

**MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND SPECIAL EDUCATION OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN  
SAMARKAND STATE INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

# **Course Work**

**Theme: Lexicography as a science of dictionary-  
making**

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## INTRODUCTION

Teaching foreign languages in Uzbekistan has become very important since the first days of the Independence of our country which pays much attention to the rising of education level of people, their intellectual growth.

As our President I. A. Karimov said: “Today it’s difficult to revalue the importance of knowing foreign languages for our country as our people see their great prosperous future in the cooperation with foreign partners ”[1,8].

It’s well known that we can’t imagine studying any language in the world without such an important thing as a dictionary. It’s obvious that it plays the most leading role in studying a language. But there’s such a problem as what kind of a dictionary we must choose to improve our speech skills day by day.

General lexicography focuses on the design, compilation, use and evaluation of general dictionaries, i.e. dictionaries that provide a description of the language in general use. Such a dictionary is usually called a general dictionary or LGP dictionary. Specialized lexicography focuses on the design, compilation, use and evaluation of specialized dictionaries, i.e. dictionaries that are devoted to a (relatively restricted) set of linguistic and factual elements of one or more specialist subject fields, e.g. legal lexicography. Such a dictionary is usually called a specialized dictionary or LSP dictionary.

There is some disagreement on the definition of lexicology, as distinct from lexicography. Some use "lexicology" as a synonym for theoretical lexicography; others use it to mean a branch of linguistics pertaining to the inventory of words in a particular language. It is now widely accepted that lexicography is a scholarly discipline in its own right and not a sub-branch of linguistics.

This research is devoted to the lexicography as a science of dictionary-making. A person devoted to lexicography is called a lexicographer, famously defined in Samuel Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language (1755) as "A writer of dictionaries; a harmless drudge that busies himself in tracing the original, and detailing the signification of words".

*The actuality* of the qualification paper is closely connected with studying or teaching a language constantly needs a good dictionary which can always help at any time.

*The object* of the investigation is lexicography as a science.

*The subject* of investigation is dictionary-making itself.

*The practical* significance of the work is the art or craft of compiling, writing and editing dictionaries.

*The theoretical* significance of the work is the scholarly discipline of analyzing and describing the semantic relationships within the lexicon (vocabulary) of a language and developing theories of dictionary components and structures linking the data in dictionaries. This is sometimes referred to as met lexicography.

*The aims* of the investigation: to show the importance of dictionary-making in modern linguistics, to study the history of lexicography and its modern development, to make out the dictionary its notion, functions, classification and components, to characterize the types of a dictionaries.

*The structure* of the work consists of 25 pages, introduction, three chapters, conclusion and list of used literature.

## MAIN PART

### 1. Lexicography as a science

The theory and practice of compiling dictionaries is called lexicography.

In other words it is the art and craft of writing dictionaries. The *Era*, from the early 3rd century BC, was the first Chinese language dictionary. The book organized Chinese characters by semantic groups. The intention of this dictionary was to explain the true meaning and interpretation of words in the context of older ancient texts.

One of the earliest dictionaries known, and which is still extant today in an abridged form, was written in Latin during the reign of the emperor Augustus. It is known by the title *De Significatu Verborum* ("On the meaning of words") and was originally compiled by Verrius Flaccus. It was twice abridged in succeeding centuries, first by Sextus Pompeius Festus, and then by Paul the Deacon. Verrius Flaccus' dictionary was an abridged list of difficult or antiquated words, whose usage was illustrated by quotations from early Roman authors.

The word "dictionary" comes from neoclassical Latin, *diction*, meaning simply "word".

The history of compiling dictionaries for English comes as far back as The Old English period, where we can find glosses of religious books. Regular bilingual dictionaries began to appear in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. These dictionaries were Anglo-Latin, Anglo-German, Anglo-French.

The first true English dictionary was Robert Cawdrey's *Table Alphabetical* of 1604, although it only included 3,000 words and the definitions it contained were little more than synonyms.

