

Dictionaries and Grammars

Frank Lichtenberk

University of Auckland

In an often quoted statement Bloomfield (1933:274) characterized the lexicon as "really an appendix of the grammar, a list of basic irregularities". By implication, a grammar is a description/analysis of the regularities of a given language.

However, it has become abundantly clear that grammatical "rules" are of various degrees of generality. Some may apply to relatively large classes of lexical items, others apply to highly restricted classes; and individual lexical items tend to have their own unique grammatical properties. As Gross (1979:859) put it more than 25 years ago: "Syntactic rules are always limited to certain lexical items;". More recently, studies of large corpora have shown that words tend to occur more frequently in certain grammatical patterns rather than in others, and that words do not occur in certain grammatical patterns where they otherwise might be expected to occur.

While for practical reasons large-scale dictionaries and large-scale grammars will continue to be published as separate volumes, from a theoretical perspective there is no clear-cut divide between lexicographical and grammatical descriptions of languages. A detailed grammatical description requires detailed lexicography, and vice versa. In the paper, examples of interplay of lexicographical and grammatical aspects of language description will be given from Toqabaqita and other Austronesian languages.

REFERENCES

- Bloomfield, Leonard. 1933. *Language*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Gross, Maurice. 1979. On the failure of generative grammar. *Language* 55:859-885.