

# DICTIONARY News

## ISO 1951: a revised standard for lexicography

André Le Meur and Marie-Jeanne Derouin

### Why a revision of this standard?

Times are changing, also in matters of dictionary making. Lexicographical methods are well established, both on the publisher and the user's side. For centuries, paper was the only media for which publishers had developed an impressive know-how. But as everything is now going digital, new methods for data management are being found.

Although everyone is aware of the growing importance of electronic devices that are full of promises, few are ready – in spite of the numerous prophecies of recent years – to get rid of the well-established traditional methods of handling large printed data collections.

With the introduction of digital supports and networking, dictionary lifecycle has been considerably extended. The original manuscript has now become a unique source that can be accessed many times in order to be reused and even integrated into other language applications. For data manipulations such as merging dictionaries, inverting language directions, extracting and merging nomenclatures, integrating lexicographic data in terminological tools or lexical databases, etc, dictionary publishers and individual compilers are increasingly aware of the necessity to structure

their contents according to standards recognized by other professionals, in order to avoid time-consuming and expensive data manipulations.

In the past decade, different proposals have either used existing printed dictionaries as a basis, including their “fuzzy” aspects and inconsistencies (TEI<sup>1</sup>, for instance), or have deliberately chosen compatibility with strictly structured computer-based lexical databases that don't allow for well-established habits of lexicographers. Therefore, there was a need for a method that takes into account both of these aspects: tradition and strictness, lexicography and computational linguistics. Thus, within ISO TC37 SC2, publishers, researchers, lexicographical and terminological experts have merged their experience to propose a revision of the ISO 1951 standard “Presentation/representation of entries in dictionaries”, which aims to bridge the above-mentioned traditional methods of dictionary-making with future oriented ones. This revision is due for publication in 2007.

### XmLex: a generic model for dictionaries

XmLex (previously called LEXml<sup>2</sup>)

**ISO 1951** was published in 1973 and revised in 1997 under the title “Lexicographical symbols and typographical conventions for use in terminography”. It focused on harmonizing the presentation of specialized dictionaries, without any concern for the structure, re-usability and exchange of data.

A market survey carried out on behalf of the ISO Technical Committee 37: Subcommittee 2 (Terminography and Lexicography) among dictionary specialists and user groups in over 20 countries has shown that there is a genuine requirement for new

- 1 ISO 1951: a revised standard for lexicography | **André Le Meur and Marie-Jeanne Derouin**
- 4 What does it take to write a new English etymological dictionary today? | **Anatoly Liberman**
- 10 2<sup>es</sup> Journées allemandes des dictionnaires | in memory of Josette Rey-Debove
- 12 The foundation of AFRILEX | **Mariëtta Alberts**
- 15 Sixth International School in Lexicography, Ivanovo State University, 2005 | **Olga Karpova**
- 16 *PASSWORD Semi-Bilingual English-Chinese Dictionary* | **Liu Jin**



K DICTIONARIES

© 2006 All rights reserved.

Editor | **Ilan J. Kernerman**

Graphic Design | **Studio Orna Cohen**

Thank you | **Xu Zuyou, Shaunie Shammass, Livia Rosenberg, Nathalie Lanckriet, Merav Kernerman, Lionel Kernerman, Mariusz Idzikowski, Vladimír Benko, Martyn Back**

**K DICTIONARIES LTD**  
Nahum 8 Tel Aviv 63503 Israel  
Tel: 972-3-5468102  
Fax: 972-3-5468103  
kdn@kictionaries.com  
http://kictionaries.com



André Le Meur has been teaching computer science to translators and librarians since 1993 at the University of Rennes 2, France. He serves as an expert on data-modelling for terminology at the French standards organisation AFNOR, and in numerous European projects including Publishnet, Inesterm and Gema. Dr. Le Meur is a member of the editorial board of the ISO standards: ISO 16642, ISO 12615 and the revised ISO 1951.  
andre.lemeur@uhb.fr



Marie-Jeanne Derouin is the managing director of the specialist dictionary company Langenscheidt Fachverlag in Munich, Germany. She is a partner publisher in the European project Publishnet, an expert for lexicography at the German standards organisation DIN, and the project leader of the revised ISO Standard 1951: Presentation/representation of entries in dictionaries.  
marie-jeanne.derouin@langenscheidt.de

is the formal model proposed in this new standard, and applies to any type of dictionary. It aims at finding a balance between strict formal structures (which allow automation) and user friendliness for the human editor, while preserving conformity to traditional lexicographic methods. It satisfies four requirements, which enable data that conform to this model to be independent from both the tools (free or commercial) and the media (paper, internet, cdrom):

- Complete separation between logical structure and display: all the punctuation and other structure markers can be automatically generated at the display stage, which means that data are independent from the media used for display.

- Non ambiguity: all the relations between elements can be computed so that XmlLex data can be interfaced with any lexical database (e.g. the ISO Lexical Markup Framework project<sup>3</sup>) or other linguistic applications relying on a clearly specified model.

- Flexibility: the XmlLex model is generic. By applying XML rules of subsetting, as defined in ISO 16642 annex C<sup>4</sup>, it is possible to specify subsets corresponding to specific needs. A subset accepts any order of elements, so that the editing structure can be strictly parallel to the display order (e.g. XSL stylesheets for transforming dictionary entries can be written in pure “push style” OR in pure “pull style”).

- Compatibility with currently available XML tools: it is now widely accepted that linguistic applications should not use proprietary formats and tools. XML and its associated specifications have become industrial standards. XmlLex can be implemented as an XML schema and operated by commonly available XML editors and by XSL stylesheets.

XmlLex uses data elements defined in ISO 12620<sup>5</sup>, if they already exist. Moreover, it defines data elements specific to lexicography that have been observed in existing dictionaries. These new data elements will be proposed for inclusion in the forthcoming ISO TC 37 Data Category Registry.

### First applications: an XML model, a subset for bilingual dictionaries

XmlLex is an abstract model that can be applied to any type of dictionary (monolingual, bilingual, general, specialized, etc). For informative purposes only, an XML implementation has been specified, including a subset that represents currently available bilingual dictionaries. The XmlLexIntro document<sup>6</sup>

describes the ‘XmlLexWorkbench’, which contains:

- The generic DTD (XmlLex\_V00.dtd), corresponding to the generic XmlLex model.
- The subset corresponding to bilingual dictionaries (XmlLexForBilingualDictionaries\_V00.dtd).
- Examples of bilingual entries.
- The following tools for transforming XML entries:

- **XmlLexDisplayer.XSL** transforms entries into HTML with a print-like preview. This XSL stylesheet and its CSS must be adapted for specific needs. Their major role is to show that, although the XmlLex model deals only with content, presentational issues (such as numeration and punctuation) can be solved automatically.

- **XmlLexInverter.XSL** shows how to “invert” lexicographical entries (i.e. to find for any linguistic unit in the target language all related information in the source language). It illustrates the fact that since XmlLex structures are non-ambiguous, methods like backtracking can be used for exploring any path in any direction when data have to be reused in a different context.

- **NomenclatureLib** is a set of XSL stylesheets that extracts and lists the nomenclature (the list of the linguistic units in the source language of a dictionary) in bilingual dictionaries.

- **LexTermLib** is a set of XSL stylesheets used to transform XmlLex entries into terminological entries compatible with ISO TC37 terminological model and with concept-oriented tools like Translation Memory systems.<sup>7</sup>

Note that this library is given “as is”. Its aim is only to illustrate the use of XmlLex, and to initiate a public “open source” collection of useful and reusable algorithms for lexicographic data management that may help newcomers to evaluate the potential of XmlLex.

### Perspectives

The revised ISO 1951 document, with its specific model based on current professional practices, is intended to allow all possible lexicographic production, exchange and management procedures. Some publishers have already modified their editorial work-flow accordingly. The first integration of dictionaries using this model for providing Translation Memory tools, in parallel with traditional dictionary production, will be put on the market this year.

**Particular acknowledgment** is due to the other members of the editorial board of the revised ISO 1951: Elisabeth Blanchon, Oliver Schweiberer and Christine Tauchmann, as well as to Mariusz Idzikowski, Elena Mantzari, Claude Nimmo and Yuka Sasaki who assisted us with very useful comments. Last but not least, we thank Ilan Kernerman for his contribution in coining the term XmlLex.

#### Notes

1 TEI chapter 12 Print dictionaries, <http://www.tei-c.org/P4X/DI.html>

2 See Marie-Jeanne Derouin & André Le Meur, "Ongoing Changes in Lexicographical International Standards: Report on the Revision of ISO 1951 Lexicographical Symbols and Typographical Conventions for Use in

Terminography and Proposals for the First Draft: Presentation/Representation of Entries in Dictionaries". In *Proceedings of EURALEX 2002*, Vol. II, 689.

