Abstract

In recent decades, a profound interest in all kinds of lexicographic work has been observed, and – in particular – in monolingual English dictionaries compiled specifically for the use and convenience of EFL learners. On the practical side, this should be viewed in the context of the growing importance of TEFL problems, which eventually led to the regular publication of EFL GAZETTE in the late 1970s, a newspaper concerned primarily with English as a foreign language. Among the subjects discussed within the canvas of this monthly publication, the whole array of English training courses are presented and reviewed, English language institutions are introduced, the issues revolving round specialised Englishes, and – most significantly to our present discussion – learners’ dictionaries are also a particular focus in the current discussion of both lexicographic theory and practice (see, for example, Hartman, 1979, 1983; Ilson, 1985; Cowie, 1981, 1987). Obviously, the science of metalexicography hardly existed as a formal discipline at the time of the advent of first monolingual learners’ dictionaries. It was evident, however, that non-native dictionary users needed detailed guidance on particular points of grammar and usage. As a result of the vast improvement in the resources available to lexicographers, EFL dictionaries have undergone numerous core changes. New features acquired the status of convention, as the monolingual learner’s dictionary developed into a distinct genre (Rundel 1998). These features included a shift towards the enlargement of vocabulary suitable for precise definition, syntax and inflection in a detailed, usable form (on this issue see Cowie, 1983b; Benson & Ilson, 1986).

Accordingly, the main objective of the paper is to outline recent developments within EFL lexicography. These may be said to include the following points in no particular order of importance: (i) navigation, (ii) style/register, (iii) phraseology, (iv) lexical relations, (v) grammar and syntax, (vi) illustrations, (vii) examples.

This paper enlarges on issues raised earlier in Włodarczyk-Stachurska (2010).

Key words

lexicography, style, register, labels, navigation, examples

It is evident that EFL dictionaries are far from being a novelty in any sense. Originally, at the beginning of the 17th century, monolingual dictionaries were merely lists of words and these lists of words were expanded into the first lexicographic publications. As Jackson (2002, p. 37) reports, the beginning of the 18th century brought a new focus to the monolingual English dictionary, with the
publication of *A New English Dictionary* in 1702. Bailey's *Universal Etymological English Dictionary* of 1721 had a fundamentally different aim, because, according to Collinge (1990, p. 674):

> It set out to include all words, not for the sake of completeness itself (...) but for the purpose of explaining derivation. The Universal contained cant terms, proverbs and dialect words, and in its 1740 edition was the first dictionary to mark stress position. Later, in 1730, the *Dictionarium Britannicum* was published which was to form working basis of the outstanding lexicographical achievement of the century.

As far as the more recent history of the *EFL* dictionary is concerned, the first of the modern dictionaries was *The New Method English Dictionary* (1935) compiled by West and Endicott, which was almost immediately displaced by *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (henceforth: *OALD*) (1942), published in Japan, under the name of *Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary*. In 1978, the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (henceforth: *LDCE*) appeared, and in 1987 *Collins Cobuild Advanced Dictionary* (henceforth: *CCAD*) was published for the first time. Specialists in the field of lexicography agree almost unanimously that neither *LDCE* nor *CCAD* were as revolutionary as it was originally claimed (see, for example, Cowie, 1999a, p. 105; Hausmann & Gorbhan, 1989, p. 44-56), though Cowie (1999a, p. 105) comments that they “(...) bring the learner's dictionary into line with more recent developments in linguistics.”

As Cowie (1999) goes to great lengths to explain, there has taken place an expansion of the established conventions of dictionary macrostructure (here the term is understood after Burkhanov, 1998, as the arrangement of the stock of lemmata in the word list) with a set of features that were shaped by the actual needs of non-native users of English. In the course of time the features obtained the status of conventions. The following fundamentals should be noted:

1) **Vocabulary control** – as a consequence of Hornby, Palmer and West’s research into vocabulary, they created a learner-oriented dictionary. The important aspect of vocabulary control was the emphasis placed on meaning and idioms of the most common words. The other thing was the notion of the restricted defining vocabulary (limited number of lexical items in their direct senses), either in the form of an explicit list or the use of simple vocabulary and grammatical structures in the defining process (for the more detailed discussion on the history of *MLD* see, among others, Rundell, 1998).

