

# How to Solve Problems in Dictionary Use: The Georgian Case

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**Abstract:** The present article was inspired by the plenary lecture given by Rufus Gouws at the XX International Congress of EURALEX in Mannheim: "Dictionaries: Bridges, Dykes, Sluice Gates" (Gouws 2022). His emphasis on the lack of a *dictionary culture* and the responsibilities that not only lexicography has towards society, but that society also has towards lexicography is an important perspective that is relevant for many societies, including Georgian society. While Gouws uses this term as an umbrella term to refer to both the user-friendliness of dictionaries, on the one hand, and the ability and willingness of society to use dictionaries and their knowledge of dictionary-use skills, on the other, in the present article we concentrate more on the latter aspect of the term *dictionary culture*.

Numerous studies conducted in the field of dictionary use since the 1970s have revealed that many users did not know how to use dictionaries, were not familiar with the structure of entries, could not identify what part of speech this or that word was, had no idea of homonymy, polysemy and related issues; this led to errors in comprehension, translation and other tasks related to foreign language acquisition. These studies, conducted in different countries, also clearly showed the need to teach dictionary use in schools and universities. Unfortunately, despite efforts from lexicographers and educators to improve this situation, and despite some positive steps taken in this direction which will be discussed in the paper, there is still no satisfactory teaching of dictionary use in educational institutions that would help create or sustain dictionary culture.

The aim of this article is to discuss problems in dictionary use in the Georgian context and share our experience of introducing the teaching of lexicography and developing dictionary-use skills at Georgian universities.

**Keywords:** DICTIONARY CULTURE, TEACHING DICTIONARY USE, DICTIONARY USE SKILLS, EXERCISES, DICTIONARY DIDACTICS, ENGLISH–GEORGIAN DICTIONARY

**Opsomming: Hoe om probleme in woordeboekgebruik op te los: Die Georgiese geval.** Hierdie artikel is geïnspireer deur die plenêre referaat wat deur Rufus Gouws by die XX Internasionale EURALEX Kongres in Mannheim gelewer is: "Dictionaries: Bridges, Dykes, Sluice Gates" ("Woordeboeke: Brue, dyke, sluisdeure") (Gouws 2022). Sy beklemtoning van die gebrek aan *woordeboekkultuur* en die verantwoordelikhede, nie slegs wat die leksikografie teenoor die gemeenskap het nie, maar wat die gemeenskap ook teenoor die leksikografie het, is 'n belangrike perspek-

tief wat relevant is vir baie gemeenskappe, insluitende die Georgiese gemeenskap. Terwyl Gouws hierdie term as sambreelterm gebruik om na beide die gebruikersvriendelikheid van woordeboeke, aan die een kant, en die vermoë en bereidwilligheid van die gemeenskap om woordeboeke en hul kennis van woordeboekgebruiksvaardighede te gebruik, aan die ander kant, te verwys, fokus ons in hierdie artikel meer op laasgenoemde aspek van die term *woordeboekkultuur*.

Verskeie studies wat sedert die 1970s in die woordeboekgebruiksveld uitgevoer is, het aangetoon dat baie gebruikers nie geweet het hoe om woordeboeke te gebruik nie, dat hulle nie bekend was met die struktuur van inskrywings nie, dat hulle nie die woordsoort van 'n woord kon identifiseer nie, dat hulle geen idee van homonomie, polisemie en verwante kwessies gehad het nie; dit het gelei tot foute in begrip, vertaling en ander take wat verband hou met vreemdetaalverwerwing. Hierdie studies wat in verskillende lande uitgevoer is, het ook die behoefte aan die onderrig van woordeboekgebruik in skole en universiteite duidelik aangetoon. Ongelukkig, ten spyte van pogings van leksikograwe en opvoeders om hierdie situasie te verbeter, en ten spyte van sommige positiewe stappe wat in hierdie rigting geneem is, wat in hierdie artikel bespreek sal word, is daar steeds nie bevredigende onderrig in woordeboekgebruik in opvoedkundige instansies wat daartoe sal bydra dat 'n woordeboekkultuur geskep of volhoubaar gemaak word nie.

