ENTRY LAYOUT IN THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH LEXICOGRAPHY: BAILEY 1736, MARTIN 1749 AND JOHNSON 1755

Ruxandra Vişan

Abstract: The present paper focuses on the history of lexicography and proposes a comparative analysis of three significant English dictionaries of the 18th century: Nathan Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum* (second edition, 1736), Benjamin Martin's *Lingua Britannica Reformata* (first edition, 1749), Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (first edition, 1755). The paper discusses the structure of the entries in these texts, concentrating on the changes undergone from Bailey to Johnson, and attempts to show that the increased complexity of Martin's and Johnson's lexicographic entries marks a departure from the model of the "universal" dictionary. While the structure of universal dictionaries such as Bailey's retains important similarities with that of the encyclopaedias of the time, later 18th century dictionaries, such as those of Johnson, are closer in structure to contemporary dictionaries of the English language, indicating a more complete separation of what starts to count as "linguistic" from what starts to count as "encyclopaedic".

Keywords: history of lexicography, monolingual, encyclopaedic, entry complexity

1. Introduction

The paper examines the structure of the entry in the history of English lexicography, taking as a point of reference three key lexicographic texts of the 18th century: the 1736 edition of Nathan Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum*, the first edition of Benjamin Martin's 1749 *Lingua Britannica Reformata* and the first edition of Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language*, which appeared in 1755.

All three dictionaries were well-known in the 18th century and played a significant part in English lexicography. Johnson's 1755 *Dictionary* became one of the most discussed lexicographic texts of all times and was subsequently considered the most authoritative English dictionary of the 18th century, holding considerable influence in the 19th century. Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum* was, in its various versions, the most popular lexicon of the 18th century (Reddick 2009: 156). The *Dictionarium Britannicum*, which was first published in 1730, is a revised form of Bailey's 1721 *An Universal Etymological Dictionary*. The present analysis centres upon the second edition of the *Dictionarium*, of 1736, since this is the edition that Johnson used as a base-text in the compilation of his 1755 dictionary (Starnes and Noyes 1946: 150; McCracken 1969: 338; de Vries 1996: 134). The *Dictionnarium* is also a text that considerably raised lexicographic standards from the point of view of the recording and use of etymology (Reddick 2009: 156). Finally, Benjamin Martin's 1749 *Lingua Britannica Reformata* is, as will be shown, a text remarkable for its treatment of multiple meanings within the lexicographic entry. Although the practice was already adopted in bilingual dictionaries by lexicographers such as Ainsworth or Boyer, Martin's is the first monolingual dictionary in English lexicography which introduces numbers for marking separate multiple meanings. A similar treatment for multiple meanings was proposed by Samuel Johnson in his 1747 *Plan of an English Dictionary*. Previous scholars point out that it is likely that Martin should have had access to Johnson's earlier *Plan* before compiling his dictionary (Starnes and Noyes 1946, Osselton 2009: 152). As will be seen, Johnson's

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)

treatment of multiple meanings is similar to Martin's, but Johnson's entry introduces further complexity in the monolingual dictionary.

The present paper centres upon a comparative analysis of the entries in these three lexicographic texts, attempting to show that while the lexicographic representations proposed in Bailey's dictionary evince similarities with the encyclopaedic texts of the time, represented by works such as Ephraim Chambers' 1728 *Cyclopaedia*, later lexicographic texts such as Martin's and especially Johnson's maximize the distinctions between their dictionaries and encyclopaedic texts. The article draws attention to the increased complexity of Martin's and subsequently Johnson's entries in comparison with the entries of an earlier dictionary such as that of Bailey.

2. Landmarks in the history of English lexicography

In order to achieve a better understanding of the part played by 18th century lexicons such as Bailey, Martin and Johnson, it is necessary to examine some landmarks in the history of English lexicography. Such landmarks are essential for grasping the way in which the dictionaries chosen for analysis organise their representations.

Previous researchers distinguish three significant stages in the history of English lexicography, namely "hard-word dictionaries" followed by "encyclopaedic" and finally by "universal dictionaries":

> in the hard-word dictionaries of the first half of the seventeenth century the focus was almost entirely on the learned vocabulary of English; the encyclopaedic dictionaries of the later seventeenth century were agreeably readable reference books with names treated alongside words; finally, the so-called universal dictionary in the early years of the eighteenth century was more narrowly linguistic, generally cutting out extraneous matter and with the aim of including all the words of the language, even the simplest ones (Osselton 2009: 132).

