

zvezdo (*Beneath the Star*, 1950; 1, 271–73), the critic offers a wealth of suggestions for how to read these novels. As a rule, stylistic notes come at the end of each commentary.

Information on the social or literary contexts is understandably less abundant. The author alludes, for example, to the hostile reception Florjan Lipuš's *Zmote dijaka Tjaža* (*Seminarian Tjaž's Errors*, 1972) received in Catholic circles (2, 168) and to critics' tepid reaction to what they perceived as Vladimir Bartol's unpoetic style in *Alamut* (1938; an opinion Zadavec appears to share; 2, 14), but generally contemporaries' views of the novels, publication histories, and status, whether in educational curricula or on the book market, are absent. There are a few brief exceptions, as in the case of Miško Kranjec, an author Zadavec has written on extensively, whose unfinished *Za svetlimi obzorji* (*Beyond the Bright Horizon*, 1960–63) Zadavec explains on the basis of personal correspondence with the writer (1, 147). Nor is there an apparent principle according to which Zadavec included or excluded Slovene novels. He treats most all of the novelists that Janko Kos lists for the three post-World War II decades in *Pregled slovenskega slovstva*, but not necessarily the same novels. Thus, however curious the reader might be to know this leading Slovene critic's "favorites," *The Twentieth-Century Slovene Novel* is not an evaluative but a companion work that functions best as an introduction to individual artistic visions.

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Simon Krek, ed. *Veliki angleško-slovenski slovar Oxford*. Vol. 1 A–K. Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 2005. 1035 pp., SIT 52,500 [= \$280] (2 vol.) (cloth). ISBN: 86-341-1559-3.

The publication of the *Veliki angleško-slovenski slovar Oxford* is a rare and noteworthy lexicographic achievement: a new dictionary that truly supersedes previous efforts in the field. The release of the first volume had been planned for December 2004, but was delayed until early 2005. The second volume of the dictionary has already been completed, but another year is required for editing and its release is scheduled for 2006. This will

definitively mark the obsolescence of the most comprehensive English-Slovene dictionary to date: the often-reprinted Grad lexicon.¹

The project (for which production costs were estimated at SIT 150 million, or \$800,000) did not receive any state support, but was funded by publishers (Državna založba Slovenije and Oxford University Press). Requests for state support were turned down because the dictionary was judged a commercial rather than cultural project.² (Compared to the English-language dictionary market, the number of Slovene dictionaries is very limited, and lexicographic projects often received state support in the past as cultural undertakings.) Indeed, comments from the publishers (as well as the price) indicate that profit is a priority. At a reception at the Grand Hotel Union on 10 March, editor Simon Krek confirmed that there are no plans to issue a CD ROM version of the dictionary because of fears of piracy, although an on-line version may be offered some day.³ Presumably this would be comparable to a subscription version of the free on-line version of the *Slovar slovenskega knjižnjega jezika*, which allows item-by-item searching but not browsing.⁴

Like nearly every English-Slovene dictionary to date, the dictionary is designed as a decoding tool for Slovene speakers (rather than an encoding tool for English speakers; viii). It thus provides phonetic and morphological information for English entries, but not for Slovene glosses. The layout of the dictionary is both efficient and user-friendly.⁵ Its three columns per page reduce lost white space, while headwords are set off in red. The dictionary adopts a British (BrE) standard in pronunciation (e.g., *Don Quixote* / ,dɒn 'kwɪksət /, *herb* /hɜ:b/) and orthography (e.g., cross-referencing the user from *color* > *colour*). The orthography varies in the use of BrE digraphs (i.e., *encyclopaedia* > *encyclopedia*, but *esophagus* > *oesophagus*) and follows the older BrE (and Oxford) standard of using *-ize* (e.g., *harmonise* >

¹ Anton Grad, Ružena Škerlj, and Nada Vitorovič, *Veliki angleško-slovenski slovar* (Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 2004).

² Igor Bratož, "Cool, Man!—Mega, stari!" *Delo* 16 March 2005.

³ Bratož; Valentina Plahuta Simčič, "Največji zaklad besed" *Delo* 12 March 2005.