Die doel van hierdie artikel is om probleme in woordeboekgebruik in die Georgiese konteks te bespreek en om ons ervaring in die implementering van die onderrig van leksikografie en die ontwikkeling van woordeboekgebruiksvaardighede aan Georgiese universiteite te deel.

**Slutelwoorde:** WOORDEBOEKKULTUUR, DIE ONDERRIG VAN WOORDEBOEKGEBRUIK, WOORDEBOEKGEBRUIKSVAAARDIGHEDE, OEFENINGE, WOORDEBOEKDIDAKTIEK, ENGELSGEORGIESE WOORDEBOEK

## 1. Introduction

In 2010 the online version of the *Comprehensive English–Georgian Dictionary* was posted on the internet (Margalitadze et al. 2010). It was based on the fascicles of the *English–Georgian Dictionary*, the publication of which began in 1995. We started a series of presentations of the Online Dictionary to different audiences just to find out that English–Georgian dictionaries were not used in teaching English, and even more bilingual dictionaries were banned from foreign language classes. This was the direct result of new methods for teaching foreign languages, which greatly diminished the role of translation, reduced the practice of using the native language in the process of teaching foreign languages, and prohibited the use of bilingual dictionaries, while the main emphasis was shifted to the use of explanatory, i.e. monolingual, dictionaries. This practice spread to schools and higher education institutions in Georgia. Nied Curcio, in her comprehensive survey of studies in the field of dictionary use, also considers the new methods of teaching foreign languages and banning bilingual dictionaries from foreign language classes as one of the factors responsible for the decline of interest in dictionaries (Nied Curcio 2022). A sceptical approach to these methods of teaching foreign languages was expressed by Arleta Adamska-Sałaciak in her article "Bilingual Lexicography: Translation Dictionaries" (2014).

"It is genuinely puzzling how methods which explicitly condemn the use of the native language in the classroom, effectively banning bilingual dictionaries, could ever have been considered beneficial in the teaching and learning of foreign languages", she wrote.

In 2011 we developed a training course for teachers of foreign languages: "Importance of Bilingual Dictionaries in Teaching Foreign Languages". During one year many training sessions were conducted with teachers of foreign languages both at schools and universities. The universities involved in the training sessions were Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, and Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University. Training sessions for teachers were held at Teachers' House in Tbilisi, attended by teachers from Tbilisi, as well as other towns in Georgia. The training course incorporated the theoretical part, which included such topics as the essence of word meaning, anisomorphism of languages, lack of equivalence between Georgian and English or other foreign languages, etc. It was stressed that while teaching foreign languages it was important to bring lexical, grammatical and syntactic information from a foreign language into correspondence with the respective lexical, grammatical and syntactic information from one's native language, and this is better and more efficiently achieved by means of bilingual dictionaries than by means of explanatory ones. The practical part demonstrated how the problem of equivalence was solved in the *Comprehensive English-Georgian Online Dictionary* and also gave teachers some practical advice on how to develop dictionary-use skills in students. We stopped the training sessions in 2012, as it was obvious that the official instructions that teachers received from the Ministry of Education of Georgia and from resource centres banned the use of the native language and bilingual dictionaries in foreign language classes. It was necessary to work with the official institutions responsible for working out the educational policies.

We started publication of articles on the current linguistic situation in the Georgian language, and problems in it caused mainly by the influence of English which, among other reasons, was the direct result of the methodology of teaching foreign languages (Margalitadze and Meladze 2016; Margalitadze 2018; Margalitadze 2020).

In 2022 the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement in Georgia revised the benchmark for language acquisition programmes and introduced the use of bilingual dictionaries as an important method of teaching foreign languages. Nied Curcio underlines the same developments in many countries in her article: "we can find recommendations on dictionary use in educational guidelines and curricula in various European countries, i.e. Germany and Italy. The use of dictionaries is once again officially allowed; the practice, which had long been common, has thus been legitimized" (Nied Curcio 2022: 72).

