

and exemplified by at least one example. All examples are translated and make use of the equivalent given. Extra information (morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic) is reported and highlighted, as already mentioned, in specific sections at the end of the entry, so as not to encumber the 'reading' of the 'main' text.

A final word on examples. They are all full sentences: it is this that permits the consistent use of bold type to highlight the various differences between English and Italian already commented on. They are not corpus driven, but invented. The authors advocate the advantages of made-up examples in the specific teaching and learning situation in which the DAI is supposed to be used (G. Iamartino, Teacher's book, p. 16 ff.), with particular reference to the age of the envisaged users and their knowledge of the world. However, examples do not sound unreal, but just seem to echo the language of most teaching material (whether this is 'real' language remains questionable).

This might provide a further link between the dictionary and the other didactic material used in the classroom, thus reinforcing the authors' basic assumption that the DAI is to be used as a textbook.

Note

¹ M. Fourment. *DAF, Dizionario di Apprendimento della lingua Francese*. Turin: Paravia. 1998. ix + 677 + 30 pages of tables and maps. Livret d'accompagnement. Cahier d'exercices. ISBN 8839550909. Lit. 45,000.

Reference

La Rocca, M. 1997. 'I dizionari bilingui Italiano-Inglese per l'infanzia'. *LEND (Linguae Nuova Didattica)* 3: 27-37 and 4: 10-21.

Stefania Nuccorini
Università di Roma Tre
Italy

Pia Jarvad. *Nye Ord. Ordbog over nye ord i dansk 1955-1998* (New Words. A Dictionary of New Words in Danish 1955-1998). Copenhagen: Gyldendal. 1999. 1084 pages. ISBN 87-00-13448-1-01-13. Price: DKK 395.¹

We are fascinated by new words because they reflect ourselves and our time. They contain bits of our childhood and youth, and many of the words have accompanied us as familiar partners during our personal development. When they are collected and printed in a book it is as if parts of ourselves become history. So it is quite understandable that Pia Jarvad's *New Words 1955-1998* (hereafter *NW*) has attracted a lot of public attention in Denmark since its release in the spring of 1999.

The author has previously edited a dictionary of Danish neologisms, viz. *Nye ord i dansk 1955-75* (New Words in Danish 1955-75) which was published in 1984. The present work naturally bears on this work, but has been altered so much in content, editorial structure and presentation that it seems justifiable to publish it as a separate work rather than as a new and revised edition of the original work.

Apart from the alphabetical dictionary part, *NW* contains some smaller sections: list of contents, a preface, and an introductory section in which the author accounts for the

corpora used and brings a key to the sources used after citations in the dictionary. Furthermore, it includes an account of the structural composition of the articles, and finally presents a survey of abbreviations and symbols. After the dictionary part, two word lists are presented with the lemmas arranged retrogradely and chronologically according to first known use, respectively. On the front cover and first page the article structure with information types is illustrated, and on the last page and back cover the same list of abbreviations and symbols is shown which also appears in the introduction.

1. The lemma list – number and nature

Assuming that the overall size of a dictionary is more or less fixed by external factors (e.g. should be contained in one volume of a given size and typography), any dictionary maker must address the problem of balancing the number of articles with the elaborateness of description and fullness of documentation for each individual article. In the present work the author has chosen to attach much weight to documentation in the form of citations which are plentiful both in number and length. One must, of course, view this against the number and nature of words which as a consequence have been excluded from the lemma list: if it were complete, there would be no reason at all to complain of the ample documentation. However, the lemma list is far from being complete. It is quite easy to come up with examples of words missing in the dictionary. As such, this fact is not very aggravating as the list of lemmas selected is not, and probably never was meant to be, exhaustive. The criterion mentioned by the author as the most important for inclusion is degree of establishment. As I understand the author's account, this means, first, that a word should not be an incidental nonce formation, but should occur with a certain frequency, and secondly that it should have a fairly even distribution within the language community, that is it should not be confined to a single group delimited e.g. regionally, socially, or by age or profession. The criterion as such is adequate, but when one looks at the result of its implementation, the picture is somewhat different. Applied with care it means that in principle the editor ranks all possible candidates according to frequency and degree of establishment and subsequently includes as many lemmas as space permits. This is, however, clearly not the procedure followed by the author as the reader soon realizes by just flipping through the book. Immediately one comes across peculiar and unestablished words, to put it mildly, words that may well be worth noting, but which certainly do not belong in a dictionary if inclusion has been granted at the expense of other and far more relevant words.

