Problems of language norms in lexicography in modern english essay sample

The course paper is devoted to functioning of concept " Language difficulties" in the theory of language norm in lexicography. Since 50th of XX century began the mass edition of practical manuals, short dictionaries, reference books and popular scientific editions concentrated on private and general problems of the language norms. By now there are more than 100 orthological dictionaries, and almost half of them have such problems as " language difficulties". Though, that is an obvious thing that all these editions give coverage to problems of language norms, in scientific and methodological linguistic publications dedicated to problems of language normalization and codification and language norm variation, the item " language difficulties" are not discussed at all. Furthermore, in introductorial articles of these dictionaries authors always avoid of using such words as " difficulties", " difficult" (sometimes they substitute them with term " complex") and don't give detailed interpretation of these difficulties or problems. In other words scientists consider the meaning " language difficulties" to be obvious and not worth to be investigated in a special way.

So this problem is still unsolved by now and demands more investigation in linguistic as well in lexicography. Meanwhile, due to development of internet technologies appeared a good opportunity to objectify our conception about language difficulties our language speakers face often: we can explore the archives of questions and answers of reference services of language, requests of search system users, electronical texts and libraries. All these requests of dictionary users is the evidence of the actuality of the given problem, linguists and lexicographers should go on investigating all the problems of language norm in lexicography and find the most effective

decision to make dictionaries more qualitative, because they still desired to be more productive and precise. Dictionaries are required in all fields of activity, especially in translation studies, wrong translation at least of one word can lead to a lot of troubles for everyone. A dictionary is known to be a reliable reference book which helps students to learn a foreign language.

Good learner's dictionaries give real help with correct pronunciation, clearly explained grammar patterns, usage, register labels and illustrative examples. Thereby appeal to the concept of language problems in language norm and their investigation in system-wide lexicographical position is doubtless a relevance problem. The object of the research is a language norm investigated from the position of professional lexicographer dealing with the compilation of dictionaries and reference books for a competent native speaker. The subject of the research are language difficulties: 1) existing in the minds of the language speakers and registered as questions addressed to teachers and linguists (difficulties in accentology, pronunciation, lexicology, semantics, grammar, spelling-orthography and punctuation); 2) presented as units of lexicographical description (headline words) in orthological dictionaries of the language;

The aim of the research is a theoretical explanation of the term " language norm problems" and it's transference from empirical lexicography to the sphere as possible of accurate and terminological use. For achievement of the given aim we should perform the next objectives: 1) study of linguistic aspects of lexicography and language norms; 2) review and comparison of the publication of the ninetieth century to the present dictionaries, difficulties in identifying their structural originality and genre: the

composition of vocabulary, recommendations related to the variance and the dynamics of the language norms; 3) study of language norms in word meaning and semantics;

4) investigation of popular semantic theories, lexical semantic problems and methodologies. Research methods: descriptive, overall sampling and analytical methods were used in the course paper.

Theoretical value of the study is due to the fact that a piece of linguistic term system describing different aspects of the study of the language norm replenished with the important concept as " language difficulties" which objectively reflects the linguistic reflection of speakers on options with an unclear normative estimation; information on such reflection can be learned from the analysis of the character of requests in language reference service. Objectifying this term we achieve an opportunity to clarify genre characteristics of so called dictionaries of language difficulties.

Practical value of research related to improving the quality and efficiency of manuals and tutorials belonging to the genre of " small lexicography": reliance on user requests to the reference service of the language optimizes the development of vocabulary of any dictionary. The study can also find practical application in preparing programs for training courses on subjects of " Culture of speech" and " Linguistics."

The paper structurally falls into introduction, two parts, conclusion and bibliography. In the introduction were mentioned relevance of the problem, the main object and aim, theoretical and practical value and research methods. The first part is dedicated to the study of linguistic norms,

lexicography and their problems. The second part consists of study of language norms in lexicography, in the practical part were compared words and phrases from the bilingual dictionaries. In conclusion was given a resume of the whole paper work. Bibliography consists of literature list used in the course paper.

1. Theoretical lexicography, its aims, problems and functions

1. 1 The concept of " lexicography".