Despite legitimizing dictionary use, the reality has not changed. Many teachers still do not use dictionaries in foreign language classes. There is no methodological support for those teachers who would like to introduce diction-

aries in their lessons and it is up to them to decide how to develop dictionary-use skills in students. There are no guidelines either for teachers or for students. Besides, one could also question how competent teachers are in developing study materials, exercises, etc. aiming at developing dictionary-use skills in learners. These are pressing questions in Georgia, but they are also the doubts and concerns in other countries as well (Nied Curcio 2022: 72-73).

As a result of the current state of affairs, lexicographers in many countries took it into their own hands to develop instructions, guidelines, exercises and other study materials, as well as practical modules in lexicography in order to assist the change of paradigm and help maintain a dictionary culture in their societies (see section 2.1).

This is the goal that we, as Georgian lexicographers, are pursuing in our country and which will be described in section 3 of the present article.

## 2. Dictionary use

### 2.1 Research on dictionary use

In his article entitled "Dictionaries: Bridges, Dykes, Sluice Gates" Gouws notes the lack of dictionary culture in many societies and makes an important point by stressing that not only does lexicography bear a responsibility towards society, but society must in turn also accept its responsibility towards sustaining lexicography (Gouws 2022). Gouws uses the term *dictionary culture* as an umbrella term that includes both the user-friendliness of dictionaries, which is the responsibility of lexicographers, and the interest of society in lexicography, the ability and willingness to use dictionaries, knowledge of dictionary-use skills, etc. The decline of interest in dictionaries, followed by the gradual loss of dictionary-use skills, was revealed by numerous studies in the field of research on dictionary use conducted in many countries.

The scientific study of dictionary use began back in the 1970s. This included both quantitative and qualitative research on dictionaries and dictionary use (Quirk 1973; Tomaszczyk 1979; Mitchell 1983; Laufer and Hadar 1997; Atkins 1998; Béjoint 2010, among others); the total number of research studies conducted exceeds 200.

The studies in the field of dictionary use were important, as based on the feedback received from users, many dictionaries were improved from the point of view of both macrostructure and microstructure. However, the research also revealed that many users did not know how to use a dictionary effectively and how to extract the maximum information contained in it. Even more, surveys showed that there was no instruction on dictionary use in schools or universities. P. Márkus et al. write in their recently published paper, "Research on dictionary use has significantly changed the lexicographic practice and made dictionaries more user-friendly. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the field of dictionary didactics concerned with the education of users. No extensive teaching

of dictionary use is provided in schools and universities; this is especially the case in the Hungarian context" (P. Márkus et al. 2023).

In 1983, Evelyn Mitchell studied the look-up behaviours of 94 school students only to find out that the students did not read the contexts included in the dictionary entries, could not identify what part of speech this or that word was, and had no conception of the meaning or significance of homonymy. As a result, they selected the wrong homonyms and their translations were inevitably erroneous (Mitchell 1983).

Yukio Tono from the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies found out that his Japanese students were reluctant to look up words in dictionaries while reading and, if they still did, they read only the very first definitions, at the same time avoiding reading long definitions or/and explanations (Tono 2001).

Many studies also strongly indicated that without proper prior training and lexicographic education, students tend to use various types of dictionaries erroneously, inefficiently and ineffectively. The comparison of how trained/experienced and untrained users look up words in dictionaries showed that these two categories of dictionary users have very different approaches to dictionary use. Rundell (1999) in particular pointed out that inexperienced users tend to look up only the very first sense of a dictionary entry. Such a superficial approach to dictionary use results in an inadequate command of foreign languages. Language competence in such cases becomes shallow and superficial. Another negative consequence of the neglect of dictionaries is the inability of such students to communicate their thoughts correctly, poor vocabulary, and a failure to associate foreign words and concepts with their proper counterparts from their native language or languages (Béjoint 2010).

