

SOME PECULIARITIES OF LEXICOGRAPHICAL SOURCE ENTRIES

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In most dictionaries and manuals lexicography is defined as "the writing and making of dictionaries". This definition implies that lexicography is concerned mainly with the principles underlying the making of dictionaries. This is quite true; lexicography does consider the problems and principles a lexicographer is faced with when he sits down to make a new dictionary. This huge product of lexicographic activity has become an object of consideration too, and it also falls within the scope of lexicography. To develop a full awareness of the problems in lexicography and the ways to their solution, a scholar is advised to get acquainted first with the lexicographic legacy he has come into and secondly, that it presents a clear-cut field of human interest.

Keywords: *language, system, lexicographical unit, etymology, denotation, connotation.*

REFERITOR LA UNELE PARTICULARITĂȚI ALE ARTICOLULUI DIN SURSELE LEXICOGRAFICE

Elaborate cu scopul de a explica numai cuvintele necunoscute, dar cuprinzând și interpretând în realitate toate cuvintele unei limbi, dicționarele au căpătat cu timpul valoare științifică, strict lingvistică, deoarece, înregistrând (aproape în întregime) vocabularul unei limbi, ele oferă un material extrem de prețios pentru a defini bogăția, varietatea și, în ultimă analiză, specificul acestuia. În funcție de compartimentele lexicului ce urmează a fi cuprinse de dicționare, acestea se divid în lingvistice și enciclopedice care nu fixează cuvintele, ci noțiunile cu care operează diverse domenii de cunoaștere. Din cele prezentate se desprinde ideea importanței pe care o are factorul uman în studierea creării dicționarelor, discuțiile rămânând însă deschise.

Cuvinte-cheie: *limbaj, sistem, unitate lexicografică, etimologie, denotație, conotație.*

Ladislav Zgusta states that *proper names* are regarded by lexicographers as those words (lexical units) which are customarily or at least habitually used in reference to single individual entities in order to distinguish them from other members of their own class of entities [7, p.117]. Considered from this point of view, it is quite logical that the unique objects of reference of these words are so preponderant that if the lexicographer indicates proper names in his dictionary at all, they usually bring a strong encyclopedic element with them. If the lexicographer decides to avoid any encyclopedic elements, it is possible to treat proper names in a more general way: in that case it suffices to indicate only their function (ed. Men's' given name; family name, place name etc.). But short explanatory (encyclopedic) glosses are usually expected by the user of the dictionary (such as the situation of a place etc.).

Few personal names show a variation: but there are exceptions, as, for example, Eng. *Charlemagne Ger. Karl der Grobe*. But not a small number of the traditional Christian names belong here: for instance, Eng: *Charles*, German *Carl*, Italian *Carlo*. Most important are place names which belong here (for example French *Paris*, Italian *Parigi*).

Laurence Urdang in the article "The Uncommon Use of Proper Names" states that: "I concern myself with the basic question of whether Proper Names are ... words that are properly entries in a dictionary" [6, p.30]. In coming to consider monolingual English dictionaries, not all dictionaries include proper names in their main word list, the most notable being Merriam Webster series in which, typically the main A-Z section omits main entries for real people and places except in certain circumstances.

Also here Laurence Urdang raises the question of what criteria characterize a dictionary entry. Linguists are not entirely sure: some of them refer scornfully to proper names entries as "encyclopedic". Many believe that it is not the function of a dictionary to provide cultural information, but that is often unavoidable if one is to convey the sense of a word to a dictionary user. The proper adjective Shakespearian, aside from its denotative association which one considered to be one of the greatest writers in any language, carries with it no special connotative overtones; Miltonic, on the other hand in addition to its denotative association with John Milton conjures up the connotative associations of "majesty" and "Classical reference" [6, p.31].

If dictionary entries are to be selected on the basis of frequency, then a strong case should be made for the inclusion of, say, *Washington, London, Frankfurt*, and thousands of other names that appear frequently in all forms of writing and speech. We come to the conclusion that frequency is not a prime factor; though it undoubtedly plays an important role in selecting which improper nouns are to be listed.

Linguists have long and consistently maintained that language is essentially a spoken means of communication; on that ground one cannot support the notion that only words that are not capitalized may be listed for even the most adroit phonetician cannot identify an initial capital letter, and the spelt form of a word cannot therefore be said to be relevant to its selection as a dictionary entry.

In any event, proper adjectives and adverbs are usually spelt with initial capitals in the real world. If the editors at Merriam~Webster struggled with this problem, the result of their labours reflected in the *Third International*, demonstrates that they arrived at the wrong conclusion: every word is entered in small letters, with "usu cap" or "cap" added. The one exception was *God*, presumably in the fear of divine retribution. It would be difficult to justify sufficient frequency for "*Washington*" unless it appeared in a letterhead employing modern design. More often, one is tempted to venture, it is spelt with capitals throughout, as "WASHINGTON", which is likely to appear in timetables, road signs etc. [3, p.61].

It is possibly correct to say that, in some contexts, *syntax* can be used to distinguish a proper from an improper noun. But grammar is ancillary to the lexicographer's task, and the parts of speech given in dictionaries are a mere convenience in organizing and phrasing the definitions: they serve no specific function that can be characterised as "lexical". Consequently, one would be sore put to justify the exclusion of proper names solely on grammatical grounds.

