THE DICTIONARY AS MEANS
OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

This article presents the evolution of the lexicographic works in relation to the needs of interpersonal communication. We shall present a brief history of lexicography and dictionaries, and also their role in promoting the literary language of a people and in facilitating interpersonal communication. The diversity of communication contexts has generated a multitude of lexicographic works meant to respond to a more heterogeneous public. We shall also try to identify the current trends that are present not only in the Romanian lexicography, trends generated by the concern for facilitating intercultural interaction and communication between individuals, namely the computerization of dictionaries. The history of the Romanian lexicography is strongly related to the development of national culture and reflects the stages of this development. The development of the unilingual lexicography, with the Romanian as basic language, the emergence of explanatory and neological dictionaries has significantly contributed to the language enrichment and also to its refinement. The increasing public, his heterogeneousness, the increasing practical needs are all elements that contributed to the continuous development of the lexicographic works. And the contemporaneity is marked by the computerization of dictionaries and the diversification of the digital applications for translation, all these in order to facilitate the cultural interaction and communication between individuals.

Keywords: dictionary, Romanian lexicography, intercultural, communication, vocabulary, dictionary typology

Résumé

Par cette approche on a l'intention de présenter l'évolution des œuvres lexicographiques en relation avec les besoins de la communication interpersonnelle. On va présenter un bref historique de la lexicographie et des dictionnaires, ainsi que leur rôle dans la promotion de la langue littéraire d'un peuple et en facilitant la communication interpersonnelle. La diversité des contextes de communication a généré une multitude desœuvres lexicographiques destinés à répondre à un public plus hétérogène. On va également essayer d'identifier les tendances actuelles qui sont présents non seulement dans la lexicographie roumaine, des tendances générées par le souci de faciliter l'interaction interculturelle et la communication entre les individus, à savoir spécialement l'informatisation des dictionnaires. L'histoire de la lexicographie roumaine est fortement liée au développement de la culture nationale et reflète les étapes de ce développement. Le développement de la lexicographie unilingue, avec le roumain comme langue de base, l'émergence de dictionnaires explicatifs et néologiques a considérablement contribué à l'enrichissement de la

langue et aussi pour son raffinement. Le public de plus en plus nombreux, son hétéro-généité, les besoins pratiques croissantes sont autant d'éléments qui ont contribué au développement continu des travaux lexicographiques. Et la contemporanéité est marquée par l'informatisation des dictionnaires et de la diversification des applications numériques pour la traduction, tous cela pour faciliter l'interaction culturelle et de communication entre les individus.

Mots-clés: dictionnaire, la lexicographie roumaine, interculturalité, communication, vocabulaire, typologie des dictionnaires

Rezumat

Prin aceasta abordare ne propunem să prezentăm evoluţia lucrărilor lexicografice în raport cu nevoile de comunicare interpersonală. Vom prezenta o scurtă istorie a lexico-grafiei şi a dicţionarelor, precum şi rolul lor în promovarea limbii literare a unui popor şi în facilitarea comunicării interpersonale. Diversitatea de contexte de comunicare a generat o multitudine de lucrări lexicografice menite să răspundă la un public mai eterogen. Vom încerca să identificăm tendinţele actuale care sunt prezente nu numai în lexicografia românească, tendinţele generate de preocuparea pentru facilitarea interacţiunii interculturale şi de comunicare între indivizi, evidente mai ales în informatizarea dicţionarelor. Istoria lexicografiei româneşti este puternic legat de dezvoltarea culturii naţionale şi reflectă etapele acestei evoluţii. Dezvoltarea lexicografiei unilingve, cu româna ca limbă de bază, apariţia de dicţionare explicative şi neologice au contribuit în mod semnificativ la îmbogăţirea limbajului şi, de asemenea, la rafinarea acestuia. Publicul tot mai numeros, eterogenitatea lui, nevoile practice în creştere, toate sunt elemente care au contribuit la dezvoltarea continuă a lucrărilor lexicografice. Şi contemporaneitatea este marcată de informatizarea dicţionarelor şi diversificarea aplicaţiilor digitale pentru traducere, toate acestea cu scopul de a facilita interacţiunea culturală şi comunicarea între indivizi.

