



A SHORT HISTORY OF LEXICOGRAPHY STUDIES IN TURKEY AND INTERNATIONAL LEXICOGRAPHY SYMPOSIUMS

Şükrü Halûk AKALIN*

Having approximately a thousand-year-old history, Turkic lexicography begins with *Diwan Lugat at-Turk*, the famous dictionary written by Mahmud al-Kashgari in the 11th century. Written in order to teach the Turkic language to Arabs, and to demonstrate that the Turkic language and Arabic are neck and neck, this first Turkic dictionary is a work of art that is comprised of all Turkish cities and languages, and that provides significant information with regards to the Turkish communities from thousand years ago.

Prepared in Khwarezm approximately sixty years after *Diwan Lugat at-Turk*, *Muqaddimat al-Adab* is a work of art that might be beneficial to those desiring to learn Arabic. The work written by Zamakhshari, who has a prominent place in the Arabic dictionary tradition even though he is of Turkish descent, contains an interesting language material for Khwarezm Turkic.

Comprised of compilations about the vocabulary and oral literature works of Cumans, people who lived in the north of Black Sea, *Codeks Cumanikus* is thought to have been prepared in late 13th century. The first section of the work, in which the language material of Cumans is presented with Latin letters, is comprised of the Cuman Turkic vocabulary and grammar rules. Persian and Cuman Turkic counterparts of Latin words are provided in this section, which is referred to as “Italian section” in Turkology literature as it is considered that it may have been prepared by Italians.

Alongside these first dictionaries, *Bahshayish Lugat*, which is estimated to have been written in the 10th century, and bilingual dictionaries from Arabic or Persian to Turkish were prepared. Written by Mehmed Esad Efendi in the 18th century, *Lahcat al-lugat* is the first dictionary in which Turkish words are lexical entries, and their Arabic and Persian counterparts are provided.

Monolingual Turkish dictionaries, on the other hand, started to be prepared as of the 18th century. James W. Redhouse’s *Muntahabat Turkiyya* (1842) and *Muntahabat Lugat Osmaniyya* (1852) are comprised of lexical entries in the Ottoman Turkish vocabulary whose roots are mostly in Arabic, partially in Persian, and slightly in Turkish. As of the last quarter of the 19th century, dictionaries comprised of the Turkish, Arabic, and Persian words in the Ottoman Turkish vocabulary, as well as the words borrowed from languages such as Italian, Greek, and French started to be written. The first example of this dictionary style is Ahmed Vefik Pasha’s *Lahca Osmani* (1876). Sami Frashëri’s *Kamus Turki* (1900), on the other hand, is a milestone in the history of Turkish lexicography with its name, its vocabulary, and its preparation principles. Succeeding the dictionaries

* Prof.Dr., Hacettepe Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü, shakalin@shakalin.net

mostly bearing the name ‘Ottoman’ up until that day, this dictionary with the name *Kamus Turki* formed the basis of dictionaries that were prepared even many years after it.

What is interesting is that the dictionary writers of this period are actually poets, authors, playwrights, translators, and publishers. For instance, Ahmed Vefik Pasha is a statesman, translator, and playwright. Sami Frashëri is the author of *Taaşşuk-ı Talat ve Fitnat*, the first contemporary novel of Turkish literature. *Lugat Naci* was written by poet Muallim Naci. Publisher and author Ebüzziya Tevfik Bey is the writer of *Lugat Ebuzziya*. This period of Turkish lexicography is the period of poets, authors, and publishers who prepare dictionaries even though they are not linguists.

With the foundation of TDK (Turkish Language Association), lexicography applications in Turkey started to be conducted institutionally. One of the main issues expressed at the First Council on the Turkish Language assembled in 1932 at Dolmabahçe Palace was the intention to prepare a dictionary so as to reveal the Turkish vocabulary. First draft of the dictionary was prepared by Hasan Reşit Tankut, Head of Linguistics, and Ali Canip Yöntem, Head of Dictionary and Philology, was assigned to write the *Türkçe Sözlük* by the decision of the Headquarter Board. However, as Ali Canip Yöntem fell sick after a short while, TDK Headquarter Board assigned Dr. Mehmet Ali Ağakay, Head of Publication, to write the dictionary. However, Dr. Ağakay was a physician – not a linguist or lexicographer. Apart from the first edition completed in 1945, Dr. Mehmet Ali Ağakay prepared the following three editions of *Türkçe Sözlük* published in 1955, 1959, and 1966. From its fifth edition published in 1969 to its latest and eleventh edition published in 2011, all editions of the *Türkçe Sözlük* were prepared by councils comprised of Turkologists, linguists, and specialists on Turkish. During these periods in which applied lexicography was demonstrated at the Turkish Language Association, theoretic and applied lexicography studies at our universities were unfortunately neglected. Even though there are classes under the name of “Turkish Lexicography” and other similar names at the Turkish Language and Literature departments of several universities, these classes focused not on the principles of lexicography and the methods of preparing a dictionary, but on the introduction of historical Turkish dictionaries, as well as the vocabulary and language characteristics of these dictionaries.

