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Two opposing theories: On H.E. Wiegand's recent discovery of lexicographic functions

Abstract

In the history of lexicography, a lot has been said about dictionary users and their needs. This paper will focus on two theories that both share the postulate that dictionaries are tools made by human beings in order to solve specific problems. The first theory is developed by the German scholar H.E. Wiegand and it will be argued that his theory about dictionary use should be considered a linguistic reconstruction of information items in existing dictionaries. The other theory is the modern theory of lexicographic functions that takes all the theoretical and practical consequences of the basic postulate that dictionaries are utility products.

1. Introduction

References to users and their needs have been made in dictionary prefaces and other lexicographic contributions for centuries. There is nothing new in that. But it is not until the 20th century that a lexicographic theory in the true sense of the word becomes a reality. This theory has developed through a number of competing paradigms that have dominated the lexicographic debate for a certain period and then given way to other paradigms. Among the most important are Scerba's "general theory of lexicography" (Scerba 1940), the reflections put forward by Hausmann (1977), and the "active-passive theory" introduced by Kromann et al. (1984). All of these theoretical contributions have in one way or another referred to users and their needs. This also applies to another "general theory of lexicography" that was developed by H.E. Wiegand in a number of articles and books from 1977 and onwards (e.g. Wiegand 1977, 1988, 1989 and

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1998). But none of these theories has taken the full consequences of their references to the users and user needs. It was not until the appearance of the “modern theory of lexicographic functions” that a theory was developed that takes the users, the user needs and the user situations as the starting point for all lexicographic theory and practice.

2. The modern theory of lexicographic functions

The modern theory of lexicographic functions has been developed by researchers from the Center for Lexicography at the Aarhus School of Business since the early 1990s (Bergenholtz 1996, 1998, Tarp 1992, 1994, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2002, Bergenholtz/Kaufmann 1997, Bergenholtz/Nielsen 2002, Bergenholtz/Tarp 2002). The theory is based on two main postulates which it, at least in principle, has in common with H.E. Wiegand’s theory. First of all it considers lexicography an independent scientific discipline and not, as in the case of a large number of lexicographers, to be a subdiscipline of linguistics. The subject field of lexicography is dictionaries, a human-made product, whereas the subject field of linguistics is language, i.e. something inherent in human beings. Secondly, and in accordance with the former, dictionaries are considered utility products that are made in order to satisfy certain human needs. Consequently, all theoretical and practical considerations must be based upon a determination of these needs, i.e. what is needed to solve the set of specific problems that pop up for a specific group of users with specific characteristics in specific user situations. As indicated above, H.E. Wiegand also generally views lexicography as a discipline that is independent from linguistics, but in reality, however, his whole “general theory” is a linguistic theory that approaches lexicography from the point of view of linguistics, a fact that also prevents him from taking the consequences of his most important lexicographic discovery, i.e. that dictionaries are utility products. Accordingly, although sharing the two main postulates with H.E. Wiegand, the modern theory of lexicographic functions differs from Wiegand’s theory by taking the full consequences of these postulates.

As any researchers or producers of utility products, lexicographers study – or ought to study – human activities in order to detect possible needs that can be satisfied by means of a dictionary. But human needs must not be viewed as something abstract, having their own independent

life. They are always linked to a specific group of people and a specific situation. Lexicographers, therefore, have to make a profile of the intended user group and a typology of the user situations where problems or needs may pop up that can be solved by providing lexicographic data in a dictionary. On this basis, the functions and genuine purpose of a dictionary can be determined.

A number of important characteristics must be taken into account in order to make a profile of a specific user group, although not all of them are relevant for each and every dictionary:

1. Which language is their mother tongue?
2. At what level do they master their mother tongue?
3. At what level do they master a foreign language?
4. How are their experience in translating between the languages in question?
5. What is the level of their general cultural and encyclopaedic knowledge?
6. At what level do they master the special subject field in question?
7. At what level do they master the corresponding LSP in their mother tongue?
8. At what level do they master the corresponding LSP in the foreign language?

For a particular dictionary, there may, of course, be other relevant types of characteristics but the above-mentioned characteristics are the most important in order to make a profile of a specific user group. Determining the user characteristics is the first step the lexicographer has to take to determine the user needs. These, however, are not abstract but related to concrete situations. Therefore, these situations should be detected, distinguished from each other and analysed in order to determine which type of needs a specific type of user may have in each type of situation. The functional theory of lexicography distinguishes between two main groups of user situations. The first group corresponds to types of situations where the user for one reason or another wants to obtain additional information on some topic, e.g. general cultural and encyclopaedic information, specialised information regarding a scientific discipline (biology, geology etc.) or information about a specific language related to the language-learning process (for example the learning of a foreign language). It is then up to the lexicographers to study the special needs

for information in each case and in terms of each type of user so that they can decide which of these needs might be satisfied by consulting a dictionary and which are then the corresponding data to be included in the dictionary.