Cuvinte cheie: dicţionar, lexicografia românească, interculturalitate, comunicare, vocabular, tipologia dicţionarelor

By this approach we intend to present the evolution of the lexicographic works in relation to the needs of interpersonal communication. We shall present a brief history of lexicography and dictionaries, and also their role in promoting the literary language of a people and in facilitating interpersonal communication. The diversity of communication contexts has generated a multitude of lexicographic works meant to respond to a more heterogeneous public. We shall also try to identify the current trends that are present not only in the Romanian lexicography, trends generated by the concern for facilitating intercultural interaction and communication between individuals, namely the computerization of dictionaries and the diversity of digital applications for translation[1].

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[1] A part of this study was published in Romanian in the article „Lexicografia modernă, direcţii şi tipologii", in *Anuar de lingvistică şi istorie literară*, tom XLVII-XLVIII, 2007-2008, Bucureşti, pp. 165-178.

1. The role and purpose of dictionaries

The dictionary is currently considered an indispensable tool for the interpersonal and intercultural communication. However, the lexicographic works and the process of elaborating dictionaries have not been seen from the same perspective throughout the centuries. For example, in the European context, at the beginning, the lexicographers'works was perceived as without any horizon, seen rather as a punishment than a virtue and appropriate more for a convicted, not for a scholar. The expression of a famous Italian humanist, Giulio Cesare Scaligero (1484-1558), was memorable for the times of Renaissance when he said: "the work of a lexicographer is the second after Hercules' work (*lexicographis secundus post Herculem labor*)" (*apud* Corlăteanu and Melniciuc 1992, p. 189). His son, the famous astronomer Giuseppe Scaligero (1540-1609), completed his father's statement with the following Latin verses:

Si quem dura manet sententiai udicis olim
Damnatum aerumnis suppliciis que caput,
Lexica conscribat; nam cetera, quid mororomnes,
Poenarum facies hic laborunus habet (*apud* Doroszewski 1973, pp. 32-33)*.*

Thus, he believed that, if a convicted deserved a harsh sentence from a judge, then he would not be sentenced to forced labour or torture, but rather to create lists of words, for this activity comprises all the other punishments.

The evolution of dictionaries and of the science of elaborating dictionaries is explained by the American lexicographer Tom McArthur, author of the work *Worlds of Reference. Lexicography, Learning and Language from the Clay Tablet to the Computer*, who speaks of the existence of four stages in the evolution of dictionaries and lexicography. These stages are similar to the development of human communication, because lexicography has implicitly developed concomitantly with the human's needs of communication. The four stages are the following:

a. a first stage of oral expression, when the first manifestations of the lexicographic works that circulated were in verses (for example, in the Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit cultures), with rhythm and rhyme, in order to be more easily memorized and transmitted from a generation to another;

b. the development of writing permitted the progress of dictionaries, meaning that the information could be systematized in a different way, the content could be extended because the memorizing was replaced by free consulting and the purposes of editing and the users diversified;

c. the emergence of typography has facilitated the publishing of a big number of dictionaries and has also produced a change of attitude from the users regarding the educative and authoritative role of the dictionaries in the language issues;

d. the fourth stage, the language computerization, led to a revolution of lexicography in the field of conceiving and elaborating dictionaries, but also by opening a varied horizon of possibilities of researching and using the information in a language.

Therefore, during the last decades the evolution of lexicography and the emergence of dictionaries are especially motivated by social development, globalization, the needs of human communication, social relations, cultural interfaces and, not the least, by the very context of computerization and development of digital technologies.

The emergence of dictionaries was firstly motivated by social needs and the proof is the anteriority of the bilingual dictionaries compared to the monolingual dictionaries. The dictionaries have always been considered works of reference that "record the words of a language or of two or many languages" (Bidu-Vrănceanu *et al.* 1997, s.v. *dicţionar*) and that „indicate the meaning or meanings of various words"[2]. Their role is to provide as much information as possible of one or many languages to their users or, in better words, to activate the linguistic skills of the readers and not necessarily to give them new linguistic competences.