3 ISO CD 24613:2006 Lexical Markup Framework (Committee Draft)

4 ISO 16642:2003 Annex C, Computer applications in terminology – Terminological markup framework

5 ISO 12620:1999 Computer applications in terminology – Data categories

6 <http://www.xmllex.net/lexicography/xmllexintro.pdf>

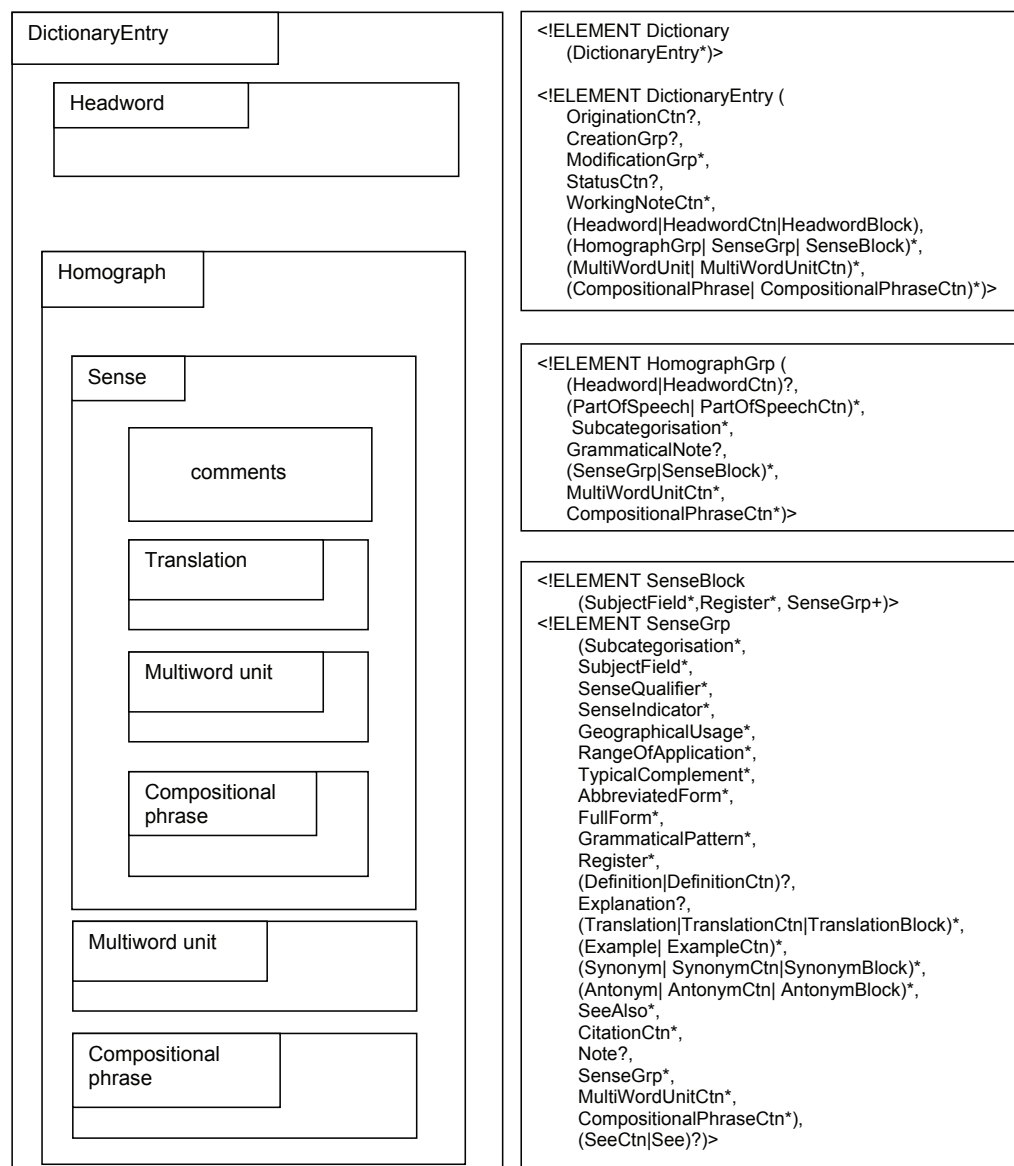
7 See André Le Meur, Marie-Jeanne Derouin, "Lemma-oriented dictionaries, concept-oriented terminology and translation memories". In *LREC 2006 proceedings*. <http://www.xmllex.net/lexicography/lextermrec2006.pdf>

standards in the field of lexicography. Thus, in 2001 it was decided to launch an entirely revised version called "Presentation/representation of entries in dictionaries". The aim of this document was to facilitate the production, exchange and management procedures for the creation and reuse of any dictionary content.

The forthcoming revised ISO 1951 addresses every kind of dictionary. It specifies a formal generic structure, independent of the publishing media, and an extensible list of constituents ("data elements") based on ISO 12620. Informative annexes propose means of presentation of entries in printed and electronic dictionaries, numbering systems, tables of functions of lexicographic symbols, and examples of XML encoding.

#### An extract of the XmlLex structure for bilingual dictionaries.

The full DTD and explanations about the data elements are available online as indicated above.



# What does it take to write a new English etymological dictionary today?

Anatoly Liberman



Anatoly Liberman was born (1937) and educated in Russia, received his PhD (1965) at Leningrad University, and is Doctor of Philological Sciences (French-German Habilitation, 1972) from the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. In 1975 he moved to the USA, and has since been teaching Germanic Philology at the University of Minnesota. His main areas of specialization are general and historical phonology (with strong emphasis on Germanic), etymology, medieval literature, folklore, history of linguistics, poetic translation, and poetry. Professor Liberman has published extensively (nearly 500 articles), his main books on language issues include *Islandskaia Prosodika* [Icelandic Prosody] (Leningrad, 1971, in Russian), *Germanic Accentology, Vol. I* (Minneapolis, 1982), *Word Heath* (Rome, 1994), and *Word Origins... And How We Know Them* (Oxford, 2005). He is the editor of Stefán Einarsson's selected writings, and editor and translator into English of the works by N.S. Trubetzkoy and Vladimir Propp. [liber002@umn.edu](mailto:liber002@umn.edu)

English etymological lexicography had two peaks: the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of Skeat's dictionary (Skeat 1910) and etymological comments in those fascicles of the *OED* that James A. H. Murray and Henry Bradley edited. Of the other authors, Ernest Weekley (1921) deserves a mention, though his forte was borrowings from Old French and putative reflexes of proper names. The rest is based on Skeat and the *OED*. Weekley's failure is typical: it is not particularly difficult to offer a new treatment of several hundred words, but a full-scale etymological dictionary requires a superhuman effort, for who can delve into and re-evaluate the history of the entire vocabulary of English? All the post-Weekley dictionaries are derivative: published only to be sold, they recycle the same hypotheses and add nothing to what can be found elsewhere. *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* ([*ODEE*], 1965; numerous reprints) presents the material from the *OED* in a condensed form but shows almost no traces of original research. As a result, contemporary English etymological dictionaries are at the level reached a hundred years ago; they cannot even be compared with the best samples of Sanskrit, Classical Greek, Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, Gothic, German, Dutch, Old Icelandic, Lithuanian, and Slavic lexicography. Students of Ossetic and Sorbian [sic] are better off in this respect than those who study English, despite the fact that no other Indo-European language has been investigated so thoroughly, one may say with such excessive zeal.

Detailed comments on etymology also occur in our "thick" dictionaries, two of which are outstanding in this respect: *The Century Dictionary* and Wyld (1932). Charles P. G. Scott, the author of the etymologies in *The Century Dictionary*, summarized everything that had been known about the origin of English words and added the Germanic and the Indo-European perspective to his explanations. He relied on the third edition of Skeat (which was no more than a reprint of the first, 1882, edition; Skeat reflected the results of his later findings in several "concise" versions of his *opus magnum* and in the fourth edition) and the early fascicles of the *OED*. Wyld, an outstanding language historian, had many non-trivial ideas on the origin of

English words, but he, too, left his mark only in a handful of entries. The dilemma that Scott and Wyld faced is familiar: both were imaginative scholars, but they dealt with thousands of words about which they had nothing new to say; hence mistakes, gaps in the presentation, and absurdities, as Weekley, himself an inhabitant of a glass house, called them.

The time has come to stop producing commercial etymological dictionaries of English. Those who need some basic information on the origin of English words will find it in any of the "shorter" Oxford dictionaries, Webster, the *Heritage*, and *The Random House Dictionary*, to mention a few. Specialists will continue using the *OED*, Skeat, Wyld, the dictionaries of other languages (to the extent that, while examining cognates, they feature English vocabulary), and occasional publications. The main difference between the fourth edition of Skeat and the dictionaries of Sanskrit, Latin, etc, referred to in the opening paragraph of this essay is obvious: those discuss the scholarly literature on every word, whereas Skeat cited the opinions of his predecessors rarely, only when he saw fit. He was interested in promoting what he took to be the best solutions, rather than surveying the field. We do not know how closely he followed the philological journals published abroad (his German and Scandinavian colleagues constantly pointed to his lack of familiarity with their work) and whether in his old age he was as avid a reader of linguistic literature as in his youth. The editors of the *OED* made every effort to keep abreast of the times, but etymology constituted a small (though important) part of their work. Murray's policy was to say "origin unknown" when no reasonable etymology of a word existed. And quite naturally, "thick" dictionaries, with the sole exception of Wyld, never give references to the literature (Wyld's references are also sporadic and vague: "As Kluge suggests" and the like). By contrast, the authors of the Greek, Latin, Gothic, and other etymological dictionaries list numerous hypotheses and consider their merits and demerits. When *they* say "origin unknown," we understand why a certain word has defied the efforts of so many researchers and what data are missing for formulating even a first intelligent guess. In other cases

we are told that the word has attracted no one's attention (consequently, if we want to discover its history, we must begin the work from scratch). But, and this is an especially important point, we come away with a full bibliography of the question and can pick up where our predecessors left off. Such dictionaries can be called encyclopedic, or analytic, in contradistinction to the dogmatic format Skeat and his successors chose.