2) **Grammatical and syntactic information** – the attempt to meet the encoding needs of the *EFL* students led to a more detailed description of
grammatical categories and syntactic preferences. (Initially Palmer, 1938, presented a systematic account of verb complementation, subsequently Hornby absorbed the scheme).

3) The role of examples – the examples appeared to be a special need, particularly required by the non-native learners of English. From the times of Hornby and his fellows they started to appear extensively. The examples functioned as a model that learners could use.

4) Phraseology – the roots of the idea of the tendency of writers and speakers to store, retrieve, and process language very largely in chunks are dated back to the times of the work by Palmer and Hornby in the 1930s. According to Cowie (1999b, p. 10), their research revealed the prevalence of ready-made sequences in everyday speech and writing, and helped pave the way for the strong upsurge of interest in phraseology of the 1980s and 1990s. According to Rundell (1998, p. 317), the concern for describing and explaining phraseology has been one of the key features of the MLD ever since.

One may venture to say that the situation has changed substantially since the advent of the second and third generation of learners’ dictionaries. According to Cowie (1990, p. 691), the main reason behind this was the growth of critical awareness among the EFL lexicographers, as well as the growing awareness of the study needs of the foreign students. Zgusta (1988, p. vi), who introduced user-perspective theory, contributed to models that allowed practical lexicographers to compile dictionaries aimed at target user groups by taking cognizance of their specific needs and reference skills. As a consequence, Cowie (1990, p. 691) concludes that “(...) the interests of researches have broadened to take account not only of what a dictionary contains but also of the user’s motives in turning to it in the first place.” Obviously, one has no choice but to agree with Hartmann (2001, p. 87) who indicates that such needs are different for different user groups.

On the whole, one is entitled to say that in recent years EFL dictionaries have been designed to meet the needs of all potential users. The ongoing changes are the obvious consequences of developments in descriptive linguistics, as well as a growing awareness of the needs of EFL students. At the same time, as pointed out by Cowie (1981, p. 206): “(...) there is a real danger of opening the gap which is known to exist between the sophistication of some features of dictionary design and the user’s often rudimentary reference skills. Dictionary makers should (...) have the limits of acceptable innovation.”

Before we proceed with our discussion, one further issue needs to be addressed, namely the concept of user-related research. The starting point in the aforementioned discussion was the Exeter conference organised by Hartmann back in 1972. The conference started a period of intense investigation into both
the users and uses of learner's dictionaries. Since that time, studies have been conducted in different countries, at different levels, and against a variety of first-language backgrounds. In 1987 Hartmann published a critical survey of the research and singled out four points of focus (after Cowie, 1999, p. 177); that is:

1) identifying the specific categories of linguistic information (e.g. meaning, spelling, pronunciation, grammar) perceived as important by particular groups of dictionary users;

2) seeking to throw light on the users themselves, and on their assumptions and expectations in turning to the dictionary;

3) investigating the study of occupational activities in the course of which and in support of which a dictionary is used;

4) investigating the reference skills which users have developed, or need to develop, to use their dictionaries more effectively, and evaluating teaching programmes or aids designed to enhance such skills.

Clearly, some revealing observations seem to emerge from studying the findings of the above-mentioned fields of enquiry. (Some scholars have questioned the value of dictionary users' views gathered by means of questionnaires, see Cowie, 1999, p. 178). To start with, user-oriented studies emerged in the late 1970s lexicographic. Tomaszczyk (1979) examined two groups of users. The first of which consisted of university students, and the second group of users included translators and instructors. When asked what dictionary they consulted for information of a given type, MLDs owners expressed the highest level of satisfaction with the information provided (see Tomaszczyk, 1979, p. 111). Cowie (1999) informs us that – along similar lines – Béjoint (1981), Marello (1989) and Al Ajmi (1992) investigated the learners' attitudes towards MLDs. Thus, for instance, as pointed out by Marello (1989, p. 109), students generally prefer to use the monolingual dictionary as a source of meaning. Not surprisingly then, also Al Ajmi (1992, p. 157 in Cowie, 1999a) remarks that advanced users of the MLD show a greater degree of interest in its guidance on grammar, spelling and collocation.