Élisabeth Ridel insists on the utility of these lexicographic works, but also on their function of highlighting the culture and conception on the world and life of the speakers „au-delà de l'«outil», le dictionnaire est l'un des reflets de la culture d'un pays: derrière un dictionnaire, en effet, il y a une langue, une communauté linguistique, une civilisation" (Ridel 2009, p. 2). When analysing the multilingual lexicographic works, the author considers that this type of dictionaries also have the role of making known a national language and standardizing it, because they present at least two cultures. Regarding the bilingual dictionaries, E. Ridel sees them not only as dissemination tools, but also as tools of conservation: „le diction-naire bilingue représente une forme de reconnaissance des langues nationales: la reconnaissance d'une identité linguistique et culturelle propre à chaque pays" (*Ibidem*, p. 2). In addition to this, R.R.K. Hartmann and G. James emphasize the character of final authority of the dictionaries in the field of using and defining the meaning of words, and also the fact that they exert a remarkable influence for protecting and conserving the language identity[3]. We must mention that dictionaries do not represent an exhaustive collection of a vocabulary from a language, but, according to the type of works or their recipients, a part of the vocabulary of a language is chosen (*Apud* Guilbert 1975, p. 38)**.** Yet, the main role of these works is descriptive-normative, the dictionaries being models for using the vocabulary of a language.

The same idea is pointed out by Aïno Niklas-Salminen, in her study on neology, where she insists on the role of dictionaries of providing an ideal norm, to which all the speakers must relate: „Le dictionnaire, comme tous les ouvrages de l'enseignement

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[2] „Le dictionnaire… indique le ou les sens que possèdent les mots" (Ducrot and Todorov 1972, p. 71).

[3] „The dictionary is supposed to represent some form of final authority in matters of lexical meaning and use. The academy dictionaries typically excerpt considerable influence… in protecting a language from what are perceived as unacceptable or corrupting pressures, for example, excessive borrowing from other languages" (Hartmann and James 1998, p. IX).

vise à donner une image de l'homme, norme idéale à laquelle doivent se conformer tous les locuteurs" (Niklas-Salminen 2001, p. 118).

Also, Jean Pruvost and Jean-François Sablayrolles, in their work on neologisms, point out the role of arbiter that the dictionaries have in terms of dynamics of a language. The authors highlight the responsibility of lexicographers in deciding which new words can enter or not a language dictionary: „Aux lexicographes est ainsi dévolue également la «veille néologique» (un néologisme en soi), avec pour délicate responsabilité le choix des mots nouveaux qui auront le privilège d'entrer dans les colonnes du dictionnaire" (Pruvost and Sablayrolles 2003, p. 16). In the current context of intercultural exchange of terms and concepts, the insertion of a certain neological term in a dictionary would depend on many elements (*Ibidem*, pp. 121-122), as the authors mention:

-   the information held by the lexicographer when analysing a term;
-   the expectances of the public: either to find definitions of all the words of a language, or to consider that the lexicographer did not take seriously his role of guardian of the language, introducing words that should not have been inserted;
-   the education and linguistic sensibilities of the lexicographer;
-   the historical period and the ideology of the time;
-   the type of dictionary and the regularity of reediting.

2. A typology of dictionaries

Regarding the typology of dictionaries[4], R.R.K. Hartmann and Gregory James, in the introduction to their dictionary, propose a structural classification and present four criteria of classification, according to which we could distinguish the following :

a) a phenomenological classification, based on the formal criterion by which the dictionaries can be categorized according to their size or their content (general, specialized etc.);

b) according to the typology of their presentation, the dictionaries can be classified according to the format of processing the information (alphabetically, thematically systematized) or the way they are provided to the public (printed form, manuscript, electronic format);

c) a functional classification would differentiate the dictionaries according to:

– the presented information: etymological, orthographic and punctuation dictionaries, historic and encyclopaedic dictionaries etc.

– the assumed purpose: explanatory, pedagogic dictionaries etc.;

– the target users: dictionaries for students, dictionaries of translation or learning a language etc.;

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[4] For other classifications of dictionaries, beside the ones presented by us, you may also consult Corlăteanu and Melniciuc 1992, pp. 191-208, and Groza 1994, p. 15.

d) finally, a linguistic classification aiming the language or languages used in a dictionary, according to which we could establish the monolingual, bilingual and multilingual dictionaries (Hartmann and James 1998, pp. VI–VII).