An early 17th century lexicon compiled by Robert Cawdrey is a prototypical example of the "hard-word" dictionary, which is the first category in the tripartite classification proposed by Osselton. Cawdrey's 1604 *A Table Alphabeticall* is the first dictionary in English lexicography to receive the label "monolingual", marking the beginnings of the opposition bilingual/monolingual in the history of English lexicography.

Bilingual dictionaries preceded monolingual dictionaries in the history of lexicography and, as such, the first monolingual dictionaries of the 17th century were considerably influenced by previous bilingual models (Starnes and Noyes 1946: 9). Monolingual dictionaries such as the 1604 *Table Alphabeticall* were dictionaries of "hard words", meant to explain scholarly loanwords to the reading public. Since these "hard words" were most often Greek or Latin scholarly terms, there is an unquestionable affinity between the first monolingual lexicons and the Greek/Latin-English bilingual lexicons of the Renaissance.

The hard-word dictionary of the seventeenth century was followed by dictionaries centring upon far more extensive word-lists, such as Thomas Blount's 1656 *Glossographia* or John Kersey's 1708 *Dictionarium Anglo-Britannicum*. Such works are nowadays often described by the label "encyclopaedic", which is the label used in Osselton's classification. This label reflects the fact that the boundaries between dictionaries and encyclopaedias were extremely fluid at the time and that the lexicographic texts of the time could be regarded as

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)

part of a heterogeneous "dictionary-encyclopaedia" category. Such "encyclopaedic" dictionaries were broader in coverage than their hard-word predecessors, but are however to be seen as a transitional stage in the passage to the "universal" dictionary of the eighteenth century.

The "universal" dictionary of the 18th century, of which Nathan Bailey's 1736 *Dictionarium Britannicum* is a significant example, started to include core vocabulary alongside scholarly terms or technical vocabulary. A more extensive study of the front pages and prefaces of such dictionaries (Vişan 2009) reveals that the premise underlying the English dictionaries of the early 18th century is to be as comprehensive as possible and to cater for the needs of a wide readership. The keyword "universal", present in the front matter of these dictionaries, reflects an ideal of including as much as possible of the vocabulary of the English language and of making it available for various categories of readers. From this point of view, universal dictionaries were the first lexicons to include a whole range of common words that are normally included nowadays by contemporary dictionaries

In the attempt to discuss the structure of the entry in the history of English lexicography, the present paper will take into account labels such as "encyclopaedic" or "universal" used in the classification of English dictionaries. The paper seeks to discuss the interaction between such labels and the type of lexicographic representation adopted by the three texts that are analyzed. At the same time, the article will endeavour to clarify to what extent one could maintain that the dictionaries of the 18th century count as "more narrowly linguistic" than their predecessors.

3. Bailey, Martin, Johnson: Sample lists

The comparison of the three lexicographic texts chosen for analysis has been made taking as a point of reference two sample lists, from different parts of the alphabet. The results concerning the inclusiveness of the three dictionaries in terms of entries can be summarized by the following table:

Table 1

		Bailey 1736	Martin 1747	Johnson 1755
Number of entries	**List 1** (cassate-cavil)	309	112	148
	List 2 (payment-pendulosity)	235	114	148

In both cases, the point of departure was the most recent dictionary, namely Johnson's 1755 lexicographic text, from which two sample lists of equal length were chosen. As shown by the results presented in the table above, Bailey's is by far the most inclusive dictionary of the three in terms of entry numbers.