The above-mentioned types of user situations are called knowledge-orientated. In these situations, the only communication taking place is between the lexicographer – as author of the dictionary – and the users of this dictionary. The users want knowledge and the lexicographers provide it, nothing more. There is, however, another main group of user situations where there is an existing – or planned – written or oral communication going on between two or more persons and where the lexicographer only intervenes indirectly (through the dictionary) when some kind of communication problem may pop up that can be solved by consulting a dictionary. This group of user situations is called communication-orientated. They are detected and distinguished from each other by means of a very simple model of communication. According to this model, communication between two or more persons is made up by the production and reception of texts (some authors call it encoding and decoding) and, in some cases, also the translation of existing texts, which is done by a translator. If we vary the language of the produced text and the mother tongue (or first language) of the text receiver and the translator, it gives a total of five different forms under which communication can take place:

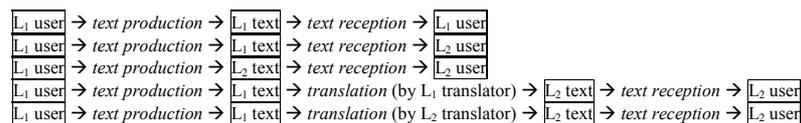


Figure 1: Communication model

Problems in the communication process that can be solved by dictionaries may exactly pop up during the production, reception or translation phases indicated in italics. As can be seen from the above model, production and reception of texts may take place both in the mother tongue and, in some cases, in a foreign language, whereas translation can be done both from and into the mother tongue. This gives a total of six basic types of

communication-orientated user situations where dictionaries can be of help:

1. Production of texts in the mother tongue (or first language)
2. Reception of texts in the mother tongue (or first language)
3. Production of texts in a foreign language (or second, third language etc.)
4. Reception of text in a foreign language (or second, third language etc.)
5. Translation of texts from the mother tongue (or first language) into a foreign language (or second, third language etc.)
6. Translation of texts from a foreign language (or second, third language etc.) into the mother tongue (or first language)

These are the basic types of communication-orientated user situations. However, there are also other types that might be relevant for particular dictionaries, e.g. translation of texts between two foreign languages. And there are also some variants of the above-mentioned types of user situations, e.g. revision of texts, which is frequently done by school teachers, bilingual secretaries and translators, and which should be considered variants of text production.

Once the lexicographers know the characteristics of the user group and types of user situations, they can proceed to a characterisation of the users' needs. At a general level, these needs will comprise the following main categories of information:

1. Information about the native language
2. Information about a foreign language
3. Comparison between the native and a foreign language
4. Information about culture and the world in general
5. Information about the special subject field
6. Comparison between the subject field in the native and foreign culture
7. Information about the native LSP
8. Information about the foreign LSP
9. Comparison between the native and foreign LSP

On the basis of these needs, the lexicographers can determine which kind of data should be prepared and incorporated in the dictionary in order to assist each specific type of users in each type of user situation. When the lexicographers know the user group and its specific character-

istics, the types of user situations and specific user needs related to these situations, they can then proceed to the determination of what is referred to as lexicographic functions. A **lexicographic function** of a given dictionary is to provide assistance to a specific user group with specific characteristics in order to cover the complex of needs that arise in a specific type of user situation. A concrete dictionary can have one or more functions, i.e. it can be mono- and multifunctional. As any other utility product, dictionaries also have a genuine purpose. This **genuine purpose** is made up by the totality of functions of a given dictionary and the subject field(s) that it covers.

Experience shows that the determinant element in a dictionary function is the user situation. There is, for example, much greater difference between a dictionary conceived for text production in the native language and one conceived for translation into a foreign language than between a mother-tongue production dictionary conceived for adult users and one conceived for school children. For that reason, functions are frequently named after the corresponding types of user situations.

In this way, the lexicographic functions may be subdivided into communication-orientated and knowledge-orientated functions corresponding to the respective main types of user situations. The most important types of communication-orientated functions are as follows:

- to assist the users in solving problems related to text reception in the native language
- to assist the users in solving problems related to text production of texts in the native language
- to assist the users in solving problems related to text reception in a foreign language
- to assist the users in solving problems related to text production in a foreign language
- to assist the users in solving problems related to translation of texts from the native language into a foreign language
- to assist the users in solving problems related to translation of texts from a foreign language into the native language

The most important types of knowledge-orientated functions are:

- to provide general cultural and encyclopaedic information to the users
- to provide special information about the subject field to the users
- to provide information about the language to the users

There may also be other types of functions. For instance, if the dictionary in question is treating a subject that has developed in a different way from culture to culture, from country to country, then the dictionary might also have the function of giving the users information on the subject in both their own country or culture and in the foreign country or culture.

The functions are the basic elements of lexicographic theory and practice and constitute the leading principle of all dictionaries. Everything in a dictionary, absolutely everything, is to a greater or smaller extent influenced by its respective functions. Neither the content nor the form of a dictionary can be conceived without taking the functions into account.

A user consults a dictionary in order to achieve information that allows him or her to solve a concrete problem or raise his or her general level of knowledge. The dictionary must be able to meet the needs that arise in such situations. Often the needs are very simple and can be covered by only one or a few lexicographic data. In other situations, the needs are very complex and can only be met by a combination of different sorts of lexicographic data. Thus, when the lexicographic functions and the genuine purpose of a dictionary have been determined, the lexicographers can proceed to the next step, i.e. to decide which data must be prepared and included in the dictionary in order to meet its various functions or, in case of reviewing, to analyse whether the data incorporated in the dictionary actually make it live up to its declared function or functions. According to the functional theory of lexicography, no data whatsoever should be included in a dictionary if it cannot be argued on the basis of its respective functions. And the presentation and structures of these data should follow the same principles.

The above is a summary of the main components of the modern theory of lexicographic functions.

3. Language dictionaries and genuine purpose

This chapter contains a critical summary of Wiegand's theory of dictionary use. Another very critical comment was already given by Mentrup (1984). Wiegand was not amused and characterised Mentrup's paper as a typical product of the German scientific tradition. According to Wiegand, this tradition demands that you should provide as many quotations as possible, but only select those that support your own argu-

mentation (Wiegand 1985:25). The authors of this paper are not sure whether these principles really are typical of German scientific discussions. Indeed, Wiegand normally uses exactly the same “typically German tradition” (e.g. Wiegand 2001). However, the following reading of Wiegand’s theory will not follow Mentrup’s method and try to collect quotations from almost all Wiegand’s contributions to lexicography, but will mostly refer only to volume one of Wiegand’s main lexicographical contribution, the voluminous book of 1162 pages with the title: “Wörterbuchforschung. Untersuchungen zur Wörterbuchbenutzung, zur Theorie, Geschichte, Kritik und Automatisierung der Lexikographie” [Dictionary research. Investigations on dictionary use, theory, history, critique and automatisisation in lexicography] (Wiegand 1998).