A classification of dictionaries that combines different criteria mentioned above and that deserves being presented here belongs to the Czech lexicographer Ladislav Zgusta, one of the founders of the first society of lexicographers named Dictionary Society of North America (DSNA) founded in 1975, at Indiana State University. In the work *Manual of Lexicography* (Zgusta 1971, pp. 197-221), the author makes the distinction between two big categories of dictionaries: linguistic and encyclopaedic. The first ones define the lexical units of the language and their linguistic peculiarities, while the second ones regard the extra-linguistic world that the words define. Starting from this general classification, the author then presents only the linguistic dictionaries that he classifies according to various criteria.

First of all, he makes the distinction between the diachronic and synchronic dictionaries. The first ones study the historical evolution of words both regarding the form and content and, at their turn, they can be etymologic and historical. The etymologic dictionaries analyse the origin of the lexical terms and study especially the shape of the words, while the historical dictionaries point out the transformations of the lexical units, regarding both the form and content, in a given period of history. Concerning the synchronic dictionaries, L. Zgusta emphasizes the fact that the collocation is quite relative, but one should avoid confusing the concept of synchrony with the term "contemporary". He shows that there can be synchronic dictionaries only for languages that were used in the past and that are no longer contemporary with us.

The second classification regards the general and special dictionaries, but it does not target the quantity of analysed lexical terms, but the *a priori* peculiarity received by a word, considered by a certain editor as part of a certain area of the vocabulary of a language. Starting from this idea, the special dictionaries are the ones that refer to certain words of the language registers; thus, we could speak on one hand of dialectal dictionaries, which analyse the vocabulary of a region, in relation to either other dialects or to the literary language, and on the other hand, of argot, slangy dictionaries. The dictionaries of technical terms are gathered under the name of glossaries, due to the fact that they also have an encyclopaedic character, also describing the denoted reality. Other dictionaries analysed in this category are the dictionaries of neologisms, synonyms, antonyms and onomasyological (systematic), of literary terms, etc. The general dictionaries analyse the standard language and can be either normative or descriptive. The normative type describes the literary language in use and has an authoritative role in the field of preserving the language accuracy, protecting it from dialectal, regional or current speaking influences. The descriptive dictionaries do not have a normative purpose, but aim at presenting the vocabulary of a language as detailed as possible, offering the users the possibility of understanding all the texts of a language.

The third classification takes into account the languages described in the dictionaries that, this way, can be monolingual, bilingual or multilingual.

The fourth typology takes into account the purpose of editing a dictionary. From this perspective, L. Zgusta finds three categories of dictionaries: pedagogic dictionaries (orthographic, orthoepic, phraseological) that aim at providing indications for using various lexical units, dictionaries that have a scientific purpose (the reverse or occurrence dictionary) that are considered lists of words rather than dictionaries them-selves, and dictionaries especially created for different categories of people (for example, pupils and students).

The last criterion of classification is related to the size of dictionaries. The large dictionaries are the thesaurus and academic dictionaries. The difference between the two is that in the academic dictionaries not all the occurrences of a word are mentioned, but they depend on their utilization in the literary works, and they do not analyse the words from the special registers of a language; a thesaurus dictionary[5] aims at being exhaustive in order to highlight as many lexical units of a language as possible and their occurrences. The medium-size dictionaries are especially the normative ones, that do not offer many examples from the literature, nor do they treat all the language registers. The small dictionaries do not offer examples at all, and the analysed vocabulary is significantly reduced.

Despite this fully comprising presentation, Ladislav Zgusta admits that the dictionaries cannot be completely framed in a certain classification, because they present combined characteristics of all the peculiarities presented above. Still, they are absolutely necessary for an editor when preparing for elaborating a dictionary.

