, study pages, pictures, numerals, proper names, kinship terms and place names, although Stark (1990:199) notes that dictionary workbook authors 'often appear keen to advertize information contained in dictionary front matter and appendices'. O'Brien & Jordan (1985:18) briefly

list the kinds of information that appear in dictionary appendices. Some electronic English dictionaries for learners such as the LONGMAN INTERACTIVE DICTIONARY and COBUILD on CD-ROM are actually compilations of several different sources, and provide an abundance of information in addition to the A-Z entries (Nesi 1996, 1999). English language teaching textbooks do not yet refer to these innovatory reference works, however, and none of my English language teaching informants mentioned them.

After look-up information has been identified and understood, it needs to be adapted to a particular writing context, or checked against a particular reading context. Berwick & Horsfall (1996:10) specify this skill, as do Gethin & Gunnemark (1996:106). The 1997/1998 syllabus of the NEAB University Entrance Test in English for Speakers of Other Languages (UETESOL) mentions the process of verifying dictionary information in the 'Editing Skills' section of the written paper:

candidates may be asked to match dictionary definitions with the use of items in a text. They will be required to provide the form of the word which conforms precisely to the grammatical constraints of the context.

Again, the process of checking dictionary information against the text was not specified by my informants, although the closely related skill of contextual guessing prior to look up was referred to.

## **2.5 Stage five: Locating entry information**

The final stage in the look-up process is that of recording dictionary information. Berwick & Horsfall (1996:25) regard this stage as essential, and Barnard (1989:17) also considers it to be an important skill, although not one that need always follow look-up. Rare words might not be worth writing down, but a learner might make a mental note of some words, mark up translations of others in the text (a method Barnard does not recommend), and use a vocabulary notebook to keep a permanent record of the dictionary information deemed most important.

'Sifting' entry information involves deciding which information to record in a notebook, and which to discard. Berwick & Horsfall (1996:26) also point out that the compiler must decide on the format, the organizational system, whether to record word information in the first or the foreign language, and whether to use abbreviations. Barnard (1989:17) suggests that a vocabulary notebook entry should contain 'usable chunks of language', accompanied by citation forms and a systematic coding system.

Bishop (1998) found that 19 out of the 25 second level Open University students of French in his survey kept a vocabulary notebook for recording dictionary look-up information. Leeke & Shaw's findings (forthcoming) suggest that vocabulary notebook keeping is most widespread amongst beginner language learners, but they also cite a number of examples of wordlist-making amongst overseas students studying at a British university. They found that for these students vocabulary storage was a highly personal process: 'nearly every list had individual features and revealed individual histories and beliefs'. Leeke & Shaw review the psycholinguistic and applied linguistic literature on vocabulary storage techniques for language learners, but take a pragmatic approach to the teaching of these skills. They argue that a less-than-optimal technique that suits and is practised by an individual learner is much more effective than 'ideal precepts which are never followed'.

Few informants specified the recording of dictionary information as a skill they taught to language students. One referred, however, to his attempt to make EAP preessional students keep card files of words they looked up. The system was apparently unpopular with both tutors and students, and was subsequently abandoned. Some electronic dictionaries provide notebook space where users can create their own personal



collections of dictionary information by 'pasting' entries. No informants mentioned this facility, however.

## **2.6 Stage six: Understanding lexicographical issues**

Some of the courses described in published papers or by informants include discussion of lexicographical issues, designed to help learners select dictionaries and/or relevant dictionary information, or linked to practical lexicographical projects.

One informant provided the outline of a fairly theoretical course for Language and Linguistics students. It introduced some lexicographical terminology in 'a comparison of the everyday vocabulary that we use to talk about words with the technical vocabulary used by lexicographers and linguists', and also reviewed general principles of dictionary compilation, and examined 'types of definition: analytic, synthetic, synonym, rule-based etc.'. Another informant reported that he had invited representatives from a local publisher to talk to students 'about how dictionaries are made and what they can and can't offer the users'.

Whitfield (1993), on the other hand, describes a scheme to teach schoolchildren dictionary skills which required the children to create their own multilingual dictionary. The children learnt about the function and use of dictionaries by addressing the problems they themselves encountered with translations, definitions and register restrictions. The dictionary skills specifications in the National Literacy Strategy also require young learners to compile their own dictionaries, and to experiment in the process with different organizational systems and different defining styles.

None of my informants specified lexicographical projects as part of their dictionary skills training programmes, but several included the comparison of different defining styles, and the comparison of entries for the same word in different dictionaries (for example the COLLINS 'Gem' and a larger Collins dictionary). Gethin & Gunnemark (1996) also look at what they consider to be 'good' and 'bad' dictionary entries, and Barnard (1989:25) suggests an activity to compare entry information in ALD and LDOCE.

One informant supplied details of an assignment for an undergraduate Study Skills module which required students to reflect on many aspects of dictionary content and use. The students had to describe their own dictionary use and associated problems, compare entry information in at least two different types of dictionary, and introspect about how much they had learnt from the process of consultation. This assignment was part of an accredited university course, a rare case of dictionary skills not only being taught, but also examined.

Several informants acknowledged the need to promote understanding of the use of dictionaries in different contexts. Berwick & Horsfall (1996:18) recommend that teachers should involve learners in discussion of 'real-life situations in which language use requires instantly available knowledge'. One of my informants did just this with her students, 'sharing information about which dictionaries they use, and what they use them for', while another specified 'Who uses dictionaries and for what?' as the title of a course unit.

Dictionary criticism and evaluation is perhaps the most complex skill in dictionary skills training, because it presupposes more basic skills of choosing, interpreting and comparing dictionary information. At this level students might discuss myths about the authority of the dictionary, and the impossibility of defining and translating meaning perfectly. Stark (1990:202) points out that 'for understandable commercial reasons' dictionary workbooks downplay defects in dictionaries. One course description sent to me by an informant, however, promised to 'stress that dictionaries are written by human beings and reflect their strengths and weaknesses'.

Stark also comments on the lack of warning in dictionary workbooks regarding 'the dangers of assuming 1:1 equivalents between languages'. Gethin & Gunnemark (1996) however, encourage a critical approach, considering the advantages and disadvantages of bilingual versus monolingual dictionaries (and deciding in favour of the bilingual). Barnard's notes on dictionary training (1989:25) warn against 'believing that words have exact, unique or unvarying translations', and one informant described a dictionary course for first year undergraduates which considered 'the concept of the untranslatable'. Another informant described a bilingual dictionary skills training programme 'including comparisons with the English section of the dictionary, to highlight (often subtle) differences between the two languages'.

Students studying Applied Linguistics at postgraduate level may be set tasks which require sophisticated lexicographical knowledge and critical insight. An assignment for the Grammar module of the Warwick MA in English Language Teaching this year required students to assess the consistency and thoroughness of the grammatical information for given words in a specified learner's dictionary, while a Use of English module in the same programme included a discussion of approaches to critical discourse analysis, referring to two articles which treat dictionary entries as discourse types (Hoey 1996 and Krishnamurthy 1996).

### **3. Attitudes and beliefs relating to the teaching of dictionary skills**

Four major themes emerged from discussion with informants.

#### **3.1 Students enter university with poor dictionary skills**

Many informants believed that their students had not received much dictionary skills instruction prior to tertiary level. Typical comments were: 'I am always surprised how little training in this students have had at A level', '97% of students have no skills', and 'students don't in general ever use monolingual dictionaries. They use bilingual ones badly'.

One informant commented that 'the changes to English language teaching in secondary schools have had a cataclysmic effect on the teaching of modern languages at university'. Another wondered whether dictionary skills knowledge had declined amongst UK students in the past ten years. Two informants were sure that it had:

Dictionaries are books, and students are increasingly reluctant to open books. At one time we could rely on students to consult verb tables in the Collins Robert, but they are no longer able to do so (they have no idea why numbers appear after verbs, and the explanation of (vi) and (vt/vtr) would have been unnecessary a decade ago).

There was also some suggestion that dictionary skills training might fall between two stools. One informant pointed out that while foreign-language teachers assumed that dictionary skills had been covered by first language teachers, first-language teachers were in fact 'working to a different agenda entirely' - 'the school system assumes that skills are transferable and self-evident, but more often than not students assume they are isolated'. Not all informants were conscious of falling standards, however. Dictionary skills training was not given at one informant's (non-UK) institution because 'we all recommend dictionaries, but students are expected to already know how to use them'.

#### **3.2 There is insufficient dictionary skills training at university level**

Most of my informants reported dictionary skills training on preessional courses, in first year programmes, or in an isolated series of lectures, rather than as regular input

throughout a student's university life. Only two informants reported providing introductions to dictionaries on courses at all levels with 'progression over the years'.

There was also some suggestion that the dictionary skills component was getting squeezed out of language courses, sometimes as a result of course re-organization. One informant commented that 'much more time needs to be devoted to the development of dictionary skills, but of course modularization does not allow for it', and another admitted 'There is no doubt a lot of room for improvement of these skills. Unfortunately, we are always short of time to fit all these skills into our teaching'. A lecturer in Japanese made a similar point: 'at the elementary level there is little incentive to use dictionaries, as ..... time is limited'. Although tutors on a distance learning degree programme were 'urged to mention these skills and to encourage students to adopt strategies', it was also pointed out that 'they have 21 hours of group tuition per year, which is not a lot!'. In some cases dictionary skills training was reduced to make room for other subjects. One informant sent me the outline for a course entitled An Introduction to Dictionaries, which has now been replaced by a Corpus Linguistics course.

Several informants expressed dissatisfaction with current practice. Typical comments were:

I think we could try to do more.

We are aware of this as an area that would repay time invested, but as yet have only taken hesitant steps by looking a little at dictionary use.

I am conscious that we need to build up a better bank of reference books.

The exercises are not very inspired.

We do a little bit ... with our first years and then with our third years... but far from enough.

We have been aware of a while that [dictionary skills] might be formalized somehow, always assuming that there is a non-boring way of doing it!

### **3.3 Some dictionary training tasks are unpopular with staff and students**

Several informants noted that dictionary skills training was not 'sexy' and that students and tutors found it boring. Not many people showed up to a talk by representatives from a local dictionary publisher, arranged by one of my informants: 'perhaps we should not have been surprised that out of a potential 200 students about a dozen turned up. The same lack of interest, I am sorry to say, prevailed among the staff'. Another informant described a failed attempt to include dictionary skills exercises and a system of vocabulary record keeping in an EAP preessional course: 'the students were bored and the teachers hated it, so I gave up'.

There were reports, however, of enthusiastic responses to dictionary skills training. Most of these involved electronic dictionary use. Guillot & Kenning (1994) write of students' 'very tangible enthusiasm' when using the ROBERT ÉLECTRONIQUE, and an informant said he was pleased with the response to self-access material for use with this dictionary: 'as it's all computer-based, it goes down quite well'. A pronunciation course involving both CD-ROM and print based activities was reported as a great success: 'far from being unpopular, the students really enjoy this quite detailed research task, the discoveries they make, and the feeling that, with a dictionary close by, they do not need to have previously heard a new, or "difficult" word before being able to pronounce it'.

Interest in the new electronic medium may not be the only explanation for the success of these programmes. There is some suggestion that tasks demanding critical and evaluative skills are more popular with students than mere mechanical exercises. Whitfield (1993) writes of transforming a boring and unpopular dictionary skills training programme by setting young learners the task of writing their own bilingual dictionaries, and although there may be no time for such ambitious projects in university-level courses, one informant wrote of practising 'dictionary use of an intelligent kind', and another was proud that the students in his department 'don't do hunt the thimble type exercises'. The justification for this approach is perhaps summed up by an informant who wrote: 'If we perceive dictionaries as tools to fill in basic gaps in the language they may be perceived as "laziness inducing" or counter-productive. But the minute you start thinking in terms of higher skills and critical thought, they are both interesting and useful'.

### **3.4 The teaching of dictionary skills was believed to be important**

My informants were self-selecting, so it is perhaps hardly surprising that many of them considered dictionary skills training 'essential'. One informant said 'I would have thought that's something any language teacher worth her/his salt would do'. Three informants also emphasized the importance of good dictionary skills when studying at a distance: 'we consider they are essential for any learner, but even more so for the distance learner'.

Most informants said that they would like to read this report when it was completed, and expressed a desire to improve the provision of dictionary skills training in their institutions. I was impressed by the enthusiasm and dedication of these busy people, who took the trouble to respond to my requests, and had so many ideas and suggestions.

### **Acknowledgements**

Thanks to Hélène Adam (UMIST); Rodney Ball (University of Southampton); David Banks (Université de Bretagne Occidentale); Christopher Barnard (Teikyo University); Polina Belimova (Institute of Foreign Languages, St Petersburg); Graham Bishop (Open University); Jonathan Bunt (University of Manchester); Andrew Cath (Universiti Brunei Darussalam); Tim Connell (City University, London); Rosalind Epps (University of New England, New South Wales); Alan Evison (Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London); Jeanne Godfrey (University of Westminster); Richard Hail (Oxford Brookes University); Peter Hasler (University of Glasgow); Annegret Jamieson (University of Hull); Steve Lamb (University of Warwick); Beverly Lewin (Tel Aviv University); Hélène Lewis (University of Bournemouth); Jo McDonough (University of Essex); Pat Mines (University of Wales, Aberystwyth); Jennifer Moore-Blunt (University of Portsmouth); Hélène Mulphin (The Open University); David Nott (University of Lancaster); Martin O'Shaughnessy (Nottingham Trent University); Loredana Polezzi (University of Warwick); Rod Revell (University of Warwick); Peter Robinson (University of Kent); Li Ruru (University of Leeds); Raphael Salkie (University of Brighton); Jane Shelton (University of Newcastle); Philip Shaw (Århus School of Business); Elizabeth Thomson (University of Wollongong); Richard Wakely (University of Edinburgh); Penny Willis (University of Hull); Hilary Wise (Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London).

## THEMATIC REPORT 4

### TEACHING DICTIONARY USE TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS OF LANGUAGE MEDIATION IN CATALONIA

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#### 1. Introduction

Present society in Catalonia is characterized by a series of changes that affect the language and communication. Information plays an essential role; both science and technology have developed greatly; the latter appears in most of our everyday activities. This has resulted in the emergence of new linguistic products and several new professions.

The professional who deals with the language in this information society is the so-called 'linguistic mediator'. This person is familiar with various areas of knowledge in Linguistics and carries out various language projects. In fact, the linguistic mediator becomes a 'bridge' between the language and the society in which it is used.

As elsewhere in the world, in Catalonia these groups of professionals are considered preferential users of dictionaries. They use dictionaries as consulting tools, but also as objects of study. Linguistic mediators manage all the available linguistic resources, carry out different activities in the language industries in general, and accomplish a great number of tasks (i.e. summaries, classifications, the standardization of documents, training and language planning) with varying degrees of linguistic intervention.

These professionals are trained at higher learning centres; that is, they enrol in specialized degree courses where they acquire the necessary skills to write, to translate general and technical texts, to produce terminology and to edit texts. These university courses allow the mediator to gain a better command of one or more of these activities.

The linguistic specialist must be capable of accomplishing very different tasks. For example, in a school, the mediator must be able to elaborate a linguistic standardization plan and carry it out, to offer a text revision service, to produce translations of academic texts, to offer teachers courses on different linguistic topics, and so on. These professional activities can be summarized as follows (Cabré & Payrató 1989):

1. To compile, classify and store information of different kinds related to a language, which may include bibliographical, lexicographic, textual, terminological, grammatical, phonetic, orthographic, stylistic or conceptual information.
2. To standardize the information retrieved and to deal with classification systems, terminology, thesauri, standards and the production of specialized documents for specific purposes.
3. To exchange practical information on translation, interpretation and edition.
4. To manage (monolingual or multilingual) linguistic services, either in a private company or as part of a governmental agency.

However, this preferential dictionary user faces some limitations that may reduce the success of their consultation of lexicographic works. The main limitations observed are the following (Béjoint 1989):

- a) Some of the information supplied by dictionaries is regularly misunderstood.
- b) Some types of information offered by dictionaries are used much less than expected.
- c) Many users tend to think that their dictionary is simply a mirror of the language, and that dictionaries cannot be wrong in their descriptions of meaning or of usage.
- d) Many users seem to be unaware of the variety of dictionaries available, and of the differences between them.

## **2. Types of dictionary users**

Linguistic mediators assume different obligations depending on the training they have received and the activities they have been asked to perform. These two factors directly determine the degree of intervention that will apply in each case. We distinguish four grades: assistant-mediator, executive-mediator, manager-mediator and research-mediator.

First, assistant-mediators undergo a fundamental general training that allows them to answer their clients' queries. Their work consists in being aware of the products available on the market, gathering relevant documents, and classifying and storing them. They have to make available a more or less complete list of products for their clients. They display some degree of intervention in the language, but it is limited because the choice of products is made by the user of the service rather than by them.

The executive-mediators try to guide their clients in the choice of the product that suits their needs. They know the set of products available on the market and, according to their clients' expectations, recommend one product or another. Their intervention ability is higher than that of the assistant-mediators because they find themselves in a situation that calls for decisions. A good executive-mediator is familiar with the products on the market, knows the characteristics of each and understands the clients' needs in order to recommend the most adequate materials for each situation.

