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# Report

# A symposium on dictionary compilation and lexicographic studies

**Fikret Turan**

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The symposium entitled "Türkiye'de ve Dünyada Sözlük Yazımı ve Araştırmaları (Dictionary Compilation and Lexicographic Studies in Turkey and the World)" organised by The Kubbealtı Foundation was held on 4–6 November 2010 at Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul. The symposium was dedicated to the memory of İlhan Ayverdi, an acclaimed cultural figure and lexicographer in the second half of the last century, whose highly detailed extensive Turkish dictionary was published a few years ago. The symposium was one of the most widely attended cultural and academic gatherings of the year in Turkey in the area of language and linguistic studies, as thirty-four papers on various aspects of lexicology and lexicography were presented and debated over the course of three days. Although only a limited number of papers dealt with questions and issues related to general lexicography, the majority of the papers addressed various aspects of Turkish lexicography.

From the number and the nature of the papers presented, it has become clear that lexicographic works and activities are the most lively and dynamic area of language and linguistic studies in Turkey. This is also supported by the fact that a number of scholars from diverse educational backgrounds in all language areas including both Turkish and non-Turkish language studies have been involved in compiling dictionaries and studying problems and issues in dictionary studies.

Generally speaking, the papers presented in the symposium can be grouped into five broad categories according to their topics and the issues they covered. The papers in the first category were descriptive in nature. They covered general aspects of lexicographic traditions such as Arabic and Latin lexicographic methods and techniques, the influence of Arabic dictionaries and dictionary methods on Turkish lexicography in the past and in modern times, the lexicographic tradition of the Turkish Language Society, general aspects of Turkish etymological dictionaries and Turkish

dictionaries of idioms and proverbs, and other issues. Among these presentations, Ahmet Topaloğlu described lexicographic works and their general characteristics in Turkish in his paper "Türkçede Genel ve Özel Sözlükler ile Sözlük Yazımı (General and Specialised Dictionaries in Turkish and Lexicography), İsmail Durmuş explained Arabic lexicography in his "Arapça Sözlük Yazımı: Farklı Yöntem ve Türler" (Arabic Lexicography: Varieties of Methods and Categories), Bedia Demiriş elaborated on lexicographic traditions among the Ancient Greeks with her paper "Antikçağda Sözlük Çalışmaları ve Flaccus'tan Diaconus'a de Verborum Significatu" (Lexicographic Works in the Age of Classical Antiquity and de Verborum Significatu from Flaccus to Diaconus), and Belgin Aksu explicated the lexicographic works and conventions of the Turkish Languages Society in her "Türk Dil Kurumu Türkçe Sözlük Geleneği" (Lexicographic Conventions of the Turkish Language Society). The papers "Türkiye'de Deyimler Sözlüğü" (Dictionary of Idioms in Turkey) by Ahmet Turan Sinan and "Dünden Bugüne Türkiye Türkçesinin 'Köken Bilgisi Sözlükleri' Üzerine Notlar" (Notes on Etymological Dictionaries of Turkey Turkish—Past to Present) by Tuncer Gülensoy surveyed the etymological and idiomatic dictionaries of Turkish. This group also included, in a similar line, general characteristics of thematic-, rhyme- and corpus-based dictionaries and their applications to Turkish were discussed as individual studies in the papers "Sözlük Sınıflandırmalarında 'Tematik Sözlük'ün' Yeri" (The Place of the Thematic Dictionary among Lexicographic Categories) by Pelin Kocapınar, "Türkçenin Tersine Sözlüğü" (A Rhyme Dictionary of Turkish) by Dursun Zengin, and "Eşdizimli Sözlükler ve Türkçenin Eşdizimli Sözlüğü" (Collocations Dictionaries and A Collocations Dictionary of Turkish) by Bayram Çetinkaya.

