

The Dickens Lexicon and its Practical Use for Linguistic Research

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It was not until the beginning of World War II that Dr. Tadao Yamamoto first established a plan for the compilation of the *Dickens Lexicon* in his mind; the earliest plan of which was suggested in *Studies in English Literature* (Vol. XIII, No. 3, 1943). As the war situation turned progressively worse, the completion of the Lexicon was left to future efforts. He decided, however, to make an "Introduction" to it in the early spring of 1944, and in the same year presented it as a doctoral thesis to the University of Tokyo under the title of *Growth and System of the Language of Dickens: An Introduction to A Dickens Lexicon*, for which he obtained the degree of Doctor of Literature from the University in 1946. The dissertation was first published in 1950 by Kansai University Press through the generous efforts of the late Professor Jiichi Hattori at Kansai University, and with financial support from the English Philological Society of Kansai University. In 1953 he was awarded the Japan Academy Prize for this book. The second edition and "An index to Tadao Yamamoto's *Growth and system of the Language of Dickens: With supplementary notes & corrections*" were published separately by the same press in 1952. The third revised edition was published by Keisuisha Publishing Company in 2003.

In 1948 Dr. Yamamoto organised the first joint research for the compilation of *A*

Dickens Lexicon, which was granted a Government Subsidy for Scientific Research by the Department of Education for 1948. The members of the joint research mainly consisted of his pupils in Hiroshima University of Literature and Science. The members chose one of Dickens' works and collected the materials for the *Lexicon*. The participants and their selected works are as follows:

Tadao Yamamoto	<i>Oliver Twist</i>
Michio Masui	<i>Bleak House</i>
Chiaki Higashida	<i>A Tale of Two Cities</i>
Tamotsu Kurose	<i>Christmas Books</i>
Hiroshige Yoshida	<i>Nicholas Nickleby</i>
Masami Tanabe	<i>Old Curiosity Shop</i>

After he moved to Osaka Women's University in 1952, Yamamoto organised the second joint research for the compilation of the *Dickens Lexicon*; the members of which included Michio Masui, Chiaki Higashida, Tamotsu Kurose, Haruo Kouzu, Yasuo Yoshida, Tadahisa Goto, Jun Matsumoto, Tamotsu Matsunami, Hideo Hirooka, and Michio Kawai. The joint research was granted a Subsidy for Government Scientific Research by the Department of Education for 1952. The process and result of it were reported in *Anglica* (1954: 438-9) as follows:

As a preliminary work for the compilation of the *Dickens Lexicon* we aimed at establishing the working principles of selecting materials for our research. For this purpose each of the members chose one of Dickens' writings from which necessary materials should be extracted. It was desired that each participant should at the outset prepare explanatory notes to the work chosen and as the next step offer slips of quotations under separate items with comments if necessary.

<i>Sketches by Boz</i> (B)	Matsunami
<i>Pickwick Papers</i> (P)	Matsumoto
<i>Christmas Carol</i> (Carol)	Kurose
<i>Martin Chuzzlewit</i> (MC)	Masui
<i>Cricket on the Hearth</i> (Cricket)	Goto
<i>Dombey and Son</i> (DS)	Higashida
<i>David Copperfield</i> (DC)	Yoshida
<i>A Tale of Two Cities</i> (TC)	Imagawa
<i>Great Expectations</i> (GE)	Ishino

Separately the present writer has prepared a collection of detailed notes to *Oliver Twist* (OT),

with which materials chosen out of the above works are to be collated.

Slips collected amount to 6504, from which 2915 have been sifted and adopted for the present research. They may be roughly classified as follows:

01.	Names and subjects	472
02.	Word-forms	152
03.	Slang and dialects	388
04.	Quotations and allusions	256
05.	Expressions coming from some definite situations or surroundings	337
06.	Phrasal expressions	200
07.	Exclamations, asseverations, swearing, &c.	174
08.	Intensive expressions	88
09.	Precise and energetic expressions	73
10.	Those with bodily names	31
11.	Miscellaneous	519
12.	Words and phrases particularly collated with the notes to <i>Oliver Twist</i>	225
	Sum total	2915

In Yamamoto's conclusion, he commented on the limitations and difficulties of this joint research as follows:

"... as a joint work ours for this time has remained at the very tentative stage. It has taught us that the desideratum is a perfect team-work with sufficient preparation and training that cost us an enormous amount of time and labour. With all our efforts, however, we must admit that we continually suffer from the considerable limitation of our knowledge, and under the present conditions there are insurmountable difficulties in having access to each and every requisite source of information. It would indeed be a consummation devoutly to be wished if we could come directly in touch, not exclusively through the narrow channel of written sources now at our disposal, with all things that have conspired to create Dickens and his language." (451)

The research team was, however, broken up, and a new downsized one was organised. Its members were Chiaki Higashida, Yasuo Yoshida, Jun Matsumoto, and Shigekiyo Kawahara. The result was published in *Dickens no Buntai (Dickens' Style in English)* from Nan'un-do in 1960, but this joint research did not bear fruit either. From that time Yamamoto began to collect the materials for the *Dickens Lexicon* once again from *Pickwick Papers* all by

himself, but unfortunately on the 28th of July in 1991, he died without seeing it accomplished.

This poster session is an interim report on the *Dickens Lexicon* project, which was newly organized in 1998 by a research group of twenty scholars whose ultimate aim has been to compile the *Dickens Lexicon* from approximately 60,000 cards, which Dr. Tadao Yamamoto (1904-91) elaborately drew up and left to us. The *Dickens Lexicon* is expected to be released as the "Dickens Lexicon Online" on an Internet website with a multifunctional search engine, in the near future. This poster session provides an introduction to the *Dickens Lexicon* project, including its practical use for research.

The *Dickens Lexicon* is designed as a web-based reference resource. Users will be able to search and retrieve lexical data (an idiom, its word class, definition, source, and quotation), stored in the original card database of approximately 60,000 indexed entries without installing extra software (apart from a web browser) on their computers. The lexicon will also be implemented with a multifunctional information retrieval system. In addition to the indexed entries, the lexicon will make it possible to retrieve frequency information on lexical items (from single words to phrases, including multi-word units) drawing upon the full corpus of Dickens' texts and an additional set of major 18th and 19th century fictional texts. A range of functions such as concordance display, sort capability, and distribution chart will be available in a user-friendly interface. Therefore, a close scrutiny of idioms appearing in the *Dickens Lexicon* with a multifunctional information retrieval system will not only make us aware of the ways idioms provided an important characteristic in Dickens' usage of English, compared with those in other major 18th and 19th century fictional texts, but will also provide insights into the characteristic structure of idiomaticity in the English language as well.

References

Yamamoto, Tadao (1950 [2003]). *Growth and System of the Language of Dickens: An Introduction to A Dickens Lexicon*. Hiroshima, Japan: Keisuisha.