The manager-mediators represent the third degree of intervention. Not only do they have to know the products that exist on the market, but they can also solve the users' most common linguistic problems. Their work often leads them to suggest alternative solutions. They are able to give answers to their clients' questions, to justify their solutions, and to explain the reasons underlying particular phenomena. Belonging to this group requires a high degree of preparation, especially in terms of interdisciplinary training. Frequently they share their work with others and consult other mediators, institutions or academies. They often suggest alternatives to these problems and have to find resources to solve unforeseen ones.

The research-mediators work under privileged conditions. They can be the producers of the documents that exist on the market, or may act as managers of these materials. The university or research and development departments are their usual workplace: academic departments, linguistic services, language academies or service companies. They intervene directly in the management of the language, moreover, their agreements are reached by consensus and their recommendations are considered binding.

These four degrees of intervention are also exhibited in the four professions that linguistic mediators engage in: translators, editors, terminologists and text producers. The teaching of activities related to the mediation process can be carried out in different institutions, from specialized schools to university linguistics departments or translator training colleges. The type of training that the students receive is specific and comprises diverse in-depth programmes of study. In all cases, it takes into account dictionaries as useful instruments for carrying out their activities. Dictionaries of different types, dealing with more or less specialized fields, should help them to perform their different duties.

Regardless of the concrete tasks of each type of linguistic specialist, some requirements are common to all types of mediation:

1. To know the most salient features of the subject they work with.
2. To establish the characteristics of the communicative situation in which they produce translations, or produce or edit texts.
3. To use the best linguistic resources in each case, drawing on dictionaries and other appropriate lexicographic and terminological materials.

*From one language to another (interlinguistic mediation): translators*

Translators try to establish a relationship with two texts between which there is some equivalence at the semantic level. The translator must convey in the target language the message of the source text, and he or she is able to do this following various procedures. The idea of translation implies the transfer to another language of the meaning intended by the author of the original text.

In fact, it is necessary to find a balance that ensures the absolute loyalty of the translation. The translation should not introduce into the target text elements caused by the intention of being too close to or too distant from the style of the source text. In addition, dictionaries are books of reference and undoubtedly supporting instruments for translation.

*From one language model to another (intra-linguistic mediation): text producers*

Producers generate texts, both general and specialized, in a specific language. Their activity is similar in part to that of other types of mediators (translators, terminologists and editors), because writing is also present in all these activities.

This type of mediator works in different fields and fulfils different functions. In general, text producers have to know various general criteria in their working language and, in order to produce adequate texts, must know the available linguistic resources and how to use them in a suitable way.

Text producers use dictionaries at least in two ways: as a complementary instrument in their everyday work, or as an object of study. They use dictionaries when they have linguistic doubts or when they want to specify a sense. They get closer to the dictionary when they regard it as an object of study, because in that case they conceive the dictionary as a type of text.

*From specialized text to general text (intertextual mediation): terminologists and specialized translators*

The professional aim of terminologists and specialized translators is the translation of specialized texts. We can talk about different factors determining specialized texts, but the most common is the subject, which implies a deep knowledge of the appropriate terminology used in the field in question. These types of mediators are real intermediaries between two specialized texts in different languages. They should know the topic of the text they are translating and they should master the linguistic resources that they can use in each situation.

*From one text model to another (intratextual mediation): editors*

Editors should establish control and revision mechanisms at all the stages preceding a printed work (Mestres et al. 1995). They have specialist skills for checking the style of the text in order to adapt it to the requirements of the publishing house.

In the case of the Catalan language, for example, the abilities and the knowledge required for an editor are at least the following. First, to find and correct mistakes in a text, taking into account the linguistic variety of the producer, the type of text and the communicative situation in which the text is produced. Second, to set well-defined editing criteria according to each situation. Third, to know the graphic conventions and to use the standardized correction marks. Finally, to know the main linguistic documents used by an editor.

In most of their tasks, the dictionary plays an essential role. It seems completely necessary in activities that imply the application of coherent criteria of correction, in accordance with the different aspects of the text (adequacy, coherence and cohesion) and in awareness of the most widely used linguistic conventions.

### **3. User needs v. dictionary types**

As already shown, there are different types of mediators who need different products. Dictionaries are useful for the tasks related to the interpretation of the lexical and the grammatical standard. The fundamental reference sources are general dictionaries, which should be supplemented by other dictionaries according to the type of text that is being created.

If we focus on the types of dictionaries that help mediators, we find a collection of very diverse lexicographic works. This diversity is due to the characteristics of the vocabulary, of the languages in contrast and of the material formats: general dictionaries v. specialized dictionaries; monolingual v. multilingual dictionaries, and printed products v. electronic media.

The utility for mediators of dictionaries should be considered from different points of view. In this sense, we find different dictionaries that assist different users to achieve different purposes:

- Encyclopedic dictionaries
- Etymological dictionaries
- Dialect dictionaries
- General monolingual dictionaries
- Bilingual dictionaries
- Thematic dictionaries
- Spelling dictionaries
- Terminological dictionaries

### **4. Examples of exercises for practising dictionary skills**

The teaching proposals presented below show some of the possibilities that dictionaries offer both as objects of study and as supporting resources in the different tasks of the mediation process. The syllabuses of the courses include the topic of dictionary use.

*Lexicographic resources in the analysis of speech and writing*

1. To regard the dictionary as a type of text and to analyze it
2. To evaluate the appropriateness of different dictionary types for each need
3. To know dictionary typologies and their usefulness in text production
4. To know the possibilities that the dictionary offers as an instrument for text production: grammatical, semantic and pragmatic information
5. To evaluate the dictionary's examples in the process of writing
6. To conceive the dictionary as a cultural, pragmatic and social object
7. To justify the dictionary not as grammar, but as a book that contains grammatical information



8. To check the definition of a given concept in different dictionaries
9. To evaluate underlying ideologies in dictionaries
10. To become familiar with the usage labels that appear in dictionaries
11. To check the spelling of the words in a text
12. To obtain usage examples illustrating writing situations
13. To recognize geographical, social, chronological and functional variation by means of usage marks in general dictionaries
14. To choose the degree of specialty of a word according to text type
15. To verify the adequacy of the words used in a text (formal/colloquial, specialized/general, oral/written, interactive/informative)
16. To change the degree of formality of a text
17. To evaluate a dictionary by the semantic information it provides
18. To know the main concepts of a specialized field through the definition of its terms

#### *Dictionaries and general translation*

1. To evaluate the usefulness of a dictionary for translation
2. To evaluate dictionaries on the basis of the quality of the equivalents given
3. To evaluate dictionaries on the basis of the presence or absence of pragmatic information
4. To determine the organization of the cultural and grammatical information that appears in bilingual dictionaries
5. To know the type of dictionary suitable for each case (taking into account the difference between dictionaries for production and dictionaries for comprehension)
6. To know the differences between general and learners' dictionaries
7. To choose the best reference work according to the translation procedure
8. To detect the borrowings and literal translations in a text
9. To detect linguistic interference using different types of dictionaries
10. To observe the set of usage labels in dictionaries
11. To consider the different dictionary shortcomings for the production activities in translation
12. To evaluate the type of dictionary needed in comprehension activities
13. To choose a dictionary by the quality of the equivalents
14. To evaluate dictionaries according to the amount of pragmatic information included
15. To determine the semantic equivalents proposed by bilingual dictionaries
16. To outline the labels for foreign languages made explicit in dictionaries

#### *Dictionaries in specialized translation and terminology*

1. To detect the presence of specific terminology in general language dictionaries
2. To evaluate the need for specialized lexicons
3. To evaluate dictionaries on the basis of the amount of terminology in them (number of lemma, degree of reliability, standardization labels)
4. To evaluate the type of dictionary which is useful in a given situation (general dictionary, encyclopedic dictionary, terminological dictionary)
5. To assess thematic variety within general language dictionaries
6. To retrieve specific terminology from general language dictionaries
7. To know the lexicographic and terminological works available on the market
8. To know the reference tools for the translation of specialized documents
9. To determine the usefulness of a monolingual or bilingual specialized dictionary according to the type of text to be translated
10. To observe the most obvious gaps in specialized dictionaries as far as phraseology is concerned

#### *Normative use and (in)correct vocabulary*

1. To recognize standardization labels in dictionaries
2. To know the differences between prescriptive and descriptive dictionaries (according to their function, selection of the nomenclature, usage labels)

3. To evaluate dictionaries on the basis of the information on usage
4. To determine the aims or the social standard of dictionaries
5. To detect the standardized vocabulary of a text
6. To correct linguistic forms if they are considered inadequate for the communicative situation
7. To correct the phonetic representation of the spelling of the words
8. To introduce phonetic, morphological, syntactic and lexical changes in a text
9. To ascertain the degree of standardization of the words in a dictionary
10. To recognize the correct spelling of the words
11. To detect geographical variants
12. To analyze the information given from the point of view of syntax
13. To detect morphemes that receive lexicographic treatment
14. To analyze gender and number markings
15. To observe the presence of irregular plurals
16. To validate the particular cases of gender
17. To check units introduced in dictionaries (suffixes, prefixes, and compounds)
18. To check units introduced as subentries
19. To access dictionaries in order to solve morphological and syntactic inadequacies
20. To compare the information offered for the same topic by different lexicographic products
21. To adapt the text to the communicative situation

In conclusion, dictionaries are very useful instruments for the linguistic mediator who has to manage very different linguistic resources and needs specific skills to produce texts, to translate general and specialized texts, to produce terminology and to edit texts. Moreover, this kind of user's limitations on the use of dictionaries can only be solved with special training.

## EXAMPLES OF PRACTICAL EXERCISES

### *Lexicographic resources in discourse analysis and writing*

1. Observeu les definicions del lema "demagògia" dels tres reculls lexicogràfics següents:

**demagògia** *f.* Política consistent a afalagar la multitud. <sup>3</sup> Estat polític en què el govern és lliurat a la multitud.  
DGLC, 1993

**demagògia** *f.* Política fonamentada en la utilització de mètodes emotius i irracionals per estimular els sentiments dels governants perquè acceptin promeses i programes d'acció impracticables. <sup>3</sup> Estat polític en que el govern és lliurat a la multitud.  
DIEC, 1995

**demagògia** *f* **1** Segons el concepte aristotèlic, forma impura de govern democràtic que consisteix a exercir el poder a profit de les masses indisciplinades. **2** **1** Política fonamentada en la utilització de mètodes emotius i irracionals per a estimular els sentiments dels governants cap a l'acceptació de programes d'acció impracticables i fal·laciosos que miren només de mantenir situacions de privilegi. **2** Estat polític en què el govern és lliurat a la multitud.  
DLC, 1993

2. Determineu la selecció d'informació i la prioritització, que proposen els tres diccionaris, en relació amb les variables que conté el quadre següent:

Diccionari / informació	DGLC, 1993	DIEC, 1995	DLC, 1993
Selecció d'informació			
Organització de la informació			

Nombre i tipus d'accepcions			
Informació gramatical			
Informació semàntica			
Informació pragmàtica			

### Dictionaries in general translation

1. Tradueix el text següent, tenint en compte que es tracta d'un document propi de l'àmbit dels mitjans de comunicació.

#### El 95% de los alumnos tropieza con los acentos

*Sólo la tercera parte sabe a los 16 años que "gozar de buena prensa" es despertar simpatía.*

**Sólo cinco de cada cien estudiantes de 16 años sale a flote en la prueba de los acentos, la mitad no identifica a Antonio de Nebrija como autor de la primera gram-tica española (...). De cada diez, sólo dos sitúan el absolutismo en el siglo XVII, y tres saben que en Asturias se produjo la Revolución de Octubre. Son pinceladas extraídas de los cuestionarios a que en 1997 fueron sometidos 56.555 alumnos de secundaria obligatoria con el fin de conocer su rendimiento.**

(...)

**Lengua y literatura.** De cada diez alumnos, sólo cinco saben que quedarse extasiado es quedarse maravillado; cinco identifican una proposición subordinada en la oración "contestó que nunca había visto a ese hombre"; otros cinco reconocen en Góngora un contemporáneo de Quevedo, y siete conocen que "pagar totalmente" es "saldar". Estos alumnos se manejan mejor con las reglas que con los contenidos, y suelen reconocer oraciones completas, adverbios, verbos transitivos y sinónimos, pero la teoría literaria, la historia de la literatura y la sintaxis se les resisten, así como el cómputo de sílabas de versos, las rimas y las estrofas. La tercera parte no domina los participios irregulares y se enreda con los antónimos y la polisemia.

(...)

**Expresión escrita.** El nivel de redacción no es satisfactorio, según el informe. Los acentos se ceban con los escolares hasta el punto de que el 98% se equivoca al menos una vez en un dictado. También la *h* hace de las suyas, con un 89,1% de alumnos con algún fallo. Se observa un mal uso de la puntuación y una mala construcción de los párrafos. Dos de cada tres saben contar historias básicas o extensas con algunos detalles, pero sólo el 18% es capaz de elaborar un relato bien desarrollado.

**Comprensión lectora.** Los chicos comprenden palabras no abstractas, reconocen ideas principales y captan el orden temporal, pero la tercera parte no reconoce los temas principales. Se dan problemas con los significados implícitos y los dobles sentidos.

**Geografía e historia.** El primer reino cristiano tras la llegada de los árabes a España surgió en Asturias, como sabe uno de cada cuatro estudiantes. Siete de cada diez atribuyen el apoyo de los Reyes Católicos a Colón al deseo de encontrar mejores rutas hacia Oriente. La prehistoria y la historia antigua son las más complicadas, en tanto que el 71, 5% conoce los personajes históricos europeos más sobresalientes.

EL PAÍS, 4/3/98

2. Determineu la proposta de traducció més adequada d'entre les possibilitats següents:

Subratllat al text	Propostes de traducció
Tropezar	ensopegar, encepegar, entrebancar-se, fer un pas fals,

	malencertar, equivocar-se, topar, encetar-se, entropessar, caure, empassegar, tenir problemes
"gozar de buena prensa"	tenir bona premsa, tenir bon nom, gaudir de, fruit, posseir, conèixer
sale a flote	Aixecar el cap, alçar el cap, veure's les orelles, superar
pinzelladas	Pinzellades, traç, expressió, fet
con el fin	amb la finalitat de, per tal de, per, amb el fi de
"quedarse extasiado"	quedar-se extasiat, quedar-se embadalit, quedar-se bocabadat, caure la baba, quedar-se amb la boca oberta, admirar, quedar-se embadocat
"quedarse maravillado"	quedar-se meravellat, sorprès, admirat, meravellar-se, admirar, esbalair, atonir, atordir, espaterrar, fascinar, enlluernar
"pagar totalmente"	pagar totalment, pagar del tot, per complet, de mig a mig, en escriu
"saldar"	saldar, liquidar, ajustar, concertar, arranjar, pagar, satisfer, barriscar
se manejan mejor	manejar-se, arranjar-se, espavilar-se, sortir-se'n prou bé, apanyar-se, enginyar-se, compondre-se-les, deseixir-se, despertar-se, eixorivir-se, engiponar-se
se les resisten	oposen resistència, resisteixen, parar, afrontar, acarar, plantar cara, enfrontar, encarar, carafeixar, capejar, desafiar
Así como	com també, així com
se enreda	embolicar-se, embullar-se, complicar-se, envitricollar-se, confondre's, emborbollar-se, atropellar-se
se ceban	rabejar-se, encruelir-se, complaure's, refocillar-se, rexinxolar-se, endurir-se
hace de las suyas	fer de les seves, fer-ne de les seves
captan	captar, copsar, agafar, aconseguir, assolir, caçar, atrapar, percar, collir
se dan problemas	es donen problemes, sovintejar, produir-se, dubte, dificultat, qüestió, cas, procés, cavall de batalla, litigi, bull, destret, mal afer, afer, enigma, planteig, vesper
en tanto que	mentre, mentre que
Más sobresalientes	sobresortint, , destacat, excel·lent, accentuat, remarcable, cimallejat, ressaltat, posat de relleu, distingit, excel·lit, prominent, superior, dominant, alt, elevat, enaltit, gran, cabdal, principal, preminent, cap de brot

**3.** Valoreu el grau de formalitat de les diverses opcions a partir de la consulta de diccionaris.

**4.** Valoreu l'adequació de les propostes de traducció, d'acord amb el registre general del text.

### *Dictionaries in specialized translation and terminology*

**1.** Traduiu les parts transcrits d'aquest recurs. Adeqüeu el text en la mesura que sigui possible al model proposat per la CALA.

DICE

Que con fecha de 15 de enero de 1995 ha sido notificada a esta parte la resolución de este Juzgado de fecha 12 de enero de 1995 declarando la incompetencia para conocer

del litigio y previniendo a esta parte para que se sirva hacer uso de su derecho ante el Órgano jurisdiccional civil.

Que mediante este escrito y al amparo de lo contemplado por el artículo 183, inciso 1, del Texto Articulado de la Ley de Procedimiento Laboral aprobado por R.D.L. 521/1990 de 27 de abril, interpone recurso de reposición, ya que infringe lo establecido en los artículos 1 y 2.a) del mismo texto legal en relación al artículo 1.1 de la Ley 8/1980 de 10 de marzo del Estatuto de los trabajadores.