One of Wiegand’s remarkable and also famous contributions to theoretical lexicography is his criticism of the lexicographical tradition dating from before 1977 and his very precise characterisation of the pre-1977 dictionary user as “the well-known unknown”. Wiegand was the first lexicographer to define the dictionary as a utility product, i.e. a tool that is or should be produced to satisfy certain human needs. You might, therefore, expect that dictionary use would be the first, or at least one of the first topics treated in a book whose subtitle is “dictionary use”. However, this is not the case. The starting point in Wiegand (1998) is his discussion and definition of the term “language dictionary”. This discussion is introduced as early as on page 2. Wiegand argues against a theoretical classification of lexicography as part of applied linguistics, lexicology or semasiology. These arguments are all very convincing, but until now they have had no general impact on the majority of the theoretical and practical lexicographers. The authors of this paper belong to the few lexicographers who share the same basic positions. Likewise, Wiegand’s distinction between dictionary research as a scientific discipline and lexicography as a non-scientific discipline has so far had the same low impact, and in this case it should be added: fortunately so. In practice these distinctions between disciplines have no real impact on the answers that are given to the question raised in the title of the first chapter: “Was ist Sprachlexikographie?” [What is language lexicography?] A first answer in the form of a definition says that the task of “Sprachlexikographie” [language lexicography] is to prepare language dictionaries in such a way that they can be used as language dictionaries:

[Sprachlexikographie ist] darauf ausgerichtet, daß Nachschlagewerke zur Sprache (= Sprachnachschlagewerke) entstehen, so daß durch diese eine andere kulturelle Praxis, nämlich die Benutzung von Sprachnachschlagewerken ermöglicht wird. (Wiegand 1998:41)

[[Language lexicography] aims at generating reference works about language (language reference works) so that these works make another cultural practice possible, i.e. the use of language reference works.]

It is remarkable that this definition doesn't say anything about the user and the user situations, i.e. the user types and different types of user situations, and – even more strikingly – nothing whatsoever about the users' needs. Why dictionaries are used, to what end and by whom is not part of the above definition. However, it could be argued that user situations are mentioned implicitly by the introduction of the term “genuine purpose”, which is first introduced without a definition, but only with a reference to such a definition which appears 250 pages later. Here, we learn that a dictionary is a tool and like every other tool has a purpose, a genuine purpose:

Wie alle Gebrauchsgegenstände, so haben auch Nachschlagewerke genuine Zwecke. (Wiegand 1998:52)

[Like all utility products, reference works also have a genuine purpose.]

A shovel, a key, a car or a towel are tools for different purposes. They are produced because of the existence of certain needs and in order to meet these needs. If you take a snow shovel as an example, you can say that the genuine purpose of the shovel is to remove snow because it is in the way. You could of course also use a plant shovel, but this might be quite impractical. Some shovels, but perhaps not the snow shovel, can have more than one function. It could also be used for non-genuine purposes, e.g. as a defence against dogs. The same goes for dictionaries. Basically, the idea is very clear and convincing: You have a problem, you take a tool, you use the tool to solve your problem. But for dictionaries this very clear idea seems unclear in Wiegand's description. Wiegand distinguishes between two different main purposes in lexicography: a language-lexicographic purpose and an encyclopaedic or extralinguistic-lexicographic purpose:

Ein genuiner sprachlexikographischer Zweck liegt vor genau dann, wenn es die Intention des Lexikographen war, daß der potentielle Benutzer aus den lexikographischen Textdaten Informationen über einen sprachlichen Gegenstand aus K_1 gewinnen kann und wenn dies tatsächlich

möglich ist. Entsprechend liegt ein genuin sachlexikographischer Zweck vor genau dann, wenn es die Intention des Lexikographen war, daß der potentielle Benutzer aus den lexikographischen Textdaten Informationen über eine Sache aus K_2 gewinnen kann und wenn dies auch tatsächlich möglich ist. (Wiegand 1998:53).

[There is a genuine language-lexicographic purpose when it was the intention of the lexicographer that the potential user will be able to retrieve information about a linguistic object of K_1 from the lexicographic text data and when this is in fact possible. Similarly, there is a genuine extralinguistic-lexicographic purpose precisely when it was the intention of the lexicographer that a potential user will be able to retrieve information about an extra-linguistic matter of K_2 from the lexicographic text data and when this is actually possible.]

This description of a dichotomy between language and extra-linguistic matter corresponds to the distinction between two kinds of objects, linguistic and non-linguistic objects:

Alle möglichen Gegenstände von Nachschlagewerken können zwei Klassen K_1 und K_2 zugewiesen werden. K_1 sei die Klasse der sprachlichen und K_2 die Klasse der nichtsprachlichen Gegenstände. (Wiegand 1998:53)

[All possible objects of reference works can be attributed to two classes K_1 and K_2 . K_1 is the class of linguistic objects and K_2 the class of extra-linguistic objects.]