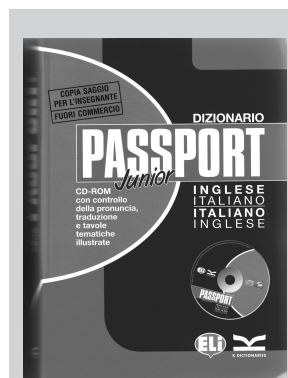
English etymological dictionaries have not always been dogmatic. 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century authors listed (and accepted or refuted) the ideas of their predecessors because what at that time passed for etymological research did not rely on strict procedures. Students of antiquities sought for look-alikes in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Old English, Irish, or Dutch, depending on their predilections, and derived English words from the words of those languages. Occasionally their derivations proved to be right, but in the absence of method everybody's suggestion seemed to be worthy of at least some respect. A modern user of our oldest etymological dictionaries (published roughly until 1850) finds invaluable surveys of the oldest views and forms an idea of how knowledge developed. For a historian of science, the way to the truth is no less interesting than the truth itself. Then comparative linguistics came into its own, and sound laws were discovered. Guesswork gave way to the science of etymology. The limitations of this science became clear much later, but the core of comparative linguistics withstood all attacks, even though nowadays it is more customary to refer to sound correspondences rather than sound laws. Polemic continued to rage in journals, while dictionaries included what was certain and left out the controversial parts.

The pendulum swung in the opposite direction only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By that time it had become hard to find the relevant literature. Even in Germany one could not be sure that a proposed etymology had not been offered earlier. Scholars realized a need for digests, and analytic dictionaries appeared. I can think of two reasons this trend had no influence on English studies. First, the *OED* was such an incomparable achievement that further work in etymology did not seem to be necessary. Oxford University Press launched several successful abridgments of the *OED* and became the capital of English lexicography, with a perennial classic as its cornerstone. Second, comparative philology did not flourish in the English speaking world as it did in Germany. A whole encyclopedia can

be filled with the names of distinguished German comparativists. In England and the United States, such names will not fill a page. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century etymology remained a German discipline. Later de Saussure and Meillet contributed to its glory, but Germanic was not at the center of their interests (a mere dialect within Indo-European). Benveniste continued the same tradition.

It is thus not fortuitous that the *ODEE* appeared only in 1965 and did not go beyond the partly outdated information amassed by its model. While English etymological lexicography remained dormant (popularization can be ignored), articles and books on the origin of English words kept appearing in a steady stream. Dictionary makers sometimes reproduced the latest proposals with undue deference (a classic case is the treatment of *boy* in the post-*OED* era: the word was said to be of French origin), but, as a rule, such proposals did not make a stir, for authorities of Skeat's and Murray's caliber were no longer in view. The golden age of etymology had receded into the past. At the same time historical linguistics lost its prestige. The epoch of structuralism set in, fewer and fewer students were trained in the old periods of the Germanic languages, and those who were soon realized that departments of English, let alone linguistics, did not vie for the honor of hiring them. The shrinking demand nearly killed the source of supply. Fortunately, the public knew nothing of those developments and kept asking where words come from. An army of well-meaning journalists catered to their curiosity, but they had neither the time nor the expertise for independent research. They, too, recycled the *OED*. Most "thick" dictionaries keep an etymologist on their staff or hire consultants. Their contribution to "revised and enlarged" editions cannot make up for the absence of a full-scale analytic dictionary of English etymology. However much the press may pay its consultants, they won't be able to explain the origin of *bird*, *Cockney*, *dwarf*, *god*, *man*, *wife*, etc, by the deadline. Whether they will be able to do so later is beyond the scope of the present discussion.

About twenty years ago, I embarked on writing an analytic etymological dictionary of English. At the moment, we do not have even the smallest clearing house of suggestions on the origin of English words. I will cite one example that deals with a relatively exotic borrowed word, namely, *osprey*. Here is what the *ODEE* says: "...sea-eagle, fish-hawk XV [that is, first recorded



**Dizionario PASSPORT  
Junior**  
**Inglese-Italiano • Italiano-  
Inglese**  
**including CD-ROM**  
**ELI**

Loreto, Italy  
September 2005  
644 pages, 215 x 155 mm.  
ISBN 88-536-0283-X  
Price: 19.90 EUR  
<http://elionline.com>  
[http://kdictionaries.com/  
products/junior/ppit.html](http://kdictionaries.com/products/junior/ppit.html)

From the series  
KERNERMAN SEMI-  
BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES





**PASSWORD Dictionary**  
for Learners of English  
**English-English-Turkish •**  
**Turkish-English**  
including CD-ROM  
INKILÂP KİTABEVİ  
Istanbul, Turkey  
September 2005  
1250 pages, 195 x 135 mm.  
ISBN 975-10-2216-9  
Price: 15 TRY  
<http://www.inkilap.com>  
<http://kdictionary.com/products/medium/pwtr.html>

From the series  
KERNERMAN SEMI-  
BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES

in the 15<sup>th</sup> century]; egret plume XIX. –O[ld] F[rench] *ospres*, repr[esenting]. obscurely L[atin] OSSIFRAGE. In modF *orfraie*, [obsolete] *offraie* (XVI), which is also unexplained.” This is a summary of the etymology in the *OED*. Skeat says the same, and so do all the old and current French and English dictionaries except one. In the *Heritage*, the entry *osprey* contains the following explanation: “Middle English *ospray*, probably from Old French *ospreit* (unattested), from Vulgar Latin *avispreda* (unattested), from Latin *avis praedae*, “bird of prey”: avis, bird, (see **awi** - in Appendix\*) + *praeda*, prey (see **ghend** - in Appendix\*). The Old French form and denotation are influenced by Old French *osfraie*, from Latin *ossifraga*, OSSIFRAGE.” As we can see, Latin *ossifraga*, although still present, has been demoted to an “influence.” It is a remarkable fact that in two authoritative dictionaries we find conflicting etymologies of the word, both stated dogmatically and without references. An analytic dictionary would have discussed the value of both reconstructions and said that both are debatable. The *Heritage* does not state that the traditional derivation of *osprey* is wrong (incidentally, I have not been able to discover the source of the *avis praedae* hypothesis), and the *ODEE* fails to inform us whether the etymology it gives is putative or certain. The phrase “representing obscurely” will puzzle even a seasoned linguist, and the statement that Modern French *orfraie* is also unexplained adds a note of despair to the rest of the entry. The plot thickens without a promise of a denouement.

Below I will give a brief account of what has been done toward the production of an analytic dictionary of English etymology. Over the years, I have been operating on a shoestring budget, but the money I have had allowed me to hire graduate and undergraduate assistants. Fortunately, many volunteers have offered their services. My team examined all the sets of all the philological journals in more than twenty languages, popular magazines like *Notes and Queries*, and endless rows of miscellaneous publications and Festschriften. The assistants were told to copy the articles and reviews that dealt with the origin of English words and their cognates. They read some works in English, German, and the continental Scandinavian languages, but I had no help for Icelandic, Faroese, Dutch, Frisian, Romance, Slavic, and Baltic and did all the screening in those languages myself. Bibliographies were of course useful, but, while looking through lists of titles, it is hard to judge whether an article contains any etymological

information, for interesting ideas on the origin of English words turn up in works on Latin numismatics, Old Indian demonology, Armenian syntax, Slavic morphology, and so on. The reasons for that are obvious. Language history and the history of culture are inseparable from etymology. Also, numerous English words have cognates in other Indo-European languages (a study of German *gleiten* or of Swedish *dverg* is as valuable for the etymology of *glide* and *dwarf* as a study of those English words). Titles like “The Origin of the Verb *glide*” are rare, and there was no substitute for opening one book after another. At present, Part 1 of my database contains slightly over 18,500 titles. Every article (paper, review, report) has been marked for the words whose origins are discussed there. Part 2 is a word list: next to each word (there are over 14,000 of them) the page numbers referring to the titles in Part 1 appear.

As Corneille said: “The tragedy is ready; I must now only write the verses.” With such a database at my disposal, all that remains is to sit down and write an analytic dictionary of English etymology. However, there are at least two handicaps. The main of them has been mentioned above: every language contains too many words! For this reason, I have divided the presumably native vocabulary of English into several groups: words without established cognates outside English, words with one or more established cognates only within Germanic, words with cognates in Germanic and elsewhere in Indo-European, borrowings from the Romance languages, and borrowings from other languages. This classification often breaks down, for a word believed not to have cognates anywhere may be shown to have some, a presumably native word may turn out to be a borrowing, and so forth, but in principle, it serves me well. My immediate aim is to write entries on the most common words of the first group (between five and six hundred), these worried bones of etymology, as a reviewer of Skeat’s dictionary once called them. I emphasize the phrase *the most common words* (*boy, girl, lad, lass*, and their likes) because volatile slang, dialectal words, and the rare words that are featured in dictionaries can wait. Germanic words without established Indo-European cognates (such as *dwarf, shilling*, and *wife*) will be the next group to deal with.

A second handicap is that writing an entry is not a mechanical process. I must first reread everything written in the articles that have made their way into the database and are now located in my

office, look up the words under discussion in about two hundred dictionaries and numerous books (they fill my carrel at the library), evaluate all the proposals (there may be as many as 21 of them: this happened to *yet*; however, the usual number fluctuates between three and six), defend the most reasonable one, advance my own, or concede defeat ("the origin is still unknown"). I have been able to offer many good solutions, but it would be rash to expect that I will break the spell laid on every intractable word. No analytic dictionary has done so. Emma Micawber, the wife of David Copperfield's unforgettable friend, once declared: "Talent Mr. Micawber has, money Mr. Micawber has not." This is a familiar problem. If I succeed in getting a renewable grant from NEH (the National Endowment for the Humanities, (<http://neh.gov>), I will hire assistants and with a bit of luck complete my project. Or perhaps some reader of this newsletter will realize what a wonderful enterprise my dictionary is and give me several hundred thousand dollars (my project did not die years ago only because of the interest in it by two philanthropists). By now I have written more than fifty entries (they range from two to fifteen single-spaced pages in two columns) and published most of them as articles. A volume of those entries, thoroughly reworked for the dictionary, along with the database, will be brought out by the University of Minnesota Press. I submitted both manuscripts in February 2005.

