



ISSN (E): 2181-4570

**LINGUISTIC PROBLEMS OF ENGLISH LEXICOGRAPHY****Nigora Maksetova****A second-year masters' degree student at the department of English Linguistics at Karakalpak State University named after Berdakh.****\*Scientific PhD, docent, Zerne Uteshova****The head of the department of English language and literature at KarSU.****Annotation:**

Even though a great number of researches has been carried out on Lexicography for a long time, there is still need for investigating much more on this field. Because English language is constantly developing minute by minute, we need to work with dictionaries. This article is devoted to provide some data about the linguistic issues on English lexicography.

**Key words:** theoretical contribution, mono-lingual lexicography, bilingual lexicography, poly-lingual lexicography, e-dictionary, encyclopedic lexicography, specialized lexicography, thesaurus lexicography.

Lexicography, that is the theory and practice of compiling dictionaries, is an important branch of applied linguistics. The fundamental paper in lexicographic theory was written by Lev Vladimirovich Shcherba as far back as 1940.

A complete bibliography of the subject may be found in Leonid Pavlovich Stupin's works.<sup>1</sup>

The reflections put forward by Franz Josef Hausmann, and the 'active-passive theory' introduced by Franz Josef Hausmann<sup>2</sup>. All of these theoretical contributions have in one way or another referred to users and their needs. This also applies to another 'general theory of lexicography' that was developed by Herbert Ernst Wiegand in a number of articles and books from 1977 and onwards.<sup>3</sup>

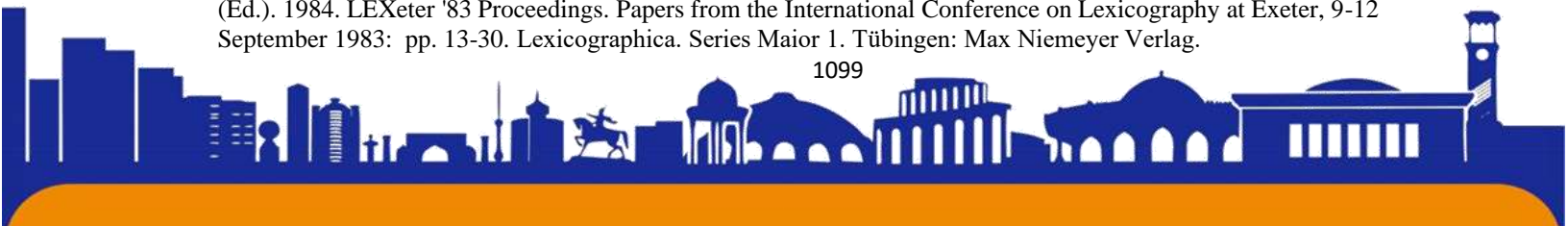
But none of these theories has taken the full consequences of their references to the users and user needs. It was not until the appearance of the 'modern theory of

---

<sup>1</sup> Смирницкий А.И. Лексикология английского языка. М. 2001. сс.180-186.

<sup>2</sup> Hausmann, Franz Josef, Zgusta L., Reichmann O. 1991. An International Encyclopaedia of Lexicography. Walter De Gruyter.

<sup>3</sup> Wiegand, Herbert Ernst 1984. On the Structure and Contents of a General Theory of Lexicography. Hartmann, R.R.K. (Ed.). 1984. LEXeter '83 Proceedings. Papers from the International Conference on Lexicography at Exeter, 9-12 September 1983: pp. 13-30. Lexicographica. Series Maior 1. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.





lexicographic functions' that a theory was developed that takes the users, the user needs and the user situations as the starting point for all lexicographic theory and practice.

The modern theory of lexicographic functions has been developed by researchers from the Center for Lexicography at the Aarhus School of Business since the early 1990s.

The theory is based on two main postulates which it, at least in principle, has in common with Herbert Ernst Wiegand's theory.