Another important typology of dictionaries was made by Jean Pruvost in his work *Les dictionnaires français: out ils d'une langue et d'une culture,* for which he received the French Academy Award in 2007. In the first part of his work, the author tries a recovery of the French lexicographic tradition starting with the seventh century AD until the Humanist period, in the sixteenth century. The second

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[5] Referring to the thesaurus-type dictionary, Ileana Busuioc and Mădălina Cucu state that this is, according to the international norm ISO 2788 – 1986, a „vocabular specific unui limbaj de indexare controlată organizat formal pentru a explicita relaţiile între noţiuni (de exemplu relaţie generic-specific)" (Busuioc and Cucu 2001, p. 46). According to the authors, the first function of the thesaurus is „diminuarea inconvenientelor limbajului natural printr-o regrupare de semnificaţi diferiţi sub aceeaşi formă de semnificant şi o repartizarea informaţiei în termeni mai mult sau mai puţin apropiaţi semantic. Instrument de control şi de structurare a vocabularului, el contribuie la coerenţa indexării şi facilitează căutarea informaţiilor prin precizia reperajului" (*Ibidem*, p. 47). They identify three types of predetermined relations by which the terms are structured in a thesaurus, namely: „*relaţii preferenţiale sau de echivalenţă* care se stabilesc între termeni sinonimi intra- şi inter-lingvistic, *relaţii ierarhice* (generice şi partitive) şi *relaţii analogice sau de vecinătate*". Then they analyse the linguistic structure of the terms of a thesaurus and make a distinction between the simple and composed terms on one side, and the collocations (complex terminological units) and proper names.

chapter treats the seventeenth century and emphasizes the emergence of monolingual dictionaries and the language theories. In the next chapter, he presents the lexicographic works from the Enlightenment Century until the publishing of the dictionaries of Littré and Larousse. The fourth chapter describes the contemporary period, the author analysing the evolution of the three great dictionaries from the second half of the twentieth century: *Robert*, *Grand Larousse de la Langue Française* and *Trésor de la langue française*.

In the second part of this work, Jean Pruvost makes several terminological distinctions, putting in opposition the lexicography with „la dictionnairique"[6] and with the metalexicography. The lexicography is defined as follows:

> „la lexicographie représente précisément une véritable recherche conduite sur les mots et leur recensement, avec tous les travaux définitoires qui y correspondent, l'ensemble des démarches mises en œuvre n'étant pas en principe lié à des impératifs commerciaux. On admettra même que la lexicographie puisse ne pas aboutir à l'élaboration d'un dictionnaire: telle ou telle recherche portant sur des ensembles de mots peut en effet très bien ne pas sortir d'un laboratoire, se concrétisant par exemple par des bases de données informatisées, éloignées de toutes perspectives commerciales" (Pruvost 2006, p. 101).

In relation to the lexicography, by the science named „la dictionnairique" the author understands:

> „le fait d'élaborer un dictionnaire en tant que produit offert à la vente, avec donc, toutes les problématiques dont relève chaque réalisation, en tant qu'instrument de consultation et en tant que média culturel conçus à dessein pour un publique déterminé d'acheteurs potentiels. Ainsi, ne faut-il jamais oublier que le dictionnaire représente un produit technico-commercial dont le contenu est défini en fonction des moyens qui lui sont consentis pour une clientèle délimitée, dans le cadre d'une étude de marché précise" (*Ibidem*, p. 101).

After making these theoretical delimitations, the French lexicographer presents the metalexicography field of study in detail, which is a relatively new and slightly known discipline. Pruvost then makes a classification of lexemes according to two criteria: semantic (synonymic, analogic, ideological terms, etc.) and formal (alphabetical, phonetic, etymologic etc. classification), in each case presenting multiple examples.

The sixth chapter provides a typology of dictionaries where the differentiating criteria represent an assembly of modular oppositions („un ensemble d'oppositions modulables"), the author considering that „par un jeud'oppositions pertinents que les dictionnaires peuvent être le plus aisément catégorisés. Ces distinctions ne sont pas exclusives les unes des autres: explicitées et nuancées, elles permettent de mieux comprendre le fonctionnement des dictionnaires et de mieux les utiliser" (*Ibidem,* p. 119). This typology takes into account both the nature and structure of

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[6] B. Quemada proposed this term in the magazine *Cahiers de lexicologie*, 1987.