## References

- Heritage = The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language.* William Morris, ed. Boston, etc.: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc. and Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969.
- Skeat, Walter W. *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language.* Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1882. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1884; 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1897; 4<sup>th</sup> ed., 1910.
- Weekley, Ernst. *An Etymological Dictionary of Modern English.* 1921. London: John Murray.
- Wyld = *The Universal Dictionary of the English Language.* Henry C. Wyld, ed. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1932.

The following is a sample entry from the new etymological dictionary by Anatoly Liberman.

## RAGAMUFFIN (1344)

Ragamuffin first appeared in texts as one of the medieval names of the Devil. It is a compound, and the origin of each of its parts is problematic. Etymologizing only rag- and dismissing -amuffin as a fanciful ending leaves this word without a reconstructed past. In all probability, ragamuffin has a connecting element (rag-a-muffin) and is thus an extended form like cockney from cock-e-nei. The most convincing hypothesis traces both rag- and -muffin to words for 'devil,' as in OF Rogomant (though in French it may have been a borrowing from Germanic), preserved in E Ragman and Ragman's roll (> rigmarole), and Old Muffy, from AF maufe 'ugly; the Evil One.' Ragamuffin is then a semantic reduplication with an augment (-a-) in the middle, \*'devil-a-devil.' An association with rags is late and due to folk etymology.

The proposed derivation of ragamuffin finds partial confirmation in the history of hobbledehoy. Both ragamuffin and hobbledehoy were first names of the Devil. The meaning of both has changed to 'ragged man' (often 'ragged urchin') and 'hobbling (awkward) youth' respectively, and both are extended forms, though with different augments.

The sections are devoted to 1) rag- 'devil,' 2) -muffin as a reflex of one of the Devil's names, 3) the role of -a- in ragamuffin and in similar words, and 4) a brief comparison of ragamuffin and hobbledehoy.

1. It has been known for a long time that in Langland's *Piers Plowman*, 1393 (c, XXI:183, Skeat's edition, 1886, vol 1) a devil called Ragamoffin is mentioned. OED quotes the relevant passage. According to MED, the name *Isabella Ragamoffyn* occurred in 1344. For two centuries ragamuffin (with any spelling) did not appear in written documents. Its uninterrupted history goes back to 1581. OED says the following about its origin: "[P]rob[ably] from RAG sb.<sup>1</sup> (cf. RAGGED 1c), with fanciful ending." The second part of ragabush 'worthless person' (now chiefly dialectal) is also said to contain a fanciful ending added to rag. The concept of the fanciful ending does not make sense when applied to sound strings like -amuffin and -abush. Shipley (1945, ragamuffin) adds -mudgeon in curmudgeon, on which see MOOCH, and -scallion in rapsallion to the list of such misbegotten creations. Whatever the origin of ragamuffin, its present day sense was influenced by rag, but it does not follow that the first ragamuffin was ragged or wore rags.

The entry Ragman 'devil' in OED contains a passing remark: "cf. RAGAMUFFIN RAGGED, Sw[edish] raggen-en ['devil']." In the entry ragged, several examples make it clear that the Devil was often portrayed as having a ragged appearance. Sw raggen can be understood as 'the shaggy (hairy) one,' a tempting interpretation in light of the material from Middle English in OED, or as 'the evil one' (rag is also a metathesized form of Sw arg 'evil, wicked'). Hellquist preferred the second alternative, while OED took the first one for granted. Spitzer (1947:91) derived rageman (this is Langland's spelling) from French. The idea that Ragemon (*le bon*) and Rogomant were folk etymologized into rageman ~ Rageman carries more conviction than that raggen was borrowed from Swedish, because Sw raggen is a neologism, unrecorded in the other Scandinavian languages. On Rageman see also rigmarole in English etymological dictionaries.

The French origin of *ragman* and *ragamuffin* was suggested long ago (anonymous [1822b:618]), but neither Spitzer nor his predecessors succeeded in discovering the ultimate etymon of the French name, which may have been Germanic, especially if an old attempt to connect E *rag* and Ital *ragazzo* 'boy, youth' is not dismissed out of hand (then *ragazzo* would come out as 'little devil,' not 'person in rags'). Probably no other word of Italian has been discussed so often with such meager results.

The Germanic root \**rag-* 'fury' is probable: compare Du dial *raggen* 'run around in a state of wild excitement' (*lopen en raggen* has the same meaning), alternating with Du dial *rakken* (Weijnen [1939-40]: detailed discussion without a definitive etymology). Sw *rag(g)la* 'wobble,' and ModI *ragla* 'wander about' may belong with the Dutch verb, but the chances are not so good, because the meanings—'move in violent agitation' and 'wonder aimlessly, move unsteadily'—do not match. The nasalized forms (N *rangle*, and so forth), except for late MHG *ranzen* 'jump violently' (FT, *rangle* and *rage* III; A BM, *ragla*; KS, *Range* and *ranzen*), are synonymous with *ragla*. If such a root existed, it need not have been identical with \**arg-* 'copulate' (said about animals), though their derivatives were partly synonymous in various languages and though one could develop from the other by metathesis, as happened in Old Norse. (Can E *rag* 'scold' be of similar origin and can G *regen* 'stir' be related to this \**ragen* rather than G *ragen* 'rise, tower, jut out'?) A pagan divinity called *Rageman*, someone like the Old English *Herla cyning* 'King Herla,' is not unthinkable (cf. *Woorden* from \**woord-* 'fury,' as in G *Wut*). The same name of the Devil seems to have been known in the Baltic languages: Lithuanian *ra-gana* and Latvian *ragana* mean 'witch' (another much-discussed word; see, for example, Otkupshchikov [1977]).

2. Conjectures on the etymology of *-muffin* have been inconclusive: from Sp *mofar* 'mock' or Ital *muffo* 'musty' (W 1828 and in all the editions until 1864), from G dial *muffen* 'smell musty' (W 1864; the same until 1890), from Gael *maoidh* 'threaten' (Mackay [1877]; Mackay, who derived hundreds of words of European languages from Gaelic, combined Gael *ragair* 'thief, villain' with *maoidh*, so that *ragamuffin* turned out to be 'dangerous scoundrel'), and from E *muff* 'stupid, clumsy person' (thus UED, which only "compares" *-muffin* with *muff*).

John Ker traced numerous English words to nonexistent Dutch phrases, and his derivations are among the most amusing in the history of English etymology. He derived *ragamuffin* from *rag er moffin* 'poverty shews itself in that countenance.' "Literally, the *Westphalian* boor predominates in his person. *Mof* is the nickname of the *Westphalian* labourer.... The word *mof* is founded in the thema *mo-en*, in the import of, to cut, to mow; and the term means strictly, a mower.... *Moffin* is the female of this class.... And I have no doubts our term *muffin* is the ellipsis of *moffincoeck*, the pastry of the *muffin* who cries it, as that which she is employed to carry about to dispose of" (Ker 1837: I, 89). His gloss of *rag er moffin* 'may it show' goes back (as he says) to the Dutch or German verb *ragen* 'project' in the subjunctive and *er* 'there.' With Ker we are pushed to the edge of normalcy, but in a small way he was vindicated: the nickname *mof* turns up in Mueller<sup>2</sup> and UED (*ragamuffin*), and *rag-* may be akin to the verb *ragen*, though not the one he meant.

Richardson thought of *ragabash* and *raggabrash* as "a

corruption of *ragged* (or perhaps *rakell* ['profligate']) rubbish," but "of *ragamuffin*," he says, "the examples found have afforded no clue to the true origin." Mueller<sup>2</sup> cites G *muffen* 'smell musty, moldy' and E *muff* 'stupid fellow' (the same word as in Ker). He mentions *Ragamofin*, the name of a demon in some of the old mysteries, and of all English etymologists he seems to be the only one to suggest a tie between E *ragamuffin* and Ital *ragazzo* 'boy.' ID (1850) follows Webster (as always) but also offers a possible derivation from *rag* and obsolete *mof*, *muff* 'long sleeve.'

In Spitzer's opinion (1947:93), *ragamuffin* goes back to F \**Rogom-oufflle* or \**Ragam-oufflle*, which must be a blend of *Ragemon* 'devil,' and such words as OF *ruffien* of the fourteenth century ... or F *maroufle* ['scoundrel']; again, it could even be a coinage from the *ragemon* stem formed with the OF suffix *-ouffle*, like *maroufle* itself.... The idea of 'ragged' appears in *ragamuffin* only as late as 1440, and is consequently quite secondary." Spitzer adds that *ragamuffin* still means a (ragged) street urchin and that perhaps 'street urchin' was the original meaning, whence an association with 'devil, demon, imp, heathen.'

W (1890) leaves *ragamuffin* without any etymology and mentions only the name of Langland's demon. For a long time dictionaries have followed this example. Only Wyld (UED) risked a tentative comparison of *-muffin* with *muff*, which he may have found independently of his predecessors or in Mueller<sup>2</sup> (for no one read Ker). Skeat did not include *ragamuffin* in his dictionary, but in his edition of *Piers Plowman* (1886, II:257, note on line 283) he wrote: "Mr. Halliwell... remarks that *Ragamofin* is a name of a demon in some of the old mysteries. It has since passed into a sort of familiar slang term for any one poorly clad. The demons, it may be observed, took the comic parts in the old mysteries, and were therefore sometimes fitted with odd names." However, Stanley (1968:110) points out in his comment on Halliwell's statement that there is no existence for the use of *Ragamofin* in old medieval plays.