Studies directly on lexicography in Turkey had been at the individual level for a long time. For the first time, the Lexicography Research and Application Center was founded at Hacettepe University in Ankara by Şükrü Halûk Akalın in 2014, and studies directed on lexicography were started to be conducted. Hacettepe University Lexicography Research and Application Center organized in 2015 an international workshop called “Researches in Turkish Lexicography”, and an international meeting in 2016, on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the Baku Turkology Congress of 1926. Eskişehir Osmangazi University Lexicography Research and Application Center was founded in 2015. These two lexicography centers in Turkey have been currently working on lexicography. Şükrü Halûk Akalın is the manager of Hacettepe University Lexicography Research and Application Center, while Erdoğan Boz is the manager of Eskişehir Osmangazi University Lexicography Research and Application Center.

Although meetings with regards to Turkish lexicography are organized under various names, the very first meeting directed on lexicography was organized in 2014 at Sakarya University under the name of “International Lexicography Symposium”. The second of this symposium series started by Sakarya University

was organized in 2015 by the Department of Linguistics of Istanbul University Faculty of Letters. Third of this symposium series, which is about to become a tradition, was organized in Eskişehir on 3-4 November 2016, by Eskişehir Osmangazi University Lexicography Research and Application Center.

On 3 November 2016, center manager Erdoğan Boz, TDK Vice President Bilal Çakıcı, and Eskişehir Osmangazi University president Hasan Gönen addressed the participants at the opening ceremony of the symposium with salutation speeches. Invited speaker of the symposium, Henning Bergenholtz, who works at the Center for Lexicography at Aarhus School of Business in Denmark, presented his speech entitled “Information tools for general and specialized users”. In his presentation, Bergenholtz focused on the types of lexicography and lexicographer, and comprehensively embraced the applications and theoretical approaches in this area.

Following the opening statement, eighty-seven presentations were made in eighteen sessions at three different halls. The sessions were named after the prominent figures of Turkic lexicography, such as Mahmud al-Kashgari, Zamakhshari, Abu Hayyan, Mütercim Asım, Mehmed Esad, Ahmed Vefik Pasha, and Sami Frashëri.

Main topic of this year’s symposium was lexicographical terminology. Therefore, part of the presentations was in relation with the main topic of the symposium - lexicographical terminology:

A.D. Hut, N. S. Başkan (Turkey) “An applied terminological study about Turkish vocabulary borrowed from French via Instagram”

E. Boz, F. Bozkurt, F. Doğru (Turkey) “A corpus based research on terms of Turkish lexicography”

E. Bzhalava (Georgia) “The function of name conceptive terms borrowed from different languages in Turkish”

F. E. Özdemir, A. B. Özdemir (Turkey) “An effort to create a Turkish terminology database for lexicography”

G. Durmuşoğlu, V. Y. Gümüş, Y. Öztürk, H. Serpil, G. Eren (Turkey) “Lexicography and institutional terminology standardization: Tailoring a Turkish-English term base for Anadolu University”

M. Aksan, Y. Aksan (Turkey) “Turkish representation of shared terms: Lexicography and corpus linguistics”

Ş. H. Akalın (Turkey) “Upon the terms of the pre-school and school age dictionaries and the types of its”

I would also like to point out a few interesting presentations submitted to the symposium:

A. Baubec (Rumania) “Lexicographic researches on Turkish in Rumanian Turcology”

A. Kolukisa (Turkey) “Study on polysemy in Japanese-Turkish Dictionaries - Making use of Turkish national corpus”

B. Özkan (Turkey) “DIY (Do It Yourself) corpora for Turkish and applications of lexicology module”

G. Mukerrem (Georgia) “A study on idioms of Turkish-Georgian dictionary in Georgia”

K. B. Stanek (Poland) “The necessity of creating a cognitive definition based on the relationship between language and culture as exemplified by the word *cat*”

L. Xhanari (Albania) “Dictionaries and linguistic studies of Albanian researchers regarding Turkisms in the Albanian language”

O. Ahmed (Macedonia) “The use of Turkish computer corpora in lexicological researches”

N. Bayraktar-Erten (Turkey) “The predicate ‘çık-’ with reference to polysemy and collocation”

S. Kumanlı (Turkey) “About methods of lexicography in the Lugat Turki Arabi Farisi”

V. Pidvoynyi (Ukraine), Typology of Turkish-Ukrainian specialized dictionaries”

In addition, it is necessary to mention that there were presentations whose topic was not directly related to lexicography. The issues for which we received criticism are that fewer presentations were made on the terms while more presentations on the main topic were expected, and that presentations - apart from those with topics mentioned in the sub-titles – that might be made at any Turkology meeting were also included in the program of this symposium. In several presentations, on the other hand, non-scientific methods such as giving few examples from the dictionary entries and criticizing a whole dictionary were observed. Furthermore, some of the presentations in this type criticize the dictionaries even before entering the subject. In the following symposiums, these issues shall be taken into consideration, and the presentations that are incompatible with the main topic and sub-topics of the symposium. The booklet comprised of the Turkish and English abstracts of all presentations made at the symposium could be reached

at <http://sozluksempozyumu.ogu.edu.tr/Storage/SozlukSempozyumu/Uploads/bildiri-ozet-kitapçığı.pdf> .

I would like to extend my profound thanks, especially to manager Erdoğan Boz, and the officers and employees of Eskişehir Osmangazi University Lexicography Research and Application Center, who successfully organized and executed the symposium, and provided the presenters with a scientific feast on lexicography for two days.