- First of all it considers lexicography an independent scientific discipline and not, as in the case of a large number of lexicographers, to be a sub-discipline of linguistics. The subject field of lexicography is dictionaries, a human-made product, whereas the subject field of linguistics is language, i.e. something inherent in human beings.

- Secondly, and in accordance with the former, dictionaries are considered utility products that are made in order to satisfy certain human needs.

Consequently, all theoretical and practical considerations must be based upon a determination of these needs, i.e. what is needed to solve the set of specific problems that pop up for a specific group of users with specific characteristics in specific user situations.

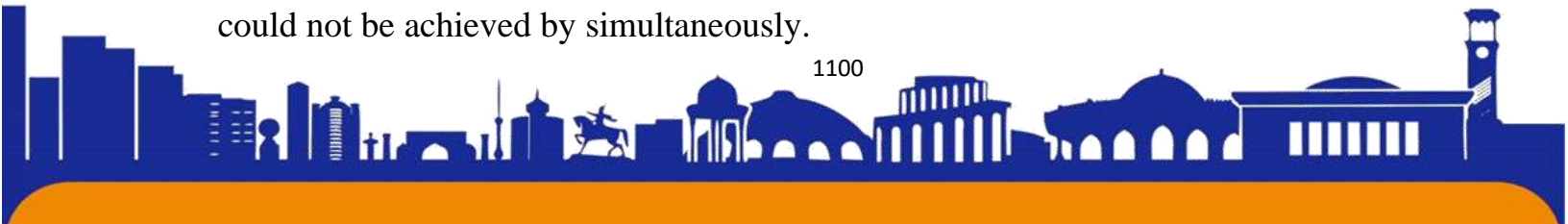
In the history of lexicography, a lot has been said about dictionary users and their needs. Here we shall focus on two theories that both share the postulate that dictionaries are tools made by human beings in order to solve specific problems.

- The first theory is developed by the German scholar H.E. Wiegand and it will be argued that his theory about dictionary use should be considered a linguistic reconstruction of information items in existing dictionaries.

- The other theory is the modern theory of lexicographic functions that takes all the theoretical and practical consequences of the basic postulate that dictionaries are utility products.

Lexicography has a common object of study with dictionary; both describe the vocabulary of a language.

- The essential difference between the two lies in the degrees in the systematization revealing characteristic features of words. It cannot claim any completeness as regards the units being very great, systematization and completeness could not be achieved by simultaneously.





•The province of lexicography, on the other hand, is the semantic, formal, and functional description of all individual words.

Dictionaries aim at a more or less complete description, but in so doing cannot attain systematic treatment, so that every dictionary entry presents, as it were. It goes without saying that neither of these branches of linguistics could develop successfully without the other, their relationship being essentially that of theory and practice dealing with the same objects of reality. The term dictionary is used to denote a book listing words of a language with their meanings and often with data regarding pronunciation, usage or origin.

Lexicography is divided into two related disciplines:

•Practical lexicography is the art or craft of compiling, writing and editing dictionaries.

•Theoretical lexicography is the scholarly discipline of analyzing and describing the semantic, syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships within the lexicon – vocabulary, of a language, developing theories of dictionary component and structures linking the data in dictionaries, the needs for information by users in specific types of situation, and how users may best access the data incorporated in printed and electronic dictionaries. This is sometimes referred to as 'meta-lexicography'<sup>4</sup>.

There also is a series of special types of lexicography, for example, linguistic lexicography, subject field lexicography or corpus lexicography. We don't regard all the prevailing subtypes as necessary or beneficial to lexicography. However, this will not be discussed in detail here. Linguistic lexicography is usually understood as general language lexicography that needs to achieve communicative functions.

Subject field lexicography is typically understood as the monolingual lexicography of different subject fields, where the lexicography needs to achieve a cognitive function. Finally, encyclopedic lexicography is the type of lexicography that includes both linguistic and subject field lexicography<sup>5</sup>.