However, the results of the research into the attitudes of users towards the dictionaries seem to pose something of a paradox. Note that – on the one hand – there is the high value that students place on their dictionaries. Yet, on the other hand, they show considerable ignorance both of their structural elements and – worse still – possible functions the dictionaries may serve. Tomaszczyk (1979, p. 116) concluded that while beginners and intermediate students tend to know their dictionaries very well, they make unreasonable and contradictory demands on them. To be more specific, complaints centred on deficiencies and inadequacies of dictionaries (typically: locating idioms, phrasal verbs and finding
collocations), and these aspects are also mentioned by Sora (1984) and Coviello (1987), see also Cowie (1999). It is for precisely this reason that, when an MLD is acquired, a wide gap – if not chasm – oftentimes emerges between a students' perception of the dictionary's value and its genuine usefulness as a learning aid (see Cowie, 1999, p. 184).

It must be pointed out at this point that a user's understanding of the information categories that the MLD contains seems to be largely limited (such views are expressed by Moulin, 1987; Stein, 1989; Atkins & Varantola, 1997 among others). Hence, not surprisingly, a discussion conducted from this vantage point must necessarily go to the question of whether the failure to use dictionaries effectively results from inadequacies on the part of users or from deficiencies in the dictionaries themselves. In an attempt to answer this question, Tomaszczyk (1979, p. 111) argues that the fault never lay entirely with lexicographers, but rather with the limited understanding and skills of dictionary-users. Additionally, Bareggi (1989), Nuccorini (1994), Nesi and Meara (1994) investigated users' dictionary skills. For the details concerning both the genesis and history of the research see, in particular, Cowie (1999, p. 82-192).

Simultaneously, it must be borne in mind that EFL dictionary users are not always fully aware of the differences between a monolingual English general-purpose dictionary and a monolingual English dictionary compiled for foreign learners (Stein 2002, p. 72). Hence, to proceed with the discussion further it seems justifiable to outline the basic differences between these two types of dictionaries. According to Stein (2002, p. 72-73), they are as follows:

1) The vocabulary listed in an EFL advanced learner's dictionary focuses on the fundamental word stock and usually includes neologisms, regional words and expressions and specialized technical terms. It usually contains about 50,000 items. In contrast, a general-purpose dictionary contains a significantly greater number of archaic expressions, neologisms, regionalisms, loanwords and technical terms which are not found in the native speaker's general repertoire of words. Desk-size dictionaries usually contain at least 70,000 entries.

2) The origins of the monolingual English dictionary for native speakers can be traced back to as early as the 17th century. Those first works were meant to explain to the layperson complicated and problematic Latin and Greek borrowings. Taking into consideration the hard word tradition of monolingual English lexicography, it was from its beginnings directed at the decoding reference needs of the dictionary users. English Dictionarie by Cockeram which consists of three volumes is a remarkable exception. The second volume contains basic English words and translates them into more sophisticated vocabulary for those who wanted to make their speech sound more stylish and elegant.
The research carrying out by Quirk (1974b) and Greenbaum et al. (1984) has indicated that the decoding reference needs are also of significance to users of general-purpose dictionaries in contemporary times. The dictionary is used mainly to obtain information about the meaning of words and the studies by the two authors report spelling as the second most important reason for looking up a word in a dictionary. Naturally, most of us are familiar with this situation when we intend to write a letter, an essay, etc., and are not certain how to spell a given word. In the above-mentioned cases, general-purpose dictionaries are applied for encoding purposes. Therefore, they contain lexicographical information which meets the decoding and encoding reference needs of the users, however, the decoding aspect seems predominant. The information that can be accessed in EFL dictionaries fulfills both needs of the users. Special attention is paid to the encoding needs though, so as to enable users to form accurate and correct expressions. The ability to produce well-formed utterances is often associated with a solid knowledge of the grammar of a language. The most important and distinctive characteristic of EFL dictionaries is the description of the behaviour of words in terms of grammar.

1) The language of EFL dictionaries used in the definitions of words is maintained at an easy level because foreign users are still learners.

2) Pronunciation can be provided in different ways by EFL dictionaries and general-purpose dictionaries. The later indicate pronunciation by means of a respelling system or by the phonetic symbols whereas the former use exclusively the International Phonetic Alphabet.

3) EFL dictionaries can be characterized by the application of more explicit references to language use so as to facilitate foreign learners to achieve the appropriate stylistic level. The above is possible due to the application of labels and notes with regard to the usage.

4) EFL dictionaries contain a significant number of example sentences and phrases which illustrate how the item in question is actually used. The purpose is to provide further help to the foreign learners.