Thus, along with the concern for the improvement in the techniques and skills required to dictionaries, it is also necessary to educate and teach students and the younger generation how to use dictionaries properly. Educators are well aware of this, and as a result, many countries have incorporated instruction on the use of dictionaries into their curricula.

In schools in Greece, for example, students are taught what a dictionary is, how to use dictionaries effectively, and how to extract maximum information from them (cf. Gavriilidou and Konstantinidou 2021). For this purpose, textbooks have been written that include special "lexicographical exercises". Elementary school students who complete these exercises develop some very useful skills in dictionary use. They are taught separately what the polysemy of lexical units means and how such polysemy is reflected in dictionary entries (Gavriilidou and Konstantinidou 2021).

In Lithuania, the 20-volume Academic Dictionary of the Lithuanian Language, which is rightfully regarded as a "major landmark of Lithuanian linguistics", is included in the curricula of Lithuania's secondary schools (Kavaliauskas 2012).

Open online lecture courses, initiated and masterminded by Michael Rundell, deserve special mention. The courses are well-structured, based on a pre-

designed plan, and provide the attendees with all the necessary information concerning dictionary use and dictionary making (Creese et al. 2018).

In 2023 P. Márkus published a workbook that contains specially developed exercises for students. Exercises train students in the use of dictionaries, both monolingual and bilingual. Exercises in training dictionary use in students cover many different issues (P. Márkus 2023).

Marello and her colleagues from Turin University created a website of online exercises, also aiming at the development of dictionary-use skills and so improving language competence (Marchisio et al. 2019).

## 2.2 Studies on dictionary use in Georgia

The information about the abovementioned studies, acquired from various sources such as international scientific fora, proceedings of international scientific conferences and symposia, etc., inspired us to conduct similar research in our country within the framework of MA and PhD programmes in lexicography at Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University (TSU), in order to find out how the dichotomy of trained and untrained dictionary users would play itself out in Georgia.

The first person to conduct such a study was Dr Antonina Kapanadze, then a doctoral student of the Doctoral Programme in Lexicography. She conducted two-stage research using special questionnaires aimed at the identification of dictionary-use skills in experimental subjects. The first stage involved the general public from the Georgian capital Tbilisi. The second stage focused on the students of TSU. For the second part of her study, Kapanadze relied on the experiment conducted by Laufer and Hadar (1997) to find out which types of dictionaries — monolingual, bilingual or bilingualized — were most effective both in language comprehension and language production.

The next study was the research conducted in 2019 by Khuskivadze, a PhD student in lexicography at TSU. The research took place in Tbilisi Public School #24, where she is employed as an English teacher. The research was focused on two separate groups of test subjects, group A and group B. The members of one group had received preliminary training in dictionary use with the help of exercises, specially compiled for this study, while the members of another group did not receive such training. In the second stage, students, including groups A and B, were given specially prepared contexts that contained familiar words but in rare senses, unknown to students. The students had to find out the contextual meanings of those words with the help of dictionaries. As material for this part of the experiment, Khuskivadze used the contexts, worked out by Donna Farina of New Jersey University together with her Slovenian colleagues for their study at Ljubljana University (Farina et al. 2019). She had written consent from the authors for the application of this material. The test series showed that those students/subjects who had received preliminary training showed better results in dictionary use (Khuskivadze 2023).

In 2020, another research project was conducted by Tskikolia, an MA student at TSU. The test subjects of the qualitative research conducted by Tskikolia were MA and BA students from TSU. Due to the restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the research was conducted through the online platform, Zoom. The aim of the research was to determine the extent to which the students had the necessary skills with regard to effective dictionary use.

One more study was implemented by our PhD student, Vardidze, who developed detailed plans of lessons for teaching polysemy at schools; they were based on her study of polysemous models of nouns in Modern English (cf. Vardidze 2020).