The first one to be at all comprehensive was Thomas Blount's dictionary *Glossographia* of 1656.

In 1721 an English scientist and writer Nathaniel Bailey published the 1<sup>st</sup> etymological dictionary which explained the origin of English words. It was called *Universal Etymological English Dictionary*. Bailey's entries are fuller, compared with the glosses in the hard-word books, and there're more of them (as many as 60,000 in the 1736 edition), but his definitions lack illustrative support, and he gives little guidance about usage.

The history of lexicography is dominated by the names of 3 figures: Samuel Johnson, Noah Webster and James A. H. Murray. The role played by the first two in the Early Modern English period of the language was very significant. Their influence continues today – directly, in the case of Webster, through the series of dictionaries which bear his name; and indirectly, in the case of Johnson, through the tradition which led the Philological Society to sponsor a «new» English dictionary.

In 1755 an English scientist Samuel Johnson compiled a famous explanatory dictionary which was called *A Dictionary of the English Language*. Over a seven-year period, Johnson wrote the definitions of 40,000 words, illustrating their use from the best authors since the time of the Elizabethans. Although Johnson was fewer entries than Bailey, his selection is more wide-ranging, and his lexicological treatment is far more discriminating and sophisticated.

The book, according to his biographer Boswell, «conferred stability» on the language – and at least with respect to spelling (where most of Johnson's choices are found in modern practice). The alphabetical section of Johnson's *Dictionary* is preceded by a famous Preface in which he outlines his aims and procedures:

When I took the 1<sup>st</sup> survey of my undertaking, I found our speech copious without order, and energetic without rules: wherever I turned my view, there was perplexity to be disentangled, and confusion to be regulated...

Having therefore no assistance but from general grammar, I applied myself to the perusal of our writers; and noting whatever might be of use to ascertain or illustrate any word or phrase, accumulated in time the materials of a dictionary, which, by degrees, I reduced to method...

The preliminaries also include a short history of the language, with long extracts from earlier authors, and a grammar, much influenced by the work of John Wallis, with sections on orthography and prosody. But it is in the Preface, often anthologized as an independent text, that we find an unprecedented statement of the theoretical basis of a dictionary project. The statement is notable for its awareness of the realities of the lexicographer's task, and also for its descriptive intention – an interesting change of opinion from the prescriptive attitudes Johnson expressed in his 1747 Dictionary plan. There he had written: «The chief intent is to preserve the purity and ascertain the meaning of our English idiom». The Preface, by contrast, stresses that his aim is «not form, but register the language»; and it is this principle which introduces a new era in Lexicography.

#### The Johnsonian Method.

This page illustrates several features of the approach Johnson outlines in his Preface:

1. Most of the definitions are appropriate and consistent between entries;
2. He plays special attention to the different senses of a word – five, in the case of eternal;
3. There's a copious use of quotations to support a definition – 116,000 in all;
4. He routinely identifies parts of speech;
5. He shows the most strongly stressed syllable in a headword by an accent;
6. There's an openness of approach;
7. He includes topical explanations of some words;
8. A wide range of ordinary words are included alongside technical terms;

9. It includes, in the «hard-words» tradition, many cumbersome Latinate forms, such as *cubicula*, *estuation*, whose status within English was doubtful;

10. His creations are highly selective, chosen more for their literary or moral value than for their linguistic clarity;

11. Several of his definitions use difficult words, such as *reciprocates in estuary*;

12. Several of his definitions have become famous for their subjectivity.

Some Johnsonian Definitions.

There're not many truly idiosyncratic definitions in the Dictionary, but some have become famous.

**LEXICOGRAPHER** – a writer of dictionary, a harmless drudge, that busies himself in tracing the original, and detailing the signification of words.

**EXCISE** – a hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid.

**OATS** – a grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people.

**PATRON** – one, who countenances, supports or protects.

**PENSION** – an allowance made to anyone without an equivalent. In England it's generally understood to mean pay given to a state hireling for treason to his country.