dictionaries and the target public or the commercial purposes. Jean Pruvost proposes a series of oppositions that are not exclusive, namely:

a. *monolingual dictionaries* vs. *bilingual dictionaries*

In the monolingual dictionaries, the registered words, definitions, examples, explanations etc. are offered in a single language. From this perspective, the dictionary „reste en principe un énoncé clos" (*Ibidem*, p. 121), but by using the computer means, one can avoid, for instance, the circularity of definitions („définir un mot par un autre, et cet autre mot par le premier, le tout aboutissant à un cercle vicieux"). The author mentions that there is still a strong connection between the bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, the fact that the first ones are based on the second ones in each described language. For this reason, the success of a bilingual dictionary significantly depends on the correctitude of a language in a monolingual dictionary.

b. *dictionary* vs. *encyclopaedia*

Jean Pruvost mentions the differences between a dictionary and an encyclopaedia, as they are presented in the definitions from *Trésor de la langue française*. Thus, by *dictionary* one understands „recueil des mots d'une langue ou d'un domaine de l'activité humaine, réunis, selon une nomenclature d'importance variable et présentés généralement par ordre alphabétique, fournissant sur chaque mot un certain nombre d'informations relatives à son sens et à son emploi et destiné à un public défini".In the author's opinion, the purpose of a dictionary is to classify the terms, the lexical units of a language from a formal or semantic point of view. The objective of an encyclopaedia is different because it represents „l'ouvrage qui fait le tour de toutes les connaissances humaines ou de tout un domaine de ces connaissances et les expose selon un ordre alphabétique ou thématique" (*Ibidem*, p. 123). Such a work will not aim at analysing the lexical units, but at presenting knowledge and information.

c. *language dictionaries* vs. *dictionaries with encyclopaedic mentions*

d. *extensive dictionaries* vs. *selective dictionaries*

e. *descriptive dictionaries* vs. *normative, prescriptive dictionaries*

In J. Pruvost's view, these two types of dictionaries point out two attitudes of the lexicographers. Usually, these trends can be found in the forewords of the dictionaries: „d'un côté, le lexicographe se fait le greffier des usages bons ou mauvais, en essayant de ne pas porter de jugements, et on a affaire a un dictionnaire descriptif. De l'autre, il prend le rôle d'arbitre des usages, éventuellement même de censeur, se considérant comme un gardien légitime et éclairé de la langue, et on dispose alors d'un ouvrage normatif, prescriptif" (*Ibidem*, p. 130). Both directions are considered good, useful, and it is the reader's choice to select the type of dictionary according to his intentions.

f. *dictionaries in synchrony* vs. *dictionaries in diachrony*

The French lexicographer believes that „le choix des entrées et le traitement de l'information reflètent deux attitudes distinctes vis-à-vis de la langue que l'on peut effectivement considérer dans la longue histoire ou, au contraire, appréhender comme un état de langue déterminé à décrire" (*Ibidem*, p. 132).

g. *general dictionaries* vs. *speciality dictionaries*

For such lexicographic works, the authors appeal to various ways of selecting the information. Thus, in a general dictionary, the vocabulary of a language is presented globally, being explained in a general manner, by definitions and examples. In a speciality dictionary, the terms are selected from a particular, formal or semantic perspective and they are chosen according to certain linguistic peculiarities previously determined.

h. *general dictionary* vs. *dictionary for students*

Through the dictionaries for students, the authors try to answer the immediate needs, but also to familiarize the students to work with dictionaries.

i. *decoding dictionary* vs. *coding dictionary*

The last distinction made by the author determines the published dictionaries and the electronic ones, this technical revolution significantly changing the relation with the lexicographic text.

The last chapter describes the internal structure of the lexicographic text organized at a macro-structural level (the structure of the entries in a dictionary) and at a micro-structural level (systematizing the meanings of a term).