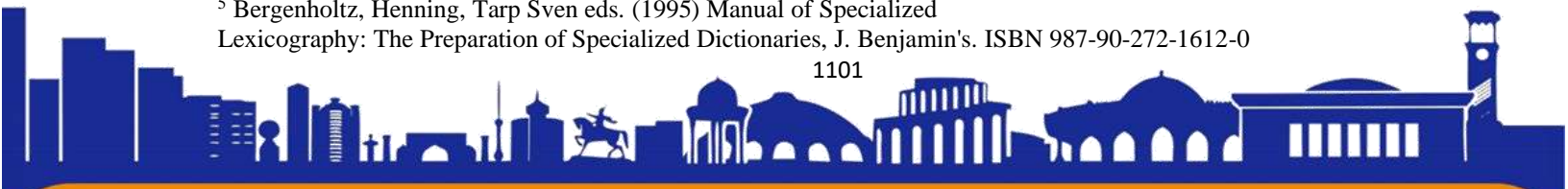
Lexicography is also identified in terms of the number of object languages:

•mono-lingual lexicography,

---

<sup>4</sup> Landau, S.I. 2001. Dictionaries: The Art and Craft of Lexicography. Second Edition. New York/Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Bergenholtz, Henning, Tarp Sven eds. (1995) Manual of Specialized Lexicography: The Preparation of Specialized Dictionaries, J. Benjamin's. ISBN 987-90-272-1612-0





- bilingual lexicography or
- poly-lingual lexicography

In addition lexicography is used as part of a compound term when referring to the source material, for example,

- corpus lexicography

But we have never encountered such terms as informant lexicography or citation lexicography although they could have been constructed accordingly.

When the technical aids are put in the centre one refers to, for example,

- computational lexicography

When focusing on the purpose of the lexicography one talks about, for example,

- learner lexicography or
- translation lexicography

Finally, the aim of lexicography becomes the documentation of a specific part of language use for future generations by having expressions like

- usage lexicography

i.e. the lexicography that accounts for concrete communicative, cognitive interpretative or operational needs, or

- documentation lexicography

that endeavours to solve a national or a general scientific problem.

It continues with a more comprehensive description of both divisions, including a listing of several branches of lexicography, for example,

- author lexicography
- bilingual lexicography
- encyclopedic lexicography
- specialized lexicography
- thesaurus lexicography

The dictionary research is divided into four components, i.e.

- history
- typology
- criticism and
- use

whereas dictionary-making is divided into three components, i.e.

- fieldwork





- description and
- presentation

In Lexicography: A dictionary of basic terminology an extensive treatment of lexicography is found.<sup>6</sup>

The main issues referred to are the 'disciplinary status of lexicography, its correlation with other linguistic and nonlinguistic disciplines, the scope of lexicographic description, methodology of lexicographic investigation, typology of reference works produced within the framework of lexicography, techniques of lexicographic presentation ...'

Different perspectives on the position of lexicography are also given, with an indication of the relevant literature; not repeated here:

'Lexicography is regarded as

- a domain of applied linguistics ...,
- a branch of information science ...,
- a province of philological and historical study ...,

a subject field whose theoretical aspect falls within the realm of theoretical linguistics, whereas its practice pertains to the sphere of applied linguistics ...'