El presente recurso de reposición se basa en las siguientes

#### ALEGACIONES

*Primera.* Se afirma por el Juzgado en la resolución recurrida que "no es competencia del orden jurisdiccional social el litigio planteado, en razón a la materia del mismo, al no concurrir los preceptos sustantivos que permiten conceptuar la relación litigiosa como de naturaleza laboral".

Pues bien, entiende esta parte que la alegación del juzgador no concuerda con lo preceptuado en la normativa sustantiva y adjetiva laboral, y así trató ya de argumentarse en la demanda que dio origen a los presentes autos.

#### SOLICITA

Que tenga por presentado este escrito, se sirva admitirlo y tenga por interpuesto recurso de reposición contra la resolución de 15 de enero de 1995 dictada por este Juzgado. Y en méritos de lo manifestado en sus alegaciones se sirva tener por admitida la demanda interpuesta y se le dé la tramitación establecida por la ley.

OTROSÍ: En el supuesto de que el presente recurso no sea estimado, esta parte manifiesta su propósito de interponer recurso de suplicación contra la resolución desestimatoria, de conformidad con lo que establece el artículo 188.4 de la LPL. Es por ello que a los efectos legales oportunos solicita que le sea entregado testimonio de la resolución de 26 de octubre de 1994 objeto de este recurso, y de la resolución denegatoria, en su caso.

Es justicia que pedimos en Gerona, a 17 de enero de 1995

---

**2.** Consulteu diccionaris, generals i especialitzats, i justifiqueu, breument, la traducció de les seqüències subratllades següents:

a) "Que con fecha de 15 de enero de 1995 ha sido notificada a esta parte la resolución de este Juzgado de fecha 12 de enero de 1995 declarando la incompetencia para conocer"

b) "Texto Articulado de la Ley de Procedimiento Laboral aprobado por R.D.L. 521/1990 de 27 de abril"

c) "*Primera.* Se afirma por el Juzgado en la resolución recurrida que "no es competencia del orden jurisdiccional social el litigio planteado, en razón a la materia del mismo"

d) "Y en méritos de lo manifestado en sus alegaciones se sirva tener por admitida la demanda interpuesta y se le dé la tramitación establecida por la ley"

e) "solicita que le sea entregado testimonio de la resolución de 26 de octubre de 1994 objeto de este recurso, y de la resolución denegatoria, en su caso"

## *Dictionaries for normative use and (in)correct vocabulary*

Corregiu només el que calgui d'aquest escrit, que és una part d'una interlocutòria. Entenem per correcció de "només el que calgui" la correcció indispensable per raó de la seva incorrecció o de la seva inadequació a la varietat i al registre del text.

### RELACIÓ DE FETS

1. XXXXXXXXXXXX, procurador de tribunals va presentar, en data 2 de febrer de 1994 un escrit de proposició de prova. Amb data 3 de febrer de 1994 va ser dictada provisió, per la que s'admetia la prova proposada, llevat de la documental pública i testifical.
2. La mateixa representació va presentar, en data 11 de febrer de 1.994, recurs de reposició contra la resolució en la que s'acordava la denegació de les proves documental i testificals. Es va donar trasllat a les altres parts sense que manifestessin res en contra.

### FONAMENTS DE DRET

1. La prova es va denegar per l'única referència que "no haver-hi temps per dur-la a terme". Denegada la prova, és considerable l'al·legació de la (part) recurrent, de conformitat a l'artic. 566 de la LEC. L'alegació es fonamenta pel fet que no són manifestament impertinents ni la documental ni la testifical proposades.

No s'escau accedir a la petició continguda en l'Atressí, perquè no tenint relació directa amb la provisió que es reposa i sense perjudici del que es pugui acordar amb vista a la pràctica de les proves que ara es declaren pertinents quant al moment processal oportú, si s'escau.

2. Observant les disposicions legals esmentades i altres d'aplicació general i pertinent en aquest cas.

### PART DISPOSITIVA

S'acorda estimar el recurs de reposició contra la provisió de 3 de febrer de 1994 en el sentit de declarar pertinents les proves documental i testifical proposades per la recurrent sense que escaigui en aquesta resolució cap altre pronunciament al respecte.

M. Pilar XXXXXXXXXXXX  
Magistrada jutge de 1a instància  
Nº 2 de la ciutat i partit de Tarrassa

Dono fe.

## **THEMATIC REPORT 5**

### **INSTRUCTION IN DICTIONARY USE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING : THE ENGLISH SCENE**

**Gérard Poulet**

University of Exeter

#### **1. Introduction**

In the 1980s dictionary skills and the teaching of dictionary skills were largely ignored in the programme of instruction and training of future teachers of modern foreign languages (MFLs). This can be easily explained by the fact that the majority of teachers considered dictionary use for beginners and intermediate students as a hindrance rather than a helpful tool, even if some recognized that the learner's ability and positive attitude towards using a dictionary would be a vital ingredient to promoting his or her own autonomy.

This sentiment has been echoed by four recent articles (Horsfall 1997, Bishop 1998, Asher et al. 1999, Barnes et al. 1999). Horsfall reflects on the prevalent consensus when he writes that 'there seems to be a general acceptance that learners were incapable of using a dictionary correctly and therefore that dictionaries should be discouraged as something too dangerous to put in the hands of (not only) young learners'. So why should we include dictionary use in an already overcrowded didactic programme? Surely classroom management, specific teaching strategies, management of resources, communication and interaction, developing the four skills and assessment were more pressing issues in MFL teacher training. Another concern was that the emphasis should be put into effective target-language vocabulary acquisition, and dictionary use was not perceived as an essential part of that process.

Asher et al., at the first stage of their enquiry which centred around schools in the Leeds area, quite significantly gave a fascinating historical perspective on the debate whether to use dictionary or not in teaching and assessing MFL skills. Since the 18th century 'its use has been alternately promoted or vilified, depending on the dictates of current methodological fashions and the language teaching objectives which underpinned them'.

#### **2. The present situation in MFL teacher training**

Graham Bishop (1998), in the introduction to his report on a small research project into the use being made of bilingual dictionaries indicates clearly (as Horsfall, Asher et al. and Barnes et al. did) the reasons behind the spectacular change in attitudes in the late 1990s. They are twofold:

- The National Curriculum statutory requirement for Modern Languages at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 (i.e. years 7 to 11 or, for those who are not familiar with the terminology, 11 to 16 year old learners) concerning the use of dictionaries, first published in 1990 and then revised in 1995. The 1990 version stipulates that MFL learners 'should be accustomed to make effective use of reference materials (including dictionaries) especially in developing their receptive skills'. In the streamlined version of 1995, Part I.3d reads: 'Pupils should be taught to use dictionaries and reference materials.'
- The examining boards' introduction of the possible use of dictionaries in 1998 for GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education, taken at the age of 16 by every one) and in 1997 for A level (Advanced level, taken two years later by

approximately 35% of the school population), for the first time in the history of these examinations.

This was viewed as a mixed blessing by classroom practitioners. Mike Buckby (1996, quoted by Bishop 1998) summarized the situation like this: 'the most useful skill will be to teach students to use the dictionary as little as possible as its use will take up precious time in the examination and risks introducing new errors from a dictionary being used in a rush and under stress.'

This again was an echo of a well-documented reluctance by teachers to come to terms with dictionary use in MFL teaching and learning. The most positive stance could be summed up by the slogan 'Beware of (be wary of?) dictionaries. Use with care!' One of the other concerns was that although there was a common core of regulations concerning dictionary use during examinations, there were also some differences among examining boards, inviting no doubt in the not distant future another government prescription or intervention. The common pattern is, at present, that the use of bilingual dictionaries is permitted in tests of reading and writing.

The difference comes when listening and speaking are tackled. Some examination boards allow the use of bilingual dictionaries when preparing for the *viva* or oral examination. As far as the listening examination is concerned, dictionaries are not allowed during the listening test itself, that is to say when the cassette is being played and paused, and that is true of every examining board. Some boards allow it afterwards. The objection to this particular use, apart from being time-consuming and distracting, is the fact that candidates would not be sure which word they were looking for after having heard it. Because of this new - revolutionary? - use of dictionaries in the GCSE examinations, Asher et al. (1999) point out clearly and indisputably that 'banning dictionaries from the process of MFL teaching and learning is no longer an option open to teachers'. Consequently, teacher trainers cannot ignore it either.

In MFL Initial Teacher Education, which is essentially a postgraduate course (PGCE), these new trends had to be addressed. There are at present over 50 centres of MFL ITE courses in England and Wales, where the 'training', to use the government agency terminology, is partly university-based, partly school-based. Essentially student teachers are trained to become teachers of French, German or Spanish, with an encouragement to offer two languages, the combination usually being French/German or German/French, French/Spanish and exceptionally French/Italian or French/Russian. Several other less common languages (Urdu, Panjabi, Modern Hebrew) are appropriately offered in certain schools but rarely on PGCE courses. (The training of EFL teachers is completely different from MFL education and undertaken by Private agencies, the British Council or Higher Institutions and is outside the scope of this particular report.)

An empirical survey among some of my colleagues around the country indicates that dictionary-using skills and how to teach and develop them among learners is now included in the 'methodological' course, for at least one session, sometimes two. Barry Jones at Homerton College, Cambridge, for example, is adamant that this workshop on dictionary user skills should not be held discretely. At Homerton, student teachers visit these skills twice: first when they deal with developing reading skills and again and differently when they talk about developing writing skills.

Our postgraduate students do not arrive completely naive to this business of the effective use of a bilingual dictionary, even if their experience and exposure to it vary, as the Exeter University survey shows. There is bound to be a cultural difference too, since out of our present cohort of 40 we have 10 native French speakers (from France and Belgium) and two native German speakers. This in fact reflects the national scene, as a recent survey commissioned by the Teacher Training Agency undertaken by Alison Taylor from Bristol University shows ('Times Education Supplement', Friday 23 July 1999).



In a typically overcrowded programme, our own PGCE course at Exeter devotes a whole workshop (2 to 3 hours) on strategies to acquire and develop the effective use of bilingual dictionaries, encouraging student teachers to think about practising dictionary skills in the classroom, starting from a fascinating error analysis of creative writing done by intermediate learners who used concise bilingual dictionaries. Then we move on to sampling commercially available and well structured worksheets aimed at developing discrete dictionary skills, for example, What's in the dictionary?, Abbreviations, Headwords, How to look up verbs, Words which have more than one meaning, Looking up set phrases, False friends etc., issued by publishing houses specializing in the making of dictionaries, such as Oxford University Press and Collins.

Here is part of a task at the end of a series of worksheets which help the learner to manipulate the dictionary. This Worksheet 31, from *Developing Dictionary Skills in French* (Pillette 1996), on Word families, interestingly encourages economy of dictionary use:

<p>Long words are rather like chemicals - break them down into their separate components and they suddenly make sense. So why not leave the dictionary alone?</p>	
<p>l'<b>herbe</b> = the grass  <b>désherber</b> = to weed          le <b>désherb</b>age = weeding  <b>herbivore</b> = herbivorous</p>	<p>To understand a long word:          • look for its root: <b>herb-</b>          • read the whole sentence as a clue to the meaning</p>
<p>1 Lis cette liste et traduis les mots <b>en caractère gras</b> sans dictionnaire</p>	
<p>l'<b>hiver</b> (winter) <b>coudre</b> (to sew) <b>lire</b> (to read) <b>chaud</b> (hot) <b>écrire</b>(to write)</p>	
a) un temps <b>hivernal</b> -----	f) <b>hiverner</b> 4 mois -----
b) aimer la <b>couture</b> -----	g) ma mère est <b>couturière</b> -----
c) <b>relire</b> un texte -----	h) un texte <b>illisible</b> -----
d) le <b>chauffage</b> central -----	i) <b>réchauffer</b> une pizza-----
e) un <b>écrivain</b> célèbre -----	j) une <b>écriture</b> élégante -----

It is arguable that one should integrate the use of the dictionary as a tool in any MFL learning activity or task rather than teach it as a separate skill, and it is particularly effective during text-handling work, starting with reading and expanding naturally into writing.

Teacher-trainers do not work in isolation from the communities of classroom practitioners who are the effective mentors of their students for 2/3 of the time they spend on a PGCE course. These mentors and reflective practitioners are more likely to have an immediate impact during the six months spent in schools by teacher trainees, or at least more durable than one seminar day spent on Dictionary use and skills. This is why the latest survey undertaken by a team of teacher trainers from the University of Warwick (Barnes et al. 1999) on dictionary use in the teaching and examining of MFLs is particularly meaningful for our report. The general attitudes of these mentors towards dictionaries will have a considerable influence on student teachers and are likely to shape their initial approach.

This particular research project was undertaken in July 1997 in the Midlands and covered 300 secondary schools, using a questionnaire. The researchers, in view of the present crowded and stressed environment in the maintained secondary state sector had ground to be satisfied since 100 teachers bothered to answer, giving them a valid and reliable 33 % response rate. The most encouraging message from this investigation concerns the general attitude of present teachers towards dictionary use in view of our opening remarks on the past general reluctance towards the dictionary as a useful tool in teaching

and learning languages, at least in the first five years of teaching a language. At Advanced level, dictionary use is positively if cautiously encouraged.

The data yielded by the survey indicate that 86% of teachers agree or strongly agree that dictionaries are helpful to pupils, a surprising 91% agree or strongly agree that dictionaries are an essential language learning tool, 87 % agree or strongly agree that using dictionaries at GCSE is good preparation for Advanced level study. But as the researchers stressed (Barnes et al. 1999), 'many who questioned pupils' ability to use the dictionary appropriately and pointed to the urgent need for training in the required skills were aware that dictionary use is potentially confusing as well as beneficial'. There was too a concern expressed on the use of dictionaries to translate into the foreign language. Priority should be given to dictionary use to help understanding the target language.

Problems as well as benefits on the use of the bilingual dictionary were expanded on in the open-ended parts of the questionnaire where respondents summarized their views about using dictionaries in MFL GCSE examinations. The comments have been categorized by the researchers as positive, hesitant and negative. Those who hesitated cited funding, resources and time as possible obstacles, expressed the need for dictionary skills training and development and for specific learner's dictionaries to be devised. The cohort of 'pros' saw in the use of the dictionary a useful transferable skill, relevant and capable of increasing language awareness, enhancing independent as well as crosscurricular learning. Those 'against' saw the use of the dictionary as problematic for pupils of lower ability, discouraging vocabulary acquisition, questionable as far testing real linguistic ability is concerned, time-consuming, costly and unfair because of the range of different dictionaries offered, negating the skill of finding meaning in context. In other words, the debate is as open and as polarized as ever. Another part of the questionnaire was dealing with developing dictionary skills in the classroom; among the respondents there was a consensus that although improving referencing skills in general is worthwhile, there is a need to be consistent and integrate dictionary use within the course as a whole in the context of the specific linguistic goals and the broader communicative and language learning objectives, an argument that we have already encountered. The earlier the start, the better.

Graham Bishop's (1998) research project yielded some interesting facts which will hopefully be of use for the evolution of bilingual dictionary design as well as for MFL teachers and teacher trainers. He compared some mature Open University students with a cohort of A level students. The interesting common denominator in their use of the dictionary is that they were using it primarily for gender, spelling and meaning. Another obvious point, which is going to affect the effectiveness of their dictionary use, is their familiarity with grammatical concepts. Here in the UK, because of the 1970s trends in mother-tongue language teaching with the emphasis on creativity and language in use rather than old-fashioned grammar, MFL teachers faced an uphill struggle. But times are changing. It must be said, too, that at Primary level children are introduced to dictionary skills in obviously monolingual English dictionaries as well as to formal grammar nowadays.

### **3. The future**

It is clear that the next generation of MFL learners, at least those who started a foreign language in 1995-96, will be or should be brought up on dictionaries within their learning experience as well as their language assessment. This, as we have seen, has had consequences for the PGCE MFL courses in England and Wales. But the very debate echoed by the various projects reviewed on the use of bilingual dictionaries in examinations and therefore in language instruction should encourage some caution as well as some optimism. Indeed, as we write the government agency QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has let it be known that new regulations have been drawn up

to govern the use of dictionaries in GCSE, A level and AS modern foreign language examinations. The use of dictionaries in AS (advanced subsidiary) and A level modern foreign language examinations will be restricted to courses starting in September 2000. Candidates will be allowed to use dictionaries for internally assessed coursework, but not externally assessed examinations. For GCSE, once the criteria and specifications have been revised after the national curriculum review, the same restrictions on dictionary use will apply. The rationale behind these restrictions is, according to the QCA, to address the current situation where rules on dictionary use vary between syllabuses as well as to prevent students from becoming over-reliant on dictionaries.

Nevertheless, the document does state clearly that when used effectively, dictionaries are valuable aids to learning MFLs, just as their misuse could hinder the development of important language skills. The final ripple effect would be logically that when these students enter universities in the next millennium, they will no doubt expect not only to be tested in the foreign language, as they have experienced at GCSE and A level, but also to make use of bilingual and/or monolingual dictionaries in their degree course assessments. But that is another unlikely story.