⁴ Iskanje po *Slovar slovenskega knjižnjega jezika* (Ljubljana: Inštitut za slovenski jezik Frana Ramovša ZRC SAZU, available at <http://bos.zrc-sazu.si/sskj.html>).

⁵ See <http://icarus.dzs.si/pdf/oxford3.pdf> to view the first ten pages of the dictionary.

harmonize): Uniquely American (AmE) lexical items (e.g., *fall*, *elevator*) are marked as AmE and glossed without cross-referencing, and uniquely BrE items (e.g., *fortnight*, *gap year*) are marked as BrE.

In terms of scope, the Oxford dictionary clearly surpasses the Grad dictionary. A random comparison of pages 622–23 (*equivocate*–*erstwhile*) to the equivalent range of entries in Grad reveals thirty-seven additions, from the relatively frequent (e.g., *erector set*, *error prone*) to the more obscure (e.g., *ergograph*, *ergosphere*). At the same time, twenty-six generally obscure items in Grad are omitted (e.g., *ergatocracy*, *erst*).⁶ Thus the Oxford dictionary is clearly not a mere reworking of the Grad dictionary. At the same time, it makes no pretense of being an unabridged dictionary of English—Webster’s 3rd,⁷ for example, includes 207 additional items within the same span. A noteworthy aspect of the scope of the dictionary is also its enthusiastic inclusion of vulgar and sexual terms that Grad shied away from. These lexemes must be available to any reader of modern English literature.⁸ The accuracy of the translations are also an improvement over Grad⁹—for example, *economical* is glossed as ‘varčen, gospodaren, ekonomičen’ but not ‘ekonomski’, as in Grad, and *billion* is correctly glossed as ‘milijarda’ (with a note that BrE *milliard* is archaic), unlike in Grad.

However, despite the clear advances that the dictionary offers over previous English-Slovene dictionaries—and it is unarguably the best English-Slovene dictionary produced to date—the overall impression of the work is also disappointing for two reasons: an unmet expectation based on the human resources involved in its creation and a number of shortcomings in the selection of terms.

It is claimed that the dictionary is the fruit of ten years of labor by ninety lexicographers and university experts¹⁰ (in the dictionary itself

⁶ The absence of *erbium* ‘erbij’ and *Erlenmeyer flask* ‘erlenmajerska bučka’ is a serious omission in this range of entries; see below.

⁷ Gove, Philip Babcock, ed., *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary* (Springfield: Meriam-Webster, 1993).

⁸ See Branko Gradišnik’s article “Kakšna jeba je dandanes prevajanje” *Delo* 23 February 2005, on the difficulty of rendering vulgarisms in Slovene.

⁹ Users of the Grad dictionary are almost universally frustrated by its many peculiarities. As only one example, Grad’s sole definition of *soufflé* is ‘šum (v organih)’ (i.e., the sound of the blood moving through dilated uterine blood vessels), whereas the common culinary definition (i.e., ‘narastek’) is absent.

¹⁰ Bratož.

dozens of additional specialist consultants are acknowledged). However, it is not possible to take seriously the idea that 900 years of human labor—or even ninety years, if one assumes that the participants devoted only ten percent of their time—were invested into this project. For the sake of comparison, the Grad dictionary (ca. 72,000 headwords) credits only three authors, and the monumental Pleteršnik dictionary¹¹ (ca. 112,000 headwords) credits only one. The scope of the dictionary—120,000 entries¹²—is also a clear improvement over the Grad dictionary, but is not remarkable, because this is comparable to other standard English-L2 dictionaries.¹³ The inclusion of a such broad range of experts is certainly a good principle—and perhaps earlier lexicographers have been parsimonious in acknowledging their support teams—but in view of the unremarkable size of the work and other deficiencies detailed below, the number of contributors is more of an embarrassment than a credit.

In addition, a scan of the list of contributors reveals that only one native speaker of English—Neville Hall—contributed to the dictionary. Neville (whom I know personally) is a composer and English instructor rather than a lexicographer or linguist, but it is presumably thanks in part to his efforts that the Oxford dictionary is free of spelling errors or other gross errors.¹⁴ However, the complete quality control of the work of some 100 nonnative speakers is a task that clearly exceeds the capacity of a single non-linguist.