5) Lastly, as yet EFL dictionaries do not contain etymologies (see in this respect Ilson 1983).
Fair enough, from the very beginning EFL dictionaries have changed beyond any doubt and any recognizable measure not only with respect to the medium. One may reasonably state that this is the consequence of the fact that EFL pedagogical lexicography is actually gaining more and more popularity among the research communities. In particular, it holds true for the major British pedagogical dictionaries. At present these are the following: Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (OALD), Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDCE), Cobuild Collins Advanced Dictionary (CCAD), and Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (CALD).

Since all the aforementioned dictionaries aim to improve and to add to the user’s language skills as efficiently as possible numerous attempts have been made aimed at minimizing the ‘looking up in the dictionary’ problems. On the whole, one may say that the recent developments reflect lexicographers’ awareness of the problems and efforts to minimize them. It goes without saying that any attempt at assessment of these four works can in no way be exhaustive, and it is not in any way a matter of primary concern of the present study, therefore it is bound to be highly selective. Keeping this in mind, I shall concentrate on selected aspects that seem to indicate a certain development within EFL lexicography. These may be said to include the following points in no particular order of importance.

1. Navigation

To start with, in most cases the aim of the look up exercise is to find a precise piece of information about a specific unit, rather than to find out everything about it. Note that in case of longer entries it can be a source of difficulty. Yet, dictionary entries may have and often do have a more complex structure. Additionally, they may include subentries (according to Burkhanov, 1998, p. 226, the notion of a subentry may be defined as a part of the entry that contains a derivative, a compound lexeme, i.e. one-word lexical item, related to the simple lexeme which heads the entry line, or a multi-word lexical item) and run-on entries (in the words of Burkhanov, 1998, p. 204, a run-on-entry is a form in bold type nested at the end of the entry, headed by a lexeme which is the closest to the base lexical stem). To illustrate this, let us draw reader’s attention to the fact that in CALD there is an all-pervading tendency to add subentries to the headwords. Let the CALD (2005) sample entry illustrate the point discussed here:
In contrast to this, in OALD (2005) one may clearly observe a tendency towards run-on entries. Take, for example, the entry *detriment*:

Note that both types of the aforementioned entries are used for items related to the main headword (either semantically or formally), although each dictionary would appear to have its own individual policy providing the rules according to which the words are arranged as main entries, subentries or run-on entries.

2. Style/Register Differences

It is safe to assume that EFL dictionary users – first and foremost – expect the dictionary to describe the standard language, the form of natural language that is understood by the majority of the native speakers of a given language. It is noteworthy to verify what the EFL dictionaries say with respect to the social and regional variety of the language they describe. The questions that should be answered at this point are about the actual form specified (the questions indicate the actual form specified; that is either British English or American English or both).

In fact, the LDCE gives the impression of being the most user-friendly dictionary in terms of this specific aspect. Let us quote what the editors of LDCE (2003, p. xv) have to say on the matter:
This dictionary has full coverage of both American and British English. If a word is only used in British English, it is marked BrE. If a word is used in American English, it is marked AmE. If there is another word with the same meaning in British or American English, it is shown after the definition. Labels before the definition show you if a word is used in informal, formal, legal, or technical English.

Despite the long history of interrelationships between British and American dictionary making and their present-day interconnectedness, there are strong national biases in works published on both sides of the Atlantic. As pointed out by Algeo (1995, p. 205):

Such bias is to be expected since the dictionaries of each nation are designed to serve the interests of that nation. They supply the information wanted by each country’s citizens to serve the interests of the nation (...). They also promote that nation’s position and status abroad and satisfy the curious passion of the chattering classes in non-English-speaking countries for “pure” form of the language of their later acquisition.

In this context, one feels tempted to ask a number of questions. To start with, one could pose the following question: “Do students of language realize of the existence of various regional/social dialects of English?” Secondly, one feels tempted to ask: “Why do lexicographers decide to distinguish only the two varieties of English (BrE and AmE) and fail to account for other lexical differences that stem from the existence of other dialects?” Setting the specialized pronouncing dictionaries such as Wells’ (2000) Longman Pronunciation Dictionary aside, Longman’s LDCE is the only EFL dictionary that discloses its pronunciation model for the American variety of English. CCAD that – without any exaggeration – may be considered one of the latest developments on the EFL market (1995, p. ix):

(...) gives priority to the English of most general utility worldwide. Dialect words are not feature [of the dictionary], nor is the language of small social groups or specialists; instead space is reserved for international English, predominantly British English but with a lot of American usage recorded.