His definitions sometimes got him into trouble. He was threatened with libel over excise, and much lampooned over pension.

So Johnson's Dictionary was the first attempt at a truly principled lexicography. It portrayed the complexity of the lexicon and of English usage more accurately than ever before; and his quotations initiated a practice which has informed English dictionaries ever since. The dictionary influenced normalization of the English vocabulary but at the same time it helped to preserve the English spelling in its conservative form.

In 1857 the Philological Society of Great Britain, noting the inadequacies of the English dictionaries then available, adopted the decision to compile a dictionary including all the words existing in the language from Anglo-Saxon times.

Twenty six years later in 1884 the first volume was published; it contained words beginning with A and B. The editor of this dictionary was James A. H. Murray. The aim was to produce a 4-volume work in a period of 10 years; but after 5 years, Murray and his colleagues had managed to complete only the section A-ANT; it was 352 pages, and sold for 62 S p in modern money. It was evident that the dictionary was a much greater work than had been envisaged. Additional editors were appointed and the last volume was published in 1928, the dictionary was called NED (New English Dictionary). It contained 12 volumes, comprising 15,487 pages and covering 414,825 lexical items.

In 1933 the dictionary was republished under the title «The Oxford English Dictionary» because the work on this dictionary was conducted at Oxford. The dictionary contained 13 volumes. Work on the dictionary recommenced in 1957, with the appointment of R.W. Burchfield to edit a new supplement.

This appeared in 4 volumes between 1972 and 1986, and included the content of the 1933 work: it added 5,732 pages to the dictionary, and nearly 70,000 further lexical items.

As it was large and very expensive scientists continued their work and made shorter editions of the dictionary. The shorter Oxford dictionary contained the same number of entries but far less examples from literature. They also compiled a Concise Oxford Dictionary. It contained only one volume and no examples at all.

American lexicography began to develop much later at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The most famous American dictionary was compiled by Noah Webster. In 1828 he published a two volume dictionary (70,000 words), which was called American Dictionary of the English language. He tried to simplify English spelling and transcription. The work greatly improved the coverage of scientific and

technical terms, as well as terms to do with American culture and institutions and added a great deal of encyclopedic information. A new feature was the introduction of Webster's own etymologies – though the speculative nature of many of these was an early source of unwelcome criticism. The spellings were somewhat more conservative than those used in the 1806 book. Its pronunciations were generally provincial in character – those of Webster's own New England. The label «American» in the title is more a reflection of the works of American authors referred to than of its uniquely American lexicon. Indeed, at one point Webster observed that «there were not 50 words in all which were used in America and not in England». On the other hand, nearly half of the words he did include are not to be found in Johnson's Dictionary, which added considerable force to his claim that he was giving lexicography a fresh direction.

Despite its weaknesses and its critics, the American Dictionary made Webster a household name in the USA. It was fiercely attacked in Britain for its Americanism especially in matters of spelling and usage; but the work was crucial in giving to US English an identity and status comparable to that given to the British English lexicon by Dr Johnson.

Indeed, it's difficult to appreciate today the impact which Webster's Dictionary made at the time, and just how authoritative the book was perceived to be. After Webster's death (1843), the rights were purchased by George and Charles Merriam, and later editions have appeared under the name of Merriam-Webster. A revision in 1847 was edited by Webster's son-in-law, Chauncey A. Goodrich. Several dictionaries within this tradition appeared in the following decades, via the Webster's International Dictionary of 1890 to the Webster's New International Dictionary of 1909, with a second edition in 1934. The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition appeared in 1961, edited by Philip B. Gove, based on a collection of over 6 million citations of usage, and dealing with over 450,000 words. This edition prepared over a 10-year period, took up 757 editor-years, and proved to be highly controversial. Three supplements later appeared – of 6,000 words (1976), 89,000 words (1983), and

12,000 words (1986), and a CD is also available. Outside of this tradition, many other publishers have come to use the «Webster» name for their dictionaries and word-books.