## THEMATIC REPORT 6

### RECENT TRENDS IN PUBLISHING MONOLINGUAL LEARNERS' DICTIONARIES

**Michael Rundell**

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#### 1. Introduction

The past 10 years or so have seen very significant improvements in monolingual learners' dictionaries of English (MLDs), specifically in terms of (a) the quality of information provided and (b) the strategies used for presenting this information. I propose in what follows to adopt these two themes as broad headings under which to track developments in the field. However, if one makes the claim that improvements have been made, one is required to be explicit about the criteria on which this judgement is based: what constitutes 'quality' in this context, and how are we to measure it? Two possible answers, relating to each of the two headings, are that improvement can be said to take place when:

- the *description* of a language that a dictionary provides corresponds more closely to 'the truth', that is, to reliable empirical evidence regarding the ways in which that language is used, and
- the *presentation* of this description corresponds more closely to what we know about the reference needs and reference skills of the target user.

What I will try to show in this report is that there have been measurable advances in both these areas. Section 2 will look at the range, variety, and quality of information that is now available to dictionary-makers, and is in turn made available to dictionary-users; Section 3 will survey some opportunities for lexicographers and publishers to exploit this information and 'add value' to it in order to maximize its usefulness for learners and teachers. Section 4 will then detail specific areas of recent improvement, and a concluding section will sketch likely future developments and improvements that are still needed.

#### 2. Lexicographic Evidence

*The 'corpus revolution': superior data for a description of the language*

The quantum leap that took us from 'first-generation' million-word English corpora (specifically, the Survey of English Usage and the Brown and Lund-Oslo-Bergen corpora) to huge databanks measured in hundreds of millions of words, is extensively documented and needs little amplification here; for an overview see Sinclair (1991), Rundell & Stock (1992), Rundell (1996). The difference between the old and new dispensations is not one simply of quantity – important though that is – but one of quality as well. Human intervention and judgement does, admittedly, still play a part in the selection of suitable texts for a corpus and – crucially, as I will argue later – in the *analysis* of instances of usage that the corpus throws up. But the key development from a lexicographic point of view is that subjective human selection is now replaced by dispassionate number-crunching in the vital stage at which *appropriate units of language to be studied* are identified and extracted from a corpus. As a result – by contrast with the methodology that produced the citation banks on which Johnson, Webster and Murray based their dictionaries – modern corpus enquiry software simply identifies *every* instance of whatever orthographic or grammatical form is specified in a query, so eliminating at a

(key)stroke the serious distortions that bedevilled older collections of hand-selected citations (on which see Murray 1977:178).

There remain, it is true, very significant differences in the composition of the various English corpora currently in use, and the important debate on what constitutes a 'good' corpus shows no sign of running out of steam (see, e.g., Biber 1993 and McEnery & Wilson 1996, ch.3, for recent contributions). Nevertheless, it is fair to say that *all* the major UK dictionary-publishers currently have access to large and diverse corpus resources which provide the raw materials for a far more reliable description of English than would have been possible for pioneers of pedagogical lexicography such as Hornby, Palmer, and West.

While some resources are shared - the British National Corpus (BNC) being the most notable example - dictionary publishers have on the whole developed their own heterogeneous data collections, whose compositions reflect, in varying degrees, opportunistic and principled approaches to data gathering. These now cover some or all of the following dimensions of language:

- general written text: for example, the Cambridge Language Survey (CLS) and the written-text components of the BNC and of Birmingham University's Bank of English (BoE);
- spoken text: for example, the spontaneous speech components of the BNC and BoE, the Longman Corpus of Spoken American English (following the BNC model), and most recently the CANCODE corpus being developed at the University of Nottingham (Carter & McCarthy 1995) and used by CUP lexicographers;
- varieties of English: for example, Australian newspapers in the BoE, the 'World English' components of the CLS and of the Longman-Lancaster Corpus (Summers 1993), and the 50-million word Longman Written American Corpus (LWAC);
- learner text: for example, the Longman Learner Corpus, first developed in the late 1980s (Gadsby & Gillard 1998), and CUP's corpus of student exam texts (CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH [CIDE] p. viii);
- specialized text types: for example, print and broadcast journalism in BoE, ephemera and unpublished material in BNC and BoE.

*Categories of information: what a corpus can do for you*

#### *(1) Frequency*

Corpus-enquiry software, operating on large volumes of data, is very efficient at exposing regular features of a language. Any linguistic feature, be it a specific meaning, complementation pattern, collocational preference, or whatever, which occurs more than a given number of times across a range of texts has a *prima facie* claim to be considered as part of the regular *system* of the language, as opposed to merely being a random event, and therefore becomes a candidate for being described in the dictionary. Corpus-derived frequency information thus has a bearing on decisions regarding:

- inclusion: for example, whether a particular headword, meaning, syntactic pattern, or phrasal unit is actually worth recording;
- ordering: for example, in which order the meanings of a polysemous word should be arranged;
- depth of treatment: for example, which linguistic features need to be explicitly exemplified or highlighted.

As we will see later, the newer MLDs incorporate frequency information both explicitly and implicitly. All of this has great potential value for learners of a language: broadly speaking, the more common a word is, the more important it is and the more worth learning, and the same point applies to more specific linguistic features too – though in practice the equation is rarely quite so straightforward (see now Kilgarriff 1994).

### *(2) Semantic information*

The analysis of meaning - the core task of monolingual lexicography, and one of the most difficult - has a much higher likelihood of success if it is based on corpus evidence. The availability of high volumes of data does not necessarily make the task easier, but it does make possible a level of precision that was previously unattainable in large areas of the lexicon. This has led to considerable advances in both 'vertical' disambiguation (sense-division within polysemous words) and 'horizontal' disambiguation (across sets of so-called synonyms).

### *(3) Words in their environment*

Corpus inquiry software, whether producing standard KWIC concordances or sophisticated statistical analyses, uncovers a wealth of information about the combinatorial behaviour of words. Lexicographers now find themselves increasingly well-equipped to identify patterns of co-occurrence that are of relevance to language learners. These include not only all forms of syntactic behaviour and collocational pairings, but also valuable information about typical context and selectional restrictions. A word like **adjudicate**, for example, is not especially problematic in strict semantic terms. But dictionary users need to know what sort of people **adjudicate**, and what it is that they **adjudicate** (or **adjudicate on**). And if the evidence suggests that expressions like *called in to adjudicate* or *brought in to adjudicate* are fairly common, what might this tell us about the circumstances in which adjudication typically takes place? Information of this kind adds considerable depth to our description, enabling us to locate words and meanings to quite precise places in the lexicon.

### *(4) Illustrative examples*

Probably the most visible way in which dictionaries have changed under the impact of corpus data is the arrival of the corpus-derived dictionary example. This has always been a controversial issue and, despite a certain amount of research effort (e.g. Laufer 1992), the jury is still out on the relative merits of corpus-based and lexicographer-produced examples. This question is actually part of a wider, long-running debate within the language-teaching community regarding the value and limitations of 'authentic' materials, and the discussion is still in full flow - see for example recent contrasting papers by Carter and Cook (both 1998). But wherever one positions oneself in this debate, there can be no question that access to corpus data has greatly enriched the store of material from which lexicographers produce example text, or that the outcome for dictionary-users has been - despite a certain unevenness - broadly positive.

### *(5) Spoken English*

The availability, in adequate quantity and quality, of data for ordinary, spontaneous, conversational English has lagged almost 10 years behind developments in the area of written text. We are still, therefore, at a relatively early stage in terms of defining a methodology for exploiting these riches and translating the insights from spoken corpora into pedagogically relevant dictionary text. Nevertheless, the impact of spoken corpora is beginning to be felt, most clearly in the COBUILD and Longman titles.

### *(6) Other information types*

Dictionaries have traditionally included sociolinguistic information about, for example, the register of a lexical unit, its regional characteristics, or the attitude and intentions of the speaker/writer who selects it. This whole area has now broadened considerably. We are now in a position not only to give a more reliable account of the types of text in which a given item tends to occur (technical, conversational, journalistic, British or American, and so on), but also to describe other non-denotational features of speech acts, such as irony and illocutionary force. Discourse management strategies, too, have now come within the lexicographer's compass, and the convergence here between academic research and corpus inquiry is characteristic of recent trends in pedagogical lexicography.

*Some preliminary conclusions: where are we now?*

The advent of large corpora has brought fundamental and irreversible changes to the process of dictionary-making. This is not in question. It is worth making the point, however, that good corpus data is merely a prerequisite for better dictionaries: it does not in itself guarantee that good dictionaries will actually be produced - a point which will be developed in the next section. For lexicographers whose careers began in the pre-corpus era, the technological changes of the early 1980s were both exciting and empowering. In roughly concurrent developments, computational techniques for data management removed much of the drudgery from the compilation process, while corpus data offered the means for producing a more satisfying description of the language.

Against this background, it is easy to see why the corpus was, initially, embraced so enthusiastically that - in some quarters at least - it was considered almost heretical to question anything whatever that the corpus threw up. The first wave of corpus-based dictionaries tends to reflect this enthusiasm in both positive and negative ways.

The less helpful consequences of the 'fundamentalist' approach to corpus lexicography are well illustrated in Hausmann and Gorbahn's thoughtful analysis (1989) of the first edition of COBUILD. A couple of examples of the tendency are worth mentioning here:

(1) **utter 1** When you utter sounds or words, you say them in order to communicate ideas and feelings. *EG Sam opened his mouth, then quickly shut it again without uttering a word ... He seldom uttered, but when he did everyone listened.*

(2) **proxy** ... 3 If you do something by proxy, you arrange for someone else to do it for you. *eg You can create an international incident by proxy.*

My argument with case (1) focuses on the intransitive example (which is supported by a grammar code in the 'extra column', showing intransitivity as an option). A stray line in the corpus, which any fluent speaker would immediately recognize as atypical, is made to justify a grammatical description of very doubtful validity. In case (2), the example text presents a decontextualized scenario that is both difficult to retrieve and not remotely typical of the way this phrase is generally used. Given that all this appears in a dictionary for learners (not, say, in the OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY), I would class both instances as 'errors' - meaning that they provide information which is both obscure in presentation and misleading in content. I make this point not in order to criticize colleagues and friends on the COBUILD team, whose contribution to contemporary lexicography can scarcely be overstated. Rather, my intention is to show the dangers of an uncritical approach to corpus data. Both instances here reflect one 'order of reality' (a phrase used by Carter 1998:47): this is certainly 'real' English in the sense that it is based on naturally-occurring data, but it is less 'real' from a pedagogical perspective, in the sense that it is highly unlikely to meet the needs of the student user.

Significantly, too, both these entries have been changed, greatly for the better, in COBUILD2, so that they now reflect norms of usage much more closely. The writers might claim that their newer description is simply a product of the bigger and better corpus resources now available to them. I would not be impressed by such a claim: the original entries were simply wrong for the type of book they appear in. (It is important here to distinguish between - on the one hand - bad dictionary entries that result from inexpert application of sound editorial principles, and - on the other hand - bad entries that are an inevitable consequence of a flawed methodology.) The many improvements in COBUILD's second edition seem to me to reflect a more mature, less dogmatic approach to corpus evidence, in which a more helpful balance is struck between the two 'orders of reality'. The novelty, in other words, has worn off, and an appropriate methodology for corpus lexicography is beginning to emerge.

One of the most striking developments of recent years is the shift towards a view of language-processing as a predominantly phrase-based rather than word-based operation - what Sinclair (1991:110) calls the 'idiom principle' (by contrast with the 'open-choice principle'). There is a convergence here between data emerging from large corpora and ideas developed in areas such as cognitive psychology and anthropology, all pointing towards the notion that a great deal of language activity involves the manipulation of pre-assembled, more or less fixed, groups of words. For lexicographers who interrogate corpora on a regular basis, there has been a gradual shift in focus 'outwards' from the node. Corpus enquiry increasingly encompasses a broader span, looking not only at collocation and complementation, but also at the tendency of some concepts to be lexicalized through multiword units, and (following the notion of 'semantic prosody') at the way whole semantic classes can have discernible relationships with the node word at various points of valency. As we will see, this changing methodology is beginning to be reflected in actual dictionary text.

Using a corpus was at one time synonymous with scanning KWIC concordances, and in most situations these are probably still the central tool of corpus lexicography. Increasingly, however, they are complemented by a range of statistical tools that can, for example, identify regularly co-occurring items at a specified distance on either side of the node word and list them in order of significance. A good example is the mutual information (MI) technique (on which see Church & Mercer 1993:18-21), which can sometimes provide striking insights not only into collocational behaviour but, just as importantly, into meaning potentials. An interesting case is the verb **cause**. An MI search for words in its immediate environment lists the following as the ten most significant: **grievous, consternation, furore, bodily, havoc, uproar, inconvenience, disruption, harm, distress** (data from the BNC). All of which reveals - in a more graphic, more 'distilled' form than a concordance could - that the typical objects of **cause** are overwhelmingly negative, thus compelling a re-evaluation of earlier descriptions. On the basis of this, the recent LONGMAN ESSENTIAL ACTIVATOR (LEA) defines **cause** as 'to make something happen, especially something bad', and CIDE does something very similar. A simple enough point, perhaps, but one that has eluded generations of lexicographers - and thus an appropriate point on which to conclude this section.

### 3. Presentation

Now you have your corpus: what more do you need? Consider first the following:

- (3) **witness** If you **witness** something, you see it happen  
**deliver** If you **deliver** something somewhere, you take it there (both COBUILD 2)
- (4) **witness** to see something happen and be able to tell other people about it later (OXFORD WORDPOWER DICTIONARY [OWPD])  
**deliver** to give or hand over (something) to the person for whom it is intended (CHAMBERS UNIVERSAL LEARNERS' DICTIONARY [CULD])

In both cases, the older, smaller dictionary, with no corpus resources at all, outperforms a large dictionary based on hundreds of million words of data. These are, of course, isolated instances and not at all typical of what usually happens - but how can it happen at all? One possible explanation is that the mass of data available for these items suggested so many possible contexts that the lexicographer was reluctant to risk a more restrictive definition. More plausibly, though, we should just see these as random cases of human error, or what was referred to above as the inexpert application of basically sound editorial principles.

Next, consider this definition from the highly respected American MERRIAM- WEBSTER'S NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY (MWCD):



(5) **catkin** a usu. long ament densely crowded with bracts

In terms of its *content*, this is unexceptionable: the definition is 'good' in so far as it accurately describes the definiendum. There is, however, an almost complete failure in the area of *presentation*. The definition would be incomprehensible to most non-specialist users (it is certainly incomprehensible to me), while a specialist user would be unlikely to need it at all. A definition cannot be said to be successful unless it scores well in both content *and* presentation: thus **deliver** in (3) above, while perfectly clear, supplies too little content to be useful; while **catkin** has all the information it needs but its presentation is so obscure as to make the definition quite useless: it defines, but it does not explain (in the way that Landau 1984 demands it, for the benefit of the reader).

It should be obvious, though the point is not always recognized, that access to good corpus resources merely provides the necessary basis for better dictionaries: it does not in itself guarantee that better dictionaries will be written.

To understand why this must be so, it is helpful to look at the schema proposed by Sue Atkins (1993:7-8) in her description of the lexicographer's task (see also the diagram below):

In the first stage – the ANALYSIS process – the lexicographer analyzes the word trying to discover as many relevant linguistic facts as possible. [This] should furnish the lexicographer with all the facts needed for the second stage of the process, which I will call SYNTHESIS. ... During the synthesis stage, the compiler extracts from the collection of ordered facts those that are relevant to the particular dictionary being written.

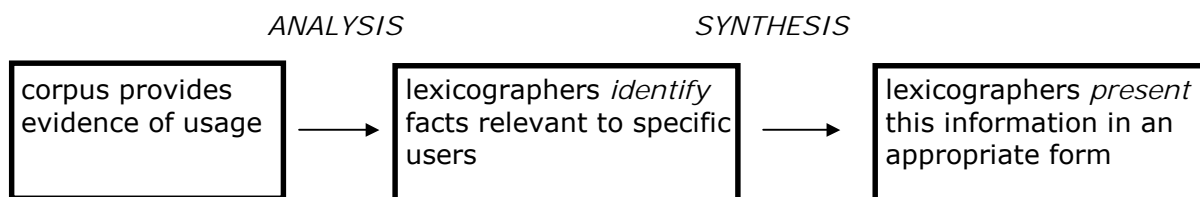
For the analysis stage, corpus data and software tools are vitally important. In addition, theoretically-derived approaches to analyzing the data, such as a frame-semantic classification (Fillmore & Atkins 1994) can often provide insights and help lexicographers to a better understanding of underlying regularities in the language. Nevertheless, the fact remains that some people are simply much better than others at analyzing data. What lexicographers often refer to as *Sprachgef<sub>h</sub>* is – though admittedly an ill-defined concept – a crucial factor in the success or failure of the analysis process.