The second, important group of papers elaborated on general problems that appear in bilingual dictionaries between Turkey Turkish and other modern Turkic languages, which have become a lively area where currently many lexicographers are involved in producing comprehensive works in Turkey. Issues concerning new comparative methods and approaches in the field and the main problems in establishing contrastive semantic values between cognates in Turkic languages were taken up in some papers. Contributing to the overall discussion on this topic, were the papers "Türk Lehçelerinin Karşılaştırmalı Sözlüğü için Dördüncü Yöntem Önerisi" (A Fourth Method Proposal for the Comparative Dictionary of Turkic Languages /Dialects) by Timur Kocaoğlu, "Türk Dilleri ve Lehçeleri Arasında Benzeşimler Sözlüklerinin Hazırlanmasının Yöntem ve Prensipleri" (Principles and Methods for Compilation of Cognates between Turkic Languages and Dialects) by Vügar Sultanzade, "Lehçe Sözlüğü Hazırlanırken Karşılaşılan Sorunlar ve Çözüm Yolları" (Problems Met in Preparing Dialect Dictionaries and Suggestions for Solutions) by Ekrem Arıkoğlu. Issues concerning contrastive and cross-linguistic matters in bilingual dictionaries and studies between Turkish, German and Swedish were elaborated by several research papers including the papers "Yeni Bir 'Büyük Türkçe-Almanca Sözlük' Projesi" (Project of a New Comprehensive Turkish-German Lexicon) by Vural Ülkü, "Türkçe ve Almanca Sözlüklerde Fiiller" (Verbs in Turkish and Ger-

man Dictionaries) by Aysel Uzuntaş, and "Turkish and Swedish Mental Verbs in Crosslinguistic Perspective" by Éva Ágnes Csató and Lars Johanson.

Another interesting group of papers was concerned with historical mono- / bilingual Turkish dictionaries in relation to their composition, methodological problems and their influence on the subsequent lexical works. Examples of this group of papers are "Tarihî ve Çağdaş Türkçe Sözlüklerde Homonymous (Eşadlı) ve Homographic (Eşyazımlı) Sözcükler" (Homonymous and Homographic Words in Historical and Modern Turkish Dictionaries) by Paşa Yavuzarslan, "Xavier Bianchi'nin 'Dictionnaire Français-Turc' Adlı Sözlüğünde Vulgarize (Halklılaşmış) Kelimeler" (On Vulgarised Words in Xavier Bianchi's Dictionnaire Français-Turc) by Yavuz Kartallıoğlu, "Nimetullâh Lügatı'nın Metin Kuruluşu Üzerine" (On the Textual Construction of the Nimetullah Lexicon) by Adnan İnce, and "Türk Sözlükçülük Tarihinde Atasözleri ve Deyimler" (Proverbs and Idioms in the History of Turkish Lexicography) by Murat Küçük. In addition, ongoing works on concordances and word lists of historical texts and related methodological issues were discussed by some participants who are specialised in historical texts and textual studies. On this, the paper "Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi Konkordansı Hazırlık Çalışmaları ve Bir Örnek Harf (Preparatory Works for the Concordance of the Seyahatname of Evliya Çelebi and the Case of One Letter as Example) by Semih Tezcan, R. Aslıhan Aksoy Sheridan and Michael Douglas Sheridan generated a lively discussion.

The fourth group dealt with issues in general and specialised dictionaries published in Turkey in recent years. Among the issues, spelling and definitions of loan words and definitions of regional words and phrases in dialect studies were the points of discussions addressed in the following papers "Çağdaş Türkçe Sözlüklerde Batı Kökenli Sözcüklerin Köken Dil ve Biçim Sorunu: 'Sigara' Örneği" (Questions Concerning Etymological Roots and Forms of Loan Words of Western-Origin in Modern Turkish Dictionaries: The Case of 'Sigara') by Erdoğan Boz, "Çocuk Kavramının Sözlüksel Tanımlarının Eleştirisi" (A Critical Inquiry into the Lexicological Definitions of the Concept of 'Child') by Engin Yılmaz and Yonca Koçmar, "Türkçe Sözlüklerde İngilizceden Türkçeye Geçen Kelimelerin İmlası ve Tanımı: Problemler ve Öneriler" (Spellings and Definitions of English Loan Words in Turkish Lexicons: Problems and Suggestions for Solutions) by Fikret Turan, "Yerel Sözvarlığının Belgelenmesi: Ankara Örneği" (Documenting the Regional Lexical Resources: The Case of Ankara) by Nurettin Demir and "Ağız Çalışmalarının Sözlük Bölümü Üzerine" (On the Glossary Parts of the Works in Dialect Studies) by Gülseren Tor.