The largest dictionary in the world is "het Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal (WNT)" (the Dictionary of the Dutch language). It took 134 years to create the dictionary (1864 - 1998). It consists of approximately 400,000 words on 45805 pages in 92000 columns.

### A Brief History of English Lexicography

(1) Latin and French Glossaries			
Year	Author /Editor	Dictionary	Size /Type
1440	Parvulorum	Storehouse [of words] for children or clerics	English-Latin
1476	Caxton	Printing in England	English-Latin
1480	Caxton	French-English Glossary	French-English
1499	Caxton	Promptorium	"hard words"
1500	HortusVocabularum	Garden of Words	Latin-English
1533	John Withals	A Short Dictionary for Yong Beginners	English-Latin
1538	Sir Thomas Elyot	Dictionary (Bibliotheca Eliotae)	Latin-English
1565	Thomas Cooper	Thesaurus of the Roman Tongue and the British	French-English
(2) Early English Dictionaries: The Seventeenth Century			
Year	Author /Editor	Dictionary	Size /Type
1552	Richard Huloet	Abecedarium Anglo-Latinum	English-Latin-(Fr.)
1582	Richard Mulcaster	Elementary	8,000 words
1588	Thomas Thomas	Dictionarium Linguae Latinae et Anglicanae	Latin-English
1598	John Florio	A World of Words	Italian-English
1604	Robert Cawdrey	A Table Alphabetical	2,500 words
1616	John Bullokar	An English Expositor	5,000 words
1623	Henry Cockeram	The English Dictionary	3 parts
1656	Thomas Blount	Glossographia	
1658	Edward Phillips	The New World of English Words	
1673	Thomas Blount	A World of Errors Discovered in the New World of Words	
1676	Elisha Coles	An English Dictionary	25,000 words
(3) The Beginning of Modern Dictionary Practice: The Eighteenth Century			

Year	Author /Editor	Dictionary	Size /Type
1702	John Kersey	A New English Dictionary	28,000 words
1704	John Harris	An Universal English Dictionary of Arts and Sciences	
1706	John Kersey	Philips's New World of English Words	38,000 words
1721	Nathan Bailey	An Universal Etymological English Dictionary	40,000 words
1727	Nathan Bailey	An Universal Etymological English Dictionary Volume II	2 parts
1728	Ephraim Chambers	An Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences	
1730	Nathan Bailey	Dictionarium Britannicum	48,000 words
1747	Samuel Johnson	Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language	
1749	Benjamin Martin	Lingua Britannica Reformata	
1755	Samuel Johnson	A New Universal English Dictionary	40,000 words
(4) Dictionaries of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries			
Year	Author /Editor	Dictionary	
1757	James Buchanan	Linguae Britannicae	
1764	William Johnstun	Pronouncing and Spelling Dictionary	
1764	John Entick	Spelling Dictionary	
1773	William Kenrick	A New Dictionary of the English Language	
1780	Thomas Sheridan	A General Dictionary of the English Language	
1783	Noah Webster	The American Spelling Book	
1791	John Walker	Critical Pronouncing Dictionary and Expositor of the English Language	
1818	Henry Todd	Johnson's Dictionary	
1820	Albert Chalmers	Todd-Johnson with Walker's Pronunciations	
1828	Joseph E. Worcester	Chalmers's Dictionary	
1828	Noah Webster	An American Dictionary of the English Language	
1830	Joseph Worcester	Comprehensive Pronouncing and Explanatory Dictionary of the English Language	
1837	Charles Richardson	A New Dictionary of the English Language (cf. OED)	
1841	Noah Webster	An American Dictionary of the English Language new edition	
1846	Joseph Worcester	Universal and Critical Dictionary of the English Language	
1857	Richard Chenevix Trench	Some Deficiencies in Our English Dictionaries (cf. OED)	
1860	Joseph Worcester	A Dictionary of the English Language	
1864	Noah Porter	A Dictionary of the English Language	
1882	Charles Annandale	The Century Dictionary	