3. Defining terms in dictionaries

Another problem faced by the lexicographers is the definition[7] of terms. First of all, the definition "adapts" according to the type of dictionary and its purpose. Thus, a bilingual dictionary will adopt a more restrictive defining technique and will be more limited in terms of quantity, regarding the number of words used in the definition. In general, for the bilingual and multilingual dictionaries, the technique called „definition by synonym" is mainly used, providing a synonym in one or many languages. In this situation, the concern of the lexicographer is to provide the most appropriate equivalence for the meaning or meanings of the appointed title-word: „in the interests of conciseness, we should aim at a single translation equivalent whenever possible" (MacFarquhar and Richards 1983, p. 112). In their article, MacFarquhar and Richards Regarding consider that, for the unilingual dictionary, the author can choose between three types of definitions: „the commonest definition methods used are defining by synonyms, by explanation and by contextualization" (*Ibidem*, p. 113). The definition by synonyms is considered simple and economic, but, often the lexicographer does not find the proper synonym or there are semantic differences between the synonymous terms, differences that can lead to an incorrect definition of a word. The definition by contextualization represents the use of a title-word in an example that would illustrate its meaning, without requiring a definition. The most common type of definition used in the dictionary is the one where a title-word is semantically

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[7] In order to see a presentation of the various opinions regarding the lexicographic definition from the second half of the twentieth century, you can also consult Oprea 1992, pp. 164-174.

analysed, the author providing information on its "history" and "relations" within the lexical system of the language in question.

The author of dictionaries has multiple options for defining lexical elements; therefore, in the lexicographic definition theory, there was a concern for setting principles that would facilitate the work of lexicographers in the defining process. Thus, as Ioan Oprea also observed, the purpose of the definition in a dictionary would have to be the following: "due to the fact that the language does not operate with genders and species, but with words and relations between words, the purpose of the lexicographic definition is framing the word into the vocabulary system from the perspective of its meaning, the possibility of combining with other words and his role in the human activity" (Oprea 1976, p. 97). By the lexicographic definition, the author aims at emphasizing those particular semantic traits that would highlight the respective word in terms of contents, distinguishing it from the other terms. In general, a lexicographic definition: „is formed of: [1] a title-word, [2] indications on the grammar category, pronunciation, etymology, derivatives, uses etc. and [3] the definition itself" (*Ibidem*, p. 103). When affirming the importance of the definition for the semantic delimitation of a lexical element, Ioan Oprea concludes as follows: "The definition itself is, in the social conscience, the very object of the dictionaries and represents an *expansion* of the (defined) title-word. This is because, under the limit of a natural language, one can always express through many words what is being expressed by a single word. The analysis-sentence is a periphrasis of the defined word" (*Ibidem*).

Angela Bidu-Vrănceanu considers that the monolingual dictionaries have, first of all,a descriptive-normative role that operates at all the levels: graphic, phonetic, phonologic, morphological, syntactic and etymological. Referring to the definitions from such a dictionary, she points out the fact that "the analysis of the *lexico-graphic utterance* can raise problems for anyone due to the lack of a description tool that is well delimitated from the object-language. The deviations, circularity and even the confusions from many lexicographic definitions are increased by this objective difficulty… Despite the lack of a clear and precise tool for describing the meanings, the lexicographer, the expert in semantics and the speaker are forced, on one hand, *to establish the relations between a word and the objects* that can be named by it and, on the other hand, *to name the strictly linguistic conditions (semantic and contextual)* for using that word" (Bidu-Vrănceanu 1993, p. 12). Therefore, the author states that the lexicographic definition should be both sematic and referential, and "this multiple relational process to which the *word* submits must be considered for the correctitude of the semantic selection made by the speaker (*Ibidem*, p. 12). In addition to this, she makes the distinction between the *formal definition* and the *substantial definition*. The formal definition "is formed of phrases that are semantically equivalent with the lexicographic entry and in which the copula is implied in the predication"; this type of definition can be paraphrased by "being identical with". The substantial definition contains the peculiarities of the appointed object and "can be paraphrased by denotation; it is a frequent definition to nouns and verbs" (*Ibidem*, p. 13).

In conclusion, Angela Bidu-Vrănceanu insists on the normative character of the lexicographic works for the speakers and, therefore, the role of the unilingual dictionaries is to present "the institutionalization of words according to the usage of the language in question, registering a lexical inventory (a determined vocabulary, that comes into prominence through forms and meanings" (*Ibidem*, p. 17). According to the model offered by the dictionary, the speaker makes the same fixing operation, reproducing the terms in his speaking. For this reason, it is necessary for the term to be coded with accuracy in the dictionary, in order to be able to be properly reproduced in the communication process. Thus, "the dictionaries reflect the linguistic use, but also regulate it, and the movements or deviations of meanings can be controlled with the help of dictionaries (*Ibidem*).