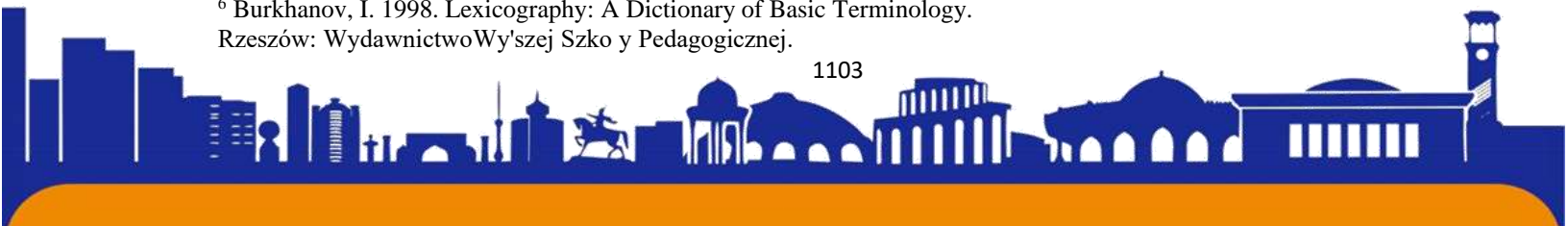
I. Burkhanov also refers to the fact that 'lexicography has been successfully developing its own theory'. He also argues that 'The term 'lexicography' refers to the process, result, and theoretical evaluation, of the making of reference works which represent a wide range of heterogeneous knowledge structures '.

I. Burkhanov's description allows the expert user a comprehensive retrieval of information and gives sample guidance in terms of the extent of information transfer in a dictionary. However, the important role of the user and the really important notion of lexicography as an independent discipline does not come to the fore strongly enough .

It is important to note that the supporters of a lexicographic theory do not all adhere to the same theory: there are different lexicographic theories but they all acknowledge the fact that the lexicographic practice is complemented by a theoretical component and that lexicography, with dictionaries as its subject matter, should be regarded as an independent discipline.

---

<sup>6</sup> Burkhanov, I. 1998. Lexicography: A Dictionary of Basic Terminology. Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej.





- Herbert Ernst Wiegand categorically denies that lexicography is a branch of applied linguistics or of lexicology, but when working outside a specific lexicographic theory, relations between lexicography and other disciplines are often postulated that go against the grain of lexicography as an independent discipline.
- Günter Kempcke who says 'Eine Wörterbuchtheorie kann nur Teil der Lexikologie sein, ...' – 'A dictionary theory has to be part of lexicology' .
- Lexicographers like Laurence Urdang believe that 'Lexicography, in practice is a form of applied linguistics ...' <sup>7</sup>
- And John M. Sinclair denies the prospect of a theory of lexicography and believes that the relevant theory is to be found in or via the areas of linguistics and information technology
- Dirk Geeraerts assumes that lexicography is part of linguistics but can hardly justify it as being a form of applied linguistics

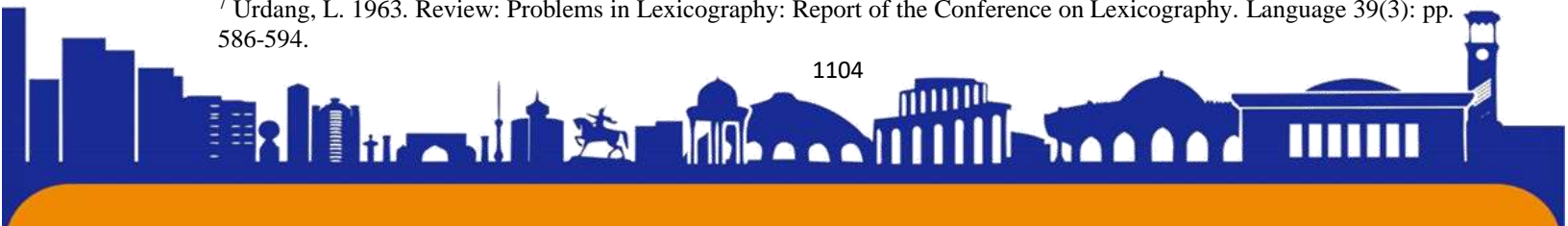
As a linguistic discipline, lexicography has rather paradoxical nature. On the one hand, almost everybody will agree to classify lexicography as a form of applied linguistics, but on the other hand, it is virtually impossible to give an adequate reply to the question what linguistic theory lexicography might be an application.