1890	George and Charles Merriam	International Dictionary
1893	Funk & Wagnalls	Standard Dictionary of the English Language
(5) Dictionaries of the 20th Century		
Year	Author /Editor	Dictionary
1909	George and Charles Merriam	International Dictionary
1913	Funk & Wagnalls	New Standard Dictionary of the English Language
1927		The New Century Dictionary
1928		Oxford English Dictionary
1934		Webster's New International Dictionary
1938	Irving Lorge & Edward Thorndike	A Semantic Count of English Words
1947		American College Dictionary
1947	Funk & Wagnalls	New College Standard
1953	David Guralnik & Joseph Friend	Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language
1961	Philip Babcock Gove	Webster's Third New International Dictionary
1963	Philip Babcock Gove	Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary
1966	Random House	The Random House Dictionary of the English Language
1968	Random House	Random House Dictionary, College Edition (Random House College Dictionary)
1969		American Heritage Dictionary
1973		Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary
1983		Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary

## 2. The Beginning of Dictionary Making in Britain

The historical roots of British lexicography go back to 7th-8th centuries when Latin was a means of international communication in Europe and the most important texts, first and foremost biblical ones, were written in this language. To facilitate their reading and translation English monks produced glosses based on interlinear translations from Latin. All religious texts were supplemented with such lists of Latin-English equivalents — glossaries. One of the first glossaries is the "Leiden Glossary" in which the pairs of equivalents are arranged in the order of

their occurrence in the text. It took seven centuries to achieve fully alphabetical order in glossaries. By that time (14th c.) it became clear that glossaries could not satisfy the growing reference needs of their users. It was necessary to make regular Latin-English dictionaries which would not be confined to 'hard' Latin words in a particular text but include as many Latin-English equivalents as possible. Such an attempt was made by compilers of "Medulla Gramaticæ" — the first Latin-English dictionary which appeared in the 15th century. Later on "Medulla Gramaticæ" served the basis for the first printed bilingual dictionary "Ortus (Hortus) Vocabulorum".

Latin-English and English-Latin dictionaries were very popular down to the end of the 16th century but already by the middle of the century Latin began to lose its status of an international language and English lexicographers turned to new West-European languages. Among the most well-known bilingual and polylingual dictionaries of this period are "A World of Words, or Most copious, and exact Dictionarie in Italian and English" by John Florio (1598), "A Dictionarie French and English" by Claudius Hollyband (1593), "Alvearic or Tripple Dictionarie, English, Latin, French" by J. Baret (1573).

It should be mentioned in this connection that dictionary-making methodology was gradually evolving over the period of nine centuries, and various lexicographic conventions were adopted. The structure of the entry became fairly complex and the reader could extract more and more information about the lexis of the target language. Lexicographers commented on the morphological structure of the word (derivational affixes were singled out in 1538), its origin and field of usage, took into account synonymy and dialectal differences, used different modes of definition, examples, usage notes and even illustrations to make their dictionaries user-friendly.

One of the aims of scholarly works and also smaller didactic volumes was to help their readers to master West-European languages. It follows that bilingual lexicography has always been pedagogically orientated and the use of the general

bilingual dictionary seems to stay as long as translation plays a dominant role in foreign language education.

### **3. Monolingual Lexicography**

The first monolingual dictionary of English "A Table Alphabetical, containing and teaching the true writing, and understanding of hard English words, borrowed from Hebrew, Greek, Latin or French, etc." by Robert Cawdrey was published in 1604. As can be seen from its title the dictionary concentrated on those words which could cause problems for native speakers of English. Robert Cawdrey who was a schoolmaster aimed at extending the vocabulary of those who spoke only English and did not know foreign languages.

