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Dictionary Article as Text in Lexicology Instruction[2]

Extended summary

The paper presents the possibilities of using dictionary articles from our descriptive monolingual dictionaries as texts for teaching lexicology at academic courses of teacher training faculties.

The starting point of the paper is that literary texts are traditionally used in teaching languages, while other types of texts (non-literary texts) are less frequently used, which, in turn, affects students' reading literacy.

In the paper, the dictionary article is first defined within the lexicographic framework, and then the dictionary article is analyzed according to its features relevant for the text typology in teaching languages. The text of the dictionary article is viewed as a continued and connected text type, given that it represents one thematic whole with coherently interconnected structural parts. It is also treated as a non-fiction text – the reception of such text is based on logical thinking, and finally, according to the genre features, it falls into the category of expository texts, the aim of which is to explain and present the meaning of a word and to point, explicitly or implicitly, to corelations among words and the position of a word in an overall lexical system.

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Despite the fact that the dictionary article as an expository text is specific, primarily in terms of the lexicographic metalanguage, some texts of dictionary articles comply with the most demanding methodological requirements for the texts used in the classroom, namely, they are full of the lexical phenomena that are taught at school.

The main part of the paper focuses on the qualitative analysis of the selected dictionary articles from our descriptive monolingual dictionaries, with a special emphasis on using a dictionary article in teaching lexicology as an introductory text, a text used for identifying lexical phenomena, a text used for practising lexical phenomena, and a text as a part of the knowledge assessment test. As the emphasis is on the dictionary article as the text used for identifying a lexical phenomenon, from the methodological perspective, the analytical-descriptive method is used to analyze the selected dictionary articles. The aim is to identify and analyze synonymy and other lexical-semantic relationships among words.

The main goal of the paper is to show that in the specific dictionary article texts selected from the monolingual descriptive dictionaries one can identify a complex network of semantical relationships among the lexemes and that these texts should find their place among the texts used in language teaching.

Based on our analysis, we concluded that using dictionary articles in teaching lexicology may have multiple benefits – acquiring the knowledge of lexicology, enriching one's vocabulary, developing language culture, but also developing lexicological knowledge (knowledge about dictionaries), skills (reading a dictionary and finding the needed information) and habits (the habit of a continual dictionary usage). All these skills and knowledge are not only subject-specific, but are also important for general education because they improve the pre-service primary teachers' functional literacy which is a pre-requisite for implementing the skills in the classroom.

Keywords: dictionary article, dictionaries, teaching lexicology, texts in teaching, reading literacy.

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