As expected, the findings of the studies conducted in Georgia generally correspond with those of the abovementioned dictionary research carried out by foreign lexicographers. They strongly indicate that education and training in dictionary use are absolutely necessary and that without such education, university students, and the students of languages in particular, end up with poor dictionary-use skills, with poor language proficiency and scanty vocabulary, both with respect to foreign and their native languages.

### **3. Introduction of teaching lexicography at Georgian universities**

#### **3.1 Lexicography as a theoretical subject**

"Introduction to Lexicography", a theoretical course of lectures for BA students, was introduced at Tbilisi State University in 2010. It was the first step toward familiarizing students with this discipline, and its complex, multidisciplinary nature.

The main topics of the theoretical course are as follows:

- the disciplinary status of lexicography;
- the functions of lexicography;
- macrostructure and microstructure of a dictionary and their components;
- the meaning of the word and methods of its study;
- documenting a language and comprehensive monolingual dictionaries;
- bilingual dictionaries and the problem of equivalence;
- learner's lexicography, the history of the genre and its characteristic features, the big five, bilingual learner's dictionaries;
- terminological dictionaries, terms and concepts, structural and semantic characteristics of modern terminology, problems of Georgian terminology;
- digital lexicography;
- history of Georgian monolingual lexicography;
- history of Georgian bilingual lexicography.

Alongside theoretical issues, students learn about academic dictionaries created by Georgian and foreign lexicographers, monolingual as well as bilingual and

terminological. In 2022 Margalitadze's manual "Introduction to Lexicography" was published by Ilia State University Press (Margalitadze 2022). The manual is not restricted to cater to the needs only of students of English departments, but is more general, incorporating examples from other languages. Still, the emphasis is on English as the Georgian language, at the current stage of its development, is mostly influenced by the English language. At the end of each chapter of the manual, there are practical tasks that students perform independently with the help of existing Georgian dictionaries. Students also prepare presentations dedicated to different lexicographic issues, famous Georgian and foreign lexicographers, and various types of dictionaries: slang, dialectal, synonyms, etymological, idioms, etc.

At present the theoretical subject "Introduction to Lexicography" is taught at four universities in Georgia. Students find the theoretical course both interesting and useful. At the end of the course they usually stress the usefulness of the knowledge acquired during this course for their future careers. Our experience of teaching this subject revealed that it was not sufficient to teach theory; it was also necessary to develop a series of practical exercises for students aimed at developing dictionary-use skills. We identified the most problematic issues, mostly connected to the meaning of words, understanding the complexity of the interaction between English and Georgian lexis, the problem of equivalence, polysemy, homonymy, conversion, phrasal verbs, idioms and terminology. These findings prompted us to develop exercises for the treatment of the abovementioned issues. Exercises are being developed together with the PhD students of the "Digital Lexicography" programme at Ilia State University who are involved in teaching lexicography to BA students.

### 3.2 Development of dictionary-use skills: Exercises

In this section, we describe some types of exercises we developed for engaging with homonymy, conversion and polysemy.

Exercises on conversion are quite simple at the initial stage. Example 1 shows such a case, when students are asked to circle the correct part of speech and they have to select the correct answer from two options.

- (1) **SIDE**
1. The side of the car was damaged.  
a. noun b. adjective
  2. The side mirror was broken.  
a. noun b. adjective

In the next type of exercises, students have to select the correct answer from a wider range of options, as is shown in example 2. Example 3 demonstrates the exercises in which students are given sentences without any suggestions about possible parts of speech. These sentences contain words known to them, but



there are also exercises that contain unknown words and students have to find out the part of speech as well as the lexical meaning of a word. As mentioned in previous sections, one of the problems identified in many studies on dictionary use is the fact that learners cannot identify what part of speech this or that word belongs to. The aim of exercises of types 1 and 2 is to help students understand and realize that a word may have the same meaning but belong to different parts of speech. While working on these exercises students are asked to complete them without the help of dictionaries. After completion of the task, they work in pairs, check words in dictionaries, and discuss examples. As for the exercises of type 3, in this case, students work with the help of dictionaries and they determine both, the part of speech of a word and its lexical meaning.