In the following dictionary nothing is mentioned about American English pronunciation and as far as the British accent is concerned it is RP. Also, CALD
(2005, p. x) provides both ways of pronunciation (although it gives BrE as well AmE, the user does not know if it is the standard variety):

*British and American pronunciations of the word are shown after the headword. These are written using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) (...) Labels in SMALL SLOPING CAPITALS tell you how a word or phrase is used, for example if it is informal or humorous.*

As to the model of pronunciation employed in OALD (2005, R116) we read to the following effect:

*The British pronunciation given are those of younger speakers of general British. This includes RP (Received Pronunciation) and a range of similar accents which are not strongly regional. The American pronunciations chosen are also as far as possible the most general (not associated with any particular region). If there is a difference between British and American pronunciations of a word, the British one is given first, with AmE before the American pronunciation.*

Note that many British-American pronunciation differences are systematic ones, and – therefore – are less significant for the users of dictionary entries. However, some of the differences words; *axe* and *ax* provide a case in point. Although both spellings can be found on both sides of the Atlantic the former variant is most frequently considered as the BrE form, while *ax* is considered as chiefly AmE, though – as shown by Algeo (1995, p. 210) – the lexicographic sources are far from being consistent in this respect. Last but not least, in spite of the growing interest in the collocational value of EFL dictionaries, of which the recent study of Osuchowska (2007) bears witness, particular dictionaries tend to deal with collocational patterns by examples, if at all. Such national collocational differences as those that account enters in the banking sense, for example, *credit account/charge account, current account/checking account* are seldom to be found in most dictionaries perhaps – as pointed out by Algeo (1995, p. 211) with the exception of The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English (1986). In general, however, handling dialect differences is by no means a strong point of the majority of the EFL dictionaries available on the market.

3. Phraseology

As Stein (2002, p. 77) succinctly puts it, one may speak of three types of lexical units with which EFL lexicographers usually have difficulties as to where
to place them within the bodies of their dictionaries, and this lot includes verb +
particle combinations, idioms and affixes. Note that the practice employed by the
editors of the LDCE seems to be highly complicated. In the Preface (2003, p. xiv) it
is said that: “Idioms and phrases are shown at the first important word of the
phrase or idiom. For example have egg on your face is shown at egg and have a
nice day is shown at nice. Idioms and phrases are listed together with the other
senses of the word in frequency order. Phrasal verbs are listed in alphabetical
order after the main verb. If the phrasal verb has an object, this is shown as sb
(=someone) or sth (= something). The symbol ⇔ means that the object can come
before or after the particle (italics by AWS).

Note that the non-native speaker of English is supposed to know whether or
not a word is important or not in order to find the fixed meaning of an idiom or a
phrase. Unfortunately, non-native dictionary users have no criterion to decide
about the importance of the words and - therefore - they are consequently at a
loss. A much more satisfactory solution is the practice adopted by the editors of
CALD (2005, p. ix) where the subentry policy has been adopted:

If a word or meaning of word is always used in a particular
grammatical pattern or with particular words, this is shown at the
beginning of the definition. Idioms (phrases which have a special
meaning that is not clear from the separate words) and other fixed
phrases are shown separately with their own definitions. Idioms and
fixed phrases are usually listed at the first important word. If you are
not sure where to find them, look in the ‘Idiom Finder’ on page 1515.

The complicated way of finding a lexical unit can also be found in OALD
(where the user is supposed to state which word is more important). As far as
CCAD is concerned phrasal verbs are assembled as subentries under the main
verb, in case of idioms CCAD does not tell the user under which headword idioms
are listed where they consist of several open-class lexical items.

4. Lexical relation

All in all, one may say that lexical relations, especially synonymy, hyponymy
and antonymy seem to be an area where more recent dictionaries have broken
new ground. For example, in CCAD there is the ‘side column’ to show the lexical
relation of a particular word. Take, for example, the following entry taken from
the CCAD (1995):
It seems that a very convenient way of showing major lexical relations is to be found in *LDCE* (2003: xvi) where “synonyms (= words with the same meaning), opposites, and related words are shown after the definition”. Let us exemplify the practice employed by the editors of *LDCE* (2005) by means of *female* entry:

Sporadic as it is, the way of presenting information of this type has featured in *EFL* lexicography for over 30 years. On the other hand, there has been another area where more recent dictionaries have broken new ground. Standard lexical
relations appear to play a crucial role in the way concepts are stored and linked in the mental lexicon (Aitchison, 1987, p. 72). This helps to understand why they feature so principally in the case of non-native English speakers. As Rundell (1989, p. 327) points out, most learners are familiar with the experience of defaulting to an opposite or superordinate term to encode an idea for which their lexical resources are limited.