Lexicography is the theory and practice of compiling dictionaries. The province of lexicography lies in the semantic, formal, and functional description of all individual words according to the language norm. Dictionaries aim at a more or less complete description, but in so doing cannot attain systematic treatment, so that every dictionary entry presents, as it, were, an independent problem. We may say that lexicologists sort and present their material in a sequence depending upon their views concerning the vocabulary, whereas lexicographers have to arrange it most often according to a purely external characteristic, namely alphabetically.

Aims and functions of lexicography.

Theoretical lexicography aims at:
1) codification of any modern language lexicon, carried out in various types of dictionaries based on historical learning; 2) systematization of characteristic features of words;
3) dictionary making providing foundation for fundamental research of dictionary development and their types. Theoretical lexicography studies the

following problems:

1) general typology developing of dictionaries and dictionaries of new types;

2) development of dictionary macrostructure;

3) development of dictionary microstructure.

Let's consider it in detail. Lexicography develops general typology of dictionaries and new types of dictionaries. It means that there are unilingual lexicography (compiling explanatory dictionaries), bilingual lexicography (compiling translating dictionaries), educational lexicography (compiling dictionaries for language studying), and scientific-technological lexicography (making terminological dictionaries). More detailed criteria on the term " dictionary" are necessary before the next problem should be considered. Firstly: dictionary is a term used to denote a book listing words of a language with their meanings and often with data regarding pronunciation/ usage and/ or origin. Basically, a dictionary lists a set of words with information about them. The list may attempt to be a complete inventory of a language or may be only a small segment of it. A short list, sometimes at the back of a book is often called a glossary. Secondly: lexicon is of Greek origin, lexicos – " relating to word". It is used to denote the system being formed by the total of all the words of a given language. It is better to use it when speaking of a dead or exotic language such as Greek/ Latin, or Hebrew/ Arabic Lexicon. Thirdly: reference book containing words (or morphemes, phrases, idioms) arranged in a definite order (different one in various dictionaries), explains meanings of described units, gives different information about objects or presents translation into other languages or describes objects.

The second problem of theoretical lexicography deals with macrostructure of dictionary development. It embraces choice of vocabulary, principles of arranging words and entries keeping all language norm rules. In addition to its basic function of defining words, a dictionary may provide linguistic information about their pronunciation, grammatical forms and functions, etymologies, syntactic peculiarities, variant spellings and antonyms. A dictionary may also provide quotations illustrating a word's usage, and these may be dated to show the earliest known uses of the word in specified senses. The third problem of theoretical lexicography concerns with microstructure of a dictionary, that is of a separate entry. It affects grammar and phonetic commentaries to a word and relates to classification and outlining of meanings, definitions, note system, supplementary materials. In addition balance of linguistic and encyclopaedic information should be taken into consideration. Modern lexicography outlines important social functions of dictionaries which record entire knowledge of a given epoch, which are as follows: 1) informative function; it reflects the shortest was that is through notations to acquire knowledge; 2) communicative function, it gives readers the necessary words of native and foreign languages; 3) nominative function, it is originated from the Latin word " nomen", from times immemorial it is use to nominate objects. Dictionaries acquire greater and greater role in storing and transforming information. [1]

1. 2. Problems of lexicography

Compiling a dictionary to start with any lexicographer should solve one or another problem of language and norm. Thus solution depends upon both as coverage of registered words in the dictionary and some devices of its

processing which in its turn forms total scientific value of any lexicographic work. This problem of norm is rather complicated in many aspects. L. P. Stupin outlines some questions to be solved: 1) objectivity of norm existence;

2) adequate reflection of language reality in a dictionary; 3) objectivity and inevitability of language changes;
4) a role of lexicographer while he/she registers facts of language and speech; 5) lexicographer's attitude to idea of language perfection and improvement; 6) maximum of units number and coverage;

7) material processing devices included in any dictionary. Actually any reference book may be considered to be reliable when it truly reflects, treats and interprets facts of language in the given language group at the given moment of life.[2]