Against this background, the entry in AHD<sup>3,4</sup> is all the more surprising. It traces *-muffin* to MDu *moffel* ~ *muff* 'mitten' (is a bahuvrihi of the *Redcap* type meant: *Ragamuffin* = *ragmitten* or *ragged mitten*?). The entry has a supplementary word history in which we read that the discovery of the name *Isabella Ragamoffyn* disproves the current derivation of *ragamuffin* from a devil's name. But *ragamuffin* has always been understood as a vague continuation rather than a reflex of *ragamoffyn* in *Piers Plowman*. Apparently, the woman in question had the character that earned her the unusual soubriquet.

Some of the conjectures listed above can be ruled out by definition. **An English compound need not have an element straight from Spanish, Italian, German, Gaelic, or Middle Dutch.** One can look for English cognates of these words, but E *-muffin* has not been recorded (*muffin* 'cake' became known in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and has always meant what it means now). Spitzer's etymology is learned but too speculative. E *muff*, which Mueller and Wyld cite, first occurs in Dickens in 1837, and this must have been the time it gained currency in the streets of London. It has no ancestors, except *muff* 'deprecatory term of a German or Swiss, sometimes loosely applied to other foreigners,' which does not occur in extant texts after 1697. Du *muff* 'lout' (< *mof*, originally the same meaning as in E *muff*) and G *Muffel* were recorded much later than *ragamuffin*. Even if their



history were less opaque, their late attestation and the absence of their cognates in Middle English make their connection with *ragamuffin* improbable. However, *muff* may have been an import from the continent.

**A seemingly correct etymology of -muffin can be deduced from the information in an article by Smythe Palmer.** He read Prevost (1905) and noted the phrase *Auld Muffy* used by the older dalesmen for the Devil. As he observes: "The expression is now but seldom heard, and in a few years, probably it will be as extinct as the dodo." Muffy is AF *maufe* 'ugly, ill-featured,' "which was once synonymous with the Evil One," a creature "notoriously hideous and deformed"; cf *Satan le maufe* (Smythe Palmer [1910:54546-]; additional details on p 546). E dial *muffy* 'hermaphrodite' is an alteration of *morfrodite*, but if Old Muffy was known more widely in the past, the two words may have interacted. See the supplement to DWARF on hermaphrodites, and Prescott (1995) on *muffy*.

**Both components of *ragamuffin* seem to mean 'devil'.** Only the origin of final *-n* is not quite clear, but so many nouns ended in *-an*, *-en* (like *guardian*, *warden*, and formations of the *slabberdegullion* and *tatterdemal(l)ion* type) that *\*ragamauffi* could easily have become *\*ragamauffi(an)*. Note that the earliest spelling is *ragamoffyn* (with *o* for *F au*?) and that Shakespeare has *rag of Muffin* or *rag of Muffian* in *1Henry IV*, IV, iii:272.

3. Words with unetymological *-a-* are discussed in some detail at COCKNEY. In Middle and Modern English, intrusive *-a-* has more than one source. When the connecting schwa occurs in French words like *vis-à-vis* and *cap-à-pie*, it is a preposition. In the native vocabulary, *-a-* is a reduced form of *on* or *of*, as in *twice a day*, *cat-o'-nine-tails*, *man-o'-war*, *Tam o'Shanter*. But when a model establishes itself, new formations arise and neologisms begin to be cast in the same predictable mold. *Tam o'Shanter* was *Tam Shanter* in Burns's poems and acquired its *o'* on the analogy of *John o'Groats* and so forth. *Fustianapes* is an allegro form of *fustian of Naples*, but *jackanapes* developed from *Jac(k) Napes*, not *\*Jack on* or *of Naples*, and *Jack-a-dandy* never was *\*Jack of* or *on dandy*. *Will with the wisp* forfeited its *with the* (*o'* substituted for them), and in a similar way the older form of *lack-a-day*, the basis of *lackadaisical*, was *alack the day* (see these words in OED and ODEE). The origin of many words with *-a-* will of necessity remain obscure, which does not mean that they should be given up as hopeless. ODEE states that *a* in *Blackamoor* < *black More* is unexplained. The comment in OED is longer: "Of the connecting *a* no satisfactory explanation has been offered. The suggestion that it was a retention of the final *-e* of ME *black-e* (obs[olete] in prose before 1400) is, in the present state of evidence, at variance with the phonetic history of the language, and the analogy of other *black-* compounds. Cf. *black-a-vised*." In the entry *black-a-vised* 'dark-complexioned' (first recorded in 1758, over two centuries later than *Black-a-moor*), we read: "... perh[aps] originally *black-a-vis* or *black o' vis*; but this is uncertain." *Black-a-top* 'black-headed' (a single 1773 citation) is left without an etymology.

ODEE says that the first element of *caterwaul* is perhaps related to or borrowed from LG / Du *kater* 'male cat,' unless *-er-* "is merely an arbitrary connective syll[able]"; we recognize here a paraphrase of "some kind of suffix or connective merely" (OED). Neither Murray nor Onions realized that *cat-er-waul* (= *cat-a-waul*?) is not an isolated example. It is unprofitable to

label insertions as merely arbitrary connective syllables or some kind of suffix. CD calls *-a-* in *black-a-moor* and *jackadandy* a meaningless syllable. This is true enough but not particularly illuminating.

*Cock-e-ney* is the earliest certain recorded extended form with schwa, and the 14<sup>th</sup> century must have been approximately the time when such words arose. Unstressed *i* was also drawn into the process of coining extended *-a-* forms. *Cock-a-leekie* has a doublet *cockie-leekie*, though *ie* in *cockie* is not a suffix. A similar case is *piggyback* 'carry on one's shoulders,' from *pickaback*. According to Skeat, *huckaback* 'coarse durable linen' (earlier *hugaback* and *hag-a-bag*) is the English pronunciation of LG *huckebak* 'pick-a-back': at one time, it presumably designated a pedlar's ware, but the evidence is lacking, and OED says "origin unknown." If Skeat guessed well, *huckaback* is a doublet of *pickaback* ~ *piggyback*. Kück's note on the Low German word (1905:1415-) supports Skeat's etymology.

**Assuming that the reconstruction given here is correct and *ragamuffin* (1344) is a tautological extended form with the initial meaning *\*'devil-a-devil'*, we will obtain a word of this type whose attestation slightly predates *cockney* < *cockeney* (1362). It will emerge as a coinage not unlike *muck-a-muck* 'person of distinction.'** Some confirmation of the proposed etymology comes from the history of *hobbledehoy*, arguably another extended form of similar structure and meaning.

**Although extended forms are not mentioned in standard books on word formation**, such as Koziol (1937) and Marchand (1969), **they played a noticeable role in the development of English vocabulary.** Modern ludic coinages like *edu-ma-cation*, the mispronunciation *rigamarole* for *rigmarole* (for which dialects provide numerous parallels), the popularity of nursery words like *peek-a-boo* and *rub-a-dub-dub*, and jocular words like *grizzle-de-mundy* make the hypothesis that *Hobert-de-hoy* is derived from *\*Hobert le Hoy* under the influence of *Flibber-ti-gibbet* and its kin plausible.

4. **Both *ragamuffin* and *hobbledehoy* seem to have been coined as the names of fiends (devils, sprites). Their original meanings are now forgotten, but the negative connotations they once possessed have survived.** *Ragamuffin* is a word that can be applied to a person of any age, though perhaps more often to a youngster (see Spitzer's remarks above), as in the title of James Greenwood's novel *The True History of a Little Ragamuffin*. The definition in AHD runs as follows: '[a] dirty or unkempt child.' RHD says: "1. a ragged, disreputable person; tatterdemalion. 2. a child in ragged, ill-fitting, dirty clothes." OED found it necessary to gloss *ragamuffin* "a ragged, dirty, disreputable man or boy" (italics added). King Rag(e)man, Auld Maufi, and King Robert were full-grown devils, but the loss of status resulted in their loss of stature. In *boy*, a baby word for 'brother' and a word for 'devil' have merged; its case is reminiscent of both *ragamuffin* and *hobbledehoy*. In Middle English, *boy* may have meant 'executioner,' and *ragman* 'hangman's assistant' has also been recorded. The proper name *Boi(e)* was current several centuries before the common name turned up in texts for the first time (see the details at BOY), and this is what happened to *ragamuffin* and presumably to *hobbledehoy*. *Rag-a-muffin* and *hobble-de-hoy* have not only had a similar semantic history; both are extended forms, though with different augments.

## 2<sup>es</sup> Journées allemandes des dictionnaires

### Colloque international de lexicographie à la mémoire de Josette Rey-Debove

International symposium of lexicography, in memory of Josette Rey-Debove

#### Le Dictionnaire maître de langue : lexicographie et didactique

[The Dictionary, Master of Language: Lexicography and Didactics]

7-9 July 2006

Klingenberg am Main, Germany

<http://www.ias.uni-erlangen.de/jad.php>

Following the *Journées allemandes des dictionnaires*, held in June 2004 in Klingenberg am Main, the Institute of Applied Linguistics at Erlangen University (Institut für Angewandte Sprachwissenschaft) is organizing an international lexicography conference for the second time. The “Second German Days of Dictionaries” will have as its central theme *lexicography and didactics*. Michaela Heinz is responsible for the conference, and Franz-Josef Hausmann is its scientific consultant. It is sponsored by, among others, the German National Research Fund and the Embassy of France. The language of the conference is French.

itself – its codes, its abbreviations, and its structure. What does lexicography do in order to facilitate this learning? What should it do? (cf. P. Bogaards’ paper).

Monolingual dictionaries for children help them to acquire the first words of French as their mother tongue. This raises the importance of adapting the lexicographic definitions in consideration of the children’s audience (cf. M. Rossi).