There are different kinds of dictionaries and of lexicographers. This means, for example, that we have a type of lexicography describing, criticizing and making theories outgoing from existing dictionaries, and we have a type of lexicography making theories about how to plan and how to make conceptions for new dictionaries. And we have a branch of lexicography dealing with the concrete conception, planning and editing of a dictionary. Such a conception could be made without any kind of scientific considerations, i.e. by trying to make a new dictionary according to the way of 'how it used to be' – the lexicographer makes a dictionary following his or her intuition and by knowing the needs of the intended user. Dictionaries of this type do not necessarily have a low quality, especially if they do not merely copy the 'tradition'.

A splendid example of a dictionary belonging to this type was that of Jens Leth, a priest well familiar with the needs of the young people he was teaching, but not with the then current tradition of making conceptualizations of dictionaries [68, 45]

---

<sup>7</sup> Urdang, L. 1963. Review: Problems in Lexicography: Report of the Conference on Lexicography. Language 39(3): pp. 586-594.





Another type of lexicography is totally influenced by linguistics and tries to use the best linguistic theories and terms for the planning and compilation of dictionaries. A final type of lexicography argues that lexicography is an independent discipline, perhaps somehow connected to a certain kind of information science or linguistics, but indeed not a sub-discipline of linguistics. Some aspects of these different types of approaches are illustrated in the following table: The history of lexicography is dominated by the names of three figures: Samuel Johnson, Noah Webster and Sir James Augustus Henry Murray.

The role they 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 Noah Webster, through the series of dictionaries which bear his name; and indirectly, in the case of Samuel 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, Samuel Johnson wrote the definitions of 40,000 words, illustrating their use from the best authors since the time of the Elizabethans.

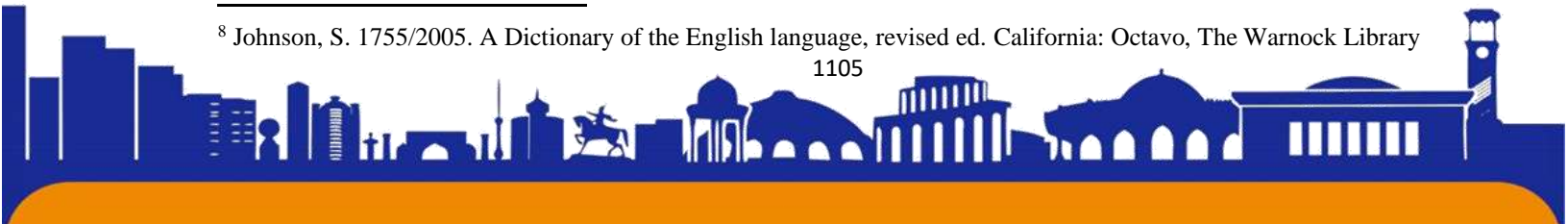
Although Samuel Johnson was fewer entries than Nathan Bailey, his selection is more wide-ranging, and his lexicological treatment is far more discriminating and sophisticated.

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

'When I took the 1st 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<sup>8</sup>.

---

<sup>8</sup> Johnson, S. 1755/2005. A Dictionary of the English language, revised ed. California: Octavo, The Warnock Library