This distinction is for many reasons unclear as argued by Nielsen (2003). But this is not the point here. As Nielsen (2003) has pointed out, the really interesting question is that it takes its starting point in two different kinds of objects. The point of departure is not – as you might expect from a theory that views dictionaries as tools – the user, the user type or the type of the user situation, but a linguistic-philosophical distinction between language and extra-linguistic matter. In the same way, the distinction between “Sprachwörterbücher” [language dictionaries], “Sachwörterbücher” [encyclopaedias] and “Allbücher” [encyclopaedic dictionaries, i.e. dictionaries for both language and encyclopaedic or extra-linguistic matter] is not based on dictionary use, the dictionary user or user needs, but on the subject matter. The definition of a language dictionary is based on linguistic matter or objects. The definition seems to be trivial. According to Wiegand, a language dictionary is a dictionary whose genuine purpose is that a user should find information about language in it:

Ein Sprachwörterbuch ist ein Nachschlagewerk, dessen genuiner Zweck darin besteht, daß der potentielle Benutzer aus den lexikographischen Textdaten Informationen zu sprachlichen Gegenständen gewinnen kann. (Wiegand 1998:53)

[A language dictionary is a reference work whose genuine purpose is to enable a potential user to retrieve information about linguistic objects from its lexicographic data.]

The distinction between a language dictionary and an encyclopaedia (extra-linguistic dictionary) seems trivial, and perhaps it is, since it is difficult to understand the difference, if you try to apply this distinction to concrete examples. The two following examples are taken from one of Wiegand's own papers on this topic (Wiegand 1994). The first one is an example of a dictionary article from a language dictionary (an LSP language dictionary), the second one is from an encyclopaedia (an LSP encyclopaedia):

Raspatorium [zu mlat. *raspare* = raspeln; schaben] s; ...ien [...i 'n]: raspelartiges chirurgisches Instrument, z.B. zum Abschieben der Knochenhaut bei operativen Eingriffen an Knochen

Datenzwischenträger Ein Datenträger, der nur das Bindeglied zwischen zwei Einrichtungen zur Datenverarbeitung herstellt. Dies ist z.B. der Fall, wenn im dezentralen → Datenstationen erfaßte und mit → Datenübertragunseinrichtungen an eine Zentrale übermittelte Daten dort erst noch einmal auf → Disketten aufgenommen werden, bevor die Eingabe aufgenommen werden, bevor die Eingabe in die Datenverarbeitungsanlage erfolgt. Hier hat die Diskette nur die Funktion eines Datenzwischenträgers.

Text example 1: Dictionary articles quoted from Wiegand (1994:108-110)

It is not at all obvious that the second article is taken from an encyclopaedia and the first one is not. It is easy to see that the first dictionary article is shorter than the second one. It can also be seen that the explanation in the first dictionary article is slightly easier to understand for a layman than the explanation in the second article. But this, i.e. the length or comprehensibility, cannot be the real reason for the classification as a language-dictionary or an encyclopaedia. The real problem is that its starting point is a linguistic-philosophical typology with no relevance whatsoever to the users' needs in terms of solving problems related to communication or getting more general or specific knowledge (Bergen-

holtz 1998, Tarp 1998). You can perhaps make a distinction if the first article is viewed as a semantic explanation and the second one as an encyclopaedic explanation. Although Bergenholtz/Kaufmann (1996) argues against such an interpretation, this could be a possible linguistic-philosophical solution. But it is not the main point. It is much more important that the above distinction is totally irrelevant for a distinction between communication-related and knowledge-related problems. If a certain person with a certain encyclopaedic and linguistic background reads a text containing the word *Raspatorium* or *Datenzwischenträger* and this person does not understand this word and consults a dictionary for an explanation, both the dictionary called “Sprachwörterbuch” [language dictionary] by Wiegand and the so-called “Sachwörterbuch” [encyclopaedia] would be helpful. In both dictionary articles the user will find an example of how to use the instrument after “z.B.” (e.g.). Perhaps the user stops after reading the first sentence in the “encyclopaedia” or perhaps he would have liked to find more information in the language dictionary. A similar argumentation is possible, if a person wants to know what a *Raspatorium* or a *Datenzwischenträger* is. It depends on the specific user needs whether the given articles provide sufficient information or not.

If the user needs – and not the linguistic distinction between language and extra-linguistic matter – is taken as the starting point, a totally different kind of dictionary classification will emerge, cf. Bergenholtz (1998):

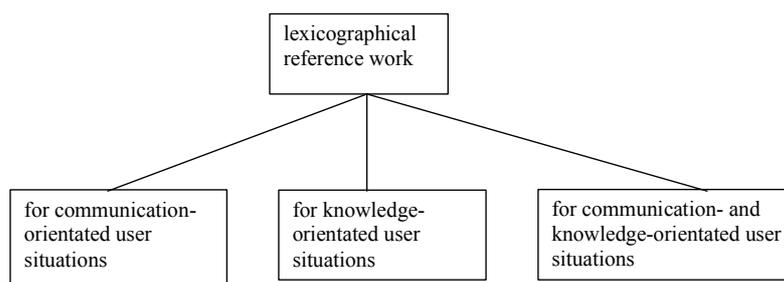


Figure 2: Classification of lexicographic reference works according to functions

This classification is based on dictionary functions and not on an irrelevant linguistic-philosophical distinction. An etymological dictionary for example – which Wiegand (1981a:141) classifies as a language dictionary – is a suitable tool if a user wants to know something about the history of a word. This is what is called a knowledge-orientated situation, but an etymological dictionary can hardly give sufficient help when someone has problems with reading or producing or translating a text. In other words, such a dictionary cannot be a tool that can provide assistance in communication-orientated situations.