Dictionary use among Turkish students and the general public and issues concerning dictionary usage were discussed in the fifth group of papers. Issues concerning especially school dictionaries were discussed in light of the findings of recent studies on the topic, which included the paper "Üniversite 1. Sınıf Öğrencilerinin Sözlük Kullanma Becerileri Üzerine Bir Araştırma: Afyonkarahisar Örneği" (An Inquiry into the Ability of Dictionary Use by First Year University Students: The Case of Students in Afyonkarahisar) by Mahmut Babacan.

Apart from the papers in these five groups, there were papers dealing with specific topics like issues concerning linguistic relativity between Indian languages and lexicographic problems concerning certain Turkic, Balkan and Semitic languages, which contributed to the overall discussions with original insights: "Linguistic Relativity to be Indicated in Lexicography Among Indian Languages" by Nazir Ahmad Dhar, "Understanding Corpus-Based Lexicography: The Treatment of 'Start' and 'Begin' in Cobuild (1995) and Node (1998)" by Radia Benzehra, "Tatarcanın Değişmez Benzetmeler Sözlüğü" (Set Idiomatic Phrases of Comparisons in Tatar) by Ferit Hakimcan, "The Role of Terms and Contribution of Scientist in the Progress of Sciences and New Dictionaries in Uzbekistan" by Gulam Ismailov and "Olivera Yaşar-Nasteva'nın Makedonca-Türkçe Sözlük Denemesi" (The Work of Olivera Yaşar-Nasteva's Macedonian-Turkish Dictionary) by Numan Aruç.

The symposium functioned as a forum, where both young enthusiastic lexicographers and experienced researchers and scholars found opportunities to share their works and experiences on lexicography and lexicology. The level of discussions and debates on various issues in the sessions has shown that lexicography is a highly popular area among linguists and philologists, who, in one way or another, have been involved in compiling dictionaries and forming new methods and approaches in lexicology and lexicography. It has also become clear that Turkish lexicography tradition still has issues concerning the inclusion of words and phrases current in spoken Turkish and the spelling and definitions of English loan words used widely by the younger generations. Some participants voiced their concerns also regarding the lack or limited number of studies and works in visual and specialised dictionaries in Turkey. With all these papers and discussions, the symposium served its objectives very well. As the organisers implied in their welcoming and closing speeches, turning this into a regular annual symposium series will help raise the level and quality of scholarship in the field immensely.

Finally I should add that the symposium was co-sponsored by the Center for Civilisation Studies of Bahçeşehir University, and The Elginkan Foundation. The proceedings of the symposium were published before the symposium officially commenced. Below, I provide the bibliographic details of the symposium proceedings and the Turkish dictionary compiled by İlhan Ayverdi:

*Türkiye'de ve Dünyada Sözlük Yazımı ve Araştırmaları Uluslar Arası Sempozyumu bildirileri: 4–6 Kasım 2010.* İstanbul: Kubbealtı Vakfı, 2010. 454 p. ISBN 978–975–6444–85–6.

Ayverdi, İlhan 2010. *Misalli büyük Türkçe sözlük.* İstanbul: Kubbealtı Vakfı. 1420 p. ISBN 978–975–6444–76–4.

A full list of titles and abstracts of the symposium papers are available online and can be accessed at: http://www.kubbealti.org.tr/files/sozluk sempozyumu.pdf