A further examination of the three lists shows that there is a significant number of lexemes as such that are present in Bailey's text and absent from both Martin's and Johnson's. Previous research (Vişan 2009) has shown that the majority of the terms which are absent in Johnson's *Dictionary*, but present in Bailey's *Dictionarium* can be qualified as "hard words" or "terms of arts and sciences" (technical vocabulary). Many of these can be also found in

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din București
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)

Chambers' 1728 *Cyclopaedia*. A further comparison between Martin and Bailey shows that, in a similar manner to Johnson, Martin chooses to exclude many of the terms present in Bailey's dictionary. As in the case of Johnson, the words that Martin excludes from Bailey's initial list are mainly are mainly Latinate or Greek and they belong to the "philosophical" (new science/arts and sciences) dimension. Here is a list of some of the terms which are included by Bailey and absent in both Martin's and Johnson's texts: *cassonade, castrangula, casu consimili, catafalco, catonian, catopsis, caucalis, cava lucida, pegomancy, penates*.

It is a well-known fact that Johnson used Bailey's 1736 as a point of reference in the compilation of his nomenclature for the 1755 text. The fact that several definitions in Martin's dictionary are almost identical to Bailey's proves that it is highly likely that Martin should have consulted a version of Bailey's earlier lexicographic text at the time of the compilation of his *Lingua Britannica Reformata*. This is illustrated by the example below:

(1) Bailey 1736:
CASSAVE, an American Root, of which, though the Juice is rank Poison, yet the substance being dried, is the common Bread of the Natives.

(2) Martin 1749:
CASSAVE, an American root, whose juice is poison, but its substance being dried, is the common bread of the country.

This suggests that both Martin and Johnson were more selective than Bailey, whose comprehensive lexicon is much closer in scope to a dictionary concentrating on terms of "arts and sciences", such as Chambers *Cyclopaedia*. Works such as Chambers' were called "dictionaries of arts and sciences" because they used this label in their subtitles. The 18th century marks the beginning of celebrated encyclopaedic projects, which were very broad in coverage and were very often designated by the title "dictionaries of arts and sciences" (Rand Hoare 2009: 50). At the same time, the century sees the proliferation of an impressive number of specialized dictionaries. It is obvious that, while Bailey has made use of such specialized dictionaries in order to expand his word-list, Martin and Johnson have chosen to do away with many of the technical terms that Bailey had borrowed from specialist lexicons.

In the following sections, I will attempt to show that the quantitative difference between Bailey's entries and those of Martin and Johnson is connected not only to the comprehensiveness of Bailey's dictionary in term of lexeme numbers, but also to the manner in which the three lexicographers choose to represent meaning. As will be shown, the difference between Bailey on the one hand and Martin and Johnson, on the other, is given not only by the number of words they choose to represent, but also by the way in which they choose to structure their lexicographic entry.

4. Entry structure in monolingual dictionaries

The structure of the entry in monolingual dictionaries undergoes several changes from its 17th century beginnings to its 18th century ones. Based on previous research, a list of relevant developments in the evolution of the entry in monolingual dictionaries in the history of English lexicography can be drawn.

The first such development concerns the presence of etymology. According to previous authors, although etymological elements existed to some extent in previous monolingual dictionaries, it is the anonymous *Gazophylacium Anglicanum* 1689 which can be called the

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)

first explicitly etymological dictionary of the language to be published in English, while Blount's 1656 *Glossographia* is the first dictionary attempting to do etymologies, a strategy that the author recuperates from previous multilingual dictionaries. However, it is Bailey's 1721 dictionary which "first attempts any systematic statement in a general dictionary of both the immediate source and the remoter analogues of English words" (Osselton 1995: 8-9).

The presence of register labels is yet another strategy that becomes important in the construction of a lexicographic entry and is perceived nowadays as one of its indispensable elements. According to Starnes and Noyes, Cockeram is the first lexicographer to try to distinguish between words belonging to different registers, while Bullokar is the first to attempt to indicate the vocabulary domain certain words belong to. As Osselton underlines, Coles' *An English Dictionary* adopts some indicators for register and dialect and Kersey can be seen as a major innovator of abbreviated entries. Regarding the presence of categorial or part of speech labels, Starnes and Noyes mention Thomas Dyche and William Pardon's *A New General English Dictionary* 1735 as the first dictionary to indicate grammar, marking every word with a capital letter that denotes its part of speech (Starnes and Noyes 1946: 128).

