

DEVELOPMENT OF DICTIONARY DISCOURSE

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The presentation explores dictionary discourse which may be defined as a stretch of language the pragmatic aim of which is to provide linguistic information about vocabulary units necessary for the speaker's encoding and the listener's decoding of message.

The aim of the presentation is to outline some recent tendencies in the elaboration of dictionary discourse in the learners' dictionaries ("Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English" 2005 , "Longman Language Activator" 1996) .

British culture enjoys a long-standing tradition of compiling dictionaries of various types. Since the appearance of Samuel Johnson's great work in 1775, dictionaries of English have been registering the ever-growing English vocabulary, working out certain discursive practices and narrative techniques, characteristic of British dictionary discourse today (Widdowson).

Despite the differences in approach and treatment, the dictionaries under examination share many common features:

- 1) learner-centeredness,
- 2) World English orientation,
- 3) electronic corpus of texts,
- 4) vocabulary limitation to key words,
- 5) use of defining vocabulary,
- 6) lingo-cultural information,
- 7) linguistic articles by famous scholars.

There is a great difference between these two dictionaries, OALD is converting words into meaning for the passive partner in communication (Quirk) while LLA represents a new concept in dictionary making which reminds of Roget's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases. This is the first-ever production dictionary. The 1052 key concepts at the heart of the English language presented through 2000 words Longman Defining Vocabulary, in eight steps of language production (the key concept → idea box → words → definition → style → grammar → key models → collocations) (Neubert). Its key goal is to increase the learners' competen-

ce to produce words for ideas. It offers a whole range of linguistic resources from which to choose to talk about a given situation in a way that suits best what a learner has in mind (Ikegami). The Longman Language Activator may be considered an important step forward in modern English lexicography.

According to de Beaugrand we should rethink the processes of constructing and using dictionaries in the light of recent developments and a new type of dictionary should appear: electronic, processed and produced on line, able to search for relevant semantic features displayed in the context, able to reshuffle its meanings depending on the type of discourse, capable of dynamic semantic processing. Dictionary discourse should be no longer a system of abstract rules for arranging features in matrices in order to generate and describe potential meaning but a range of strategies for constructing adjusting and negotiating meaning in the context of human sense-making activities..

References

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