(2) **BACK**

1. Nick was not careful and fell on his back.  
a. verb b. noun c. adverb d. adjective
2. When we were children we liked to sit in back rows at the cinema.  
a. verb b. noun c. adverb d. adjective
3. I could not notice him, because he stood back in the crowd.  
a. verb b. noun c. adverb d. adjective
4. We seldom back his plan.  
a. verb b. noun c. adverb d. adjective

- (3) He was three days back in his work.  
I have a back view of things.  
We walked toward the garden at the back of the house.

Exercises on homonymy contain pairs of homonyms or converted forms and students have to identify which pair of words represents homonyms and which pair is an example of conversion, e.g. example (4).

- (4) **bargain** *n* something you buy cheaply or for less than its usual price.  
**bargain** *n* a small farm-holding
- barrow** *n* a hill, hillock.  
**barrow** *n* a castrated boar.
- beal** *v* a pustule or boil.  
**beal** *n* the mouth of a river.
- beat** *n* a stroke or blow in beating.  
**beat** *v* to strike with repeated blows.

Type 4 exercises concentrate on the differences between converted forms and homonyms. They help students realize that there are words with the same meaning, but they belong to different parts of speech, while there are also words that are spelled and pronounced in the same way but convey totally different

meanings. Students write out example sentences from bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, compare and discuss them in pairs or groups.

The above-discussed types of exercises (1, 2, 3 and 4) develop one of the most important skills in learners, namely the ability to look for the right word in a dictionary, i.e. the right part of speech and the right homonym.

Students particularly enjoy and find useful exercises on polysemy. We usually start with simple exercises, like example (5) in which students are given several polysemous meanings of a word from the *Comprehensive English–Georgian Online Dictionary*, followed by several sentences containing this word in one of the senses and they have to circle the correct sense of a word.

(5) **TO BREAK**

1. გატეხა (გატეხს);
2. დამტვრევა (დაამტვრევს; დამტვრევა); დამსხვრევა;
3. გარღვევა (გაარღვევს; გაირღვევა); გაწყდომა; გაგლეჯა;
4. შესუსტება (შეასუსტებს);
5. გაღარბება (გააღარბებს), გაკოტრება;
6. ცნობება (აცნობებს), უწყება, შეტყობინება;
7. გატეხა (გატეხს), დარღვევა (*სიტყვისა, დაპირებისა, კანონისა და ა.შ.*).

a. Tom **broke** the news of her husband's death to Mary.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7

b. The money lenders soon **broke** him.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7

The next exercises on polysemy are more difficult. Students are given sentences, in which familiar words are used in senses not known to them (example 6). In order to find the contextual meaning of *sharp* in the second sentence, for example, students have to read the whole entry of this highly polysemous word. In the *Comprehensive English–Georgian Online Dictionary*, this meaning of *sharp* '(of clothes or their wearer) smart and stylish' is described under sense 10. Such exercises make students understand that the contextual meaning of a word is not always the first sense in an entry, a common misconception among users.

- (6) 1. Governments around the world have raised **interest** rates in a desperate attempt to keep post-pandemic inflation under control.
2. The gentleman attracted everyone's attention in his **sharp** blue Dolce & Gabbana suit.
3. The influx of refugees **taxed** the scarce water resources of this small village.

In exercises of type 7, students have to insert omitted words in sentences and the words to be inserted are either used in different senses of a word or are converted forms or homonyms (example 7). For example, *tip* in the first sentence of example 7 is used in the sense 'to give (someone) a small sum of money

as a reward for performing a service, such as serving in a restaurant'. However, in the 4th sentence, students have to insert a homonym of *tip*, meaning 'overbalance so as to fall or turn over'. Likewise, *book* in the second sentence is a verb and means 'to engage (a performer or guest) for an event', while in the third sentence, it is a noun, a converted form, meaning 'a main division of the Bible'. Students use different online dictionaries for these exercises. After accomplishing the task, they discuss their findings about different senses of polysemous words or converted/homonymous pairs and their meanings.