Lexicographic treatment

The ways in which the problems mentioned in this paper may be treated in bilingual dictionaries. That very few of possibilities have been explored to date is disappointing, but not discouraging. There have been a number of new attempts at expanding the analytic procedures of descriptive linguistics to include a more rigorous, thorough, and theoretically rewarding analysis of semantic structure. Despite these more encouraging signs, we realize that most dictionaries will continue to be organized primarily as alphabetical indices. Suggestions regarding the ways in which structural semantic information might be more adequately covered in such dictionaries would include, wherever possible: (1) consistent marking of each entry as to its

status as a lexical unit and taxon, its immediately subordinate taxon and all coordinate taxa and superordinate taxon and all coordinate taxa included with it in this next higher taxon (simple diacritics and abbreviations can be devised for systematic use in compilation and checking); (differential marking of translation labels and of definitions);

(3) concise indication of distinctive attributes which define categories belonging to analyzed lexical sets; (4) systematic cross-referencing to maximal taxa in all major subhierarchies, to referential synonyms, and to units involved in categoric overlap; (5) frequent use of structural charts and diagrams. Where only limited opportunities are available for accomplishing such tasks, priority might be given to those parts of the lexicon which, on the basis of nonintuitive and intracultural criteria, appear to involve semantic relations of an everyday obligatory nature. In number of segregates, paradigmatic complexity and hierarchic depth, certain lexical domains are likely to be more highly structured than others.[3]

Problems of Usage Labelling in English Lexicography
Comments on usage are included in dictionaries as a guide to speakers of a language in their decisions on how to use words appropriately. They may be unsure, for example, whether wireless is an old-fashioned (and chiefly British) word now almost entirely replaced by radio, or whether to call a woman petite, slim or slender implies an approving attitude towards her in contrast to skinny, which suggests disapproval. To help learners with these difficulties, a number of labels are used in dictionaries to denote the stylistic values of words or the technical fields in which they are used; these are called ' usage labels'. This article intends to show the dilemma surrounding

usage labels, which makes them confusing and sometimes misleading from the point of view of second language learners. The focus will be on demonstrating the problems with regard to the labels assigned to words from the perspective of the second language speaker. The article therefore attempts to guide future lexicographers to make more informed usage labelling decisions by expounding the inadequacies of usage labelling in English lexicography. [4] The Choice and Classification of Usage Labels

There seems to be little or no consensus on how to categorize the usage labels and as a result, the groups of labels as chosen by the lexicographers concerned vary from one dictionary to the next. There is also no uniformity in the choice or array of usage labels as presented in English dictionaries. The different dictionaries exhibit a diverse range of labels and categorize them differently depending on the lexicographer.

The LDOCE divides the usage labels into four categories namely: regional, foreign, attitudinal (formal, informal, humorous, approving) and style labels (biblical, dialect, law, literary, non technical, old-fashioned, old use, poetic, slang, spoken, taboo, technical and trademark).

The OALD does not divide its labels into broad groups, it simply presents the following list: approving, disapproving, figurative, formal, humorous, informal, ironic, literary, offensive, rare, slang, spoken, technical, AmE, BrE, dialect, old-fashioned, written, taboo, old use, saying and trademark. The array of labels in the MED is divided into three categories namely: style and attitude labels (formal, humorous, impolite, literary, offensive, old-fashioned, spoken, very formal, and very informal), subject labels (for example

business, computing and journalism) and regional labels (for example Australian, Canadian and American).

In the WBD there are labels like archaic, dialect, English speaking variation labels, foreign language labels, informal, obsolete, poetic, professional terms, slang, substandard, trademark, unfriendly use and figurative usage. The NSOED divides its labels into four categories, namely: those showing restriction to geographical area, those referring to style or register, those indicating branch of knowledge or field of activity, and lastly, labels indicating frequency or extent of use.

The CIDE has the following array of labels: approving, dated, disapproving, not standard, old use, poetic, regional, slang, female, figurative, formal, humorous, informal, law, literary, male, medical, specialized, taboo and trademark. It is evident that each dictionary makes its choice of the labels to be assigned to words. What is not clear is the criteria the lexicographers use in selecting certain labels over others.