Moving on to the synthesis stage, the demands on the lexicographer are even greater, and the process requires, *inter alia*:

- a clear idea of the needs, expectations, problems, and skills of the target user: for example, what sort of tasks will the dictionary be used for, what assumptions can we make about users' reference skills or their grasp of linguistic categories, what do we know about their preferred modes of learning or the types of language transfer problems they typically experience, and so on;
- an understanding of the commercial/publishing constraints (time, space, cost etc.) and how these impact on the editorial process;
- a sound grasp of the range of editorial strategies available for conveying certain categories of information, and the skill to use them successfully;

—drawing on all of the above, a clear notion of 'lexicographic relevance': that is, the specific cluster of factors – unique to each individual dictionary project – that informs the decision-making process and enables the lexicographer to distinguish between information that is simply 'true' and information that is relevant to a specific book. (Thus in example (1) above, it is *true* that **utter** can be used intransitively, but it is not in this case *relevant*.)

And the more information that is available, and must be processed and in some way be accounted for, the more important the notion of lexicographic relevance becomes. To sum up, the dictionary-making process can be visualized like this:



This characterization of the lexicographer's task helps to explain why the arrival of corpus data has not in fact significantly diminished the role of human skill and human judgement in the dictionary-making process. And it is on this basis that I would argue that recent improvements in MLDs have at least as much to do with presentation (or, if you like, with the readiness of dictionary-publishers to innovate and their commitment to meeting users' needs) as with the availability of superior language data.

#### 4. Recent developments: Chapter and verse

##### 4.1 Navigation: Finding the information you need (including information you didn't realize you needed)

It is self-evident that dictionary users need to be able to locate the information they are looking for, and to locate it quickly - since consulting the dictionary may in itself disrupt their train of thought and 'loosen the link with the text [being read], especially when the search procedure takes some time' (Bogaards 1996:284). Yet there is a good deal of evidence to show that the apparently straightforward operation of 'looking it up in the dictionary' often calls for considerable skill, persistence, and ingenuity, and can end up being a source of error (Rundell 1999). Recent innovations reflect lexicographers' awareness of these problems and efforts to minimize them. These include the following:

###### (1) *The use of frequency information as a guide to the ordering of meanings*

Most MLDs now organize multi-sense entries mainly on the basis of frequency, a strategy only made possible by the availability of large corpora. The logic of this is that the user, to locate the entry s/he is searching for, 'will on average have to scan the least number of entries and sub-entries before reaching the one with the relevant meaning for the context where he or she has met the word' (Scholfield 1999:27).

###### (2) *Phraseology and canonical forms*

Again, corpus data has made a more phrasally-oriented approach both *possible* (in the sense that regular word combinations can be identified with some confidence) and *desirable* (in the sense that it is more helpful to users to present the whole 'chunk' in which a given word most frequently occurs than to present fragments that have to be bolted together before they make sense). Thus, for example, most MLDs now describe the lexical unit **have a think (about)** as a single item, rather than going through the pretence that **think** is in any useful sense a noun (traditionally defined as 'an act of thinking'). In general, MLDs tend now to focus on the prototypical rather than worrying about what might very occasionally happen. The fact that the BNC shows two instances of something being 'taken with a fistful of salt' is not allowed (as it is in WEBSTER'S THIRD NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY [W3], for example) to outweigh the fact that there are many dozens of examples of the prototypical **take something with a pinch of salt**: this is the citation form shown in most MLDs, and this approach - while not covering every possible eventuality - is more calculated to accelerate the look-up process.

### (3) Lexical relations

Standard lexical relations, especially synonymy, hyponymy and antonymy, appear to play an important part in the way concepts are stored and linked in the mental lexicon (e.g. Aitchison 1987). This helps to explain why they feature so prominently in most types of communication strategy used by language learners, and most learners will be familiar with the experience of defaulting to an opposite or superordinate term to encode an idea for which their lexical resources are limited - *it wasn't interesting*, for example, instead of *it was boring*. Information of this type has featured in MLDs for at least 20 years (rather sporadically, it must be said), but this is another area where more recent dictionaries have broken new ground.

One thinks here of the symbols used in COBUILD's 'extra column' to show, for example, that the verb **intimate** is similar to **hint** and has **suggest** as its superordinate, and that the opposite of **off-the-peg** is **made-to-measure**; of the Usage Notes (found in almost all MLDs) which disambiguate close synonyms; or of the 'Language Portraits' in CIDE, such as the one on 'Opposite and Negative Meanings' (p. 991), which deals with the role of affixes in the formation of antonymous words.

### (4) 'Guidewords' and 'signposts'

For most users in most situations, the goal of the look-up exercise is to find information not about a whole word-form but about a specific meaning or phrasal unit. In the case of polysemous words, locating the right sense can be a major source of difficulty, and there is evidence that some users 'solve' this problem simply by selecting the first sense they come to (see Rundell 1999). In order to relieve users of the need to wade through large amounts of (irrelevant) text, both the CIDE and the LONGMAN DICTIONARY OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH (LDOCE) have adapted a strategy already familiar in bilingual lexicography: for each separate sense, there is a short descriptor designed to give the user a general idea of the way the word is divided up; these can be scanned fairly quickly, and ideally the user is drawn in to the appropriate sense without the need to perform a major reading task.

Thus for example, the multi-sense item **tip** is 'signposted' in CIDE with words such as END, INFORMATION, PAYMENT, and RUBBISH, and in LDOCE3 with END, MONEY, ADVICE, UNTIDY, and HORSE RACE.

These approaches are not without their problems: the Guidewords or Signposts tend to rely on high-frequency superordinate terms, and these are sometimes too ambiguous or vague to facilitate effective searching. It is vital, too, that Guidewords be as short as possible, yet this can make it difficult to distinguish between closely related meanings. Certainly there is more work to be done here (see also Bogaards 1996:288 and Herbst 1996:350), and it is a little early to be sure how effective this innovation is in real situations of use. But even if these systems do not always work well, this is a well-motivated attempt to address a known problem, and we can look forward to further developments in this area.

### (5) Onomasiological dictionaries

Until recently, this 'meaning-to-word' tradition was represented in the pedagogical area only by Tom McArthur's pioneering LONGMAN LEXICON (LLCE 1981). But in the last five years, several new types of onomasiological dictionary have come onto the market:

- the so-called 'production dictionary', for which the prototype is the LONGMAN LANGUAGE ACTIVATOR (LLA). This is a conceptually organized reference resource designed specifically to meet the *encoding* needs of learners (in this case, fairly advanced learners). It is organized around what Rosch (1975) identified as 'basic-level concepts' (about 1000 of them), and the look-up process essentially involves deciding on a broad meaning area, selecting the 'keywords' to which it is related, and

then browsing and comparing sets of near-synonyms (for details see Rundell & Ham 1994). An intermediate-level production dictionary, the LEA, was published in 1997.

- CUP's *Word Routes* series (starting 1994), a set of thematically-organized dictionaries which are bilingual but geared towards the learner of English. Rather as in ROGET'S THESAURUS, the overall structure according to which individual themes are organized is coherent but largely obscure, so that the usual way into the text is through one of the two indexes (one in English, one in the source language). The books cover many of the conceptual categories found in the LLA (with sets of words, for example, meaning **Easy, Forbid, or Persuade**), but (like the LLCE) they also deal with large numbers of concrete nouns, in sets such as **Farm Animals** and **Types of building** (for a recent review, see Bruton 1997).
- The OXFORD LEARNER'S WORDFINDER DICTIONARY (OLWD 1997), a vocabulary-building tool that works somewhat like a reverse dictionary, and again covers both abstract concepts and concrete objects. The main entries are alphabetically arranged, and from the entry on **furniture**, for example, one can find words for specific pieces of furniture (thus: 'a piece of furniture with shelves which you keep books in: **bookcase**') but also words that describe the way furniture looks ('old and in bad condition because it has been used too much: **shabby**').
- Dictionaries on CD-ROM, such as Longman's INTERACTIVE ENGLISH DICTIONARY (1993), COBUILD'S DICTIONARY ON CD-ROM (1996), Longman's INTERACTIVE AMERICAN DICTIONARY (1997), and Oxford's ADVANCED LEARNER'S DICTIONARY ON CD-ROM (1997). Electronic products are still at a relatively early stage, though there have already been some impressive innovations in this medium (on which, more later). From a navigational point of view, the relevance of these dictionaries lies in the fact that - although they are still at present based on 'written for paper' A to Z dictionaries - the electronic format largely frees users from the constraints imposed by alphabetical order. Thus, for example, locating an idiom such as **talk the hind legs off a donkey** (always a hit-and-miss procedure on paper) is simply a matter of keying parts of the phrase (say, **talk, hind, and donkey**) into a text search facility. Search routines can also enable the user to locate every definition that contains a particular genus word or expression: thus a full-text search on the string *in & bad & condition* in the electronic ALD yields a set of headwords that includes **ratty, fly-blown, derelict** and **run-down**.

We have seen here a number of initiatives designed to address the problems of 'findability', and even if these are not always unambiguously successful, things are moving in the right direction. Other macrostructural elements, too, have seen changes at the detailed level. There is, for example, a range of approaches to homography in the newer MLDs (see e.g. Herbst 1996), but most now use word class and orthographic form, rather than meaning and etymology, as the organizing principle. Only the ALD still follows the older approach (which led, in LDOCE1, to no fewer than nine homographs for the word **tip**), but it is hard to see how this can be of much help to the average learner.

There is, too, much less 'nesting' of derived forms, compounds etc. than used to be common, so that CIDE's policy of (for example) nesting **decisive** and **decision** under the headword **decide**, now looks oddly retrogressive. Similarly, conflation of word classes into a single entry, a space-saving device used in many dictionaries, has largely been abandoned in the MLD, and now figures only in CIDE (e.g. in the entry for **cause**: *n, v* (to be) the reason why something, esp. something bad, happens). Other space-saving conventions, such as the use of the tilde (~) to replace the headword in an example or phrase, or the use of cut-back run-on forms (such as **-ogical** at the headword **ideology**) have also largely given way to more transparent approaches. These may look like very minor tweakings of the macrostructure, but publishers' user-research suggest they can make a real difference to the navigational task. Finally, the old *fig.* label (rightly described by Osselton 1995:16 as 'hard to justify on linguistic grounds') is now in serious decline in all dictionaries, and among MLDs is used only by CIDE (see e.g. the entries at **arid** and **swamp**).

What characterizes most of these changes is a re-examination of macrostructural features inherited by MLDs from an earlier 'native-speaker dictionary' (NSD) tradition (see Rundell 1988), and an abandonment of any that do not seem relevant to the MLD medium.

## 4.2 Meaning

### (1) *Semantic analysis*

Corpus data has made possible a much more fine-grained level of semantic analysis (see e.g. Moon 1987). Compare, for example, the following sets of definitions where, in each case, the first is from a pre-corpus dictionary, the second from a dictionary based on corpus evidence:

- (6) **helpful** giving help; useful (ALD4)  
**helpful** If you describe someone as **helpful**, you mean that they help you in some way, such as doing part of your job for you or giving you advice or information (COBUILD2)
- (7) **witness** be present at and see (ALD3)  
**witness** to see something happen, especially an accident, a crime, or an important event (LEA)
- (8) **amicable** suitable between friends; friendly; peaceful (LDOCE1)  
**amicable** an **amicable** arrangement or solution is one where people who do not agree with each other are able to solve their problems in a friendly way (LEA)

There is, no doubt, plenty of scope for further advances, but the trend towards more sharply-focussed defining is clear and irreversible. These are simply random instances of an accretive process which is gradually transforming the quality of definitions right across the board. Its results are not perhaps as immediately visible as the arrival of the corpus-based example sentence, and this area has consequently attracted much less attention. But it is in fact of far greater long-term significance for dictionary users.

Disambiguation, both 'horizontal' and 'vertical' (see Section 2 above), has similarly felt the benefit of corpus data. With regard to disambiguation among items in the same semantic area, pre-corpus dictionaries (even large scholarly ones) routinely relied on the use of synonym definitions, for example:

**clever** quick to learn and understand  
**intelligent** clever and quick to understand  
**bright** clever  
**brainy** (*informal*) clever (all from CULD)

Current dictionaries generally make a much better job of sets like this. Progress here has been a little uneven and there is still a good deal to be done (see now Bogaards 1996), but things are moving in the right direction.

### (2) *Definitions*

The point was made in Section 3 above that access to more reliable data on usage does not *necessarily* lead to better definitions. The following conversation throws light on another area where very important changes have been taking place. This is taken from a Caribbean novel, Sam Selvon's *A Brighter Sun* (London: Allan Wingate 1952), whose ambitious but poorly-educated hero, Tiger, has been memorizing dictionary definitions in an effort to educate himself. Here he is tormenting his bemused wife, Urmilla:

"I will catch you with a easy one now! Every day people passing selling fish - look we just eat some for dinner. You know what a fish is?"

"But how? Is a thing that does live in the sea, and in river and pond too. It does swim, and people does eat it for food. .."

"I know I would catch you! You really wrong this time! The dictionary ain't say anything like that! It says is a animal living in water, is a vertebrate cold-blooded animal having gills throughout life and limbs, if any, modified into fins. You see! ... All the time I did think a fish was just like what you say, but now I find out for truth what it really is! ... Look, hand me my small narcotic cylinders rolled in paper."

"Cylinder? What is that? Is what you mean at all?"

Tiger chuckled, self-contented.

"Just extend the terminal part of your arm, the extent of space between where you is and which part it is is not remote."

"I beg you pardon, Tiger, but ...this time you really tie me up."

"All right, girl. Reach the cigarettes for me then."

"Well," Urmilla said, "if you did say so all the time, now so you smoking already!"

This neatly illustrates the point that dictionaries have traditionally operated in a self-contained universe of discourse, parallel to the world of 'normal' prose and even somewhat resembling it, but with its own quite distinct conventions and usages. MWCD, for example, gives for the first meaning of **pedantic** the definition 'of, relating to, or being a pedant'. Is this supposed to be English? As the extract above makes clear, the effect of such definitions can often be to hinder communication rather than to help it. A dictionary definition is a somewhat abstract construct at the best of times, so great efforts must be made to remove any obstacles to comprehension and accessibility. This is probably the biggest single challenge of pedagogical lexicography. Many earlier dictionaries do not seem concerned even to try, but recent MLDs have begun to move away from 'the technical character and syntactic clumsiness' of more traditional definitions (Herbst 1996:326).

In the first place, the use of a controlled 'defining vocabulary' (pioneered by Michael West as long ago as 1935) has now become an almost standard feature of the MLD (Herbst 1996:324). But even more importantly, there has been a marked shift way from the conventions and metalanguage of traditional defining technique. One still occasionally comes across this sort of definition even in the most recent MLDs, for example:

(9) **strict** greatly limiting someone's freedom to behave as they wish, and likely to cause them to be severely punished if disobeyed (CIDE)

(10) **jealous** feeling or showing fear or anger that sb one loves very much loves or is loved by sb else more (ALD5)

But on the whole MLDs now aim for a defining language that approximates more closely to 'normal' unmarked discourse.

Meanwhile the focus on typical contexts of use has been developed in various ways. COBUILD's 'sentential' style of definition, which draws to some extent on well-known techniques of folk-defining has been very influential here. In the dictionary's first edition (1987), the phrasal verb **lay up** is defined in these terms:

(11) If an illness **lays** someone **up**, it causes them to stay in bed

The definition immediately informs the reader about the typical subject of the verb, a point that users are left to deduce for themselves from the more conventional treatment of **lay up** in the (more or less) contemporary ALD4 (1989):

(12) **lay sb up** cause sb to stay in bed, not be able to work etc

But even within this new paradigm, further improvements have now been made: in its second edition, COBUILD not only dispenses with the rebarbative 'cause someone to ...' formula, but shifts the whole focus of the definition into the passive structure in which it most typically occurs - *and* shows the preposition that most usually follows the phrase:

(13) If someone **is laid up** with an illness, the illness makes it necessary for them to stay in bed

The policy of presenting headwords in terms of their lexical, syntactic, and contextual environment has been taken further still in more recent MLDs, especially by the use of design and typography. Compare, for example, the way that (one meaning of) the verb **conduct** is covered in consecutive editions of LDOCE:

(14) **conduct** to carry out or direct (LDOCE2)  
**conduct an experiment/survey/inquiry etc** to carry out a particular process, especially in order to get information or prove facts (LDOCE3)

We see here the combined effects of corpus data (which supplies the information that the typical objects of **conduct**, in this meaning, are actually quite limited and predictable) and the drive towards greater precision and transparency.

It would be a brave person who would argue that these changes have been uniformly positive. We are still, I believe, at a fairly experimental stage with new approaches to defining, and more user research needs to be done to test the practical value of different styles. It is legitimate, too, to point to the danger of wordiness in some types of 'natural language' definition: for example ALD5's more conventional definition of **scrumptious** ('esp of food: extremely enjoyable; DELICIOUS') not only uses half as many words as COBUILD2's ('If you describe food as **scrumptious**, you mean that it tastes extremely good') but is equally clear and conveys all the information that is needed. Nevertheless, the instinct to explain meaning in ways that are geared towards the user's needs and level of competence seems to me to be absolutely right.

What is beginning to develop now is a more extensive palette of 'new' definition types (just as a range of traditional styles is available to the writers of the MERRIAM-WEBSTER dictionaries), from which lexicographers can select the most appropriate style for particular types of meaning.