(7) Insert the omitted words: **TIP BOOK PUT**

1. We generally \_\_\_\_\_ about 5 GEL per drink.
2. Your band is \_\_\_\_\_ for the school party.
3. Even though he swore on the \_\_\_\_\_ he was telling the truth, he was still sent to jail.
4. The little girl \_\_\_\_\_ the vase full of water all over the new carpet.
5. The agreement was never \_\_\_\_\_ into writing.
6. They feared being \_\_\_\_\_ to death.

The aim of the exercises is to develop a habit in students to consult a dictionary, to check the meanings of words in different sources, both monolingual and bilingual, and to appraise the efficiency of dictionaries. Discussions after completion of exercises also help students better understand difficulties stemming from the anisomorphism of native and foreign languages, polysemy, homonymy, or other linguistic issues that are quite problematic to be dealt with by learners without the help of relevant reference sources.

### 3.3 Course of online lessons

In 2022 we started recording and publishing on the internet a series of online lessons entitled "Why Consult a Dictionary". The video lessons are recorded on the Zoom platform. Lessons are short, 8–10 minutes long, and each lesson is dedicated to the analysis of one particular translation mistake. The lessons analyse mistakes with the help of relevant dictionary entries and demonstrate how these mistakes could have been avoided if dictionaries had been consulted.

Below we describe one type of video lesson, dedicated to the analysis of cases when an English word is polysemous but its equivalent in Georgian has only one meaning. Often, the polysemous meaning of an English word is ascribed to the Georgian equivalent.

For example, *classified* has two meanings in English: 1. arranged in classes or categories, and 2. (of information or documents) designated as officially secret and accessible only for authorized people. The Georgian equivalent კლასიფიცირებული '*klasipicirebuli*' has only the first meaning, but კლასიფიცირებული '*klasipicirebuli*' is often erroneously used in the second sense

of *classified* in Georgian and so instead of "NATO's classified information", we get the Georgian translation, which literally means "NATO's information arranged in classes".

*Roadmap* has two senses in English: 1. a map showing roads, especially for automobile travel, and 2. a detailed plan to guide progress toward a goal. The Georgian equivalent of this word **საგზაო რუკა** '*sagzao ruka*' has only the first meaning of its English counterpart. Despite this, **საგზაო რუკა** '*sagzao ruka*' is used to render the second meaning of English *roadmap*. As a result, the English sentence "Roadmap for accession to the European Union" is translated literally and the Georgian translation is "a map showing roads for accession to the European Union".

A *bald eagle*, a beautiful bird, in one of the TV programmes, was translated in Georgian literally, **მელოტი არწივი** '*meloṭi arc'ivi*', as an eagle with a bald head, i.e. in the primary sense of the English adjective *bald* "without hair on the head". *Bald* is a highly polysemous word. One of its senses is "having white feathers or skin (of birds and animals)". This bird has white feathers on the head and *bald* in this case means not "without hair", but "having white feathers".

Each video lesson contains screenshots of relevant dictionary entries, both monolingual and bilingual, with instructions on how to navigate in them and how to avoid mistakes by consulting dictionaries.

These, as well as similar mistakes, are collected and used not only in video lessons but also in exercises on polysemy, as discussed above.

### 3.4 Establishment of an international conference in lexicography

For the wider popularization of lexicography in Georgia, a biannual international conference was launched in 2022 organised by Ilia State University and Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University with the theme "Lexicography in the XXI Century". The conference will be held alternatively at Ilia State University and Batumi State University. This will draw attention to lexicography not only in the capital city, but in Western Georgia as well. The aim of the conferences is to create a forum in Georgia for the discussion of vital issues of modern lexicography, including issues of dictionary didactics.

