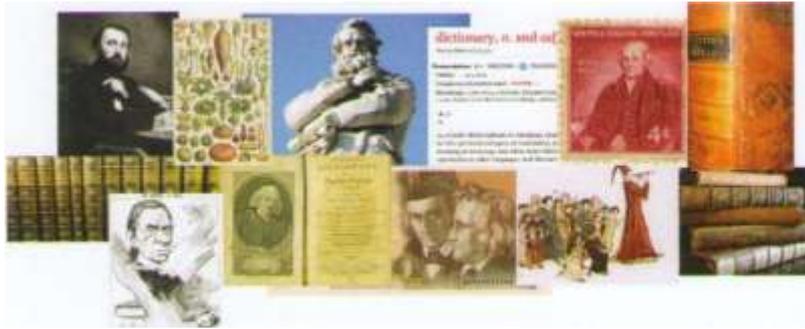




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Monolingual English and Armenian Dictionaries: Structural, Semantic and Pragmatic Perspectives

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The art of dictionary making has developed time-tested lexicographic traditions both in the English and the Armenian languages. Comparing monolingual English and Armenian dictionaries is of particular interest as their historical development took place completely independently, yet concurrently - during approximately the same period of time. Our research is aimed at the contrastive study of English and Armenian lexicographic traditions with special reference to the structural, semantic and pragmatic characteristic features of dictionary entries accounting for their differences and similarities. An attempt is made to reveal the main principles of the entry development in the dictionary making in the languages under study. Structurally the main difference consists in the absence of the transcription in the Armenian dictionaries conditioned by the phonetic system of the Armenian language. Semantically dictionary definitions reveal various layers of meanings which are presented differently in each of the languages. The grounds for such renderings are mostly accounted for by the differences between the English and Armenian cultures. As for the pragmatic information, it is worth mentioning that though the tendency in the English lexicographic tradition is to supplement the semantic aspect of definitions with the pragmatic one, the monolingual Armenian dictionaries under study convey far less pragmatic information. Based on an extensive study of a number of monolingual English and Armenian dictionaries it can be claimed that contemporary monolingual dictionaries mostly rely on the knowledge the adult users possess and their pragmatic competence. However, it is our strong belief that the pragmatic aspect of the language as an inseparable part of human's linguistic competence, should not be overlooked. Moreover, the integration of the pragmatic information in the dictionary entries of the words of certain semantic loading has become a necessity.

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