Elements such as "reference to sources" and "illustrative quotations" (examples) are significant steps in the development of the lexicographic entry. While it has been regarded by many as the main feature that makes Johnson's 1755 *Dictionary* innovative, the presence of examples was by no means a new strategy in English lexicography, although Johnson is indeed the first author to use it in a uniform manner in a monolingual dictionary. According to Sidney Landau, John Florio's 1598 bilingual dictionary *A Worlde of Wordes* has to be seen as the first modern-language dictionary that mentions the sources from which the words of his headword list are drawn (Landau 2001: 33). While Florio uses citations from contemporary Italian authors to illustrate some of his definitions, Blount is the first English lexicographer to record non-dictionary sources in the text proper, quoting excerpts from philosophical or literary works (Osselton 1995: 11).

As was underlined in one of the sections above, Martin is the first English lexicographer to distinguish among multiple meanings by using numbers within the entry. As with other lexicographic devices, this was not a new strategy in lexicography as such and writers of bilingual dictionaries such as Robert Ainsworth or Abel Boyer had employed numbers for separating multiple meanings. Johnson's is the second dictionary that employs this device. As in the case of illustrative examples, the use of numbers in order to separate multiple meanings is a strategy that monolingual dictionaries borrow from bilingual lexicography.

5. Entry complexity in eighteenth-century dictionaries

The examination of an entry for the verb "to cast" in the sample lists will reveal the distinctions that arise among the entries of the three dictionaries chosen for analysis:

(3) Bailey 1736:
TO CAST [prob. of **kaster**, *Dan.*] to fling or throw; also to think or contrive, as to cast in mind

(4) Martin 1749:
TO CAST 1. to throw or fling
2. to melt metal
3. to condemn
4. to devise a project

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din București
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)

(5) Johnson 1755:
TO CAST v.a. preter. *cast*, part. pass *cast*. [*kaster*, Danish]
1. To throw with the hand.
I rather choose to endure the wounds of those darts, which envy *casteth* at novelty than to go safely and sleepily in the ways of ancient mistaking. *Raleigh's History of the World.*
...
2. To throw away as useless or noxious
...
37. *To cast off*. To reject.
It is not to be imagined that a whole society of men should publickly and professedly disown, and cast off a rule, which they could not be infallibly certain was a law. *Locke*.
...
44. *To cast up*. To vomit.
Thou beastly feeder are so full of him,
That thou provk'st thyself to *cast* him *up*. *Shakesp. H. IV*.
Their villainy goes against my weak stomach and therefore I must *cast* it *up*.
Shakesp. *Henry V*.
O, that in time Rome did not cast this errours up
This fortune to prevent. *Ben Johnson's Catil*.
Thy foolish errour find;
Cast up the poison that infects thy mind. *Dryden*.

While Bailey's entries are generally composed of a definition accompanied by etymology and sometimes by a label indicating the domain the term may belong to (e.g. Painting/Law, etc.), Martin's definitions are sometimes, but not constantly, accompanied by etymology and/or a domain label, in a similar manner to those of Bailey. As the entry for *cast* shows, there are entries in Martin's dictionary were no such labels are present. Martin's main innovation lies in the representation of multiple meanings, which, as can be seen in the representation of the verb *cast*, Martin groups and numbers within the same entry. Johnson's entries are the most complex, as is shown by his representation of *cast*. Here, I have included only an excerpt of Johnson's lengthy entry.

Generally, Johnson's entry is based on a structure which includes a categorial label, the etymology of the lexical item, numbered meanings and examples (or "illustrative quotations") accompanied by references. In Johnson's *Dictionary*, references consist either of the name of the author of the exemplified excerpt or of the name of a particular work of the author. Sometimes, Johnson chooses to include usage or register labels.

The excerpt that I have chosen is part of the entry for the transitive verb *cast*. Usually, Johnson presents the transitive and the intransitive uses of verbs as two separate entries following one another. As can be seen above, Johnson's entry presents a higher degree of lemmatization than the entries of previous dictionaries (Reddick 2009) and, as the present entry shows, his dictionary gives extra information on the paradigms of irregular verbs. While both Martin's and Johnson's dictionaries differ from Bailey's in terms of the representation of multiple meanings, Johnson's *Dictionary* differs from the two previous lexicons in significant ways. Apart from the lack of "illustrative quotations" which serve as examples, another significant difference concerns categorial labels. While Johnson's entries contain an indication of the part of speech label, Bailey's and Martin's entries are entirely devoid of such

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din București
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)

grammatical information. Significantly, Johnson's *Dictionary* lays increased emphasis on the representation of grammatical information compared to other dictionaries of the time. Johnson's is the first monolingual dictionary to offer a more detailed representation of phrasal verbs (Osselton 1995: 11). In the same manner, the *Dictionary* offers representations of functional categories that are either absent or more briefly treated in dictionaries such as Bailey's or Martin's.