The rapid development of artificial intelligence and computer and mobile technologies has created new prospects for lexicography. Online dictionaries, mobile dictionary applications, machine translation programs, vast text corpora, and other advances in modern digital humanities pose new challenges to lexicographers. Lexicography and modern philology in general have become truly multidisciplinary fields. In an interdisciplinary activity such as modern lexicography scholars need to be innovative, to look for new directions, new methods and new approaches. Yet with the advent of digital technologies in philology, excessive preoccupation with new technologies and relying upon them too exclusively may be sometimes counterproductive. Here too, a creative combination

of various methods and approaches is of great importance.

All of this points to the need for intensive communication among scholars working in this field, frequent contacts and exchanges of experience. In terms of the circumstances described above, the current situation of Georgia differs from that of developed European countries. There is still much to be done in Georgian lexicography. Therefore, we consider it important to establish such a forum in Georgia, which will contribute to the proper development of this important field both in our country and in countries similar to Georgia. The conference will contribute to familiarizing scholars working in this field with European as well as general, international knowledge and expertise; it will promote the popularization of lexicography and will encourage talented young people to work in this field. At the conference, special attention will be devoted to the participation of young researchers as there will be sessions dedicated to MA and PhD students. We hope that the biannual conferences will play an important role in the popularization of teaching dictionary-use skills in schools and universities.

#### **4. Conclusion**

With the development of new directions in theoretical lexicography and research on dictionary use, the quality, structure and user-friendliness of existing dictionaries have improved considerably. Unfortunately, we have also witnessed the decline of interest in dictionaries. Many studies carried out in the field of dictionary use have revealed that students do not have elementary skills in dictionary use; they even cannot identify what part of speech this or that word is. Some students do not even know that online resources are also dictionaries and regard this term referring to something obsolete and outdated. One of the reasons for the decline of interest in dictionaries lies in the new methods of teaching foreign languages, which banned the use of bilingual dictionaries in foreign language classes.

The latest developments indicate that the educational policy has changed and dictionary use is now officially legitimized in the official educational guidelines of many countries. This important change has not affected dictionary use at all. There is still no training in dictionary use in schools and universities; there are no guidelines for teachers on how to develop dictionary-use skills in students.

Many lexicographers in different countries took the initiative into their own hands and undertook the development of study materials, workbooks with exercises both for monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, and online platforms for learners.

Lexicography in Georgia largely followed the same trend: decline of interest in dictionaries, adopting new methods of teaching foreign languages, banning bilingual dictionaries from foreign language classes, implementing changes to

the educational policy recently and the introduction of dictionary use in official guidelines; yet this did not show any palpable results for the discipline and in our efforts to maintain dictionary culture in our country.

Our studies have revealed that students enjoy working with dictionaries, once they are taught how to do this effectively; they like targeted lexical exercises and at the end of the semester they show better results in dictionary use, which is tested with specially devised exercises. Students like discussing theoretical issues of lexicography; they discover how much fun it is to explore meaning, to find links between the senses of a polysemous word, and so on.

At this stage, we think that lexicographers from different countries should combine their experience and efforts to develop unified programmes and guidelines for teachers, and produce workbooks with exercises for students aiming at the development of dictionary-use skills. At the same time, it is important to hold conferences and round-table discussions dedicated to the analysis of existing problems in our methods of education and devise concrete steps for their improvement. We are pursuing this policy in our country and it is encouraging to see that lexicographers in other countries also come to the same conclusions. Gouws is right (Gouws 2022) to stress the responsibility of society towards sustaining our discipline, but it is probably also our duty to explain to our societies the importance of this discipline for the health of our languages, education and culture. We need to gain the support of the media in this endeavour, and above all to convince and win the support of teachers who are the ones to introduce the teaching of dictionary use in their classes, both at schools and at universities.

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