To complete the picture it should be mentioned that the author does not hesitate to treat perfectly transparent derivations in separate and fully-fledged articles (of the type **matchrace**, **matchracer**, **matchracing** or **spam** (noun), **spamme** (verb, to spam), **spammer**, **spamming**). Lots of space could have been saved by at least omitting the identical etymological account (which amounts to eight lines repeated four times in the latter example), or preferably by combining them into one article. Likewise, much space could have been saved by not repeating words and citations that appear both as separate lemmas and as examples within a first element article.

So the general impression is that the lemma list is too limited in number (a total of 10,000 words over a period of more than 40 years is not impressive) and disappointingly uneven in quality. A possible explanation could be that the method of collecting material has been the traditional one: personal observation registered on slips, whereas no attempt has been made at looking systematically for the new words. This is a pity considering that the author explicitly mentions that she had access to the 40 million word corpus of The Danish Dictionary. If she had taken the trouble to search, for example, for words occurring

in this corpus only and not included in any (electronic) dictionary, she would have had a good starting point. Such a run takes about an hour and generates a list of several thousands of words even with a lower limit of, say, 10 specified to avoid too many random occurrences. Of course, not all the occurrences are equally interesting, and some fall outside the period in question, but it is still a very quick and manageable way of getting a large number of candidate words, yielding many words which are suitable for inclusion in a dictionary of this kind, indeed in my best judgement much more suitable than many of those that actually do occur in the dictionary now.

2. Article structure

An article typically consists of the following types of information: word class, usage restriction (if appropriate), definition, date of first known use, citations, and etymology. Information of word class is useful and is applied in general without causing problems, although one could of course discuss the information value of terms such as ‘phrase’ (*forb.* = *forbindelse*) and ‘one word utterance’ (*enkeltordsytring*). It cannot, however, be discussed whether *-arium*, *-krat* (cf. *-crat*) and *-tek* (cf. *-theque*) are nouns as stated by the author. As bound morphemes they are of course suffixes and should be classified as such. The same holds for productive first elements that are treated in separate articles. Strangely enough, one occasionally encounters words with more than one word class specified. The reason is not clear as the general principle favours the other extreme, viz. the creation of homograph articles even for separate senses of a polysemous word, a somewhat unconventional principle which is perhaps to be explained by the method of registration employed from the early beginning. However that may be, it is all the more odd why some articles should include more than one word class. It seems to be a deliberate decision since examples of both word classes are documented by citations.

Between word class and definition appears a field, in brackets and in italics, containing various kinds of information that may be comprised under the designation usage restrictions, ranging from pronunciation (though, in the vast majority of cases simply the formulation (*med tilnærmet engelsk udtale*) (with approximate English pronunciation); phonetic transcriptions are never used), to subject area, syntactic and morphological specifications, and a limited number of style markers. In most cases, the information is useful and without problems, but stricter principles for their application could be desired. In particular, the style markers appear to be scattered too much at the author’s convenience. Much could be gained by a systematic and consistent use of the labels of the inventory.

Far more remarkable and much more important are the definitions. Compared with the earlier work, this is in fact a new information type. That alone is an asset, and all the more gratifying it is to note that most definitions are plain, instructive, and concise. In fact, so much so that it is regrettable that for some reason not all words have been given definitions. It is hard to think of any editorial principle that would explain the fact, at least there is no correlation with semantic transparency or illustrative citations. One can only hope that later editions will supply the wants.

3. Citations

I have mentioned that the number and length of citations is too plentiful. To get an impression, consider the following illustrative examples. In the article **ergoterapeut** (ergotherapist) four citations are given, one of which amounts to 13 lines and another to

9 lines. The neighbour article **ergoterapi** (ergotherapy) contains only one citation, but this in turn takes up 20 lines. In total, citations make up 48 out of 63 column lines, or a little more than 75%. Even more extreme articles can be found, such as **BSE** where the citation occupies as much as 24 lines (in comparison, The Danish Encyclopedia devotes 23 column lines to the phenomenon). As for the number of citations it is not uncommon to find articles with both 5, 6, and 7 citations, but the absolute top scorer is the type of article made up by lemmatized word parts (prefixes, suffixes, first and last elements) because they contain examples to support many different derivations and compounds within the same article. Clearly, there is nothing invidious about this as such, but when several of these derivations and compounds in addition appear as separate articles with definition and citation, it becomes an unnecessary waste of space. Thus the article **gruppe-** ('group' as first element) contains 25 and the article **-gruppe** ('group' as last element) 21 citations to illustrate words which in more than half of the cases also appear as separate articles, sometimes even with the same citation.