- The didactic aspects of different types of bilingual dictionaries

A dictionary is an archetypal didactic piece of work. Its “didacticity” may be more or less premeditated, more or less evident, or more or less hidden. We can always reveal in it some didactic aspect, in relation to its size, its status, and the targeted audience and age group (French as a foreign language or French as a native language, professionals or language learners, adults, students or children, etc). The wide category of bilingual dictionaries serves to uncover the didactic features of various types of dictionaries (cf. R. Brockmeier, V. Schnorr, M. Back, I. Kernerman, M.-Cl. Jadin, S. Schneider, A. Farina).

- Dictionary and electronic medium

A dictionary in book form does not help vocabulary acquisition in the same way as the same dictionary in electronic form. A traditional printed dictionary that has been computerized does not have the same qualities as one conceived a priori for electronic usage. A dictionary in book form, but produced on computer, looks different than a dictionary in book form that was not created by electronic means. Similarly, a learners dictionary on CD has different constraints than an online dictionary. What are the merits, the shortcomings, and the difficulties concerning these different forms, and electronic media in particular? (cf. U. Heid, J. Binon / S. Verlinde, I. Kernerman, M. Back).

- Monolingual dictionaries – some particular lexicographic information

It is rare to find non-professional users who are familiar with how to use a dictionary for purposes other than word search. Yet good dictionaries offer many more kinds of information, often unsuspected. These include details about grammar, morphologic relations, etc. (cf. B. Gaillard, F. Martin-Berthet).

**Josette Rey-Debove** was a highly respected linguist who devoted her professional life to the study of words and the making of dictionaries. Her incisive and impassioned approach to linguistic issues earned her a reputation as both a scholar and a provocateur. She wrote books on lexical semantics and semiotics, and advised official bodies on spelling reform and the feminization of French nouns. Her main contribution to semiotic theory, entitled *Le Métalangage*, deals with a central topic in lexicographic studies. Josette Rey-Debove made a fundamental contribution to several prestigious dictionaries, including the *Grand Robert* and *Petit Robert*. She also created the *Robert méthodique/Brio*, an innovative dictionary that analyses the lexical morphology of the French language, and a dictionary for learners of French, the *Dictionnaire du français* (Le Robert/CLE).



Josette Rey-Debove

Josette Rey-Debove was at the heart of the 2004 conference, and the idea for organizing another such event was inspired by her. Her work, both metalexicographic and lexicographic, again serves as a thematic basis of the conference, in particular her learners dictionaries for different audiences: *le Petit Robert des Enfants*, *le Robert méthodique/Brio*, *le Robert quotidien*, and *le Dictionnaire du français*.

Josette Rey-Debove passed away suddenly on 22 February 2005. The conference *Le Dictionnaire maître de langue* is dedicated to her memory. Alain Rey will deliver the opening memorial address.

The program contains the following themes:

- Learning to learn: learning from the dictionary; learning first words

A dictionary, whether bilingual or monolingual, always plays an important role in vocabulary acquisition, especially in electronic applications. But prior to that, one must “learn” the dictionary

Using information boxes (a device that turns out to be more and more frequent in contemporary dictionaries, whether monolingual and bilingual) enables lexicographers to address users in a less rigid style than entries with a fixed information structure (cf. M. Heinz).

• The dictionary as a countermeasure against linguistic insecurity

For a large number of French speakers, a word or meaning “which is not in the dictionary” is considered to be suspicious or linguistically inexistent. This attitude derives from a linguistic insecurity encountered not only by non-French native speakers of French (such as in Belgium, Switzerland, Québec), who speak another variety of the French language than that spoken in France, but also by some Frenchmen living in regions outside Paris, whose spoken language deviates from the (implicit) Parisian norm. Dictionaries have the power to deal with such insecurity by endorsing (or not) the regional or “popular” words when registering them (or not) in their pages. The lexicographic treatment of these words requires a certain didactic presentation because the dictionaries that record diatopic varieties also serve as learning tools, and not only for reference purposes (cf. M. Berré, L. Mercier, A. Thibault).

In the past, not long ago, when many Frenchmen spoke regional languages other than French, bilingual dictionaries were made for such audiences (cf. P. Rézeau).

• Pictures and dictionaries

Since the publication of Comenius’ *Orbis Pictus* (1658), the pedagogic and didactic power of images in the process of learning words has not been refuted. Particularly, dictionaries for children and pupils cannot be but illustrated. But modern techniques enable the illustration of dictionaries for adults as well. What is the relation between a picture and a lexicographic description? Should figurative phrases be illustrated, and if so how? What are the didactic effects of typically French “iconophores”? (cf. M.-Cl. Jadin, J. Wolfbauer / E. Worbs, T. Van Male; see also the discussion between J. Rey-Debove and F. Corbin in the first Klingenberg conference, 2004).

• Larousse, master of language

For over a century, Pierre Larousse and the dictionaries that bear his name have been synonymous with “masters of language”. What has led Pierre Larousse to the *Petit Larousse*? (cf. J. Pruvost).

Michaela Heinz

Conference organizer

heinz.michaela@t-online.de

## PROGRAM

- Alain Rey (Dictionnaires Le Robert, Paris, France). Théorie et pratique lexicales : une dialectique (l’exemple de Josette Rey-Debove) [Lexical theory and practice: a dialectic (the example of Josette Rey-Debove)]
- Paul Bogaards (Universiteit Leiden, the Netherlands). Du bon usage des dictionnaires : étude critique des quelques livrets d’accompagnement [On good usage of dictionaries: a critical study of some accompanying workbooks]
- Ralf Brockmeier (Éditions Larousse, Paris, France). Le tournant didactique des dictionnaires bilingues Larousse : un premier bilan [The didactic change of Larousse bilingual dictionaries: a first appraisal]
- Veronika Schnorr (Büro für Lexikographie, Stuttgart, Germany). Ressemblances et différences entre dictionnaire bilingue général, dictionnaire d’apprentissage et vocabulaire de base [Similarities and differences among general bilingual dictionaries, learners dictionaries and basic vocabularies]
- Martyn Back (Dictionnaires Le Robert, Paris, France). Conception et réalisation des *Robert Collins Junior Bilingue* [Design and creation of the *Robert Collins Junior Bilingue*]
- Ilan Kernerman (K Dictionaries, Tel Aviv, Israel). Le dictionnaire semi-bilingue et au-delà [The semi-bilingual dictionary and beyond]
- Ulrich Heid (Universität Stuttgart, Germany). Les collocations dans les dictionnaires didactiques électroniques [Collocations in electronic learners dictionaries]
- Jean Binon / Serge Verlinde (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium). De la lexicographie d’apprentissage à l’environnement d’apprentissage [From learners lexicography to learners environment]
- Marie-Claude Jadin (Lexicographe, Nancy, France). Les dictionnaires bilingues (français et allemand) [Bilingual dictionaries (French and German)]
- Simone Schneider (Universität Würzburg, Germany). L’utilisation des dictionnaires monolingues français dans les lycées bavarois [The use of French monolingual dictionaries in Bavarian high schools]
- Michaela Heinz (Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany). Les encadrés du *Robert quotidien* [The information boxes in the *Robert quotidien*]
- Françoise Martin-Berthet (Université Paris-XIII, France). Didactique de la morphologie lexicale : le *Robert Brio* [Didactics of lexical morphology: the *Robert Brio*]
- Annick Farina (Università degli Studi di Firenze, Italy). Problèmes de traitement des « pragmatèmes » dans les dictionnaires bilingues [Problems of treating “pragmatèmes” in bilingual dictionaries]
- Pierre Rézeau (Lexicographe, Strasbourg, France). Un dictionnaire languedocien-français anonyme (ca 1800) et ses vertus pour l’apprentissage du français [An anonymous Languedocian-French dictionary (ca. 1800) and its virtues for the learning of French]
- Michel Berré (Université de Mons-Hainaut, Belgium). Enseignement des langues et vocabulaires de base : quelques observations sur le *Basiswoordenschat* de Verlée (1954) et le *Dictionnaire fondamental de la langue française* de Gougenheim (1958) [Teaching languages and basic vocabularies: some observations about the *Basiswoordenschat* of Verlée (1954) and the *Dictionnaire fondamental de la langue française* of Gougenheim (1958)]
- Louis Mercier (Université de Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada). Différents usages linguistiques, différents contextes référentiels : comment un dictionnaire peut aider ses lecteurs à mieux comprendre la variation du français [Different linguistic usages, different referential contexts: how a dictionary can help its readers to better understand the variation in French]
- André Thibault (Université de Paris-Sorbonne, France). Aspects didactiques du traitement des régionalismes dans le TLF [Didactic aspects of the treatment of regionalisms in the TLF]
- Micaela Rossi (Università degli studi di Genova, Italy). Dictionnaires pour enfants et apprentissage du lexique : les enjeux de la définition [Dictionaries for children and vocabulary acquisition: issues of definition]
- Bénédicte Gaillard (Lexicographe, Paris, France). Le statut de la grammaire dans les dictionnaires pour apprenants [The status of grammar in dictionaries for learners]
- Julia Wolfbauer / Emmanuelle Worbs (Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany). *Mille et un bonheurs d’expression* – un dictionnaire phraséologique d’apprentissage (par Michel Boucher) [A thousand and one joys of expression – a phraseological learners dictionary (by Michel Boucher)]
- Thora Van Male (Université de Grenoble, France). Dessins et desseins : les illustrations ornementales du *Grand dictionnaire universel* de Pierre Larousse [Drawings and plans : the ornamental illustrations of the *Grand dictionnaire universel* of Pierre Larousse]
- Jean Pruvost (Université de Cergy-Pontoise, France). Larousse – d’un instituteur à une collection de dictionnaires pour enfants [Larousse – from school teacher to a series of children’s dictionaries]

# The foundation of AFRILEX

Mariëtta Alberts



Mariëtta Alberts started her career as a terminologist in 1971 at the Department of National Education in South Africa, where she later became secretary of the Coordinating Terminology Board. Her research interests include terminology, lexicography and computational linguistics, and she has been actively engaged in creating training programs for several South African entities. Among her many roles, she has served as Head of departments in the National Language Service, part-time lecturer in Lexicography and Terminology at the University of Pretoria, and Manager at the Pan South African Language Board, a position that she currently holds. Dr. Alberts holds membership in the ISO TC/37, served as Executive of the South African Translators' Institute and was elected Vice-Chairperson of the International Information Centre for Terminology. She is a founding member of the Centre for Legal Terminology in African Languages, where she serves as secretary on the Executive Board, and of the African Association for Lexicography, where she was re-elected as President in July 2005. [marietta@pansalb.org.za](mailto:marietta@pansalb.org.za)

## 1. Background

In 1992, the Board of Control of the Bureau of the Woordboek van die Afrikaanse Taal (BCBWAT) conducted a feasibility study to determine if there were a need to establish the Southern African Institute for Lexicography. The purpose of such an institute was to unite the various local private and governmental bodies involved in dictionary practice that existed due to historical, cultural and other reasons. The research was entrusted to Prof. William Branford and myself, and was funded by the Gencor Development Trust. While initiating the idea, the BCBWAT members realized that such an institute could not be established without the consent, support and collaboration of all the players in the Southern African lexicography scene.