Certain labels are not listed in some dictionaries, while they occur in others. For example, the OALD has labels mainly atypical to the other five dictionaries such as ironic and saying, the labels very formal and very informal are commonly used by the MED and rarely in the other five dictionaries. The WBD lists and explains the term combining form as a usage label but the other dictionaries do not have this as a usage label. The CIDE also employs female and male as labels, the two being alien to the other five dictionaries studied. It is therefore apparent that there is no agreement on the number of dimensions in usage. It is evident that each dictionary makes

its choice of the number, type and classification of usage labels to be assigned to words. Quirion (1995: 347) states that ' the reduction in the number of labels could lead to some consensus in labelling'.[5]

Style and attitude labels

• Formal in current use but not used in ordinary conversation or in normal everyday writing: Bit / bit/ noun A bit informal slightly , or a little: I'm feeling a bit tired. That was a little bit stupid.

• Informal more common in speech than in writing and not used on a formal occasion: fluke / flu: k/ noun informal something good that happens unexpectedly because of good luck; • Humorous used in an ironic and often friendly way: under the influence(= drunk); • Impolite not taboo but will certainly offend some people • Literary old but still used in some kinds of creative writing: spurn /sp3: n/ verb literary to refuse to accept someone or something; • Old- fashioned no longer in current use but still used by some older people: motor car, wireless.[6]

2. Language norm and connection between lexicology and lexicography

2. 1 Problems of language norms

The dynamic character of norm. The static aspect (the system of language units) and dynamics (language functioning). Language norm in its dynamic aspect as " socially and historically determined result of speech activity, fixing traditional realizations of the system and creating new language facts, revealing connections with the potential capacities of the language system and the existing patterns". Variation of language units: " variants within the

limits of the norm" as the basis of stylistic choice: synonymic means of the language.

Fixation of language norms. Language norms are fixed by normative dictionaries and grammars. An important role in the circulation and preservation of language norms plays literature, theater, school education and mass media. Some names and nominations (for instance, names of geographical objects) can exist in the language in various forms (variants), however, usually only one of them is a normalized form, a form that is required for use in research, reference and educational publications as well as in the press.

Literary norm. A particular case of the linguistic norm is a literary norm. Literary norm has a number of properties, it is the only and general for all speakers of the language, it is conservative and aims to preserve resources and rules of their usage accumulated in the society by previous generations. At the same time, it is not static, first, it is changeable over the time and secondly, provides dynamic interaction of different methods of linguistic expression depending on the conditions of communication.

Natural and artificial norms. In case of spontaneous use of language means by different speakers of the given language, language norm is considered to be formed by natural way. If there are no identifications, the language norm will be defined purposefully (artificially). Artificial norms are set by rulemaking activity of linguists by preparing and publishing authoritative dictionaries and reference books, as well as legislation on various aspects of language use. [7]

Descriptive and prescriptive norms

There are different approaches of setting norms, among these norms there are two main types of norms: – descriptive (narrative) – the establishment of norms is based primarily on the analysis of the actual use of various linguistic phenomena by native speakers; – prescriptive – the establishment of norms is carried out mainly on the basis of authoritative conclusions of linguists about the rightness or wrongness of a particular use. Actually neither of the approaches are not commonly used, however linguistic traditions of a particular country is generally choose one of them. Prescriptive rule-making usually neglects regional dialects and other social or language variants, the presence of hard and developed spelling and punctuation rules, commonality of language learning curriculum, etc. At the same time the descriptive approach is often expressed in the absence of hard-set rules in some aspects of the language (for example, punctuation), loyalty to the dialects, fixation of a lot of different variants to use in dictionaries, etc. The levels and aspects of language

The concept of language norms applies to all levels of the language. In accordance with level of relatedness and specificity of the following types of language norms: – lexical – provide the correct choice of words;

– accentological – provide the correct accentuation;

– orthoepic – describe the correct pronunciation of words;

– orthographic – fix uniformity of voice transmission in writing; – morphological – word change and derivation rules described in the grammar;

– syntax – regulate the correct forming of grammar constructions. [8]

According to Vinogradov the problem of the word meaning, the problem of the semantic aspect of words and phrases is essential to Marxist linguistics. The correct solution to this problem depends largely on understanding of the volume, scope and objectives of semantics or semasiology in the general system of the science of language. The study of the laws of development of the language vocabulary is also not possible without deep penetration into the essence of the historical changes in the meanings of words. The study of whole groups, systems, series, categories of words and laws of semantic change, more and more beginning to enter into the practice of historical and comparative historical lexicology. Therefore, the elucidation of the essence of the word, the analysis of qualitative changes in the structure of words in their historical movement is one of the main objectives of lexicology. Definition or interpretation of the word meanings is the main goal of compiling dictionaries and the direct object lexicography. The study of the laws of development of the semantic aspect of words and expressions in a given language with the development of this language in connection with the history of the people concerned should be an integral part of the general history of the language. In this little-studied linguistics Soviet linguists face many pressing challenges.

