

THE GREEK-DUTCH / DUTCH-GREEK LEXICON COMPILATION PROGRAMME

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My contribution to this Conference is in connection with a research programme that is still in its preliminary stage, a fact that obliges this report to refer to its development, objectives, importance, contents and technical support in general terms only.

Commencing with a very promising initial phase in October 1996, the programme has since went through various phases occasioned by technical and economic problems that we have encountered to date. In the framework of the aforementioned preliminary phase, my colleague M. Jansen and I, in conjunction with the Programme Coordinator, A.F. van Gemert, laid out the research objectives, designed a large part of the dictionary's macrostructure, defined the contents of the lexical levels that were to be processed for each lemma, studied basic elements of the lemma microstructure through the creation of model lemmata per grammatical category and experimentally tested the capabilities of the available technical support.¹

However, unforeseen complications which surfaced in the available means of technical support for the programme, and in funding, imposed a seven-month suspension before satisfactory solutions were provided. This inactivity was followed by a period of intense deliberation resulting in the advent of a second preliminary phase between November 1, 1997 and January 1, 1998, the official and true commencement date of the programme.

The research programme is expected to be completed in June 2001. It is being carried out by an initiative of the Modern Greek Literature Department of the University of Amsterdam, more specifically by Professor A.F. van Gemert, and the scholarly collaboration of the Centre for the Greek Language, using the experience acquired in recent years in the field of Lexicography, within the same

1. The article entry software for the source and target languages at our disposal was called Dict-Edit. It was designed for Macintosh at the beginning of the 1990s specifically for the requirements of a Greek-Dutch dictionary by the Computing Centre of the School of Philosophy at the University of Amsterdam. However, its performance later proved unsatisfactory and doubts arose over its capabilities for automated retrieval of entered data.

university environment.² The primary source of funding is the Dutch Language Union (Nederlandse Taalunie), to be more exact the Lexicographical Funding Committee (Commissie voor Lexicografische Vertaalvoorzieningen, CLVV) headed by Professor W. Martin, and to a lesser degree the University of Amsterdam School of Philosophy. In addition, financial assistance (in the form of scientific collaboration by the Centre for the Greek Language (CGL) and other organizations) is provided by the Greek side.

Initially, the purpose of the project was to be the continuation of an undertaking begun in 1988 by the Dutch hellenist, M. van Pinxteren, in conjunction with the Amsterdam Philosophical School, to successively compile two Greek-Dutch/Dutch-Greek dictionaries, each of 50,000 lemmata. This initial goal has both expanded and contracted: it now includes the creation of an electronic Data Base for the Greek and Dutch language and, secondly, the compilation of two bilingual dictionaries, each of 40,000 lemmata, derived from the Data Base to serve the translation requirements of both the Dutch/Flemish and Greek user.

To achieve the simultaneous use of lemmata by both users, in other words, for the dictionaries to be bi-directional, we chose the international scientific terminology as the metalanguage to provide information on a morphological and stylistic level. In parallel, in the case of multiple meaning in the source language, explanatory information is provided for each meaning only in Greek, if this information is addressed to the Greek-speaking user or only in Dutch, if intended for the benefit of the Dutch-speaking user.

Who, is this Dutch–or Greek speaking–dictionary user? One is the Dutch/Flemish secondary school student of modern Greek,³ the adult at the evening classes of the many educational centres,⁴ the student of modern Greek literature⁵ and the Professor of Modern Greek at both secondary and higher levels of education. The other is the Greek student in Holland and Belgium and the Professor at the local lan-

2. Currently at the School of Philosophy eight more lexicographic research programmes are in progress: Lexicon compilations into and from Dutch for the following languages: Danish, Polish, Russian, Arabic, Italian, Croatian, Latin and Romanian.

3. The drive towards the instruction of modern Greek at secondary school level in Holland is included within the framework of political support for the least used official languages of the European Union's member-states that resulted in the Community programmes "Lingua", since 1989 and "Socrates", since 1995. For additional information on the latter, see: *Official Journal of the European Communities* 1995 where the decision resulting in its creation is published. In addition it conforms to the general policy of the Dutch Ministry of Education where, through special committees (Vakontwikkelgroep Moderne Vreemde Talen and Commissie Vernieuwing Eindexamenprogramma's Moderne Vreemde Talen) it aims not only at the advancement of the "major" modern European languages but "minor" ones too (e.g. Russian, Spanish, Italian) as well as languages of minority groups (e.g. Turkish and Arabic).

4. Regarding the Volkuniversiteiten, that offer instruction in modern Greek at all learning levels for a small fee.

5. Modern Greek literature and language are taught at four universities in Holland and Belgium: Groningen, Amsterdam, Antwerp and Brussels.

guage primary and secondary schools in the aforementioned countries. Naturally, we cannot exclude the translator/interpreter employed at European Union institutions and the businessman who uses both languages as professional tools.

Currently, the language requirements of these persons, with regards to translation, are inadequately catered for, since they are forced to use intermediary languages (English, German, and French),⁶ or one of the three existing Greek-Dutch/Dutch-Greek dictionaries,⁷ which are outdated and largely inadequate. Given the process of European unification and the strengthening of Greek-Dutch relations, the lack of an effective translation tool becomes all the greater. Filling this void is the precise meaning and importance of this programme, which aspires to offer a scholarly tool able to solve immense translation problems that have, for years now, bedeviled all those engaged in the Dutch-Greek language pair.

