

**Werner Hüllen, *English Dictionaries 800-1700*
The Topical Tradition
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999, xvii+525 pp.**

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Between the beginnings of European lexicography and 1700, many glossaries and dictionaries were arranged not according to the alphabet, but in a topical order which followed the influential paradigms of theology, philosophy, and natural history at that time. Together with related text genres like didactic dialogues, treatises on terminology, and thesauri, they constitute the topical (or onomasiological) tradition. Its basic principle is the idea that the world can be mirrored in its ontological order in a word-list with similar arrangement. The book presents this tradition as it appeared in the English-speaking world between (roughly) 800 and 1700 and shows it as embedded in a wider European one. In doing so it argues that the onomasiological principle is not confined to glossaries and dictionaries but appears as the general pattern also in dialogues for learning languages, in treatises for the explanation of terminology, and in thesauri as the semantic component of universal language schemes.

In the first two chapters with the function of «Opening the topic» the lexicographical terms (e. g. macrostructure, microstructure) are defined and onomasiological dictionaries are shown to be texts with a syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic structure. The following six chapters have the function of showing «The English tradition of onomasiology» by explaining works along these text-linguistic lines. A relevant typology of Old English glosses is developed and Aelfric's glossary presented as the first influential work of its kind, prefigured by the classical *Hermeneumata*. There then follow analyses of colloquies for the teaching of Latin (e. g. by Adam of Petit Pont, Alexander Nequam, and John of Garland), wordbooks for the teaching of French (e. g. by Walter of Bibbesworth and the so-called *Femina*) and dialogues (like Noel de Berlaumont's *Colloquia et Dictionariolum* and others, e. g. those by Claudius Holtyband and Guy de Miège), outstanding among them William Caxton's *Dialogues in French and English*. The treatises chosen to exemplify the onomasiological principle are devoted to husbandry (e. g. Garvis Markham), rhetoric (e.

g. Richard Sherry), geometry (e. g. Robert Recorde), and seafaring (e. g. Captain John Smith). In-depth studies deal with John Withals' English-Latin dictionary «for young boys» (1553) and with James Howell's English-Italian, French, and Spanish dictionary for the genteel (1660). A further in-depth study investigates John Wilkins' tables (1668), i. e. the semantic part of his universal language scheme, as a comprehensive thesaurus of English in this special context.

«The European scene», as sketched in the two following chapters, deals with Latin dictionaries for the trivium, which appeared in Germany and the new textbook culture that developed as a consequence of Renaissance ideas. It pertains to elaborate so-called nomenclators in the spirit of Humanism (e. g. Hadrianus Junius's *Nomenclator*, 1564) and to textbooks for vernaculars (in particular the *Liber in volgare*, 1424, and *Introito e portra*, 1477) which started to be printed after 1477 on a great scale, eventually covering all European countries of cultural importance at the time and up to eight languages. The most outstanding case of this new development is Johannes Amos Comenius, whose sentence-dictionaries *Janua linguarum* (1631) and *Orbis sensualium pictus* (1659) gained continent-wide influence and were edited and adapted in many English versions. They are couched in Czech traditional lexicography (e. g. that of Daniel Adam of Weleslavin) and in the author's own philosophical system. These intricate dependencies are uncovered just as the influence which Comenius's books had in England. The analysis of the *Orbis pictus* includes a close look at the interconnections between text-entries and illustrations.

Concluding «Reflections on the topic» see the onomasiological works mentioned as constituting an autonomous «speculative» tradition (i. e. a tradition using language as the *speculum* (mirror) of reality) in front of the backdrop of a general «encyclopedic» tradition which strives for collecting all human knowledge available in one unified system, and of a «semantic» tradition which, semiotically speaking, regards the word to be the name attached to a pre-existing object. Towards the end of the 17th century, this general philosophical framework gave way to new epistemological ideas, as they appear, for example, in John Lockes works and which prepare the path for the mental lexicography of our own time.

There is an appendix of 22 tables in which the topical glossaries and dictionaries are given in overviews, some of them rendered in present-day number codes.