The use of examples makes it possible to distinguish among far more contextual meanings in an entry such as Johnson's, than in entries without examples of usage such as Martin's. It is important to note that, unlike his predecessors, Johnson lists several meanings for phrasal verbs within his lengthy *cast* entry. Both Bailey and Martin choose to list phrasal uses of *cast* as separate entries: Bailey uses *to be CAST down* as the headword of a separate entry, while in Martin's dictionary *to cast off* is also represented as a separate entry, this being the only phrasal verb based on *cast* which Martin lists. Below, I will provide a larger excerpt from Bailey's dictionary in order to illustrate how a dictionary such as Bailey's represents information that a dictionary such as Johnson's concentrates within a lesser number of entries:

(6) Bailey 1736:
TO CAST [prob. of **kaster**, *Dan.*] to fling or throw; also to think or contrive, as to cast in mind
CAST [Irr.Imp and Part.P.] did cast, have or am cast.
CAST, convicted of any crime, also having lost a civil Process.
CAST [of the Eye] an Ogle, also Squinting.
To be at the last CAST, or at one Wit's End.
A CAST, a throw.
A CAST [Falconry] a couple or set of Hawks.
To CAST *a point in Traverse* [*in Navigation*] is to prick down on a chart any point of the compass that any land bears from you, or to find what way the ship has made, or on what point the ship bears at any instant.
CAST *of the Country* [with *Miners*] the colour of the earth.
CAST a *Hawk to the Perch [Falconry]* to put her upon it.

As can be seen, Bailey chooses to represent in separate entries information that appears lemmatized in Johnson's dictionary, using the participle/past tense *cast* as a distinct headword. Moreover, he lists other contextual meanings of the verb or the noun *cast* as separate headwords. Some of these contextual uses appear as part of Johnson's lengthier entries for the verb or the noun. Generally, many collocations, idioms or other types of phrases/sentences can appear as headwords in Bailey's dictionary. While there are such entries in Martin's dictionary, although their number is considerably reduced, Johnson usually chooses to incorporate this type of information in the main entry.

Martin's entries represent an intermediate stage between Bailey and Johnson. The number of entries is not as wide as Bailey's, and instead of single-lemma entries plentifully supplied with synonyms Martin chooses to represent multiple meanings, albeit in an inconsistent manner. In spite of the fact that sometimes Martin imitates Bailey and tags additional meanings in separate entries (e.g. *To cast a point in traverse*), his entries give an abridged, more unified impression than the entries in the *Dictionarium*:

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din București
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)

(7) Martin 1749:
TO CAST, 1. to throw or fling
2. to melt metal
3. to condemn
4. to devise a project
TO CAST off, 1. to pull off a garment
2. to renounce, to reject
3. to outstrip the hounds in Hunting
4. (among Printers) to tell the lines
To CAST *a point in Traverse* (*in Navigation*) signifies to prick down on a chart, any point of the compass that any land bears from you, or to find what point the ship bears at any instant, or on what way the ship has made.

6. "Encyclopaedic" information: Chambers and Bailey

A comparison between Bailey's *Dictionarium* and the well-known dictionary of arts and sciences, Ephraim Chambers' 1728 *Cyclopaedia*, reveals similarities between Bailey's entries and those of Chambers. In a manner similar to Bailey's, the author of the *Cyclopaedia* prefers to list several entries instead of one complex entry for the different uses of a term:

(8) Chambers 1728:
CASU *consimili*, a Writ of Entry, where a Tenant by Courtesy, or for Life, aliens in Fee or in Tail, or for another's Life: Its takes its Name hence, That Authority being given by State. West. 2. to the Clarks in Chancery, to make new Forms, as often as any new Case should start up, not under any of the old Forms; they framed this Writ to the likeness of the other call's Casu proviso; which fee.
CASU *Proviso*, a Writ of Entry, given by the Statute of Glocester, in Case where a Tenant in Dower aliens in Fee, or for Term of Life; or in Tail: and lies for him in Revision against the Alien.