Having examined frequency, form and function it would seem that the only remaining character is *meaning*. That would prove a very tenuous argument indeed, for most of the dictionaries under consideration contain etymologies, and, if the etymology of a proper adjective and adverb must indicate its referent, then some form of definition of the proper noun must appear in the etymology. As that is usually the case, one should accuse lexicographers of being ashamed of the information they are offering: if not, why relegate it to etymology. As that is usually the case, one could accuse lexicographers of being ashamed of the information they are offering: if not, why relegate it to the etymology, as if trying to hide it? The OED incorporates information about Freud in its entry *Freudian*, and has *Freudian slip* as a subentry; *Webster's Third International* enters *freudian*, gives information about Freud in its etymology, and relegates *freudian slip* to a citation:

Freudian.... *adj.* *Often cap* [Sigmund Freud 1939 Australian neurologist, founder of psychoanalysis + E *-ian*]

1: of, relating to, or according with the theories or practices of Sigmund Freud and his system of psychoanalysis ...

2a: in psychoanalytical readily interpretable terms...

2b: SEXY, SMUTTY...-**freudianism**...*n* -*s* *usu cap*

This is of no help whatsoever, for it fails to define *Freudian slip* [3, p.70].

Although *Webster's Third* might be justifiably criticized for failing to provide any definition for the common phrase, *Freudian Slip*, that is not the issue here. More to the point is the absence of *Jesus*, *Jesus Christ*, or *Christ* as an expletive, and the total absence of anything but a passing specific reference (in the etymology) to Jesus Christ.

Perhaps as an adjunct to meaning one must consider metaphor. On this point, dictionaries differ. Those that allow proper names as main entries tend to define them with their characteristics so that users who encounter a metaphorical reference to someone as "an Einstein" are able to define what that means; those that deny proper names as headwords define a selection of metaphorical references to real or fictional people somewhat indifferently. Thus, the *Third International* has entries for *einstein* ("genius"), and *crusoe* ("solitary castaway"), with their origins in the etymologies; but common metaphors like *Lady Macbeth*, *Hitler*, and *Caruso* are totally absent. If the policy is to omit proper names, one might expect more felicitous treatment of metaphor; those dictionaries that include proper names need neither bludgeon users with obvious information about the characteristics of their subjects nor be concerned about a sudden increase in the popularity of the metaphorical use of a name, provided that the definitions are adequate to the purpose [3, p.73].

In conclusion we may say that proper names – however selective their coverage might be – should be considered as much a part of the language as improper names and other words spelt with a small initial.

Stevens P.D. in his article on "British and American English" states that "Proper Names of foreign origin are usually anglicized in America but not in Britain" [5, p.245]. One characteristic that contrasts with British speech is the frequency of "spelling pronunciations" in both place-names and proper names and the lack of stress-reductions in such words. The British speaker hears the American say *Edimburgh* with four syllables (,ed-in-b[^]-row) where he uses three (,ed-n-brə); he hears words ending in *-ham* (for example, *Buckingham*) pronounced in American English with a final syllable like the meat (-ham) when he expects a weak final syllable (-ə̃m). It is not true, however, as many believe, that the shortening of place names is the prerogative

of the British speaker. An American does the same when he pronounces *Connecticut* or *Arkansas*. Thus the eminent American linguist Bernard Bloch was surprised to be addressed with a German pronunciation of his last name when visiting Britain; he was accustomed to its being pronounced identically with *block*.

Another example is that family names like *Sanchez*, *Papadopoulos*, and *Pavarotti* have an entry in an English Lexicon. Native speakers of English readily recognize some names as Scottish, Welsh, or Cornish, or Jewish.

Immigrants to England sometimes anglicize their names: eg. *Piekarsky* becomes *Parkes*, *Klein* becomes *Clyne* (Keith Allan).

After making the analysis of the proper names we come to the conclusion that every proper name was introduced in the entry word in its English variant but still the majority give, the *foreign variant* ex.: *Switzerland*: French. *Suisse*, German: *Schweiz*, Italian: *Svizzera*.

At the same time Place Names from Romanian Dictionaries are usually given in their transcribed form and the countries whose pronunciation coincides with the Romanian one are given in their original form e.g.: *Amsterdam*, *Viena*. One of the few examples is that of **LONDON** which in the "*Dictionar Enciclopedic Ilustrat Junior, Nume Proprii*" [2] gives the English variant in the entry word and the same word is explained in parenthesis showing its English provenience: **LONDON (engl. LONDON)**, while in the other two dictionaries we have only the Romanian variant e.g.: **Landra**: capitala Marii Britanii in „*Mic Dictionar de Nume Proprii Straine*" [4].

Sometimes we can find the original pronunciation in parenthesis ex.: **LISABONA** (*Portuguese, Lisboa*) in the „*Dictionar Enciclopedic Ilustrat de Nume Proprii*" [2] another example also gives its phonetic transcription ex.: **Bruxelles**, [brüsé] (în flamandă Brussel) in „*Dictionar Enciclopedic Român*" [1].

As a conclusion, it might be said that the presence of such information in any kind of dictionary is very important; this is additional information for the general knowledge of the reader and support for a French, Spanish or German language reader.

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