### 4.3 Grammar and syntax

Dictionaries have (almost) always given basic information about grammatical categories, and ever since Harold Palmer's pioneering *A Grammar of English Words* (Longman 1938) first introduced the notion of 'verb patterns', the provision of information about the way words behave syntactically has been an important feature of the MLD. This sort of information can be conveyed both *explicitly* (typically through coding systems of one type or another) and *implicitly* (by being built in to the wording of definitions and examples). Two clear trends can be identified here: first, a definite move towards more transparent coding, and secondly a more systematic effort to ensure that information supplied in codes is mirrored in examples and (increasingly) in definitions too. Compare, for example, the following:

(15) **promise 1** [T1,3,5a,b;V3;Di,5a;Iÿ] to make a promise to do or give (something) or that (something) will be done (LDOCE1 1978)

**promise 1** [I, Tn,Tf,Dn•n, Dn•pr, Dn•f] ~sth (to sb) make a promise (to sb); assure (sb) that one will give or do or not do sth (ALD4 1989)

**promise 1** [I;T] to tell someone that you will definitely do something or that something will happen: **promise (that)** *Hurry up! We promised that we wouldn't be late.* **promise sb (that)** *You promised me the car would be ready on Monday.* **promise to do sth** *The children promised to give us a hand with the packing etc etc LDOCE3 1995)*

Though considerable variation still exists among the different MLDs, what most current coding systems have in common is that they assume very little grammatical knowledge on the part of users, and they aim to satisfy users' needs in this department without requiring them to consult explanatory tables and charts. There is a trade-off here, in which a certain delicacy of description is sacrificed to the need for maximum clarity. So for example, the patterns represented by the sentences *I warned him to leave* and *I wanted him to leave* which are actually distinct and are coded differently in older dictionaries, are now treated purely in terms of their *surface* characteristics and therefore given the same code, for example:

**want (or warn) sb to do sth** (in LDOCE3) or Vn.*to* inf (in ALD5)

In general, the losses here seem to be outweighed by the gains.

Furthermore, the use of examples and definitions to (subliminally) reinforce grammatical messages gives us another string to our bow, as for example in the following:

(16) **argue 1** If you **argue** that something is true, you .... *His lawyers are arguing that he is unfit to stand trial.* **2** If you **argue for** or **argue against** an idea or policy, you ... *The report argues against tax increases ...* **5** If one person **argues** with another, they speak angrily to each other about something that they disagree about. You can also say that two people **argue** : ... *They were still arguing...* (COBUILD2)

Developments here have been informed by a good deal of internal (to publishers) user research and user feedback, both about strategies of dictionary use and about the linguistic sophistication (or otherwise) of target users. But they also reflect a view that - while we would all like more effort to be put (especially by language teachers) into the development of users' reference skills (see e.g. BÈjoint 1994:166-7) - we would be unwise to produce materials that required a more active engagement by users. On the whole, people want to find information quickly and be able to grasp it immediately once they find it.

#### 4.4 Examples

Progress in this area is obviously to a large extent a function of the use of corpora. The contrived, unnatural, or atypical example sentences that were such a pervasive feature of earlier MLDs have now, on the whole, been replaced by authentic-sounding examples which reflect regular patterns of usage, and which can therefore serve as reliable models for language production. There is, however, considerable variation in the way different dictionaries approach examples. The old argument contrasting 'authentic' and 'made-up' examples (see Herbst 1996:327) is no longer really relevant: *all* reputable dictionaries now base every aspect of their text on corpus data. The differences now lie in the degree to which corpus material is 'processed' on its way into the examples. Compare the following examples for the core meaning of **kill**:

*Careless driving kills. | He was killed with a knife. | Cancer kills thousands of people every year. | We need something to kill the weeds.* (ALD5)



*More than 1,000 people have been killed by the armed forces. | Cattle should be killed cleanly and humanely. | The earthquake killed 62 people. | Heroin can kill.*  
(COBUILD2)

Producing successful examples is a deceptively difficult skill, and both sets here seem to me to do a good job. In a very (and necessarily) short space, they reveal (among other things):

- grammatical information (**kill** can be transitive or intransitive, and it is often used passively, in which case the agent is marked by **by**, the instrument by **with**;
- selectional restrictions: the subject of **kill** can be a human agent, but can also be an illness, an event, a dangerous drug, or a type of behaviour; the object can be human, animal, or vegetable; a range of very typical contexts.

There is not a great deal to choose between these accounts; the COBUILD examples have, characteristically, slightly more of the whiff of the corpus about them, but certainly not in a way that would cause problems for users. There is a delicate balance to be struck here: wholly authentic examples have a convincing ring and are generally more lively and intrinsically interesting than overtly 'pedagogical' examples. Where the corpus provides clear and typical examples that neatly illustrate the points that need to be made, there is no conceivable reason for not using them. The risk factor here, illustrated rather too often in COBUILD1, but only very occasionally in COBUILD2, is that wholly authentic examples can show mystifyingly irretrievable contexts (for example in COBUILD1's example at **gravitate**: *He gravitated, naturally, to Newmarket*), atypical uses (see **proxy** in (2) above), or too much irrelevant and (to the learner) distracting material (see Hausmann & Gorbahn 1989 for numerous examples).

The more 'pedagogical' example, typically now produced by modifying an actually occurring sentence, has the advantage of allowing the lexicographer to focus on specific linguistic points without baffling the user. But this path, too, is not without its dangers, and examples produced in this way risk sounding contrived or simply very dull. While clear philosophical differences remain in the stated approaches of the different MLDs (compare for example the positions taken by Della Summers in the LLA, p. F10, and John Sinclair in COBUILD2, p viii-ix), there is actually something not too far from a consensus in working practices, and the differences we see in the texts themselves are often more attributable to varying levels of lexicographic skill than to fundamental differences of ideology.

#### 4.5 Frequency information

In addition to frequency-based sense ordering (already mentioned above), two current MLDs - COBUILD2 and LDOCE3 - provide quite detailed information about the frequency of the more common words in their respective headword lists. In the case of LDOCE, this is sometimes complemented by graphs that illustrate, among other things, the relative frequency of near synonyms across the written/spoken or British/American axes, or the relative frequency of the different complementation patterns of a verb.

All of this is especially valuable for students operating in productive mode. If they are to make appropriate word choices, they need to know (for example) that certain types of cognates with words in their own languages (such as **commence**, **permit**, or **enter**) are actually rather uncommon in most types of English text, and would be almost aberrant in spoken discourse. Frequency symbols and frequency graphs provide helpful pointers here, and these new developments are merely the beginning of a trend which has a good deal further to run.

## 4.6 Illustrations

English dictionaries have featured pictorial material since as long ago as 1538 (Stein 1991:101), and almost all MLDs - with the notable exception of the larger COBUILD dictionaries - make extensive use of illustrations. Earlier dictionaries used pictures mainly for representing concrete objects, either singly or in some sort of lexical set (such as vocabulary relating to cars or houses).

Both these types of illustration are still widely used, but there have been several innovations in this area, many of them originating in the second edition of LDOCE (1987). These include: diagrams clarifying spatial or temporal concepts (such as **since** and **ago**); illustrations showing the related meanings of polysemous words; illustrations clarifying the differences between confusibles like **borrow** and **lend** or **rob** and **steal**; illustrations that show the literal meanings of words which are often used metaphorically (such as **muzzle**, **boomerang**, or **pioneer**); illustrations showing cultural stereotypes (as for example of a **burglar** in the LONGMAN DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE [LDELIC]); illustrations of what cognitive psychologists call 'scripts', showing the various events and actions relating to a particular situation, with the associated lexis (see for example the script for Driving a Car in CIDE).

Illustrative material has become more closely integrated into the text of MLDs, and forms one of several strategies for helping users expand their vocabulary and successfully negotiate known areas of difficulty. (Other areas of recent improvements are discussed in Rundell (1998:336-337).)

## 5. Some conclusions

The following trends in publishing MLDs can be detected:

- a more 'utilitarian' philosophy: dictionaries designed for users, not theoreticians. As ever, we have much to learn from the amazingly far-sighted Dr Johnson, who understood this point perfectly: 'It is not enough that a dictionary delights the critic, unless at the same time it instructs the learner; as it is to little purpose, that an engine amuses the philosopher by the subtlety of its mechanism, if it requires so much knowledge in its application, as to be of no advantage to the common workman.' (Samuel Johnson, *The Plan of a Dictionary* 1747). Whenever a pedagogical dictionary shows *systematic* failure (as opposed to the occasional lapses to which we are all subject), one can usually trace the cause back to a failure to consider the user, and almost all the examples of 'bad' practice in this paper can be so interpreted;
- a greater willingness to ignore the peripheral and focus on the typical. This idea is now firmly in place, even if its consequences have not yet been fully worked through in every aspect of text;
- a readiness to take a prescriptive line when this can be pedagogically justified - again reflecting a welcome move away from the inappropriate model of the 'dictionary of record' for native-speaker users, and towards the broader world of pedagogical materials for language learners. Note here the value of learner corpora, which now provide us with enough information to focus on likely areas of difficulty. Thus for example the entry for **remind** in LEA (on the basis of numerous corpus lines of the type: *That woman reminded me an old friend who I haven't seen for...*) explicitly warns users: *Don't say "it reminds me her". Say **it reminds me of her*** (see also Gillard & Gadsby 1998);
- a far broader range of information types, such as different varieties of English (spoken English in much greater depth than before), pragmatics (a COBUILD speciality but also well covered now in other MLDs), frequency information (especially COBUILD2 and LDOCE3), cultural resonance (especially in LDELIC), false friends (especially in CIDE, and every type of usage information, taking MLDs much further into the territory of general ELT materials;

- a greater diversity of dictionary types: general, cultural, encyclopedic, semi-bilingual, 'production', and so on.

Seven years ago, Reinhard Hartmann (1992:153) wrote: 'I feel we are only at the start of an exciting period of real problem-solving'. The paradox here (and this is what makes pedagogical lexicography such an absorbing field) is that really major advances have indeed been made in the intervening years, yet it still feels as if we are just at the start of more exciting developments still.

[Note website address (in Bibliography and Resource List) for: Lexicography MasterClass]

## THEMATIC REPORT 7

### RECENT TRENDS IN PUBLISHING BILINGUAL LEARNERS' DICTIONARIES

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#### 1. Introduction

'Change is not something that people tend to associate with dictionaries. [...] The heavy cost of dictionary production, and the penalty to be paid for errors of judgement, have made it almost impossible for any radically new dictionary to come into being.' Sue Atkins's (1996:515) rather pessimistic statement is not an isolated one - on the contrary. Numerous metalexigraphers have expressed their doubts as to the possibility of bringing really innovative approaches into the vast field of dictionary-making, such as Zöfgen, when he writes (1991:2888):

It is therefore all the more surprising that in a market saturated with language learning material a bilingual dictionary developed along the lines of pedagogical lexicography and especially designed for the foreign learner is [...] still not available.

Looking back at developments on the German dictionary market over the past decades, one is tempted to agree with Atkins's and Zöfgen's findings. Of course there have been some 'new' dictionaries - published by well-known dictionary publishers - with titles like *Schulwörterbuch* or *Schülerwörterbuch*; in fact they turned out to be more or less conventional dictionaries with some 'add-ons' such as warning-signs against the use of false friends, or an additional appendix.

In a way Atkins is absolutely right when she talks about the financial risks which have prevented dictionary publishers for a long time from pursuing radically new ways of presenting pairs of languages in bilingual dictionaries. Traditionally accepted principles of organizing the macro- as well as micro-structure have persisted. Therefore, competitors on the dictionary market have little more to show off with than the number of entries, the number of translations and some catchy neologisms. Quantity seems to dominate quality.

Another reason for the deplorable deficiencies in learner-oriented bilingual dictionaries is that lexicography as a profession as well as an academic subject has not been taken seriously for a long time. Lexicography (as well as metalexigraphography) has been widely regarded as part of applied linguistics - in the German-speaking countries to an even greater extent than in the English-speaking world (F. J. Hausmann's chair at Erlangen University - not by coincidence - is a *Lehrstuhl für angewandte Sprachwissenschaft*). Serious, in-depth reflection on the topic of learner-oriented lexicography did not - to my knowledge - start until the early 1980's.

The discussions of German lexicographers and metalexigraphers were of course influenced by the work and results already accomplished worldwide. And yet again, the main interest did not focus on bilingual dictionaries, but on monolingual ones; the following definition by Thomas Herbst (1990:1379) speaks for itself:

A learner's dictionary is a synchronic monolingual dictionary intended to meet the demands of the foreign learner.

Along with the prevailing didactic approach of teaching a foreign language via the foreign language, the main course of the discussion for quite a long time followed along the monolingual rather than the bilingual path.

Thanks to institutions such as EURALEX, the relevance of bilingual dictionaries for foreign language acquisition has been rediscovered and is now widely recognized, and lexicographers worldwide (either as dictionary-makers working for a publisher or as metalexicographers working at a university) have taken cognizance of the need for bilingual learner's dictionaries to meet the real requirements of their users. Or, to put it differently, the reflections on monolingual English learners's dictionaries over the past decades have significantly contributed to the high quality represented by dictionaries like the ALD or LDOCE, which set international standards for the genre of the monolingual learner's dictionary. The lexicographers at Langenscheidt were therefore determined to maintain the high standard set by the LONGMAN DICTIONARY OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH when it was decided to take over the completion of the GROSSWÖRTERBUCH DEUTSCH ALS FREMDSPRACHE (LDAF).

It is to be hoped that this and future discussions will contribute to the development of standards for bilingual, pedagogically oriented dictionaries which are accepted throughout the European dictionary-making world.

In order to give a brief orientation on the latest developments on the bilingual dictionary market, I am going to present five new dictionaries which were all published in the 1990's and which have one characteristic in common: they all have special didactic features and an individual special macro- as well as microstructure. They are - in a word - pedagogically oriented. I will outline their characteristics, strengths, shortcomings, limitations and - finally - try to extract principles which may be generally applicable to future dictionaries.

I am going to talk about dictionaries proper - published in the conventional print medium. CD-ROM or on-line dictionaries will deliberately be excluded since the almost endless possibilities of the computer confront us with different problems which require a different methodological approach. The times should be over when it was common practice amongst dictionary publishers to have their lexicographical staff compile a dictionary, publish the book, give the data to the electronics department to have the CD-ROM on the market some weeks later.

I am not going to talk about new or revised editions of *Großwörterbücher* like Langenscheidt's MURET-SANDERS or SACHS-VILLATTE, or Collins' unabridged GERMAN-ENGLISH/ENGLISH-GERMAN DICTIONARY. These are aimed at professional users, university students or learners with an advanced L2 proficiency. I believe that from a certain level of L2-competence special didactic features are no longer necessary. Dictionary publishers may well try to bring more user-friendliness into these dictionaries, but didactic features which I am going to introduce below are superfluous at that stage.

## **2. New developments**

### *The semi-bilingual learner's dictionary*

I assume that the criticism levelled against the use of monolingual learner's dictionaries in foreign-language teaching has become a kind of common property - at least within an academic circle of experts like this (see the thematic report by Michael Rundell, TR6 above). So we shall not go into details. The main point of criticism was and still is: monolingual learners' dictionaries can be off-putting because the user may get frustrated when he/she does not understand the definition. As a result of the lengthy discussions which arose because of this apparent inherent weakness in monolingual dictionaries, the

idea of a semi-bilingual learner's dictionary was born, the idea of combining the advantages of the monolingual with the convenience of the bilingual dictionary.

Of course, the concept of semi-bilingualism should not be looked at as a monolithic block. There is the minimal approach, e.g. represented by numerous dictionaries published by Kernerman in Israel, where only a basic translation is given following the definition of the headword or its sub-meanings. At the opposite end of the spectrum we find the 'bridge' concept, developed by the COBUILD team and not yet realized in the German-speaking market (where the 'PONS' label is associated with several of Klett's bilingual dictionary projects, especially those in collaboration with Collins and Le Robert). As far as we know, a plan to compile an English-Dutch learner's dictionary for the Dutch market was dropped at an early stage. The idea was to translate the original definition into the learner's mother tongue, thus enabling him/her to understand the meaning.

Somewhere between these two extremes lie the two semi-bilingual learners' dictionaries that I want to introduce. The first is the OXFORD GRUNDWÖRTERBUCH ENGLISH-GERMAN/DEUTSCH-ENGLISCH (OGWB), published by Cornelsen and Oxford U.P. in 1990. It is based on the monolingual OXFORD ELEMENTARY LEARNER'S DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH (OELD, published in 1981), and it claims to contain 'über 7500 Definitionen und Beispielsätze'. The bilingualization was done by Helga Holtkamp.

The micro-structure is strictly organized. Following the headword in bold type, the IPA phonetic transcription is given, then the part-of-speech label. The semantic component begins with the definition in English, followed by the German equivalent of the word's or its sub-category's meaning. If a phraseological element (**take the blame**) or a complete example sentence (**The driver took the blame for the accident**) is given, this is also translated. Those who share the critical view of monolingual dictionaries mentioned above will inevitably come to the conclusion that the concept of semi-bilingualization as realized by Helga Holtkamp is a major step towards a more learner-oriented dictionary.