In this light, Wiegand's use of the terms "Wörterbuchbenutzungshandlung" [dictionary use act] and "kommunikative Handlungen" [communicative acts] has no direct connection to the user needs, but only to the terminology of a linguist who reconstructs the item classes in given dictionaries – although he argues for the correct and important understanding of a dictionary as a tool and therefore characterises the use of a dictionary as a certain kind of act:

Eine Wörterbuchbenutzungshandlung (kurz: Benutzungshandlung), die zum vollständig generischen Handlungstyp EIN WÖRTERBUCH BENUTZEN gehört, ist gegeben genau dann, wenn bei der Ausführung kommunikativer oder nichtkommunikativer Handlungen mindestens ein Wörterbuchexemplar dient, um Handlungsziele zu erreichen. (Wiegand 1998:295)

[A dictionary use act (short: use act) that belongs to the completely generic type of act of USING A DICTIONARY exists precisely when, during the performance of communicative or non-communicative acts, at least one copy of a dictionary serves to achieve the objectives of the act.]

Wiegand's distinction between communicative and non-communicative acts seems to be similar to the distinction used in the modern theory of dictionary functions. This first impression is, however, deceptive. In Wiegand (1998) the terms relate to the act of using a dictionary, in other words not a communicative act at all, but only one related to the use of dictionaries when the user has communicative problems. Nevertheless, the use of a dictionary is and should be regarded as an act. Acts have a genuine purpose; in Wiegand's terminology the use of a dictionary can fulfil one or more than one genuine purpose. We have noticed that nowhere in the definition of "genuine purpose" (see chapter 4 in this paper) and, as far as we can see, nowhere in Wiegand (1998) the terms "genuine

Funktion” [genuine function] or “Wörterbuchfunktion” [dictionary function] are to be found – although the term “genuine Funktion” [genuine function] can be found in earlier contributions by Wiegand. On the other hand and paraphrasing Wiegand’s statement (2002:222) about Nielsen (1999), the definition that Wiegand provides of the “genuine purpose” of a dictionary is “hopelessly general” (see the next chapter for the exact quotation and further discussion). All relations to the real function of the tool are lacking. Not a single word is found about dictionaries as a tool conceived in order to satisfy certain needs related to certain kinds of problems in terms of communication or knowledge. In addition to this, it is not obvious that you can define the dictionary subject and the dictionary type before you have determined the needs for which the tool is made. You cannot compare it with the well-known story about the hen and the egg.

In connection with the genuine purpose of a dictionary, there is a certain order of procedure. The lexicographer preparing a dictionary determines certain types of problems in terms of language use or knowledge for a certain user type and conceives the planned dictionary in such a way that it can be a useful tool for these assumed problems. Following this decision, the lexicographer can make decisions on subject matter, dictionary structures, empirical bases etc. – but it can and should not be done in a reverse way. Seen from the user’s perspective you have a specific user situation where a person has communication- or knowledge-related problems. When this person wants to use a dictionary in order to solve these problems he or she might consider the specific language, subject matter or dictionary type in order to choose a dictionary that can give assistance, but in most cases his or her habits and possible access to a particular dictionary will play the crucial role for his or her choice of dictionary. For the user it is not important whether he or she gets the needed information in a printed or electronic dictionary, in a “language dictionary” or an “encyclopaedia”, in a one-volume dictionary or a two-volume dictionary. Cultural habits and personal experience will play a more important role. But the dictionary user will never as the first and only possibility base his or her dictionary choice on a linguistic-philosophical distinction between language and encyclopaedia. Such a distinction is in reality a linguist-orientated reconstruction of dictionary information classes or items (Mentrup 1984:151). Wiegand (1998) doesn’t

take his starting point in the user, the user's characteristics, the type of user situation or the problems that might pop up in such a situation. He discusses these elements later and in other contexts, but these central elements of a user-orientated lexicographical theory are completely lacking when he defines the genuine purpose of a dictionary.

4. Wiegand discovers the lexicographic functions

In an article published in 2001, H.E. Wiegand finally discovers the concept of lexicographic functions. At that time, the term "function" was widely used by scholars from all continents and Wiegand apparently felt that he also had to have his say on this important lexicographic issue. Wiegand (2001) starts his paper with a review and criticism of the different scholars that have incorporated the concept of functions into their work. The central part of his criticism is directed against the contributions of Bergenholtz and Tarp and contains a number of far from convincing arguments. He criticises Tarp for his mastery of the German language or lack of it (this is correct but has nothing to do with the topic in question), he dislikes some of the terms used by Bergenholtz and Tarp and especially the use of abbreviated terms (this is his problem) and he also argues that Bergenholtz a couple of times uses some of the terms in an inconsistent way (this is right but still doesn't affect the basic principles of the theory of lexicographic functions). His conclusion is that "ein klarer Begriff der Wörterbuchfunktion liegt m. W. bisher nicht vor" [a clear concept of dictionary function doesn't exist yet]. This conclusion, however, is not based on an analysis and criticism of the basic postulates and principles of the theory of lexicographic functions, something that should be expected from a scholar of Wiegand's calibre. The real reason seems to be that Wiegand wants to appropriate a popular and widely used term and integrate it into "die **von mir** erarbeiteten Allgemeinen Theorie der Lexikographie" [the general theory of lexicography developed **by me** (our emphasis)]. Consequently, in the process of doing so he only conserves the form, i.e. the term "function", whereas he completely changes its content and meaning according to his own lexicographic theory.