Although the Oxford dictionary is free of mere mechanical errors, it has less obvious organizational shortcomings. These include systematic inconsistency, an overloading of proper nouns, and peculiarities from the perspective of frequency.

¹¹ Pleteršnik, Maks, *Slovensko-nemški slovar*. 2 vol. (Ljubljana: Knežškofijstvo, 1894).

¹² “Oxford Veliki angleško-slovenski slovar” (advertising brochure) (Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 2004).

¹³ Cf., e.g., László Országh’s two-volume *English-Hungarian Dictionary* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990) with approximately 120,000 English entries or I. P. Galperin’s two-volume *New English-Russian Dictionary* (Moscow: Russian Language Publishers, 1977) with approximately 150,000 English entries.

¹⁴ The obvious danger of not employing a native speaker is exemplified by Daša Komac’s *Splošni angleško-slovenski in slovensko-angleški moderni slovar* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 2001), which is riddled with spelling, semantic, and typographic errors.

First, when it comes to certain closed sets of vocabulary (e.g., days of the week, names of months, etc.), it is expected that an editorial decision will be made to include all of them or completely omit them. In the Oxford dictionary this principle is frequently violated. Thus, certain standard US state abbreviations are included (*AK, CA, CT*, etc.) and others omitted (*AL, AR, AZ*, etc.). Likewise, certain older US state abbreviations are given (e.g., *Calif., Colo., Conn.*, etc.) and others omitted (e.g., *Ala., Ariz., Ark.*, etc.). Certain chemical elements are included (e.g., *actinium, aluminum, americium*, etc.) but others omitted (e.g., *dysprosium* ‘disprozij’, *erbium* ‘erbij’, *francium* ‘francij’, etc.). Certain constellations are included (e.g., *Aquila, Boötes, Cassiopeia*) but not others (e.g., *Antila* ‘Zračna Črpalka’, *Apus* ‘Rajska ptica’, *Argo* ‘Nebesna ladja’ etc.). The selection does not appear to be based on frequency or cultural relevance, and therefore gives an impression of chaos.

Second, the decision to include a large number of personal and geographical names in the main body of the dictionary is an unusual one. Although the dictionary follows the general principle of including only names that differ between the two languages (thus *Elbe* ‘Laba’ and *Aristotle* ‘Aristotel’ are included, but *Berlin* ‘Berlin’ is not), the inclusion of less frequent places such as *Kanchenjunga* (‘Kančenjunga’, a Himalayan peak) and figures such as *Bellerophon* (‘Belerofont’, a Greek hero) makes one wonder whether they were merely included to pad the dictionary.

Finally, the promotional material and the preface (x–xii) makes much of the fact that the dictionary is corpus-based. However, because one of the basic functions of corpus analysis is to determine frequency (other functions include determining meaning, collocational patterns, and grammatical valence), it must be asked how faithfully the producers of the dictionary relied on such frequency evidence. Table 1 compares the frequencies (based on a Google count)¹⁵ of items included in and omitted from the Oxford dictionary.

¹⁵ The judicious use of an Internet search engine such as Google is a relatively simple way to establish relative frequencies of lexical items. Specifying domains (e.g., `Istanbul site:.edu`) allows one to establish relative frequencies for AmE (i.e., .edu hits) and BrE (i.e., .uk hits)—that is, not between AmE and BrE, but between different lexical items within AmE, within BrE, or within both sets combined.

The juxtaposition of high-frequency omissions and low-frequency inclusions in Table 1 illustrates that relatively infrequent items have been included at the expense of relatively frequent items. In some cases, however, sheer frequency need not be the sole criterion for inclusion of an item. It might be argued, for example, that many of the dictionary users will be students that might participate in the EU's *Erasmus scheme* and might therefore have need of the Slovene equivalent. By the same token, however, it could be argued that omitted but culturally relevant items such as *Carniola* 'Kranjska' and *Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes* 'Kraljevina Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev' ought to have been included. Although there are no obvious omissions of the most basic English vocabulary, certain omissions are nonetheless surprising.