And the book has yet more to offer. Usage notes designed especially for the needs of a German-speaking user have been added, as in the entry **heavy** the warning:

Vorsicht! **schwer** im Sinne von schwierig heißt **difficult**:  
"eine schwere Übung", *a difficult exercise*.

Other notes contribute to the learner's cultural competence (e.g. under **appetite**, or **café**), give phonetic information (e.g. under **increase**) or deal with grammatical or syntactic problems (e.g. under **as**). Extra pages (e.g. on 'Das Präsens' or 'Wortzusammensetzung') add to the didactic value of a useful ELT tool which started life as an ordinary monolingual dictionary. The book is rounded off by an English-German glossary in the appendix.

At Langenscheidt an innovation committee was set up in the early nineties, which - of course - not only had to deal with dictionaries, but with the whole range of the group's products, including Polyglott guides, Humboldt books, language courses and electronic products. This process culminated in Langenscheidt's 'dictionary offensive' of 1997 when the Dictionary Division presented 27 new products. In considering innovative ideas we also looked at the possibility of a semi-bilingual dictionary, our in-house discussion reflecting the current international debate on this type of dictionary. Those in favour of semi-bilingualism (including myself, who formulated the project proposal) stressed the didactic benefits of the concept, while those against claimed exactly the opposite: giving basic translation equivalents would keep users from reading the English definitions and phrases.

It was finally decided to carry out the project. Due to major restructuring and other reasons (like the introduction of the new German orthography) it took longer than

expected to complete the work. But in June 1997 Langenscheidt published a semi-bilingual learner's dictionary for German learners of English which was called LANGENSCHIEDT'S TWO IN ONE DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH (LTOD).

The basis for the dictionary was the completely revised edition of LONGMAN NEW JUNIOR DICTIONARY (LNJD) which came out in 1993 (in Germany it was published under the title LANGENSCHIEDT-LONGMAN ELEMENTARY DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH) and which contained approximately 12,000 words and phrases. It was decided to cut down this number by a quarter in order to make room for the German equivalents, additional headwords (i.e. items which were not originally in the LNJD word-list, but which were part of the 'ministerial list', i.e. the basic vocabulary laid down as a minimum by the German ministries of education), additional phrases which provide information of special interest to German learners, usage notes and a German-English glossary. We aimed at and realized about 9,000 words and phrases - the target-group we had in mind were students in their third year of learning English.

The first pedagogical or didactic element which was introduced was the front-matter. We deliberately did not want to have another boring preface which users do not bother to read. Instead it was decided to include a workbook which could be used both for classroom work and private study, and which would help the users to get acquainted with the dictionary's micro-structure. Now - more than two years after publication - we can say that feedback from the teachers so far has been unanimously positive.

The second pedagogical element is the use of colour. Although considerably more cost-intensive than black-and-white print, it was decided to introduce colour into the dictionary. The headwords come in what is called 'Langenscheidt blue', the colour reflecting the company's corporate identity. Blue headwords apparently make it easier for users to find the entry they are looking for. Colour was also used to underlay the more than 200 usage notes. And 12 colour pages were added with illustrations of vocabulary paradigms.

A feature which most learners who use their dictionary not only for decoding but also for encoding have always found useful is the indication of syllabification by dots in the headwords. Phonetic information is given in IPA signs, and part-of-speech information is marked in full because abbreviations at this stage of foreign-language competence were considered an impediment to easy reference.

The definitions make use of a computer-controlled defining vocabulary and are supplemented by a German translation equivalent of the meaning or - in the case of polysemous headwords - of each of the sub-senses. A phrase or an example sentence is only translated when didactically necessary. Thus, in the entry **layer** the definition plus the basic translation enable the user to decode the sentence *This cake has got a layer of chocolate in the middle.* - so there is no need for a translation. On the other hand, in the entry **paint**<sup>1</sup> the additional information had to be given that *Wet paint* is *Frisch gestrichen* in German.

Angelika Seifert - an experienced teacher and translator, who did the main part of the lexicographic work - attached great importance to a strictly learner-oriented approach. So most of the usage notes she wrote reflect her own classroom experience.

The new feature of colour illustrations which show vocabulary paradigms (e.g. **prepositions, verbs of movement**) adds to the value of this dictionary, which, we believe, gives the user a first taste of monolingual dictionaries without the frustration and will eventually help to smooth the way towards coping with truly monolingual learner's dictionaries such as LDOCE.

In a way the semi-bilingual or bilingualized dictionaries discussed above can be regarded as a kind of spin-off of existing monolingual dictionaries. The three bilingual dictionaries which I want to turn to now are both genuine and unprecedented, but with one slight reservation which I will make in due course.

The OXFORD SCHULWÖRTERBUCH ENGLISH-GERMAN/DEUTSCH-ENGLISCH (OSWB) was published in 1996 as a result of the cooperation between Oxford U.P. and Cornelsen; hence the joint editorship: in Oxford Margaret Deuter, in Berlin Helga Holtkamp. On the outside back cover the publishers claim 27,000 words and phrases. At first glance one immediately gets the impression that this is something very different. Blue headwords, including blue nested compounds and patterns, no swung dashes (tildes) even in phraseological elements, no cryptic abbreviations for points of grammar, metalanguage in German (*Nomen, kein Plural etc.*), 13 study pages between the two sections of the book, many full example sentences and - not that many - usage notes.

Here, clearly for the first time on the German dictionary market, the concept of the 'lean dictionary' was realized. I remember very well an extremely interesting discussion I had with Paul Procter back in 1992 at Exeter on this topic. The basic idea is expressed by the topos *less is more*, meaning a reduced number of headwords but instead information the users really need; or, to put it differently: cut down on the macrostructure, and improve the microstructure.

Unfortunately the first positive impression is not confirmed when one takes a closer look at the OSWB. The lexicographers who made this book decided on an - at first glance - unobjectionable approach: to take the monolingual OXFORD WORDPOWER DICTIONARY (OWPD) as their basis. However, what leaves a lot to be desired is the way the project was tackled. All the definitions were omitted from the original monolingual English corpus and replaced by German translations. In addition, the number of entries was reduced and not all the phraseological units listed in the OWPD were incorporated in the bilingual dictionary. The phrases and sentences which were left were then translated into German and the key words in the German translations were tagged. Finally - in a process which we call 'St\_lpfung' - the resulting English-German part was alphabetized and turned into the German-English part of the dictionary.

Here are some examples. In the German entry **ansteigen** you get the sentence *Die Temperatur ist auf fast 40 Grad angestiegen*, which is translated by *The temperature has risen to nearly forty degrees*. In the entry **rise<sup>2</sup> 1** of the OWPD you get the example sentence *The temperature has risen to nearly forty degrees*. The other way round: in the entry **happily** of the OWPD you get the example *I would happily give up my job if I didn't need the money*, a sentence we find again when we look up **gerne 5** in the German-English part of the OSWB where it is given as translation for *Wenn ich das Geld nicht brauchte, würde ich meine Arbeit gerne aufgeben*.

In applying this method of compiling the German-English part of the dictionary a bit more lexicographical and - above all - didactic effort would have been advantageous. There are many entries and phrases which clearly show a deplorable lack of learner-orientation in the sense that the vocabulary does not belong to the target-group's idiolect or empirical world. *Der Jäger blies ins Horn* and *Er war sehr erfolgreich, aber nur auf Kosten eines glücklichen Familienlebens* are only two examples of this. There are cases where the German translations of the original OWPD even lack idiomaticity, consequently there are some example sentences in the German-English part of the OSWB which sound rather strange: *Merkwürdigerweise trugen wir den gleichen Namen*, or *Ich mache meine Übungen während des Tages zwischendurch*, or *Die Aktualität des Dokumentarfilms imponierte mir*, etc.



Lack of learner-orientation is also true of numerous entries in the English-German part. Under **remember** we find *Please remember me to your wife*, under **such** we get *The statement was worded in such a way that it did not upset anyone*, under **light** we read *We shall have to change our decision in the light of what you have just said*.

The OWPD, an excellent dictionary for intermediate learners, was designed for the world market, not for the specific needs of German-speaking users. Taking this dictionary as a basis for a bilingual English-German/German-English dictionary with a clearly didactic purpose indicated by the title *Schulwörterbuch* involves the risk of failure. And this is - I am afraid I have to say this - exactly what has happened.

And a last point: a dictionary which is based on a work published in 1993 (and compiled well before that date) should not claim on the outside back cover that it is based on the *British National Corpus*, since that text collection was not available before 1994.

Most dictionaries published in Germany in 1997 go by the rules of new German orthography. There is an interesting dictionary by Collins, published in the U.K., which claims, on the outside front cover, to be '*the 1st dictionary to adopt the NEW GERMAN SPELLINGS*'. This is the COLLINS EASY LEARNING GERMAN DICTIONARY (ELGD). In Germany the book is published under licence by Klett which on its title-page proclaims the PONS COLLINS EASY SCHULWÖRTERBUCH DEUTSCH-ENGLISCH/ENGLISCH-DEUTSCH. And in the preface we find the following introductions:

Mit dem *PONS Collins Schulwörterbuch* wird ein neues innovatives Wörterbuchkonzept vorgestellt, das speziell dem Anfänger beim Erlernen der englischen Sprache helfen soll.

*Collins Easy Learning German Dictionary* is an innovative new dictionary designed specifically for anyone starting to learn German.

Obviously Collins and Klett were aiming to publish not only a bilingual learner's dictionary but also a bilingual and bidirectional learner's dictionary which could be used by English-speaking students who want to learn German as much as by German-speaking students who want to learn English. An ambitious target which makes one wonder.

The bidirectional structure shows, in German-English entries where inflected forms are given, such as **klingen ... klang, hat geklungen**, or **Haus ... des Hauses, die Häuser**, information completely redundant for the German user, but of relevance to the English user. The lemmatization of irregular German forms like **brachte** or **gebracht** plus cross-references to **bringen** makes sense in a learner's dictionary for non native-speakers of German - and vice versa in cases like **went, gone, geese** or **mice**.

Since the book was originally designed for native speakers of English it is only logical that no phonetics are given in the English-German part; instead, an appendix *Aussprache des Englischen* has been added in which roughly 8000 words and their pronunciation are listed, a solution which to my knowledge is unique in lexicography and leaves much room for debate. I don't want to go any deeper into microstructural aspects. I only want to emphasize that a bilingual learner's dictionary of English for German users following the structure outlined in the English-German part of the book (plus pronunciation in the entries, of course) would probably do a good job - and vice versa for a bilingual learner's dictionary of German for English-speaking users following the structure of the German-English section.

The attempt to create a bilingual as well as bidirectional learner's dictionary was bound to fail, unless one is happy with a dictionary for the sole use of decoding. Is it possible to

produce a bilingual learner's dictionary which serves both purposes - decoding as well as encoding? To me the answer would be 'yes'.

Let me now introduce the latest development, the LANGENSCHIEDT'S POWER DICTIONARY ENGLISCH-DEUTSCH/DEUTSCH-ENGLISCH (LPDE). In 1993 a working-group was established at Langenscheidt which was to find ways of improving one of Langenscheidt's best-selling books, the well-known *Schulwörterbuch*. Hence the provisional working-title *Didaktisiertes Schulwörterbuch*, or *DSW* for short. On the team - to which I belonged from the beginning - were not only lexicographers but also experienced teachers and didactic experts from universities and teacher-training seminars. The target-group was to be learners from beginner's to intermediate level. Although we were aiming at school students we realized from the start that the concept should also work for English language teaching in adult education.

During several brainstorming weekends it became quite clear that the mere incorporation of new features would get us nowhere. It was the structure as such, the lexicographical identity which had to be changed. The idea began to invade our minds that we would have to get rid of old and established lexicographical conventions if we were to achieve anything. Slogans such as *Weniger ist Mehr!*, *Tod der Tilde!*, *Nie wieder v/recip und v/impers!*, *Lautschrift für englische Übersetzungen!* covered pinboards and flipcharts. At the end we had a concept to start with, a concept which was changed and adapted in the course of compilation which again was accompanied by constant discussion within the team. It was a concept which - and we were absolutely convinced about that - would lead us to a dictionary unprecedented in the history of German lexicography.

The main characteristics of the LPDE are as follows:

- We followed the principle of *less is more*, which means we decided on a 'lean dictionary' concept - a reduction in the number of headwords in favour of an extended, user-oriented microstructure.
- No more tildes - each compound or derivative, each headword repeated in a phrase or example sentence was given in full.
- Each headword is given full lemmatization - no more nesting of compounds or derivatives.
- The headwords appear in 'Langenscheidt blue' - phrasal verbs follow after the base-verb in a blue frame.
- In the German-English section entries which changed considerably due to the new orthography are framed in blue.
- No more cryptic abbreviations for grammar but clear, explicit metalanguage or phrases and examples to show typical grammatical structures.
- The LPDE is tailored to meet the varying needs of the users depending on the individual context. *English-German for decoding*: this part concentrates on what students might hear or read. Here the user finds a high density of headwords with a lot of idiomatic contemporary vocabulary. *German-English for encoding*: this part concentrates on what students might wish to express in spoken or written English. They find a selective range of headwords for active use. For the first time L2-phonetics are given in the L1-L2-section of the bilingual dictionary.
- Plenty of usage notes were especially designed to meet the needs of the German-speaking users.
- New contextualized, lively colour illustrations help to extend the learner's vocabulary and offers scope for classroom work.

So far the feedback to the LPDE has been overwhelming. In fact, there have been offers from other European dictionary publishers who are interested in collaborating in order to produce bilingual learner's dictionaries for their languages with English following the *Power* concept. We are considering the idea of establishing a 'Power family', which would be a range of bilingual learner's dictionaries for the main European languages, for

different target groups according to varying proficiency levels. The next Langenscheidt dictionary which will be organized according to the *Power* concept is going to be a French-German/German-French learner's dictionary which we have been working on for more than three years and which is going to be published in 1999.

Perhaps the qualities of the LPDE dictionary are best demonstrated by the fact that Oxford U.P. and Cornelsen published a *Neubearbeitung 1998* of their OSWB - compared to the 1996 edition there will be 32 additional pages with colour illustrations and English phonetics in the German-English section ... these facts speak for themselves.

However, we do realize that the *Power* concept can not be applied to all kinds of dictionaries. The tourist, for example, wants a pocket dictionary with plenty of headwords and a good choice of travel-related vocabulary. Professional users like translators want a plethora of special vocabulary, secretaries probably want a dictionary with typical office-oriented phraseology etc.

So in the future we will still be offering a wide range of dictionaries in order to meet the requirements of as many users as possible. But with the *Power* concept we are convinced that we have achieved a major breakthrough in bilingual learner's lexicography.

#### *Other new developments*

In this paper I have concentrated on two bilingualized and three bilingual learner's dictionaries. However, I realize that there are other major new developments in the field of bilingual lexicography, i.e. the remarkable Collins/Pons project of an unabridged French-German/German-French dictionary by Veronika Schnorr. The idea of showing the valency of verbs by giving sentence patterns instead of complicated grammar codes is an important user-oriented achievement - there is a rumour that Klett wants to drop this feature for a future revision. If this is true I would like to hear the reasons for it.

In 1994 and 1995 the completely revised editions of three English-French dictionaries appeared on the market, and all three presented interesting new features. The COLLINS/ROBERT DICTIONARY (CRFD) gives cross-references from entries like **excuse** to notes like 'Language in Use'. The OXFORD/HACHETTE DICTIONARY (OHDF) has introduced 'Language Notes' of the type we know from LDOCE, plus vocabulary paradigms like *illnesses, aches and pains*. In addition to the linguistic information, the LAROUSSE FRENCH DICTIONARY (LGD) also offers encyclopedic information, e.g. in the entry **grammar school**.

Additional features like maps, model letters and information about political systems are the result of a realization that there is more to language acquisition than vocabulary and grammar.

### **3. Conclusion**

Europe is about to form a closer political and economic union, but culturally it is still extremely diverse. Learning and teaching a foreign language therefore must be more than just words and rules on how to combine them. The aim of language learning must be the acquisition of intercultural competence. And the dictionaries of the future - both monolingual and bilingual - will have to be designed accordingly.

I believe that for beginners' and intermediate bilingual dictionaries the *Power* concept shows the way ahead. There is always room for improvement, but even now it may form the basis for further development in the field of learners' reference works. The semi-bilingual element also seems to me a workable approach at a certain level of proficiency. And how cultural information can add to the value of an already excellent dictionary can be gleaned from the monolingual LONGMAN DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND

CULTURE (LDELIC). Maybe the pedagogically oriented dictionary of the future will show a strong resemblance to what Hausmann once (1985:370) called *Allbuch*.

There is one last point which I would like to emphasize. In recent years there has been an increasing abuse of the deplorable fact that the general public is not capable of judging quality standards in dictionaries. The average buyer cannot distinguish between a cheap dictionary they see in a supermarket and a high-quality product. We have a case here which Hausmann on various occasions has referred to as 'dictionary criminality'. Unscrupulous profiteers - I would not call them publishers - are flooding the market with incredibly bad products which cheat the buyer and in the longer run damage the reputation of quality-oriented lexicographers and publishers. And, what is worse, there is also a growing tendency towards plagiarism. The Bibliographisches Institut won a case in 1997 against a company called *Lechner Eurobooks* (other company names are also used) which had simply copied the DUDEN/OXFORD STANDARDWÖRTERBUCH ENGLISCH (DOSW), changed the typography electronically and dumped the result on the market at a ridiculously low price. Other suppliers sell really old dictionaries and mark them on the cover as *Völlige Neubearbeitung* or *Über 2,000.000 Exemplare verkauft*.