(9) Bailey 1736:
CASU *consimili* [in Law] a writ of entry granted where to a tenant in courtesy, or tenant for term of life, or for the life of another, alienates or makes the land in fee, or in tail or for the term of antoher's life.
CASU *matrimonii praelocuti* [in Law] a writ which writes against a man for refusing to marry in reasonable time a woman who hath given him lands upon that condition.
CASU *proviso* [in Law], a writ of entry given by the statute of Gloucester, in case where a tenant in dower aliens in fee, or for term of life or in tail, and lies for him in reversion against.

Chambers' method concerning the terms he chooses to represent in his encyclopaedia is that of listing separate "hyponyms" as sub-entries within a larger entry for the term. From this point of view, one could say that Chambers' representation is characterised by a greater degree of clarity than Bailey's, since he gives the "hyperonym" in a slightly larger font than the group of hyponyms he lists beneath:

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)

(10) Chambers 1728:
PEACE**,** in its general signification
PEACE *of the King*
PEACE *of God and the Church*
PEACE *of the Plough*
Clerk of the PEACE

(11) Bailey 1736:
PEACE
PEACE [in the sense of the Law]
PEACE *of God and the Church*
PEACE *of the King*
PEACE *of the Plough*
Clerk of the PEACE
PEACE [in Painting, &c]

The comparison above shows that there are obvious similarities between Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum* and a text concentrating on encyclopaedic information such as that of Chambers. Both Bailey and Chambers compile comprehensive dictionaries, listing an impressive number of technical terms, also comprised by the proliferating specialized dictionaries of the time. In this manner, both lexicographic texts emerge as works that readers are able to rapidly scan for particular uses of terms, since both Bailey and Chambers choose to list several separate entries/sub-entries for the listed words, instead of incorporating the information in complex entries, as Johnson does. From this point of view, the only major difference between Chambers and Bailey is that the *Dictionarium* includes common words or functional categories, which Chambers' encyclopaedic text does not focus on.

7. Conclusions

The comparison between Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum*, Martin's *Lingua Britannica Reformata* and Johnson's *Dictionary* has revealed that Bailey is more comprehensive than the lexicographers who follow him, including a higher number of terms and, at the same time, entries in his lexicon. Martin's dictionary represents a transitional stage between Bailey and Johnson. The lexicographer considerably trims down his word-list and adopts a strategy (numbered multiple meanings) that increases inter-entry complexity.

As shown by the increased complexity of Johnson's lexicographic entries, the emphasis in Johnson's *Dictionary* falls on structuring or organising the material within the same entry, rather than on increasing the number of entries. Due to their use of numbered multiple meanings within the same entry, both Martin and Johnson pay increased attention to core vocabulary (several verbs is our list *cast*, *catch*, etc.), while choosing to omit much of the technical vocabulary present in Bailey's dictionary. This choice of excluding vocabulary that was covered by the specialized lexicons of the time indicates that dictionaries such as Martin's and Johnson's no longer envisaged comprehensiveness as the main purpose of their works. This suggests that since specialized dictionaries had already taken over the function of explaining technical vocabulary, certain areas of specialized vocabulary were no longer felt as falling within the scope of a general-purpose dictionary of the English language.

A comparison between Bailey's *Dictionarium* and Ephraim Chambers' 1728 *Cyclopaedia* reveals that Bailey's entries are very similar to Chambers, who prefers to list several entries instead of one complex entry for the different contextual uses of the same term.

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din București
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)

Osselton's classification of 18th dictionaries distinguishes between earlier "encyclopaedic" dictionaries and later "universal" dictionaries, such as Bailey's *Dictionarium*, which were "more narrowly linguistic, generally cutting out extraneous matter" (Osselton 2009: 132). The representational similarities between an "encyclopaedia" such as that of Chambers and a "universal" dictionary such as that of Bailey underline that the distinction between dictionary and encyclopaedia was very fluid in the first half of the 18th century. This shows that, while we could consider "universal" dictionaries "more narrowly linguistic" due to the fact that they had begun taking into account core vocabulary words ignored by their 17th century predecessors, a more complete separation of what starts to count as "linguistic" from what starts to count as "encyclopaedic" begins to take place in the second half of the 18th century, with dictionaries such as Martin's or Johnson's.