One of the ways in approaching the complex issues associated with the study of the word and its meaning to the study of law of the word meaning changes is the examination of different types or kinds of lexical meanings and modes or forms of communication in the semantic structure of the word. Formation and the creation of a new concept or a new understanding of the subject is based on the existing language material. This understanding,

embodied in the word becomes an element of the semantic structure of the language as a whole. Whenever a new meaning is included in the lexical system of the language it shall enter into relationship with the other elements of the complex and the branched structure of the language. Only against the background of the lexical-semantic system of the language, only in connection with it the margins of the word are defined as a complex yet coherent linguistic unit that combines a number of forms, meanings and uses. Due to the complexity of the semantic structure of the word, because of the variety of its relationship and live interactions with other lexical links language system is very difficult to separate and transfer the meanings and word senses even in this period of language development and present with the fullness of life and the specific role of speech in speech communication and in exchange of ideas between members of society.[9]

2. 2 Analysis of the normative norms of dictionary entries.

These papers also attest, however, to the multidisciplinary input of current research on lexicographic semantics. The advent of the computer age has not only radically changed the praxis of the compilation of dictionaries, it has also given birth to new kinds of dictionaries, a variety of new lexicographic methodologies and techniques, and a range of new disciplines that concern themselves with the compilation of dictionaries (in the widest possible sense of the word) and the theoretical and practical problems they pose. Although there is much overlap and cross-fertilization, experts from the fields of (traditional) lexicography, theoretical linguistics, computational linguistics, computational lexicography and knowledge engineering all tackle the linguistic semantic problems experienced within their fields with their own

kind of theoretical and practical expertise in accordance with the specific aims of their lexica. Such method helps to make dictionaries and reference books more effective.[10] The problems and difficulties of pronunciation, spelling and grammatical categories may be labeled " open" only in the sense that they are obvious from the very start to anybody approaching the domain of a foreign language. This paper deals with " lexical weapons", that is, with learning and using vocabulary.

Words of every national language, taken together, create the language picture of the world specific to the nation. If we present the picture as a mosaic, then every word and its equivalent may be compared to a piece of it. Dealing with other languages implies an opposition, a contrast with one's mother tongue. Actually, the very idea of both – a native and a foreign language arises only in this opposition. Lexical " weapons" used by language to fight the intruders are mostly hidden, that is why they are so efficient and dangerous. Hidden linguistic pitfalls may be presented as follows. 1. The volume of semantics. Pieces of language mosaics often differ in size, they cover different bits of reality. For example, the Russian word дом has a broader meaning than its supposed " equivalent" – house: it includes home, building, block of flats, mansion. There are very many examples of this kind in any two languages. Lexicon, Lexicography, Terminography in Russian, American and Other Cultures. The Russian word переводчик covers both translator and interpreter, наука stands for science, humanity, branch of knowledge. Any bilingual dictionary gives numerous and various examples of this kind. 2. Stylistic connotations.

Pieces of language mosaics may differ in shades of colour. For example the word crimson (English) and богровый (Russian) are semantically equivalent but the Russian adjective has strong inherent negative connotations, unlike the English word. In a letter from China (an invitation to a linguistic conference) the venue of the conference is described in the following way: With its picturesque landscape, Hangzhou has ever been praised as " Paradise on the Earth". In the XIII century, Marco Polo, a famous Italian tourist praised Hangzhou as " The most beautiful and magnificent city in the world. The word tourist used to describe Marco Polo's visit to China may be correct semantically but it is stylistically unacceptable and produces a comic effect. In the same way a Soviet Russian cliche нерушимое единство translated into English as an unbreakable and indestructible unity sounds wrong stylistically because it violates the stylistic tendencies of the English language which, by the witty words of Robert Daglish, " prefers" to whistle in the dark where the Russian language shouts in the broad daylight." 3. Collocability.