Dictionaries of hard words dominated in the 17th century and gradually they became fairly sophisticated reference book which could be written only by professionals. Thus, for example, "Glossographia: or a Dictionary, Interpreting all such Hard Words whether Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, French, Teutonic, Belgic, British or Saxon; as are now used in our refined English Tongue. Also the Terms of Divinity, Law, Physics, Mathematics... with Etymologies, Definitions, and Historical Observations on the same" by Thomas Blount (1656) comprised not only borrowings but also many terms of different branches of science. Thomas Blount devised very short and precise definitions, he indicated the origin of the word and its field of usage, and sometimes he mentioned the name of the author, who had used the word in question. The first attempt at a dictionary whose word-list comprised words of different degrees of complexity, both native and non-native was made by Nathaniel Bailey who in 1721 published "An Universal Etymological English Dictionary". Two editions of this dictionary (1721 and 1727) served the basis for his famous "Dictionarium Britannicum" (London, 1730) which had 48,000 entries. Nathaniel Bailey made a few lexicographic innovations: he was the first to indicate the stressed syllable in head-

words and to use sayings and proverbs in order to make the senses more explicit. In the dictionary there are over 500 pictures illustrating many technical terms.

Nathaniel Bailey's dictionary is the most important achievement of English monolingual lexicography before Samuel Johnson's Dictionary which produced an enormous impact on British and American lexicography of the eighteen-nineteenth centuries. It will not be an exaggeration to say that Samuel Johnson's Dictionary was revolutionary in many respects.

Samuel Johnson worked on the dictionary for nine years. The dictionary was a fantastic achievement of English lexicography. Similar normative-defining dictionaries had already been compiled for French and Italian. Johnson confessed that these dictionaries had set an example for him. But he was aware of both their merits and faults, and critically approached the underlying lexicographic principles.

"A Dictionary of the English Language in Which the Words are Deduced from Their Originals and Illustrated in Their General Significations by Examples from the Best Writers" (London, 1775) had two parts. The first part consisted of "Preface", "The history of the English language» and «The grammar of the English language", the second part was the dictionary corpus, comprising 40,000 entries. A central concern of S.Johnson's research of the lexicon was the study of current English and selection of those words which could be considered to be the norm. Otherwise stated, S.Johnson's Dictionary was a prescriptive one.

The most important innovations of the Dictionary were a) clear differentiation of senses (separate meanings were neatly arranged and enumerated); b) each meaning was illustrated by quotations from "the best writers".

About 114,000 examples used in the Dictionary perform the following important functions: a) they prove that the word is not a fiction of the lexicographer's brain but a fact of language; b) they reinforce sense distinctions; c) they help the user to gain a deeper insight into the collocational, colligational and

stylistic peculiarities of the headword; d) they point to the chronological limits of the language period under discussion.

S. Johnson planned to use quotations in chronological order to show how the semantic structure of the word was changing over a certain period of time. But this idea could be implemented into practice only in the "Oxford English Dictionary", originally called the "New English Dictionary" (1888-1928).

The OED is the most comprehensive and authoritative dictionary of the English language. It was compiled by the English Philological Society. The work began in 1857. the first volume was published in 1888, the last one — in 1928, and a Supplement — in 1933. The second edition of the OED which recorded the language of the 20th century was published in 1989. Now the OED consists of twenty volumes and the number of entries amounts to more than 325,000.

The purpose of the dictionary was to record the history of all the English words since 1150. The dictionary registers different spellings of the word, its etymology, modern pronunciation, grammatical information and the account of usage over the period of the word existence. Each use is illustrated by a selection of quotations which give the user an idea of the chronological sequence of development of the word semantics. The dictionary indicates the subject field for which this or that use is characteristic and provides senses with stylistic labels. The OED comprises not only literary English words but also scientific and technical words, neologisms and a great number of obsolete, archaic, and dialectal uses.

The Oxford University Press published different abridged versions of the OED "for those who were interested in the history of the English language from the days of King Alfred". They are based on the same principles as the OED : the historical record of the English lexicon and the use of key quotations. "The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary" is the best known one. The number of dictionaries of English published in Great Britain in the 20th century is so great that it is impossible even to mention all the titles to say nothing of describing dictionaries in detail. The most popular one-volume general-purpose dictionaries are "The

Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English", the "Collins Concise Dictionary", Chambers English Dictionary, the "Longman Dictionary of the English Language" etc. All of them contain detailed guidance on the understanding and the general use of current idiomatic English.