The most important part of H.E. Wiegand's contribution bears the title "Versuch einer theoretischen Bestimmung des Begriffs der Wörterbuchfunktion" [Towards a theoretical determination of the concept of dictionary function]. In the beginning of this Chapter, Wiegand returns

to his old concept of “genuine purpose”. Rather surprisingly he then writes that “die Termini genuiner Zweck und genuine Funktion synonym verwendet werden” [the terms genuine purpose and genuine function are used as synonyms]. The only reason for this unnecessary inconsistency is apparently that Wiegand already in the past has used these two terms as synonyms, i.e. before his attempt to integrate “dictionary functions” into his theory. After this digression, Wiegand stresses that “at the highest level of generalisation ... there is only one genuine purpose for all dictionaries” and he then provides such a general definition of “genuine purpose”, quoting his old definition from Wiegand (1998) that was already partially discussed in Chapter 3:

Der genuine Zweck eines Wörterbuches besteht darin, daß es benutzt wird, um anhand lexikographischer Daten in den Teiltextrn mit äußerer Zugriffsstruktur (vor allem solchen im Wörterverzeichnis oder in den Wörterverzeichnissen) Informationen zu denjenigen Eigenschaftsausprägungen bei sprachlichen Ausdrücken zu erschließen, die zum jeweiligen Wörterbuchgegenstand gehören. (Wiegand 1998:299)

[The general purpose of a dictionary is that it is used in order to retrieve information from the lexicographic data contained in the text parts with outer access structure (especially in the word list or the word lists) about those properties reflected in the linguistic expressions which belong to the subject matter of the dictionary.]

It is evident that in order to understand this definition it is crucial to know what is meant by “subject matter of the dictionary”. Apparently, Wiegand is aware of this fact because, directly after the above quotation, he also quotes the definition of this term in Wiegand (1998):

Der Wörterbuchgegenstand eines bestimmten Wörterbuches ist die Menge der in diesem Wörterbuch lexikographisch bearbeiteten Eigenschaftsausprägungen von wenigstens einer, höchstens aber von endlichen vielen sprachlichen Ausdrücken, die zu einem bestimmten Wörterbuchgegenstandsbereich gehören. (Wiegand 1998:302)

[The subject matter of a given dictionary is the set of properties that are treated lexicographically in this dictionary and which consist of at least one and not more than a finite number of linguistic expressions that belong to a specific dictionary subject matter field.]

This definition is clearly tautological because it presupposes that the reader knows the meaning of “dictionary subject matter field”. If you are unaware of this concept and combine the two quotations, the following result emerges:

The general purpose of a dictionary is that it is used in order to retrieve information from the lexicographic data contained in the text parts with outer access structure (especially in the word list or the word lists) about those properties reflected in the linguistic expressions which belong to the set of properties that are treated lexicographically in this dictionary and which consist of at least one and not more than a finite number of linguistic expressions that belong to a certain dictionary subject matter field.

There is no doubt that this definition is very different from the definition of “genuine purpose” provided by the theory of lexicographic functions (see Chapter 2 in this paper). And it goes without saying that the above definition is, at best, very difficult to understand and, thus, provides next to no assistance to practical lexicography which, in the end of the day, should be the sublime objective of a lexicographic theory. The major objection to this definition is, however, that it is not based on the users, their characteristics and needs in specific situations, i.e. that it is not based on the dictionary functions as is the case with the definition provided by the functional theory of lexicography. On the contrary, Wiegand’s definition starts the wrong way around; it has the dictionary itself as its starting point and only treats the possible user questions in the second place:

Festgelegt wird **in erster Linie** diejenige Klasse lexikographischer Informationen, zu der die jeweilige Information gehört, die anhand der jeweils genannten lexikographischen Daten einer bestimmten Datenklasse [...] bei usueller und korrekter Benutzung des Wörterbuches erhältlich ist. Damit wird jedoch **in zweiter Linie** auch die Klasse der Typen von Benutzerfragen festgelegt, die im Rahmen der usuellen Benutzung an das Wörterbuch gerichtet werden können. (Wiegand 2001:230)

[**First of all**, the class of lexicographic information is determined, to which the information that can be retrieved from the mentioned lexicographic data of a certain class of data [...] by means of the habitual and correct use of the dictionary belongs. **Secondly**, in this way the class of types of user questions that can be directed to the dictionary within the framework of the habitual use is also determined.] (Our emphasis)

Such a procedure is typical for the theoretical approach that first of all contemplates and interprets already existing dictionaries. This kind of research is, of course, very important, but even more important is the development of theories that can provide guidelines and support for the function-orientated lexicographic practice. Therefore, the modern theory

of lexicographic functions takes its starting point in the dictionary functions and not in the more or less successful dictionaries already published. When the point of departure is “first of all” the existing dictionaries and the data included in them, then the user and the corresponding user questions are put in “second place”. This starting point may have influenced Wiegand’s characterisation of the user:

Die Festlegung des genuinen Zwecks besagt nichts darüber, wer in welchen sozialen Situationen die jeweiligen Informationen benötigt.
(Wiegand 2001:230)

[The determination of the genuine purpose says nothing about the person that needs the corresponding information and in which social situations.]

The understanding of this statement depends on the meaning of “social situations”. This expression is not explained but similar statements can be found in Wiegand’s article on dictionary functions. He points out that he also uses the “concept of genuine purpose on all functional parts of a dictionary”, e.g. items of meaning paraphrase:

Auch hier gehört es **nicht** zum genuinen Zweck, daß es bestimmte Benutzer in bestimmten Benutzungssituationen sind, welche die Bedeutungsparaphrasenangabe lesen. Der genuine Zweck eines Gebrauchsgegenstandes oder der einer seiner funktionalen Teile wird mithin stets aufgrund einer **phänomenologisch** basierten Unterscheidung bestimmt. Es geht um die Typen der erhältlichen lexikographischen Information und damit um die Typen der Benutzerfragen. (Wiegand 2001:230)

[It is **not** part of the genuine purpose that specific users read the items of meaning paraphrase in specific situations. Consequently, the genuine purpose of a utility product or of one of its functional parts is always determined by means of a **phenomenologically** based differentiation. It concerns the types of available lexicographic information and, hence, of the types of user questions.] (Our emphasis)

In other parts of the article other statements directly question this picture of the user, e.g. the following quotation:

Was für alle Gebrauchsgegenstände gilt, läßt sich auch für Wörterbücher als einer spezifischen Sorte von Gebrauchsgegenständen konstatieren: Ihre genuinen Zwecke und ihre Funktionen lassen sich **nur relativ zu Typen von Handlungssituationen festlegen**, zu denen diejenigen konkreten Handlungssituationen gehören, in denen sie – korrekte Benutzung vorausgesetzt – erfolgreich zur Erreichung von Handlungszielen benutzt werden können. (Wiegand 2001:231)

[What applies to all utility products can also be noted in dictionaries as a special type of utility products: Their genuine purpose and their functions can **only be determined in terms of types of acting situations** to which concrete acting situations belong, and where they can be used – in case of a correct use – to successfully achieve the objectives of the act.] (Our emphasis)

Furthermore, it is stressed that “acting situations” are called “dictionary use situations” or just “use situations” and that these situations necessarily consist of “drei Typkomponenten“ [three type components], among them “Benutzertyp“ [user type] and “Benutzungshandlung“ [use act]. These issues will be discussed later. But if this last quotation is compared with the already quoted statements that the genuine purpose of a dictionary doesn’t have anything to do neither with “the person that needs the corresponding information and in which social situations” nor with the fact “that specific users read the items in specific situations”, then it is not at all evident how Wiegand’s “genuine purpose” is related to the user and use situations. But apart from this uncertainty, it could also be questioned whether the whole definition of the genuine purpose of a dictionary as formulated by Wiegand is a successful one, since it is both so abstract and so concrete that, in effect, the term loses its meaning. This becomes evident when Wiegand tries to apply his definition to a German dictionary of anglicisms:

Der genuine Zweck eines deutschen Anglizismenwörterbuches besteht darin, daß es mit Suchfragen zu Anglizismen im Deutschen benutzt wird, um (anhand von Angaben zu Anglizismen im Deutschen) **Informationen** zu den Anglizismen und damit solche zum **Einfluß** des Englischen auf das Deutsche zu erhalten. (Wiegand 2001:236)

[The genuine purpose of a German dictionary of anglicisms is that it is used through search questions on anglicisms in German (by means of items of anglicisms in German) to get **information** about the anglicisms and, in this way, about the **influence** of English on the German language.] (Our emphasis)

This definition is problematic. On the one hand, the statement that a dictionary of anglicisms should be used to get information about anglicisms is made at such a high level of generalisation that, at best, it becomes tautological and, thus, meaningless. On the other hand, the statement that the dictionary should provide information about the “influence of English on the German language” is at such a low level of generalisation that it would not apply to a great number of these dictionaries. There

might be users who are interested in the influence of the English language on German, but there are surely also other users that don't care about this and just want to know what a particular anglicism means or how it is spelled. However, dictionaries conceived for the latter type of users are not included in Wiegand's definition. And one of the problems is exactly that the dictionaries of anglicisms are defined on the basis of their subject matter (anglicisms) and not on the basis of the needs of a specific type of users in a specific type of user situation, i.e. they are defined on the basis of a secondary and not a primary characteristic, "from within" (phenomenologically) and not "from without" (according to the user's needs).

After making these clarification of his definition of the "genuine purpose", a term which he considers synonymous with the term "genuine purpose", Wiegand finally begins discussing the central term in his paper, i.e. the term "dictionary function" which he defines in the following way:

Eine Wörterbuchfunktion eines Printwörterbuches besteht darin, daß ein solches Wörterbuch eine festgelegte Menge von Typen von Wörterbuchbenutzungssituationen in dem Sinne abdeckt, daß ein kundiger Benutzer in einer konkreten Benutzungssituation, die zu einer der abgedeckten Typen gehört, immer dann zum Nutzer wird, wenn sich seine Suchfrage auf eine lexikalische Einheit bezieht, die in dem benutzten Wörterbuch primär gebucht ist und wenn er seine usueller Benutzungshandlung korrekt ausführt. (Wiegand 2001:235)

[A dictionary function of a printed dictionary is that a fixed set of types of dictionary use situations are covered in such a dictionary so that a skilled user in a concrete use situation that belongs to one of the covered types will benefit from it when his search question is related to a lexical item primarily entered in the dictionary used and when he performs his habitual act of use correctly.]

This definition is slightly modified throughout the paper but it drops, so to say, down from the sky. Considering that it is the first time in Wiegand's voluminous works that he tries to define this lexicographic expression and that a definition already exists in the framework of the functional theory of lexicography, it is highly surprising that Wiegand introduces his own concept in this way. The only possible explanation is that he dislikes the existing concept because it doesn't fit into his own theory and that he wants to give his own interpretation of an expression that long ago has gained a footing in lexicography.

Once more, Wiegand's definition is made "from within" and not "from without", i.e. from the point of view of the user, although the user is clearly integrated in the definition this time. One could also ask what the difference would be between the above definition of a printed dictionary and a definition of an electronic dictionary. According to the functional theory, whose starting point is the user's needs, an electronic and a printed dictionary would have exactly the same function, provided that they are conceived to solve the type of problems that arise for the same type of user in the same type of user situation.