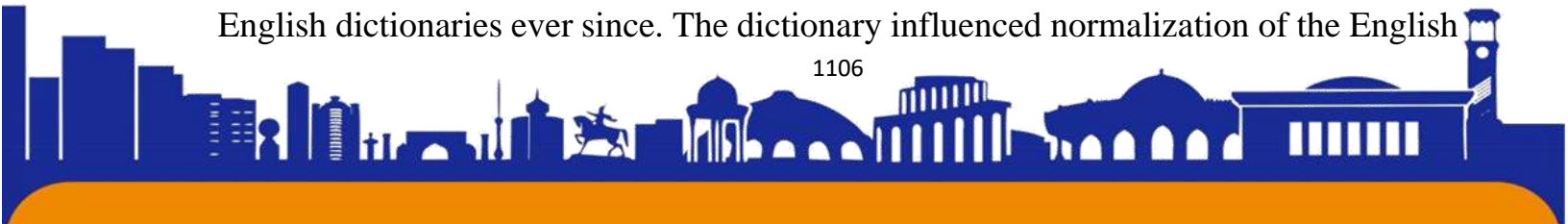
The preliminaries also include a short history of the language, with long extracts from earlier authors, and a grammar, much influenced by the work of John Wallis, with sections orthography and prosody. But it is in the Preface, often anthologized as an independent text, that we find an unprecedented 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 Samuel 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: It illustrates several features of the approach Samuel 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-word' tradition, many cumbersome Latinate forms, such as cubacula, estuation, whose status within English was doubtful;
10. His creations are highly selective, chosen more for their literary or moral value than 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.

So Samuel 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 Sir James Augustus Henry Murray . The aim was to produce a four-volume work in a period of ten years; but after five years, James Murray and his colleagues had managed to complete only the section A – ANT; it was 352 pages, and sold for \$ 62 in modern money. It was evident that the dictionary was a much greater work that had been envisaged. Additional editors were appointed and the last volume was published in 1928, the dictionary was called New English Dictionary – NED. 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 Robert William Burchfield to edit a new supplement. This appeared in four 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.

The methods of compiling, structures and entries of dictionaries have always attracted the attention of former soviet and foreign linguists. To be more precise, in his groundbreaking work Ladislav Zgusta placed lexicography within the field of the study of lexicon, including the sphere of lexical semantics .Lexicographer, according to his opinion, should be familiar with linguistics in much broader sense and has to take into consideration not only the whole structure of language in question, but also the culture of the relevant linguistic community:

'The scholar, by referring to the culture, makes way for an approach which compels lexicographers to contextualize the language in terms of the more general world of the relevant speech community '





ISSN (E): 2181-4570

In a different place, the author states that 'The theory of lexicography is connected with all the disciplines which study the lexical system, semantics, lexicology, grammar, stylistics' .

Uriel Weinreich, a very much influential linguist whose interests centered, among others, on the issue of dictionary making, assumed that a dictionary should form a basis for lexicological theory. More recently, much along the same lines sound the statement made by Dirk Geeraerts, who says that:

'Lexicography is the purposeful human activity for which the principles of language are merely one among a number of parameters that determine the actual shape dictionaries take ' .

#### Used Literature:

1. Johnson, S. 1755/2005. A Dictionary of the English language, revised ed. California: Octavo, The Warnock Library
2. Urdang, L. 1963. Review: Problems in Lexicography: Report of the Conference on Lexicography. Language 39(3): pp. 586-594.
3. Burkhanov, I. 1998. Lexicography: A Dictionary of Basic Terminology. Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Wy'szej Szko y Pedagogicznej.
4. Landau, S.I. 2001. Dictionaries: The Art and Craft of Lexicography. Second Edition. New York/Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
5. Bergenholtz, Henning, Tarp Sven eds. (1995) Manual of Specialized
6. Lexicography: The Preparation of Specialized Dictionaries, J. Benjamin's. ISBN 987-90-272-1612-0
7. Смирницкий А.И. Лексикология английского языка. М. 2001. сс.180-186.
8. Hausmann, Franz Josef, Zgusta L., Reichmann O. 1991. An International
9. Encyclopaedia of Lexicography. Walter De Gruyter.
10. Wiegand, Herbert Ernst 1984. On the Structure and Contents of a General Theory of Lexicography. Hartmann, R.R.K. (Ed.). 1984. LEXeter '83 Proceedings. Papers from the International Conference on Lexicography at Exeter, 9-12 September 1983: pp. 13-30. Lexicographica. Series Maior 1. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

