

Designing and compiling an electronic student's dictionary of Old English verbs. Teaching exploitation and didactic assessment

Workshop submission: Historical linguistics at school: An ever-pressing need?

This paper presents an electronic student's dictionary of Old English adapted to the academic needs of the BA in English Studies. The scope of the dictionary is restricted to the verbal lexicon because the verb is the organiser of the semantics and syntax of the clause. The dictionary has been designed in database format using the software *Filemaker*, which allows for different search options and makes its online distribution and accessibility possible. The electronic dictionary database comprises 5,575 verbal files in its present state. Originally, this electronic lexicographical source included information about reference forms, alternative spellings, PDE translation, lexical category, morphological class and main inflectional forms. Citations and additional cross-references are currently being added. The paper also discusses the teaching exploitation of the dictionary and reflects on the role of historical linguistic courses in the curriculum of degrees in modern languages. As far as the teaching exploitation is concerned, emphasis is made on challenging areas of the grammar and the lexicon of Old English like inflection, alternations and spelling variation. Conclusions are drawn along the following lines. While the dictionary stands out as an educational resource that contrasts with the lexicographical products available within the field for its versatility and its multiple applications, it is necessary to insist on the points of contact and on the areas of convergence with other linguistic (synchronic) courses in order to meaningfully teach historical linguistics and to encourage the learning of the historical language.

Keywords: Electronic lexicography, Old English, Historical Linguistics, Didactic exploitation