Collocational, or lexical-phraseological constraints on speech production are the most concealed and the most dangerous linguistic weapons. This means that any word in any language has its own, characteristic only of the language in question, set or reserve of words with which it is compatible. That is to say, it is ' friends' and collocates with certain words and is not ' friends', and therefore does not collocate with others. Why does the English verb to pay (give somebody money for goods, services, etc.,) collocate with such incompatible – from the Russian point of view – nouns as attention, visit, compliments? Why are the Russian word combinations высокая трава

(lit., high grass), крепкий чай (lit., firm tea), сильный дождь (lit., strong, powerful rain) translated into English as long grass, strong tea and heavy rain? There is only one answer to this: each word has its own collocability (or valency). And collocability is nation-specific (not universal) in the sense that it is characteristic only of a given word in a given language.

The specific character of a collocation becomes evident only in juxtaposition to other languages much as one becomes aware of one's own culture through coming into contact (clashing) with an alien culture. Thus, native speakers of a language remain oblivious to the pitfalls confronting the student: it never occurs to Russian students that in a certain language tea can be strong and compliments – paid. And, for this reason, the student of a foreign language should learn not individual words and their meanings but the common and more or less fixed collocations in which these words occur in a language under study. Lexical collocation undermines the foundations of translation and interpretation. Bilingual dictionaries are a case in point. The translation of words with the help of a dictionary that gives " equivalents" of their meanings in another language can lead students astray and encourage them to use foreign words in collocational contexts typical of their own language. It is not surprising, therefore, that most numerous and common mistakes are made by foreign language learners when they are translating from their mother tongue into the language under study. The following examples of collocations translated from Russian into English illustrate this point as they reflect Russian collocational patterns: to create a commission (instead of to set up a commission)

closed arena (canopied arena)

to visit lessons (to attend classes)

light athletics (track-and-field athletics)

constant residence (permanent residence)

mistakes repeat themselves (mistakes recur)

to wash one's head (to wash one's hair)

Every non-native teacher of foreign languages has huge collections of this kind of mistake. Developing the metaphor with war, collocations are a barbed wire strung upon a language barrier. All the devices described above are properly linguistic, they are components of what is called " language barrier", language weapons of fighting intruders and defending its own people. The meaning of the word, defined as referring a sound or graphic complex to an object, is a thread connecting the world of language with the world of reality or, rather, a path leading from one world to the other. The meaning of a native word is leading to the native world reflected by the native language and imposed on its users. The meaning of a foreign word leads to a foreign, strange and alien world and the same sort of culture.[11]

Conclusion

As should be obvious from the foregoing, the papers on linguistic problems and their salvation make a very specific contribution to current lexicographic research aimed at the development of adequate dictionaries, be they for NLP-systems or for human use. The papers on " language norms in lexicography" have in common their focus on the problems experienced in the analysis, description and acquisition of linguistic information. With most

other lexicographic research they share the ultimate aim of improving the lexical semantic information in resources, be they dictionaries of the traditional kind that are meant for human users, or the lexica of natural language processing (NLP) systems. The need for a multidisciplinary effort to achieve these aims speaks for itself. The computer systems and tools that are becoming available both to the researcher, the practical lexicographer and the human user are opening up a myriad of new possibilities for the presentation and utilization of masses of lexicographic information.

We approached the difficult task of studying language norms, their types and aspects as well their problems in all fields of linguistics, linguistic norm problems in lexicography according to the great soviet linguist V. V. Vinogradov were concerned too. Then studied lexicography, types of dictionaries, usage of labels and their problems, also problems of lexicography were mentioned as a main part of our paper data that underlies current research on lexicographic lexical sphere. We made our own investigation in analysing the normative norms of dictionary entries. Comparing the volume of semantics, stylistic connotations and collocability of English words and their translations in Russian we revealed that every language of any nation has their own connotational pecularities which belong to this only language, translation of words will always lead to such problems, we should just select the most appropriate meaning or try to give analogue variant explaining the main sense of the connotational object. Concluding our course paper we may say that we have made a contribution first of all for us themselves, studying such an actual problem, but linguistic and

lexicography, their connection and problems related to them will still be actual and demands more investigation.

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