Unfortunate is furthermore the fact that definitions and citations apparently have been edited at different times, or at least at different editorial stages so that presumably unintentional incongruities between the information types have arisen. It may be factual information in the definition which is contradicted by the content of a citation, or information about synonymy relations which is mutually inconsistent.

Finally, it is striking how often citations are used which only contain the lemma in a compound form. Is this a valid instance of the word at all? In many cases it seems to be a deliberate strategy to bring only a single citation with the lemma in the simplex form, supplied with a number of compound instances, and it is even possible to encounter words that have been included as an entry even though all citations demonstrate the word as part of a compound.

4. Etymology and dating

No doubt about it: there is a lot of good and useful information and explanations of the origin and wanderings of words and expressions. It is the kind of thing that can make even non-specialists indulge in pleasure reading in a dictionary. Therefore it is also true, as it was of the definitions, that the more you have the more you want. When you have seen how well it can be done you quickly come to miss the high standard in other articles.

And the level is, regrettably, very uneven. Of **guppy** we learn, for instance: '*from English guppy, after the person R.G.L. Guppy who brought the fish to the British Museum from Trinidad*'. And of **paparazzi**, **paparazzo**: '*from Italian paparazzo which is singular; paparazzi is plural. - After the name of such a photographer in Fellini's film La Dolce Vita, 1959*'. Also, information of word creation on domestic grounds is given, e.g. **skatteål** (tax eel): '*the word coined by Ekstra Bladet (a Danish newspaper)*'. Having read these spiritually pleasing explanations how can you but be disappointed when you read of **Murphys lov** (Murphy's Law): '*from English Murphy's Law*'. And the disparate standard applies not only to 'the good story', but also to the proper etymological accounts. For example, it says informatively of **gogo**: '*from French a gogo ('in abundance') via English go-go, from 1962*'. Under **gyros** (a Greek dish), on the other hand, we are merely told: '*from Greek gyro*'. This last, very scanty piece of information is, unfortunately, used as a template for a large number of articles. Just as one is curious to know who this Murphy is (that it is perhaps not known is beside the point), it is of course useful to know that *gyros* means "rotating" (viz. of the meat from which the dish is made). The non-uniform standard probably has to do with the author's sources, and thus it is not difficult to

appreciate her situation. One can only hope that work will commence to bring the average article up to the same high level as the examples shown, for the benefit of later editions.

Compared with the space taken up by citations, information of first known use is not much to look at: a year placed in brackets between definition and citation. Nonetheless the work of dating represents not only an important part of the creation history of *NW*, but it is also a valuable, and very time consuming type of information. The author deserves credit for her job, and also for having revised datings continuously since the earlier work. The outcome of the effort is very little visible: about 800 articles have been removed compared with the first dictionary because new datings have moved first known use so much back as to fall outside the period. Needless to say, only people of high moral standards can be entrusted with such a task.

5. Conclusion

I have pointed out a number of substantial as well as more superficial shortcomings, inaccuracies, and inconsistencies, both in the inventory of information types used in the dictionary, and in the principles governing their application. Only a few of these are directly misleading or regular errors, whereas most will pass unnoticed by the user. Far more serious is the criticism of the lemma selection. There are simply too many gaps in the word list, and we are not talking about rare or peripheral words and expressions.

Likewise I have pointed out that the author's relation to the notion of space economy leaves much to be desired. If a new edition is being considered there are a number of obvious places where space could be saved in favour of all the many missing words.

Citations can profitably be reduced both in number and length. The reference apparatus ought to be tightened: it is unnecessary to refer between alphabetically adjacent articles (e.g. the reference from **stifadho** to **stifado**); one should however profitably refer, but of course only refer from synonyms to one main article instead of having, say, three identical definitions and the same citation repeated three times as in the articles **squash**, **courgette**, and **zucchini**. Similarly, form variants can be combined in a single article, as can new meaning and sense developments of the same word, thereby saving the repetition of word class, pronunciation, etymology etc.

It is indisputably a strength that *NW* has been supplied with definitions, and indeed many fine definitions, as well as many good and relevant etymologies. One could only wish that the same high standard would be extended to cover all articles equally. The dating of first known use is beyond question valuable and, as far as I can judge, impeccable. On balance, *NW* represents a clear improvement compared with its predecessor, but there is still a long way to go.

Note

¹ A more in-depth version in Danish of the present review can be found in *Danske Studier* 1999, pp. 203-12. Readers familiar with Danish may consult this article for a more detailed exposition of individual words and matters dealing with specific Danish contexts.

Lars Trap-Jensen
The Danish Dictionary
Copenhagen