From the perspective of the Slovene content of the entries, both merits and shortcomings may be noted. In addition to the generally greater accuracy noted above, a clear advantage over the Grad lexicon is that the Slovene glosses are clearly separated into different numbered senses (e.g., *convenience* "1. prikladnost..., 2. prednost..., 3. javno stranišče") rather than run together in a long list (e.g., *convenience* "udobnost, prijetnost, prikladnost, pripravnost; korist, prid, dobiček; komfort; angleško stranišče; ...prevozno sredstvo"). At the same time, greater synonymy would enrich the Slovene entries—for example, *fluvial* is glossed as 'fluvialen', but 'rečen' is an even more prevalent equivalent in scientific terminology. Inasmuch as one of the functions of a bilingual dictionary is to assist native speakers in finding *le mot juste*, greater selection in this area would have been welcome.

On occasion the Slovene glosses do not seem to capture the sense of the English—for example, *giblets* '(perutninska) drobovina' might be better glossed 'užitna perutninska drobovina' to distinguish the concept from (non-edible) 'entrails', and *chitterlings*, generically glossed as 'drobovina', by the anatomically approximate Slovene 'rajželjc'. Also, some old errors are perpetuated in the new dictionary. For example, *cumin* is glossed first as 'kumina' (i.e., 'caraway'), *cranberry* first as 'brusnica' (i.e., 'lingonberry'), *gymnasium* second as *gimnazija* (an archaic or exceedingly rare sense of the English word), *ignorant* second as *ignorantski* (i.e., 'unconcerned, disinterested'), and *kindergarten* solely as 'otročki vrtec' (valid in neither American nor British English). It is regrettable that these false friends and translators' traps have been perpetuated for another generation.

Table 1. Frequencies of Selected Items Omitted from and Included in the Oxford Dictionary (Values as of March 2005 for combined hits (= .edu + .uk), hits at the domain .edu, and hits at the domain .uk.).

Omitted Items				Included Items			
Item	Hits*			Item	Hits		
	Comb.	.edu	.uk		Comb.	.edu	.uk
<i>Istanbul</i> 'Carigrad'	879,000	194,000	685,000	<i>Erech</i> 'Erek'	755	353	402
<i>Keynesian</i> 'Keynesianski'	127,200	105,000	22,200	<i>Erasmus scheme</i> '(program) Erasmus'	642	11	631
<i>duct tape</i> 'izolirni trak'	56,300	35,700	20,600	<i>Kerguelen Islands</i> 'Kerguelenovi otoki'	611	172	439
<i>bonobo</i> 'pritlikavi šimpanz'	32,100	13,500	18,600	<i>ice cream cornet</i> '(sladoledni) kornet'	283	0	283
<i>ice fishing</i> 'ribolov na ledu'	22,940	7,440	15,500	<i>ergosphere</i> 'ergosfera'	245	187	58
<i>erbium</i> 'erbij'	16,410	12,400	4,010	<i>ermine moth</i> 'metulj zapredkar'	229	103	126
<i>clevis</i> 'vlečni kavelj'	8,340	1,030	7,310	<i>kibbutznik</i> 'član/-nica kibuca'	182	84	98
<i>Erlenmeyer flask</i> 'erlenmajerska bučka'	8,270	6,920	1,350	<i>Gallia Narbonensis</i> 'Narbonska Galija'	179	82	97
<i>islets of Langerhans</i> 'Langerhansovi otočki'	6,595	5,920	675	<i>ice yacht</i> 'jadrnica za jadranje na ledu'	128	40	88
<i>erectile tissue</i> 'erektilno tkivo'	2,990	660	2,330	<i>dancing mistress</i> 'plesna učiteljica'	107	77	30
<i>errancy</i> 'zmote, napake'	2,132	1,640	492	<i>ergograph</i> 'ergograf'	66	49	17
<i>fifth disease</i> 'peta bolezen, infekcijski eritem'	1,613	931	682	<i>erratic block</i> 'balva, eratska skala, osamelec'	51	15	36
<i>kefir</i> 'kefir'	1,494	464	1,030	<i>chaologist</i> 'kaosolog/-ginja'	11	7	4

The *Veliki angleško-slovenski slovar Oxford* is clearly a breakthrough in Slovene lexicography and is destined to become an indispensable tool. At the same time, its unevenness does not justify its high price—which will place it beyond the reach of not only students, but many professionals—or fully correspond to its impressive credentials.

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