At the time, only the official dictionary offices of Afrikaans and English (the Bureau of the WAT and the Dictionary for South African English (DSAE), respectively) received funding from the government of South Africa. This was due to the bilingual policy of the country held until then. The local African languages received no official funding; the few dictionaries compiled were either university-based or private initiatives. Proper funding was needed to produce more dictionaries and to train lexicographers and terminologists for all Southern African languages. It was thought that a national institute could disseminate available expertise and provide in-house training.

Three areas were researched: the need for a Southern African Institute for Lexicography, its structure, and the collaboration between the various interested parties. The target respondents included all known individuals, institutions and bodies involved in lexicography and related professions. They received a cover letter, a document including information about the purpose of the research, and a questionnaire.

## 2. Feasibility study

The study showed that the main concern of the respondents was the lack of coordination in lexicographic efforts. Respondents wanted collaboration, training and sharing of knowledge in the field, but they did not agree that a formal structure, such as an institute, was the way to go about it. There was

much reservation about introducing a new administrative controlling system, underlain by the fear that an institute might hamper private initiatives and activities.

Some respondents suggested that a coordinating body, a clearinghouse or an association, could be established as an interim structure before deciding to have an institute. An association for lexicography could reunite interested parties without undermining individual projects, while offering expertise, training, information, news, etc.

The feasibility study indicated that the time was not ripe for the establishment of an Institute for Southern African Lexicography, but that a professional association for Southern African lexicography should be immediately established, to address the communication and coordination needs of the respondents. The association could initially function under the auspices of the Linguistic Association of Southern Africa (LSSA).

## *Aims of the professional association*

The study recommended that the professional association should, to ensure autonomy, have its own constitution and formulate its own aims and projects. It was suggested that the association should provide the following services:

- establish a liaison office or clearing house to coordinate projects;
- set an email network;
- issue a quarterly newsletter;
- publish an accredited magazine (e.g. *Lexikos* of the AFRILEX series);
- organize an annual conference to share professional information;
- formulate a national policy regarding lexicography.

## *Funding*

An association would require less funding than an institute, yet membership fees alone could not sustain it. Those involved in planning should look into funding possibilities. An important aspect to take into consideration was addressing the existing imbalance between public spending on Afrikaans and English compared to that of African languages.

## *Publishers*

Lexicography depends to a great extent on publishing houses. Some have an



excellent record of dictionary publication. Others try to make a profit without taking into consideration the overhead and research cost involved in the lexicographic process. Publishers should be encouraged to effectively finance dictionary research and compilation, and to support the association financially.

#### **How to proceed**

It was suggested that:

- all respondents should be informed of the envisaged professional association;
- respondents who indicated interest in the association should be contacted to take part in the process of its planning;
- all the respondents and other interested parties should be invited to join the association and become members;
- a meeting should be called as soon as possible to gather all interested parties for the establishment of such a professional association;
- feedback regarding the outcomes of the feasibility study should be given to all respondents;
- the report on the feasibility study should be made available to all interested parties and decision-makers in the field of lexicography.

#### **Concluding remarks**

The results of the feasibility study indicated a keen interest in a unifying body among lexicographers and members of related professions. It was clear that there was not, as yet, a need for an official institute. It was strongly felt that whatever body is formed, it should not be bureaucratically structured and should not restrict individual freedom, *inter alia* with regard to management and control.

Therefore, the research team suggested that a professional association for lexicography be established to meet the needs of lexicographers and other related interest groups.

The report on the feasibility study was presented to the BCBWAT in 1992, and Afrikaans and English versions were published in 1993. Board members were obviously not in full agreement with the conclusions of the study since they had hoped that the respondents would have agreed on the establishment of an Institute for Southern African Lexicography.

#### **3. The establishment of AFRILEX**

In 1995, Daan Prinsloo and I drafted a questionnaire to test the viability of an association for lexicography. Over 800 copies were sent to members of ALASA, LSSA, publishers, government

departments, and even political parties. The idea was greeted with overwhelming enthusiasm that left no option but to establish an association.

On 14 July 1995, several lexicographers, academics and others met at the Eighth International Conference of the African Languages Association for South Africa (ALASA) to establish a professional lexicography association, the African Association for Lexicography.

Dr. Reinhard R.K. Hartmann chaired the inaugural meeting and facilitated the entire process, including the election of office bearers. Prof. Rufus Gouws was elected Chairperson, Ms. Irene Dippenaar and Prof. Sizwe Satyo were elected as Vice-Chairpersons, Dr. Mariëtte Alberts as Secretary-Treasurer, and Prof. Daan Prinsloo as Organiser. Mr. Pieter Hartevelt, as Editor of *Lexikos*, was co-opted to the Board.

The Bureau of the WAT granted permission to the association to adopt the name AFRILEX and its publication, *Lexikos*, became the official mouthpiece of the African Association for Lexicography.

A related issue concerns the establishment of the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) with eleven National Lexicography Units (NLUs). The NLUs function under the auspices and financial backing of PanSALB. Each NLU is managed by an Editor-in-Chief. The Bureau of the WAT and the DSAE have become the NLUs for Afrikaans and English, respectively, and remain in their locations of Stellenbosch and Grahamstown, respectively. Nine African language NLUs have been established and they are hosted at tertiary institutions in the geo-linguistic area where their majority native language speakers live. Employees of the NLUs are members of AFRILEX and participate regularly in its activities.

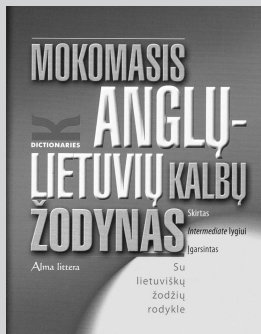
#### **4. Present situation**

AFRILEX promotes and coordinates the research, study and teaching of lexicography in Southern Africa, in the broadest sense. It acts to train lexicographers, terminologists and other language practitioners in lexicographic principles and practice, organizes regular international conferences and local seminars on topics that are of current relevance, and publishes a journal as well as with other relevant literature. Membership is open to all individuals and institutions with an interest in lexicography. This creates a mutually stimulating environment conducive to



**PASSWORD English Dictionary for Speakers of Slovenian**  
**Elektronska izdaja na plošči CD-ROM**  
 DZS  
 Ljubljana, Slovenia  
 December 2005  
 ISBN 86-341-3839-9  
<http://www.dzs.si>  
<http://kdictionaries.com/products/medium/pwesi.html>

From the series  
 KERNERMAN SEMI-BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES



**PASSWORD Electronic Dictionary**

**Mokomasis Anglų-Lietuvių Kalbų žodynas**  
**English-Lithuanian Learners Dictionary**

ALMA LITTERA

Vilnius, Lithuania

December 2005

ISBN 9955-08-695-5

<http://www.almali.lt>

<http://kictionaries.com/products/medium/pwslt.html>

From the series

KERNERMAN SEMI-BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES

the exchange of ideas for researchers and practitioners in this field.

AFRILEX is managed by a Board that is elected biannually by postal ballots and holds annual general meetings during its international conferences. The first Board drafted a constitution that was adopted at the first meeting. Over the years, some amendments have been made to the constitution for keeping it updated and relevant. Each Board member has an allocated task to fulfill:

- President: oversees the activities of the association and its liaison with other associations;
- Vice-President: performs the responsibilities of the President when the President cannot do so;
- Secretary: writes minutes and letters, and liaises with board members and general members;
- Registrar: updates address lists, manages and maintains the database;
- Treasurer: responsible for the change of signatories, processing membership fees and preparation of auditor's reports;
- Organizer: organizes seminars, tutorials and the annual conference, and liaises with other associations;
- Webmaster: maintains the website.

The Board coordinates conference dates with those of other local linguistic associations such as ALASA and LSSA. It cooperates with international lexicography associations such as EURALEX, ASIALEX, AUSTRALEX, the Dictionary Society of North America (DSNA), etc, and its members attend conferences of these associations whenever possible.

AFRILEX holds its international conferences by invitation at tertiary or lexicographic institutions. The Tenth anniversary of the association was celebrated at the 2005 conference hosted by the Sesiú Sesotho Dictionary Unit at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein. The Eleventh International Conference is to be held in July 2006 at the University of Venda for Science and

Technology in Thohoyandou, with the central theme of "The user perspective in lexicography".

Certificates of merit in recognition of contribution to AFRILEX have been presented to three members so far: Dr. Johan du Plessis, Editor of *Lexikos*, and two previous chairpersons, Prof. Rufus Gouws and Prof. Daan Prinsloo. There is also one honorary member, Prof. A.C. Nkabinde.