General-purpose dictionaries cannot satisfy those who are in need of expert guidance on some specific aspects of English. They can consult numerous dictionaries which provide the user with special information of various kinds. Special philological dictionaries are legion: pronunciation, etymology, usage, synonymy, idioms, slang, and many other linguistic phenomena are treated in dictionaries of this kind.

#### **4. American Lexicography**

American lexicography began to develop much later at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The most famous American dictionary was compiled by Noah Webster. In 1828 he published a two volume dictionary (70,000 words), which was called American Dictionary of the English language. He tried to simplify English spelling and transcription. The work greatly improved the coverage of scientific and technical terms, as well as terms to do with American culture and institutions and added a great deal of encyclopedic information. A new feature was the introduction of Webster's own etymologies – though the speculative nature of many of these was an early source of unwelcome criticism.

The spellings were somewhat more conservative than those used in the 1806 book. Its pronunciations were generally provincial in character – those of Webster's own New England. The label «American» in the title is more a reflection of the works of American authors referred to than of its uniquely American lexicon. Indeed, at one point Webster observed that «there were not 50 words in all which were used in America and not in England». On the other hand, nearly half of the words he did include are not to be found in Johnson's Dictionary,

which added considerable force to his claim that he was giving lexicography a fresh direction.

Despite its weaknesses and its critics, the American Dictionary made Webster a household name in the USA. It was fiercely attacked in Britain for its Americanism especially in matters of spelling and usage; but the work was crucial in giving to US English an identity and status comparable to that given to the British English lexicon by Dr Johnson.

The first American dictionaries of English were based on British dictionaries of the 18th century. Curiously enough, the first American dictionary was made by a Connecticut schoolmaster whose name was Samuel Johnson in 1798. "A School Dictionary" by S.Johnson had only 4,150 entries and did not differ from British dictionaries. In 1800 S.Johnson together with John Elliot published a new dictionary "A selected, pronouncing accented dictionary" which was also a learner's dictionary. It has a reference section containing some information on grammar, etymology and derivation. The word-list comprised not only native English words but also a few borrowings from Indian languages.

A truly American dictionary was compiled by Noah Webster. His two volume "American Dictionary of the English Language" was published in 1828 and had 70,000 entries. Noah Webster's dictionary contained many Americanisms, that is words borrowed from Indian languages and Spanish which became part and parcel of the American variant of English in the 19th century. Webster's definitions were more precise and scientific than those in S.Johnson's Dictionary oriented at the language of the best British writers. Webster also tried to simplify the spelling and pronunciation that were current in American English of the period.

A very important feature of this dictionary is a number of Supplements providing the user with a wealth of various encyclopaedic information.

After Webster's death in 1843 George and Charles Merriam, publishers from the state of Massachusetts, bought the copyright for his famous dictionary, and now its shorter versions are published under the name of *Merriam-Webster*. The

latest revised edition "Webster's Third New International Dictionary" has 460,000 entries, and lays special emphasis on present-day English. It has more quotations but less encyclopaedic information than the previous edition.

## CONCLUSION

In this work we succeeded in achievement of all the aims that we had had at the beginning of our investigation: to study the history of lexicography and its modern development, to make out the dictionary its notion, functions, classification and components, to characterize the Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners as an example of a dictionary of good quality. So we proved the importance of dictionary-making in modern linguistics.

So General lexicography focuses on the design, compilation, use and evaluation of general dictionaries, i.e. dictionaries that provide a description of the language in general use. In other words it is the art and craft of writing dictionaries.

So we can't imagine our studying or work without lexicography because any pupil, student and even experienced teacher whose activity is closely connected with studying or teaching a language constantly needs a good dictionary which can always help at any time.

The material of this report can be used by anybody who is interested in lexicography as a science and wants to know more about dictionary-making itself.

## THE LIST OF USED LITERATURE

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