Innovative lexicographic texts such as Martin's *Lingua Britannica Reformata* pave the way for better-known authoritative dictionaries such as Johnson's, which start to define the parameters of a prototypical English dictionary. The presence of works such as the 1755 *Dictionary* indicates a crystallization of the model of the modern "language" dictionary or a "rigidification" of the fluid boundary between dictionary and encyclopaedia. This amounts to an increased complexity of the lexicographic entry, which starts to include usage notes and examples, grammatical information and multiple meanings (multiple meanings of core vocabulary words that previous monolingual dictionaries ignored).

The comparative analysis of the structure of the lexicographic entry in three significant dictionaries of the 18th century has shown that the English language dictionary gradually becomes different in scope and in terms of representational strategies from encyclopaedias or specialist lexicons. From this point of view, dictionaries such as the *Lingua Britannica Reformata* and the *Dictionary of the English Language* no longer count as "universal" dictionaries. A dictionary such as Johnson's, anticipated by works such as Martin's, comes to incorporate very much of what contemporary monolingual dictionaries generally encompass. Significantly, many of the innovations which contribute to the increased complexity of Martin's and Johnson's entries can be traced back to bilingual dictionaries. Previous researchers (Korshin 1974, Osselton 1995 and 2009, Reddick 2009, de Vries 1996) have emphasized the influence of bilingual dictionaries on authoritative lexicographic works of the eighteenth-century such as Johnson's *Dictionary*. Further research could establish to what extent one could talk of an increased influence of bilingual lexicography on English monolingual lexicography in the second half of the 18th century.

Ruxandra Vişan
University of Bucharest
Department of English
ruxandra.visan@g.unibuc.ro

References

Bailey, N. 1736. *Dictionarium Britannicum*, the second edition. London, Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale Group.Pembroke College-Oxford University Libraries. <http://galenet.galegroup.com>.

Chambers. E. 1728, *Cyclopaedia or An Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences.* London, Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale Group. Pembroke College-Oxford University Libraries. <http://galenet.galegroup.com>.

Johnson, S. 1755/2005. *A Dictionary of the English Language*, revised edition. California: Octavo, The Warnock Library.

Korshin, P. 1974. Johnson and the Renaissance dictionary. *Journal of the History of Ideas.* 35 (2): 300-312.

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)

Landau, S. I. 2001. *Dictionaries. The Art of Lexicography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Martin, B. 1749. *Lingua Britannica Reformata or A New English Dictionary*. London, Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale Group. Pembroke College-Oxford University Libraries. <http://galenet.galegroup.com>.
McCracken, D. 1969. The drudgery of defining: Johnson's debt to Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum. Modern Philology* 66 (4): 338-334.
Osselton, N. E., 1995. *Chosen Words. Past and Present Problems for Dictionary Makers*. Exeter and Devon: University of Exeter Press.
Osselton, N. E. 2009. The early development of the English monolingual dictionary (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). In A. P. Cowie (ed.), *The Oxford History of English Lexicography*, 131-154. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Rand Hoare, M., 2009. Scientific and technical dictionaries. In A. P. Cowie (ed.), *The Oxford History of English Lexicography*, 47-94. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Reddick, A. 2009. Johnson and Richardson. In A. P. Cowie (ed.), *The Oxford History of English Lexicography*, 155-182. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Starnes, D. W. and Noyes, G. 1946. *The English Dictionary from Cawdrey to Johnson 1604-1755*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Vişan, R. 2009. *Samuel Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language and the Strategies of Lexicographic Modernity*. Bucharest: Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti.
de Vries, C. M. 1996. *In the Tracks of a Lexicographer: Secondary Documentation in Samuel Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language (1755)*. Leiden: Led.

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)

BDD-A9850 © 2010 Universitatea din București
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-18 21:58:36 UTC)