AFRILEX is fortunate to have an accredited magazine such as *Lexikos*, which is published by the Bureau of the WAT and serves to promote lexicography in its broadest sense. The editor, Dr. Johan du Plessis, has retired from his position as the final editor at the Bureau, but keeps his post as editor of *Lexikos*. AFRILEX shares responsibility for the future existence of *Lexikos* with the Bureau of the WAT.

The *Lexikos* encouragement prize for scholarly writing was initiated in 2005. This prize aims to encourage students in lexicography and young lexicographers to conduct significant research in their field of study, and to raise the standard of scholarly writing in the field of lexicography. Contenders to the prize submit articles dealing with lexicographical or metalexicographical aspects of languages used in Africa, and the winning article is published in *Lexikos*.

## 5. Conclusion

The membership of AFRILEX is comprised of dictionary compilers, members of the lexicography teams of the eleven NLUs, compilers of terminology lists or technical dictionaries for Language for Special Purposes, directors and members of various language boards and advisory bodies, lecturers and students of metalexicography and terminology, and other language practitioners such as translators, editors, interpreters, teachers and journalists.

The members of AFRILEX have a responsibility towards the various speech communities they serve, helping to preserve African languages and develop them into functional languages in all spheres of life, while encouraging all of the various language communities to stretch their communication skills to the fullest.

**Alberts, M.** 1993. *Feasibility Study: Institute for Southern African Lexicography/ Lewensvatbaarheidstudie: Instituut vir Suider-Afrikaanse Leksikografie*. Bureau of the WAT, Stellenbosch.

<http://afrilex.africanlanguages.com>



M. Alberts, R. Hartmann, R. Gouws and D. Prinsloo with the AFRILEX emblem (2005)

## Sixth International School in Lexicography Ivanovo State University, 2005

Olga Karpova

The Ivanovo International School in Lexicography dates back to 1995, and attracts scientists and young scholars from around the world. Participants have a chance to listen to prominent professionals and take part in first-hand scientific discussions at roundtable sessions.

The sixth seminar was held at Ivanovo State University on 12-14 September 2005, with the central theme of "Lexicon, Lexicography, Terminography in Russian, American and Other Cultures". Participants included over a hundred prominent linguists and young researchers from universities throughout Russia and from abroad. Discussions focused on current linguistic issues, notably cross-cultural communication, and the lexicographic scene of the English, Russian, German, French and Arabic languages, the latest trends in terminography, learners and bilingual dictionaries, projects of new reference works, etc.

There were two keynote speakers at the conference. Prof. Heribert Picht (Germany) discussed the problems of scientific knowledge-engineering in language for special purposes, professional communication, a terminology study and non-verbal presentation of special knowledge. Prof. Ken Haseley (USA), discussed effective communication skills in the world of professional communication and the exchange of special information.

Eight roundtable discussions took place along with plenary sessions, and were chaired by leading Russian scientists: Prof. K.Y. Averboukh (Moscow), Prof. L.M. Alexeeva (Perm) – "Modern Terminology Study: Crisis of Ideas or New Stage of Development?"; Prof. G.E. Kreydlin (Moscow), Prof. F.I. Kartashkova (Ivanovo) – "Problems of Nonverbal Communication"; Prof. M.L. Makarov (Tver), Prof. T.V. Levina (Vladimir) – "Lexicology Problems of Discourse-Analysis"; Prof. V.A. Vinogradov (Moscow) – "Contrastive Lexicology and Linguistic Illustrations of the World"; Prof. I.A. Tarasova (Saratov), Associate Professor L.L. Shestakova (Moscow) – "Authors' Dictionaries in Lexicography of Various Nations"; Associate Professor O.A. Uzhova (Ivanovo) – "Dictionary of Language and Culture as a Means

of Cross-Cultural Communication Development"; Prof. G.M. Vishnevskaya (Ivanovo) – "Phonetic Characteristics of Various Types of Dictionaries. New Trends in Lexicography"; Prof. A.N. Taganov (Ivanovo) – "Word of Fiction in the Space of Culture".

The lecture by Prof. S.G. Ter-Minasova (Moscow), "War and Peace of Languages and Culture", was rich in vivid examples illustrating cultural stereotypes of various nations, as well as difficulties concerning cross-cultural communication. The presentation by J. Tulloch (Oxford), editorial manager of Oxford English Dictionary, concerned the history, development and current state of compiling the OED. Prof. L.M. Alexeeva (Perm) discussed medical terminology. Prof. N.V. Vasilieva (Moscow) discussed peculiarities of describing proper names in various types

The Seventh Ivanovo conference is due to be held in September 2007, and will feature Prof. G. Iamartino (Italy) and Dr. Ch. Lauren (Finland) as guest speakers.

<http://ivanovo.ac.ru/win1251/english/structure/prorect/seminar6.htm>



Inauguration  
of the Sixth  
Seminar

of dictionaries. Prof. L.A. Solnishkina (Kazan) presented a new dictionary project of Russian marine jargon. Prof. I.S. Keselman (Orel) discussed the dictionary of textual chains with special reference to EFL/ESL. Dr. N. Kassir (Haifa, Israel) discussed Russian-Arabic contacts and ways of describing lexical borrowings in a dictionary. Dr. O.M. Karpova (Ivanov) and her group of young researchers made a joint presentation of the latest Collins dictionaries.

The biannual international schools and seminars held at Ivanovo State University host a growing number of linguists and scientists from many countries. These events in the lexicographic world serve as a stimulus to the further development of reference sciences and the compilation of new types of dictionaries. They have become a unifying force for the international linguistic community, while enhancing the university's scientific relations with other universities in Russia and worldwide.



# PASSWORD Semi-Bilingual English-Chinese Dictionary

Liu Jin

Liu Jin is an assistant editor at the Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, majoring in International Chinese.

## 上海辞书出版社

The Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House was formed in 1978 from the Cihai Editing Department of Zhong Hua Book Company. It is the first publishing house in China that specializes in reference works, including various types of dictionaries, chronological tables, indexes, yearbooks, etc. Over the years, it has published over 730 titles, with seventy million copies sold. Fourteen of its publications received the honorable title of the National Book Award, the supreme book award of China, and 25 dictionaries, such as *A Comprehensive Dictionary of Chinese Idioms and Phrases*, won the China Dictionary Award. In 1994 it was named the National Publishing House of Excellence.

457 North Shaansi Road  
Shanghai 200040 China  
cishu@online.sh.cn  
<http://www.cishu.com.cn>



In May 2005, the *PASSWORD Semi-Bilingual English-Chinese Dictionary* was published by Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House (SLPH), with the cooperation of K Dictionaries Ltd (KD). This brought to the fore the significant role played by semi-bilingual learners dictionaries in the field of foreign language teaching in China. With this recent publication, it is fitting to elaborate on the *whys* and *wherefores* of the research and development of this new type of dictionary.

Our original intent to publish such a dictionary was inspired by an article written in 2001 by Xu Hai, from the Lexicography Research Center of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (<http://bilex.gdufs.edu.cn>), in which he made a full and detailed exposition of the academic reasoning for the use of the semi-bilingual dictionary – a novel member in the family of dictionaries. The ideas conveyed in the article held enormous appeal and we took them very seriously. In 2002, after meticulous modifications and editing, Xu's article was published in *Lexicographical Studies* (Vol. 2), a journal of the China Lexicographical Association (reprinted online, <http://kdictionaries.com/kdn/kdn14/kdn14-pwzh-x.pdf>). This is a unique professional periodical in the field of lexicography in China, published by SLPH. Ilan Kernerman, Managing Director of KD, paid a visit to our publishing house in 2003. Soon after we reached a collaborative agreement, which is how the dictionary came into being.

The reasons why we strongly recommend this new type of dictionary in China are as follows:

- The semi-bilingual English-Chinese dictionary can make up for the inadequacy of general English-Chinese dictionaries by providing the English explanation and examples of usage of the entry.
- It can make up for the inadequacy of monolingual English learners dictionaries by providing Chinese equivalences.
- It remedies the deficiency of English-Chinese bilingual dictionaries. It is designed in such a way that its users

are encouraged to read and think in English with a minimum need for using Chinese.

- It paves the way for readers to use monolingual English dictionaries, since the original English version constitutes the core of this dictionary.

- Last but not least, its comparatively lower cost to that of general English-Chinese bilingual dictionaries is appealing to users.

We made additional modifications by taking the current state of China's English teaching into consideration. For example, in the course of editing, we supplemented the words required by the English school syllabus in China. We provided KD with a list of well over 150 English words, which they

compiled into entries and we, in turn, translated to Chinese.

The dictionary was launched into the Chinese market in 2005, in full collaboration with KD. We were highly honored to have had the assistance of Prof. Huang Jianhua, chairman of the Commission of Bilingual Dictionaries of the Lexicographical Association of China (<http://bilex.gdufs.edu.cn/others/bilex.htm>). In his Preface to the dictionary, writing with coruscating wit, he gives a lucid and academic exposition of the importance of the semi-bilingual dictionary in active language learning.

Professor Huang drew an analogy between the semi-bilingual dictionary and "something that is neither fish nor fowl", eliciting a positive connotation from this usually negative phrase. He referred to the semi-bilingual dictionary as a "new type of thing" that cannot be exactly categorized and therefore integrates the advantages of both categories. In his point of view, the concept of the dictionary is based on the psychology of vocabulary acquisition in foreign language learning as applied in learners dictionaries.

In brief, the minimalistic translation that is provided in the semi-bilingual approach is by no means a "lazy" dictionary layout; rather, it is one that prominently promotes learner-friendly features.