5. Grammar and Syntax

Ever since the advent of a scheme of verb patterns, the provision of syntactic information has been essential for the editors of major EFL dictionaries. Basically, one may speak of two main ways in which this kind of information can be conveyed (Rundell, 1998, p. 329). Namely, the information may be conveyed either:

1) explicitly (typically through coding systems of one type or another),
2) implicitly (by being built into the wording of definitions and examples).

According to the same scholar (Rundell, 1998, p. 329-330), two trends may be identified here; that is:

1) a well pronounced move towards more transparent coding,
2) a more syntactic effort to ensure that information supplied in codes is mirrored in examples and in definitions as well.

At the same time, as Stein (2002, p. 86) stresses, in the case of EFL dictionaries, the following features are the real hallmarks:

1) the explanation of meaning,
2) specifications of word’s grammatical behaviour,
3) the illustration of the meaning and the syntactical use of a word with real language examples.

In the case of each of the four dictionaries targeted here it holds true that 1) the grammatical information is specified in an abbreviated form and 2) for the explanation of a word normal print is used while for the examples italics are used. In this context one is tempted to address the following pertinent question, that is: “Since considerable variations still exist between different EFL dictionaries, what grammatical coding system assumes the most grammatical knowledge on the part of user?” In general, one may say that current research into dictionary use has shown that non-native speakers of English have great difficulty in handling grammatical codes. The major reason behind it may be the fact that, as Stein (2002, p. 89) suggests, “(...) grammatical description obviously varies according to the overall grammatical system underlying the syntactic analyses in each dictionary.” It is usually common that the explanation is given after the headword. Obviously, there is the grammatical equivalence between the headword and the definition (that is when the headword is a noun, it shall be a
noun phrase, when it is a verb the information provided has the grammatical status of a verb). On the whole, learners expect to find information quickly within their dictionaries and to be able to grasp it immediately. Let us at this point have a closer look at selected definitions. In LDCE (2005, p. xiii):

Part of speech is shown first, then information about whether a word is countable, uncountable, transitive, intransitive etc.
Common grammar patterns are shown before the examples, so that you can see clearly how the word operates in the sentence.
Common prepositions are also shown before the examples.
Information about irregular forms of verbs, nouns, and adjectives is shown at the beginning of the entry.

Most regrettably, in the case of CALD the coding system implied requires users to consult explanatory tables given on a separate page. The editors of CALD (2005, p. ix) say that “(...) labels in square brackets give you grammar information. These labels are explained inside the front cover of the dictionary.” Likewise, the lexicographic description of the words in CCAD also requires verification aided by explanatory pages and – therefore – one feels that the situation seems to be somewhat off-putting for the user as there are ten of them (1995, p. xxiv-xxxiii). For a detailed discussion concerning the grammar element in EFL dictionaries see Bèjoint (1994b) among others.

6. Illustrations

According to Stein (1991, p. 101), dictionaries have featured illustrative materials since as long ago as 1958 and she indicates that, except CCAD, all EFL dictionaries make extensive use of them. Although illustrations are still widely used in lexicographic practice, one may speak about certain new directions and innovations in this area. According to Rundel (1998, p. 335-336), these novelties include:
1) diagrams clarifying spatial or temporal terms,
2) illustrations showing the related meanings of polysemous words,
3) illustrations clarifying the differences between confusables like borrow and lend or rob and steal,
4) illustrations that show the literal meanings of words which are often used metaphorically,
5) illustrations showing cultural stereotypes,
6) illustrations of what sometimes called ‘scripts’, showing the various actions and events relating to a particular situation, with the associated lexis.
Lexicographical teams at Oxford (OALD) and Harlow (LDCE) distinguish four main types of illustrative materials (Stein, 2002, p. 127), that is to say:

1) illustrations showing common animals, objects, plants, etc.,
2) illustrations ‘showing things that are not easily explained in words, such as shapes, complex actions or small differences between words which are similar but not the same’ (F49),
3) illustrations depicting ‘groups of related objects. These explain the differences between similar objects, show the range of shapes and forms covered by a particular word, and serve as an important aid to vocabulary expansion’ (F49),
4) illustrations showing ‘the basic or physical meaning of words that are commonly used in an abstract or figurative way’ (F49).