The pivotal point of the above definition is once more the "dictionary use situation", although it should be noticed that a function – in contrast to the genuine purpose – can cover more than one such situation. Here it is important to note that Wiegand's "dictionary use situation" or just "use situation" is not identical to the "user situation", which constitutes a central element in the theory of lexicographic functions. Wiegand's concept of "use situation" is first of all related to the acts that take place during the dictionary consultation process, whereas the "user situation" as defined by the functional theory of lexicography refers to the situation – social situation, if you like – where the user for one reason or another feels a need that can be satisfied through the consultation of a lexicographic reference work, e.g. a need related to communication (text production, text reception, translation) or a need for more knowledge, which is not related to a specific communication situation. Moreover, Wiegand's concept of "dictionary use situation" also includes a number of determinations, first of all three compulsory ones:

- einem Benutzertyp
- einem Typ von Benutzungshandlung
- einem Wörterbuchtyp (Wiegand 2001:235)

- [– a user type
- a type of act of use
- a dictionary type]

but also an infinite number of other, apparently optional determinations, e.g.:

- der Typ des Benutzungsanlasses
- der Typ des Benutzungsgrundes
- der Suchfragentyp
- der Typ des Benutzungszusammenhangs und
- der Typ der Benutzungsgelegenheit. (Wiegand 2001:235)

- [- types of use cause
- type of use motive
- type of search question
- type of use context and
- type of use occasion.]

A closer study of the three compulsory determinations reveals that “a user type” corresponds fully to the concept of “lexicographic functions” in the functional theory that includes the user type as one of its three most important determinations. In contrast, “a type of act of use” is not included at all in this concept and neither in its concept of “genuine purpose”. And finally, to include “a dictionary type” in the concept of functions is in direct contradiction to the functional theory, which performs its fundamental typologisation of dictionaries on the basis of their functions, i.e. quite the opposite of Wiegand. This difference is emphasised by Wiegand in another statement in relations to the “Festlegung einer Wörterbuchfunktion“ [determination of a dictionary function]:

gegeben ist der (meistens phänomenologisch bestimmte) Wörterbuchtyp, zu dem das Wörterbuch gehört, um dessen Funktion es geht. (Wiegand 2001:235)

[given is the (mostly phenomenologically determined) dictionary type to which the dictionary belongs and whose function is the case in point.]

As regards the infinite number of optional determinations apparently included in Wiegand’s basic definition, it is, ipso facto, impossible to compare these with the theory of lexicographic functions that doesn’t embark on long-winded speculations.

Consequently and in conclusion it can be said that Wiegand’s recently introduced definition of the lexicographic concept of “dictionary function” doesn’t correspond to the similar concept in the functional theory. A number of Wiegand’s determinations are not included in the definition presented by the functional theory whereas a number of determinations included in the latter are not to be found in Wiegand’s definition. And it is definitely not correct, as Wiegand claims, that his definition of a dictionary function is equivalent to the concept of “genuine purpose” in the functional theory. It is true that there is a greater similarity here, but two crucial determinations included in the latter are not contained or only partially contained in Wiegand’s definition, i.e. the “user situation”

and the “type of problems” that pop up in this context. The user situation is, as already mentioned, different from Wiegand’s “dictionary use situation” and the type of problems corresponds only partially to Wiegand’s “search questions”.

Finally, Wiegand concludes that according to his theory, “dictionary function” is the superordinate concept and “genuine purpose” the subordinate one:

Der genuine Zweck ist ein genau bestimmter Teil einer Wörterbuchfunktion, und zwar gerade derjenige Teil, mit dem alle vorgesehenen Typen von Benutzungshandlungen und damit die vorgesehenen Typen von Suchfragen bestimmt werden, denn diese sind durch den jeweiligen Wörterbuchgegenstand determiniert. (Wiegand 2001:236)

[The genuine purpose is precisely defined part of a dictionary function, namely that part by which all the anticipated types of acts of use and, hence, the anticipated types of search questions are defined, as these are determined by the actual subject matter of the dictionary.]

According to the modern theory of lexicographic function, it is just the opposite as the concept of “genuine purpose” contains all functions included in a dictionary and its subject field, e.g. modern Danish, anglicisms, gene technology etc.

5. Conclusions

Just as the modern theory of lexicographic functions, H.E. Wiegand’s “general theory of lexicography” is based upon two main postulates: a) that lexicographic research is an independent scientific discipline, and b) that dictionaries are utility products. However, neither in his voluminous work, in his monumental Wiegand (1998) nor in the less ambitious Wiegand (2001) does he take the theoretical and practical consequences of these basic postulates. Quite the contrary, he bases his whole typology of dictionaries upon an arbitrary division of the world in language and other things (encyclopaedia), a division that is carried out on the basis of a linguistic-philosophical theory that has nothing to do with lexicography as an independent discipline. In this process he studies the dictionary “from within” (phenomenologically) and not from the point of view of the users and their needs in specific types of user situations. Consequently, he also betrays his most important lexicographic thesis, i.e. that dictionaries are utility products. During 24 years of lexicographic research

he has managed to do without the concept of lexicographic functions which is the cornerstone in the modern theory of lexicographic functions, a theory that is more faithful to Wiegand's basic postulates than he is himself. Through a number of books and papers, the proponents of this theory has argued that Wiegand's dictionary typology contradicts his own basic postulate about lexicography as an independent discipline. They have put forward a theory, based on lexicographic functions, that has taken the full consequences of the thesis that dictionaries are utility products that are conceived and compiled in order to satisfy certain human needs. During the years, the term "lexicographic function" has become more and more popular and widespread, and Wiegand (2001) has finally accepted the challenge. However, instead of taking the consequences of the criticism raised by the functional theory against his own theory, he takes the term "dictionary function", empties it of all its content and gives it a completely new content that fits into his own contradictory paradigm. In this way, Wiegand has taken a gigantic step backward, clinging stubbornly to an old paradigm that has already been at least partially undermined by the progress of lexicographic theory and practice. It has therefore become clear that we have to do with two completely different lexicographic theories: Wiegand's old "general theory of lexicography" and the new "theory of lexicographic functions", which, although they share the same basic postulates, are completely opposed to each other. The struggle between these two paradigms will hopefully stimulate the lexicographic debate in the years to come.

6. Literature

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