4. Trends in the contemporary Romanian lexicography

One of the trends manifested in the second half of the twentieth century was called the „user perspective" (Hartmann and James 1998, p. VIII), meaning that, when elaborating and disseminating a dictionary, the focus is on the user: which are his needs and the contexts that determine him to appeal to a dictionary. This orientation meant the elaboration of dictionaries as diversified as possible that would correspond to the various profiles of users, to the contexts where they use them and to the abilities that they have and gain.

Yet, an actual trend of the modern lexicography – defining in the twenty-firsts century for developing this branch of science – that brought multiple changes in the field and is motivated both by the process of globalization and also by the development of the digital science, is the computerization of the methods of study on one hand, and of the dictionaries as means of knowing a language, on the other. Therefore, even from the 90's, we see an increasing interest from the Romanian lexicographers for putting as many dictionaries as possible into electronic format. We must point out that the Romanian lexicographers had knowledge of this trend even from its beginnings, from the first attempts in the Western languages[8]. We especially refer to the article of Mircea Mitran, *Automatizarea lexicografiei*, published in 1965, in the magazine *Limba română* (no. 5, pp. 527-531), where the author presents the results of the conference from New York, *International*

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[8] One of the first attempts from the Romance languages is mentioned in M.B. Quemada's article *La technique des inventaires mécanographiques*, published in the volume *Lexicologie et lexicographie françaises et romanes. Orientations et exigences actuelles*, Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Strasbourg, 1957, pp. 53-68. Other studies that emphasize the computer means that can be used as research tools in the field of neology are the ones that belong to A. Petroff, *L'informatique comme instrument de recherche dans le domaine de la néologie* și Ph. Dresco, Traitement informatique de la néologie: Bilan et réflexions à propos d'un projet pilote, in *Langages* (under the title *La néologie lexicale*), 8e année, décembre 1974, no. 36, Paris, Didier-Larousse, pp. 103-118 and respectively pp. 119-123.

Conference on Computational Linguistics, to which he participated. As a result of these international preoccupations, the personnel from the Institute of Linguistics "Iorgu Iordan" together with the Institute of Linguistics „S. Pușcariu" of Cluj have started, even since 1980, to create the first computerized bank of linguistic data, named BANDASEM (*Banca de date fono-morfo-semantică a limbii române*)[9].

These concerns for computerizing the languages have led to the establishment of continental organizations that reunite lexicographers, lexicologists, linguists, but also programmers that aim at achieving a technologizing level as high as possible for as many languages as they can worldwide. This trend supports Alain Danzin's statement, according to which: "in the electronic era, it is essential for a language to be used in the electronic information systems for its survival" (Haja *et al*. 2005, p. 5). Thus, the Dictionary Society of North America (DSNA) was founded in 1975, the European Association for Lexicography (EURALEX) in 1983, the Australasian Association for Lexicography (AUSTRALEX) in 1990, the African Association for Lexicography (AFRILEX) in 1995 and the Asian Association for Lexicography (ASIALEX) in 1997, with the purpose to coordinate more efficiently the activities and projects for computerizing all the language of the planet.

5. Conclusions

As it could be seen, the history of the Romanian lexicography is strongly related to the development of national culture and reflects the stages of this development. The development of the unilingual lexicography, with the Romanian as basic language, the emergence of explanatory and neological dictionaries has significantly contributed to the language enrichment and also to its refinement. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the lexicographic field was marked by the efforts of elaborating an academic dictionary, but it has also continued to rapidly develop in the other directions and during this period the types of dictionaries were diversified and the number of their editions grew. The increasing public, his hetero-geneousness, the increasing practical needs are all elements that contributed to the continuous development of the lexicographic works. And the beginning of the twenty-first century is marked by the computerization of dictionaries and the diversification of the digital applications for translation, all these in order to facilitate the cultural interaction and communication between individuals.

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[9] For more information on this project and other linguistic resources developed by the researchers from the two institutes of the Romanian Academy, see the presentation from the article Vintilă-Rădulescu 2002, pp. 19-32.

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