Stein (2002, p. 131) stresses that “(...) illustrations in dictionaries are always text-bound. They either occur within a dictionary entry, to the right or the left of the definition, or they may precede the text or follow it”. Burkhanov (1998, p. 96-97) emphasizes that “(...) furnishing graphic illustrations, then, is an important technique of lexicographic description.” All in all, everyone would agree that they could encourage not only language comprehension, but also language production at the same time.

7. Examples
Cowie (1978, p. 131) indicated 30 years ago, while commenting on the work of Hornby (the early master of lexicographic work), that an invented example could include a range of information types, and fulfilled several functions simultaneously. At present, all EFL dictionaries base every part of their text on corpus data and – as a consequence – corpus-derived dictionary examples. One has grounds to believe that most scholars in the field probably agree that, “(...) where the corpus provides natural and typical examples that clearly illustrate the points that need to be made, there is no conceivable reason for not using them” (Rundell, 1989, p. 334-335).

One of the most obvious changes pertaining to EFL dictionaries in recent years has been the application of the corpus data to the process of compiling dictionaries. The impact of the following development has been profound within the field of pedagogical lexicography. Another aspect worth mentioning in this context is the contribution made by laymen. Such aspects as pragmatics, cultural allusion and encyclopaedic information, as well as the guidance on grammar can hardly be omitted. All of the aforementioned aspects seem to reflect a move from the model of general-purpose dictionary towards EFL dictionary, in which the needs of the user take absolute priority over all other factors.
The fact that English is the *lingua franca*, and more and more people have acquired – to a varying degree of mastery – a certain command of English, has caused fierce competition on *EFL* lexicographic market. The positive aspect of the rivalry is the fact that the lexicographers are constantly experimenting with new ideas and solutions. Stein (2002, p. 125) indicates that the year 1992 “(...) marked a new venture in EFL lexicography. Oxford University Press and Longman both produced a new EFL dictionary which included a cultural component.” All the cultural editions were based on *EFL* versions of particular dictionaries (the examples of the aforementioned are: *The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English, The Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*). From the *Preface* one may learn that the overall aim of the dictionary may be encapsulated as follows (*LDCE*, 1998, p. v):

*This is a full dictionary with 40,000 general language words, but also with 15,000 cultural references in addition, all of which have been fully updated. These range from literary figures to pop culture, from Shakespeare to *Psych*, from *Maya Angelou* to the *Simpsons*. Historical events, such as the *Gettysburg Address*; sporting heroes, such as *Ayrton Senna* and *Michael Owen*; products, such as *Viagra* or *m’n’m’s*, are all entered.*

Given the rapid changes in communication technologies, popular expressions, and advertising slogans, it might seem problematic for *EFL* learners to find a dictionary covering a particular field of study. At present, one is given the impression that there are more and more niche reference works that in some way tend to cover an existing gap on the lexicographic market. The *Longman Business English Dictionary*, published in 2007, or *Fire Fighting Dictionary* target the practical language needs of specific foreign language learner in the process of study.

**Conclusion**

It is hardly surprising that the intense contemporary interest in *EFL* teaching has recently fostered the development of a deep concern with language learning tools, and – in particular – lexicographic tools. With little experience in the selection and use of dictionaries, one may be tempted to seize upon voluminous reference works, being under the impression that there exists some correlation between the book size and the language input. Simultaneously, it is apparent that vocabulary-learning tools are immensely varied.

Understandably, the process of the transition from the usage of a bilingual to monolingual learner’s dictionary is certainly a difficult step – not only for the
learners, but also the teachers. The development of both encoding and decoding skills in the \textit{L2} is regarded as a vital curriculum component that has to be given adequate consideration in language teaching. This is inevitably conducive to more differentiated vocabulary use and greater variation in linguistic expression. Moreover, it provides the foreign learner with direct access to a different culture and society. At the same time, it shows learners the way the linguistic information is presented within dictionaries. By laying open the recent achievements in \textit{EFL} lexicography and by pointing out the areas where further changes and improvements would be welcome, this paper aimed to shed some light on the issue of several developments in \textit{EFL} lexicography: not only new types of dictionaries, but also, if not merely, new techniques of the meaning explanation.

**References**

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