What I want to say is this: if we are serious about producing high-quality pedagogically oriented bilingual dictionaries we also have to consider international measures of quality control. This could perhaps be achieved by a kind of convention between quality-conscious dictionary publishers or by recommendations presented by expert networks like this to European politicians who are involved in cultural education. If we were able to achieve a certain standard product level for bilingual learners' dictionaries across Europe, future buyers would then be able to distinguish between trash and quality.

The cultural growth of Europe requires more communicative and intercultural competence. Dictionaries can play a major role in this process - and it is our job to make sure they will.

## THEMATIC REPORT 8

### PRINCIPLES OF TERMINODIDACTICS

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#### 1. Introduction

The main object of 'terminodidactics' is the teaching of terminology to mother-tongue speakers and learners of foreign languages at different levels of the educational spectrum, including as target groups the general public outside formal teaching-learning contexts. Terminodidactics can be defined (Lino 1990:170) as the study of patent lexicon sub-systems with didactic applications.

There are several factors that have led to a methodological reorientation in terminology. Among these are (a) the impact of science and technology on contemporary society, (b) the structure of technical and scientific communication, (c) the internationalization of human activities that leads to the need for translating a great volume of texts, and (d) automation, computerization and telematics.

These new socio-cultural realities have brought terminology into teaching curricula for the purpose of training professionals who can deal with the new challenges of contemporary society. Consequently, terminological science has been introduced as a subject in higher education and also within secondary schools.

#### 2. Terminodidactics in higher education

Just as science is acknowledged as important for the needs of society, the existence or absence of terminologies has implications for the whole community: in research, in the authorities, in industry and in commerce. All these are essential reasons for incorporating the teaching of terminological sciences into university curricula, at the levels of the licenciante degree, Master's programmes and Ph.D. courses.

In teacher training it is particularly important that terminodidactics is offered in order to prepare the future teachers for the field of 'languages for special purposes'. Within the university context, terminodidactics is a fundamental element in courses for foreigners, particularly in the teaching of Portuguese as a second language for scholarship holders under the SOCRATES programme. Under this heading, we have been privileged to teach languages for special purposes from the following domains: economics, law, science, technology and medicine. With this aim, we have created didactic materials for special purposes, e.g. a CD-ROM *Termedica* that leads to the teaching and learning of the language of medicine and medical terminology, either in the classroom or for self-instruction at the library. It consists of the following components: (a) a dictionary, (b) texts and images, (c) medical communication and (d) exercises.

The dictionary contains approximately 20,000 medical terms. Students of medicine or trainee doctors are able to do simple or compound searches for entry terms, synonyms, translation equivalents and definitions. The CD-ROM also includes texts related to different types of medical discourse, along with the contextualization of terms, synonyms and phraseologies, thus allowing better acquisition of medical terminology and medical knowledge. The exercises are related to linguistic particularities that can be contextualized and linked to other components of the CD-ROM.

Computer text corpora in languages for special purposes are didactic materials of great relevance to the teaching and learning of the mother tongue or a foreign language in higher education. By relying on corpora, the teacher can develop a set of fundamental strategies for language acquisition which give the students an opportunity for assuming the double role of learner and researcher. The approach to corpora can be of several kinds: 'teaching about [corpora], teaching to exploit [corpora] and exploiting [corpora] to teach.' (Leech 1997:6). These three ways can be either considered autonomous or used interactively.

Access to computerized corpus data permits a multiple approach to real language texts. The constitution of the computer corpus itself is a matter of great linguistic interest for discussion in the classroom and for the acquisition or improvement of the mother tongue as well as the foreign language. The corpora can be arranged, according to the objectives set by whoever is interested in them, in order of chronology, text type, area of specialization, etc. The current trend is to tag the texts with grammatical, syntactic, semantic, morphological and other labels. For English and French, this is a reality, but we cannot say the same for many other languages. In this case the teacher as well as the researcher-student have a very important role to play. In order to perform tagging on a special-purpose text corpus, the student needs to get acquainted with the inherent concepts in the language for special purposes that he/she is studying and be able to, for example, distinguish a technical term from a lexical unit from the common core of the language.

In extracting relevant information by means of a 'concordancer', the student can observe the central forms, which in this case constitute terminological units, as well as their expansions to the left or right. In this way, the student can see the specificity of updated terms in the respective special-purpose language. For example, the observation can coincide in the grammatical, semantic, lexical and/or conceptual parts of the terminological unit. The student can pursue the linguistic or conceptual evolution of one language for special purposes, move from one special-purpose language to another, or even compare points within two different linguistic systems on a contrastive basis. The objective of this type of work is to systematize the collected data and thus to systematize knowledge resulting from work with the didactic material. Within that material, we regard the dictionary as the most interesting component.

In secondary schools, terminodidactics can also be part of the teaching of the mother tongue and foreign languages. At this level of teaching, the experience of creating with students so-called 'auto-dictionaries' in class can be particularly beneficial, involving the co-operation of teachers of both the mother tongue and various scientific subjects. The result of this experience is a multimedia learning dictionary with hypertext relations, allowing the students to acquire new concepts as well as new terms. In the functional perspective of terminology and scientific discourse, the student is charged, with the help of the model of this self-learning dictionary, to look up the meanings of terms and acquire new scientific concepts, utilizing multiple contexts, texts and images (Contente 1998).

### **3. Terminodidactics and 'telematic' lexicography**

Terminodidactics is also associated with the conception of telematic lexicographic products that frequently take on a complementary function and contribute to the updating of scientific and terminological knowledge within and after University degree programmes.

Following this point of view carefully, the development of new data technology has helped in the re-structuring of theoretical, methodological and didactic presuppositions. We have created *Neoporterm*, a telematic dictionary product available on the Internet (Lino & Costa 1998), consisting of three components, (a) a dictionary, (b) a text file and

(c) a document database. The dictionary's structure can accommodate terms, scientific neologisms or current language neologisms associated with an electronic text file. It includes linguistic data, conceptual data, document and administrative data. The terminographic definition contains a certain degree of complexity in order to give answers to the linguistic and conceptual questions posed by the user.

*Neoporterm* registers neological and/or neonymic variants or even terminological variants from the socio-terminological context of the Portuguese language in Portugal or from those of different Portuguese-speaking countries.

The aim of this report was to point out the importance of the teaching and learning of special-purpose languages within the university sector in Portugal. With the spread of ERASMUS/SOCRATES students across European universities, we think that terminodidactics can play an increasingly important role in language teaching programmes. Effectively, these students are the future economists, doctors, architects etc. who will want to be able to read and understand texts of their specialty encoded in a foreign language. Universities will have to acknowledge more and more the value of teaching and learning languages for special purposes and build them into their curricula.

## TNP SUB-PROJECT 9: DICTIONARIES

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### 1. Recommendations and their dissemination

A set of Recommendations as agreed and formulated by the Scientific Committee of the TNP Sub-Project 9 (Dictionaries) is reproduced in the first section of this volume (pp. 1-5 above). Two recommendations are made under the heading of 'raising dictionary awareness', seven are concerned with 'improving dictionary provision'. In each case we have indicated the target groups at which the recommendations are directed, but we realize that conditions vary from country to country and that the process of disseminating this information should not be left to chance.

That is why we have made a deliberate effort throughout the three-year period of our activities to publicize the issues involved. While preparing the National Reports on the dictionary scene in various countries (see pp. 7 to 31 above), we had to contact numerous institutions to collect information and used the opportunity to tell them about the Thematic Network Project. Once completed, the synthesis versions of the national reports have been passed on for comment to colleagues outside the TNP and used in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes on Lexicography and Terminology in several universities (especially at Exeter, Lille 3, Rennes 2, VU Amsterdam, HHS Århus and UN Lisboa).

Each year we organized an open workshop (Lille 1997, Gent 1998, Exeter 1999, see Appendix) to involve experts from outside the group, and in Years 2 and 3 we commissioned specialist studies (several are reproduced under the heading of 'Thematic Reports' above), which in turn has led to intensive contacts with colleagues inside our own institutions and with authorities consulted by the authors of the reports. On at least three occasions we have interacted with members of other TNP Sub-Projects.

The work of our TNP Sub-Project was reported at the Liège Congress of the European Association for Lexicography in August 1998, which also provided an opportunity to exchange ideas at a well-attended workshop on dictionary use. Our group was represented at the first Conference of the European Language Council (Lille 1997), and the results of our deliberations were available at the second ELC Conference (Jyväskylä 1999).

The work of our TNP Sub-Project has been regularly mentioned (and some of its reports discussed) in courses on Lexicography and allied subjects at Exeter (U), Århus (HHS), Trento (UdS), Madrid (UA), Tampere (U), Thessaloniki (AU), Barcelona (UPF) and Lisbon (UN), and information about the TNP has been made available generally to universities represented by its members and to various specialist organizations such as the European Association for Lexicography (EURALEX), the Danish and Nordic Associations of Lexicography, the editors and some of the authors of volumes in the 'Lexicographica Series Maior', the Spanish Ministry of Education, the Argentinian Secretary of State for Culture, the Finnish Centre for Technical Terminology (TSK), the Committee for Lexicographical Resources for the Dutch Language (CLVV), the Centre for the Greek Language at Thessaloniki, the Portuguese Association of Terminology (TERMIP), the Panlatin Terminology Network (REALITER), the Iberoamerican Terminology Network (RITERM) and a range of publishers in various countries (especially Longman, Bloomsbury and Routledge in the U.K., Langenscheidt in Germany, Benjamins in the Netherlands, WSOY in Finland, La Maison du Dictionnaire and Le Robert in France and Porto Editora in Portugal).



At least four of the websites mentioned in the Bibliography & Resource List (U Exeter, UA Madrid and U Lille 3 as well as the European Language Council) refer to the work of the TNP Sub-Project on Dictionaries. Several publications by members of the group (e.g. the DICTIONARY OF LEXICOGRAPHY by Hartmann and James and a forthcoming book on 'Lexicography and Dictionary Research' by Reinhard Hartmann) make explicit reference to the ELC and the TNP. Most notably, the publication of this volume should help to make the results and implications of our activities known to a wider circle.

## **2. Follow-up project: Learners' dictionaries**

Looking further ahead, we envisage a project which would develop a 'blueprint for designing dictionaries for foreign language learning in Europe'. In line with the recommendations as outlined above, we believe that the time is ripe for specifying the design features of (various) learners' dictionaries within a Europe-wide general framework for evaluating dictionary standards for the benefit of both producers and consumers.

We would propose the following three-stage procedure for such a one-year scheme:

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- a planning meeting which would agree on the scope of the framework, the composition of a panel of experts, the questions they are meant to address and the categories and criteria within which they are to operate;
- a workshop-style meeting at which the appointed experts present and discuss the results of their enquiries on the basis of previously circulated reports, with the objective of elaborating a check-list of design features for various (sub-types of) learners' dictionaries, with due consideration of the perspectives of producers (publishers) and consumers (users), teachers, administrators, researchers and experts in information technology;
- an evaluation meeting which would propose European guidelines for describing, comparing, evaluating and designing dictionaries (and other reference works, including electronic ones) for language learners.

An alternative to the workshop formula would be an enquiry with experts where formal meetings are replaced by standard reports. We believe that such a framework for a follow-up project could make a significant contribution to the field we have been investigating for the last three years, and trust that it can be accepted and carried forward within or beyond the TNP context.

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[*Note:* This list contains all the bibliographical references to books and articles cited in all the Recommendations, National Reports and Thematic Reports assembled in this volume. It is subdivided into 4 parts:

- B1 Reference works cited/consulted
- B2 Other references
- B3 Journals
- B4 Websites]

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### B3 Journals:

*Applied Linguistics* (Oxford 1980-)

*Cahiers de Lexicologie* (Paris 1959-)

*Dictionaries. Journal of the DSNA* (1979-)

*ELT Journal* (Oxford 1947-)

*English Today* (Cambridge 1985-)

*Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris 1970-)

*Le Français Moderne* (Paris 1933-)

*Germanistische Linguistik* (Hildesheim 1969-)

*International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* (Amsterdam 1996-)

*International Journal of Lexicography* (Oxford 1988-)

*Language Learning Journal* (Leeds 1990-)  
*Lebende Sprachen* (München 1956-)  
*Lexicographica International Annual* (Tübingen 1985-)  
*Lexicon* (Tokyo 1972-)  
*LexicoNordica* (Oslo 1994-)  
*Lexikos* (Stellenbosch 1991-)  
*Lexique* (Lille 1982-)  
*Logoploigisi* (Athens 1996-)  
*Reference Reviews* (Bradford 1987-)  
*Studi di lessicografia italiana* (Firenze 1979-)  
*Terminologias* (Lisbon 1990-)  
*Terminologie et Traduction* (Bruxelles 1992-)  
*Terminologies Nouvelles* (1989-)  
*Terminology* (Amsterdam 1994-)

**B4 Websites, mailing lists and email addresses:**

BAALPG [British Association for Applied Linguistics, postgraduate researchers]:  
baalpg@mailbase.ac.uk  
BALEAP [British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes]:  
baleap@mailbase.ac.uk  
BNC [British National Corpus] (Oxford U): info.ox.ac.uk/bnc/  
CELTE [English Self-Access Centre] (Warwick U): www.warwick.ac.uk/eap  
DRC [Dictionary Research Centre] (Exeter U): www.ex.ac.uk/drc  
DSNA [Dictionary Society of North America]:  
polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/dsna.index.html  
EAFT [European Association for Terminology]: www.wsl.ch/wsldb/mexft/lervad.html  
ELC-TNP [European Language Council] (Berlin FU) www.fu-berlin.de/elc  
ELU [English Language Web Links to Remote Sites] (Kent U):  
www.ukc.ac.uk/secl/elu/elu.htm  
EURALEX [European Association for Lexicography] (Stuttgart U):  
www.ims.uni-stuttgart.de/euralex  
IULA [Applied Linguistics] (Pompeu Fabra U Barcelona): www.iula.upf.es/formacuk.htm  
*Internet Dictionary Project*: www.June29.com/idp  
LANG-ASST [Training of Language Assistants]: lang-asst-trg@mailbase.ac.uk  
*Lexicography MasterClass*: ds.dial.pipex.com/town/lane/ae345/index.htm  
LLI [Linguistic Computing] (UA Madrid):  
www.llif.uam.es/~fmarcos/informes/lexico/lexicoix.html  
NTU [Nederlandse Taalunie] (The Hague): www.taalunie.org  
*Nordiclex*: www.nordiclex.org  
*Recursos* [Spanish Language] (Brighton U): www.bton.ac.uk/slweb/recursos/lengua.html  
REWO [Permanent Overlegorgaan Regionale Woordenboeken, Nederlandse Taalunie]:  
dialect.rug.ac.be  
RILF [Research Institute for the Languages of Finland] (Helsinki):  
www.domlang.fi/english/html  
RTT [Norwegian Council for Technical Terminology] (Oslo): www.rtt.org  
SILEX [European Diploma in Lexicography] (CdGU Lille 3): www.univ-lille3.fr/www/silex  
SYSFLING [Systemic Functional Linguistics]: pgaines@u.washington.edu  
TELRI [Trans-European Language Resources Infrastructure] (IdS Mannheim):  
solaris3.ids-mannheim.de/telri/main.html  
TSK [Finnish Centre for Technical Terminology] (Helsinki): www.tsk.fi  
UCML [University Lecturer in Modern Languages]: ucml-teaching@mailbase.ac.uk  
*Union Latine* (Paris): www.unilat.org/  
*'User Studies'* (Lancaster): www.lancs.ac.uk/postgrad/tono/userstudy/index.html  
*'Wörterbuchform'* [Dictionary Structure Research] (Heidelberg U):  
www.gs.uni-heidelberg.de/~koerkel/makro1.html



## TNP SUB-PROJECT 9: DICTIONARIES

### APPENDIX: MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS

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### **Meetings of TNP Sub-Project 9: Dictionaries**

*Year 1:*

Preliminary meeting on Policy Paper at Rennes: 15 September 1996

1st SC meeting at Exeter: 15 December 1996

2nd SC meeting at Madrid: 31 May 1997

3rd SC meeting at Lille: 4 July 1997 (with Workshop on Dictionary Research during European Language Council Conference)

*Year 2:*

1st SC meeting at Exeter: 22 November 1997

2nd SC meeting at Gent: 13 March 1998 (with Workshop on Dictionary Publishing and introductions by Coordinators of 2 other TNP Sub-Projects)

3rd SC meeting at Århus: 30 May 1998 (with presentations by members of 2 other TNP Sub-Projects)

*Year 3:*

1st SC meeting at Lisbon: 27 September 1998

2nd SC meeting at Exeter: 16 & 17 January 1999 (with Workshop on Dictionary Use and the Teaching of Reference Skills)