To ensure the success of the project we are moving in two directions:

1. On the level of macrostructure, our aim is to set up, as far as possible, a complete and current Data Base and
2. On a microstructure level, we intend to completely specify all details on the following language levels: (i) Phonetics, namely pronunciation, (ii) Spelling, (iii) Morphology, (iv) Syntax, (v) Meanings, (vi) Combination (combinatorics), and (vii) Style.

Regarding the macrostructure, I would like to point out that it follows two guidelines:

1. The Greek vocabulary that we compiled in the preliminary phase, through comparison of one bilingual and three Greek dictionaries (Stavropoulos 1988; *Σύγχρονο Λεξικό της Νεοελληνικής Γλώσσας* 1991; Tegopoulos-Fitrakis 1991⁴; Kriaras 1995), is being examined by associates at the CGL before it assuming final form and
2. The electronic Data Base of the Dutch language (*Referentiebestand Nederlands, RBN*)⁸ prepared by the Lexicographical Funding Committee, which has been placed at our disposal. This base will contain 40,000 lemmata of Dutch in their definitive form and is based as much on text corpora as well as on catalogues showing the frequency of occurrence of the lemmata.

6. The following lexicons are mainly used in conjunction with the bilingual Dutch: (i) Stavropoulos & Hornby 1977, and (ii) Wendt 1995.

7. Regarding (i) van Dijk-Wittop Koning 1991⁶: contains 3,000 entries and in spite of its positive features it does not transcend the level of a basic vocabulary; (ii) Imbrechts 1981 with 17,000 entries; (iii) Imbrechts 1982 with 20,000 entries; (iv) Lindenburg 1988 with 35,000 entries, which are mainly sourced from works of Greek literature written up until the 1950s. Analysis on the positives and negatives of the above dictionaries see van Gemert 1996, where all dictionaries for the learning of Greek by Dutch speakers, and conversely, in use at the moment, are presented in detail.

8. Regarding the facts of the macrostructure base as well as the microstructure (as pertains to the nouns) see Martin 1997.

The final form of the list of lemmata will constitute the foundation for the section of Greek to Dutch and it will reversely function as a supplement to the *RBN Data Base* in the direction of Dutch-Greek.

As for the microstructure, I wish to make several comments:

1. Pronunciation will be entered in accordance with the International Phonetic System by associates at the CGL.
2. All variants in form and accentuation currently in use will be included and constitute cross-references.
3. On the morphological level, we shall include the following information: the gender of the noun, the degrees of the adjective and the derivative adverb, the tenses and the past participle of the verb, and the kind of pronoun, adverb, cardinal/ordinal number, article and conjunction. We shall note only those of the above forms which present certain anomalies. In the case of normal inflexion and word-formation, we shall refer to a detailed grammatical Appendix.
4. The syntactical information will include various data. For the noun and adjective, we shall note its syntax with particular preposition, case or conjunction. For the active voice verb and the deponent verb, we shall specify its transitive or intransitive nature; for the passive voice verb, we shall specify its mood. Regarding the pronoun, we shall state its use with or without article and its usage as an adjectival or substantive complement. Useful information is provided for the remaining grammatical categories.⁹
5. On the semantic level we shall provide pertinent information regarding, for example, if a noun is concrete or abstract, if a certain information of an adverb is linked to specific meanings of the adjective, if there is a synecdoche, etc. The *Dictionary of the Modern Demotic Greek Language* by Emm. Kriaras will guide the processing of the articles for the Greek-Dutch section. Concerning the Dutch-Greek dictionary, the citations that illustrate each meaning will be extracted mainly from the *RBN Data Base*, after their translation from Dutch. They will be supplemented with more citations coming from the above dictionary.
6. Combination elements that we will try to render are idiomatic expressions,¹⁰ lexical phrases, stereotypical expressions, proverbs, the combina-

9. Regarding the adverb, its use as an adjectival complement and its syntax with a preposition or a conjunction are stated. Regarding the preposition, we refer to the case with which it is construed. Regarding the cardinal/ordinal number, its usage as an adjectival or substantive complement and its construction with possessive pronouns are stated. For the conjunction, we state the construction with the specific mood and verb tense and its parataxis or subjunctive usage. Finally, concerning the particle, we are interested in its construction with a specific mood and verb tense or a specific case.

10. Concerns special or general idiomatic expressions that are connected either with one or all of the lemma's meanings.

tion of the word with a specific preposition or conjunction (grammatical collocation) or with a specific lexeme (lexical collocation).

7. Style information that will concern us includes the register (formal, popular, etc.) and issues of nuance (connotation).

In order to include all the information previously mentioned on every lemma we must maintain reliable electronic support.

Unfortunately, the experimental use of the Dict-Edit software resulted only in a quest for new solutions. Its incomplete nature led us to the use of OMBI (Reversible Bilingual Lexical Database) software¹¹ for a Windows operating system that was designed by the CLVV committee. This software allows the user to process the articles on all language levels mentioned through a series of fields that can include all pertinent information (Wijne, van Elswijk, Maks & Martin 1997). In addition, by automatically reversing all the data entered, it gives bi-directional operation capability towards both languages, resulting in a significant saving of time. Naturally, vigilance is always necessary since errors frequently occur during the inversion.

It is for this reason that a consulting body of hellenists has already been formed. Its function will be to check the articles and suggest suitable solutions when necessary. Simultaneously, a three-member scientific committee oversees the progress of the project in its entirety.

We hope that the future progress of the programme shows that the problems that up until now impeded its smooth development belong to the past. In short, we hope that, shortly, we will be in the position to present results.

Translation YANNIS GETSOS

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11. Concerning the main characteristics and structure of this software see Martin & Tamm 1996.

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