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## Introduction

Lexicography as a cultural practice (“kulturelle Praxis”, Wiegand et al. 2010: 3, 103) demonstrates the important pedagogical-cultural role of lexicography. Although dictionaries have changed in terms of structure, appearance, and medium – especially due to digitalization and Artificial Intelligence – their importance to society, as well as to the individual, has not diminished at all. Dictionaries, encyclopedias and other reference works, printed or online, constitute a central and fundamental tool not only for translating and learning a foreign language; consulting them is part of the basic strategies for obtaining new information and accessing the world of knowledge – although it is easy to think that automatic translators, instant voice translators or chat bots may replace online dictionaries. It is important to emphasize that the reliability and findability of lexicographical data constitute a quality criterion, which is essential for dictionaries, but in turn decisive for successful use by users as social agents in the society. Dictionaries compiled by experienced and professional lexicographers are a valuable tool for the acquisition of new knowledge within the scientific and technical learning processes in the first language, as well as in foreign language and technical language. At the same time, it is of immense importance to also know resources with lower quality, to use them, to compare them with professional tools, precisely in order to recognize their weaknesses and limits.

Merten (2011: 357), regarding the search for information and dictionary use, speaks of a lifelong relationship between learner user and dictionary (“lebenslange Lerner-Wörterbuch-Beziehung”). Indeed, he argues that searching for information in dictionaries and encyclopedias is an elementary working technique that is necessary throughout life in order to acquire information (lifelong learning). An adequate use not only of dictionaries, but of all type of research tools, is one of the important skills for all school subjects and also outside school. Daily practicing with these tools is a prerequisite for the development of conscious and adequate user behavior. Therefore, as early as elementary school, students should be made aware of the use of the dictionary for their own text reception and text production and to check these texts with lexicographic resources. The use of reference works enables students to handle their own processed texts independently and in their own responsibility. If students learn the use of dictionaries systematically and realize when and why to use them, they become convinced of the usefulness of the lexicographic resources and are motivated to continue using them

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(ibid.: 357). Although Merten is referring primarily to native language teaching, these statements can be applied also to foreign language learning and translation.

Since the 1990s, and especially following the publication of the “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages” (Council of Europe 2001), appropriate use of dictionaries in foreign language teaching has again become important. The Council of Europe with its language policy assigns dictionaries – and reference works in general – a fundamental role: searching for information, activating prior knowledge, using auxiliary resources, using problem-solving strategies, checking and correcting, are just some of the important communicative strategies in a context, where the dictionary can be used as a reference work. In the “Companion Volume” (Council of Europe 2020), dictionaries and lexicographic resources are mentioned as important aids for all linguistic activities, in reception (reading comprehension), written production and written interaction, and also mediation. The following three examples are intended to demonstrate this.

- *Reading comprehension (Reading for information and argument)* (B2): “Can understand specialised articles outside their field, provided they can use a dictionary occasionally to confirm their interpretation of terminology.” (Council of Europe 2020: 57)
- *Text production (Written interaction)* (A1): “Can compose messages and online postings as a series of very short sentences about hobbies and likes/dislikes, using simple words and formulaic expressions, with reference to a dictionary.” (Council of Europe 2020: 83)
- *Mediation (Mediating a text)* (B1): “Can interpret and present in writing (in Language B) the overall trends shown in simple diagrams (e.g. graphs, bar charts) (with text in Language A), explaining the important points in more detail, given the help of a dictionary or other reference materials.” (Council of Europe 2020: 97)

In the day-to-day reality of foreign language teaching, it seems that the use of a dictionary, whether monolingual or bilingual, is not something that is taken into consideration (cf. Nied Curcio 2015; for a successful strategy to promote dictionary culture and strategies in language teaching in Greece cf. Gavriilidou/Konstandinidou 2021 and 2022). It is often up to the will of the individual teacher whether and how much to make use of it in class, assuming it is allowed. It is also often taken for granted that students have learned to use a dictionary in their native language classes and then apply this skill quite naturally to the use of the bilingual dictionary. With regard to online dictionaries, it is assumed that they can handle them as digital natives. As a result, the students are left alone in the decision of whether or not to use a (lexicographic) resource. No conscious reflection is reached on whether to use it, or which, when and how. At the same time, students expect teachers to present various learning resources, explain their use and, above all, they expect teachers to recommend “good” dictionaries that will support them in their learning process. However, it often happens, that foreign language teachers do not really seem to be familiar with the current dictionary landscape

and partly insist on the use of a single (monolingual) print dictionary in class. This misunderstanding in the perception of dictionary use has lasted for a long time (and often still does), usually causing no explicit dictionary teaching in this regard to take place. In today's times, analysis of the resources used and subsequent discussion and reflection – not only on online dictionaries – but also on language resources in general, machine translation, and other tools of Artificial Intelligence – should play a key role in foreign language learning. Dictionary teaching – or rather teaching, analyzing, comparing and reflecting on online lexicographic resources and other linguistic tools – should therefore be integrated into foreign language teaching.

In empirical research, the role of online dictionaries, their actual effectiveness and appropriate use in classroom have been studied. More empirical research in the field of research into dictionary use must be carried out with learners and teachers in focus, incorporating newer linguistic and lexicographic resources, machine translation tools and Artificial Intelligence tools, even if this is a major challenge due to their rapid and constant modification, but it serves not only to learn more about the actual use of these tools by the learners, but also to improve the quality of future lexicographic tools and to make them a successful tool for (foreign) language learners.

Against this background, we organized two symposia: In 2021, we hosted a conference “New Challenges in Dictionary Teaching”, funded by the EMLex study program (European Master in Lexicography), at Università degli Studi Roma Tre, Italy. In 2023, we continued this work in the context of a symposium “Dictionaries and their use in foreign language classes. New challenges in a multi-lingual, digital, and global world” at the 20<sup>th</sup> AILA world congress (“Diversity and social cohesion in a globalized world: moving towards more engaged language studies”) hosted by the Université de Lyon, France. In our calls for papers we invited talks regarding the following aspects:

- How can adequate dictionary usage competence be promoted as part of media competence among teachers and learners?
- What will dictionary didactics look like in the future? How can the use of (online) dictionaries and other lexical online resources be integrated into teaching? How should educational guidelines, curricula, and teaching materials reflect these changes?
- What educational policies should be taken?
- How should modern lexical resources and dictionaries be designed to support learners?
- How can research into dictionary use contribute to further developing dictionary didactics?

The papers in this volume are authored by some of the presenters at these events; we are grateful to all authors willing to include them here. They comprise (I) empirical studies on the use of online dictionaries, glossaries, translation tools, etc. in language teaching, (II) studies on the background for teaching, e.g. by looking into the curricula, and (III) ideas on how to improve dictionary teaching in the classroom.

In the first paper, **Ida Dringó-Horváth** and **Katalin P. Márkus** (“Using dictionaries in teaching (and learning) English as a foreign language – the beginning of a longitudinal research project”) present their idea to set up a long-time research project among university graduates in English as a foreign language and German as a foreign language. In the online questionnaire used in this longitudinal study, they focus on attitudes, use, educational background influence, and integration into teaching practices regarding dictionary use. Compared to the first round of this study in 2015, the results from 2023 “suggest minor changes in usage categories without significant shifts in dictionary-using habits, highlighting a move towards digital autonomy and decreased pedagogical emphasis on dictionary skills”. The authors discuss how these results can be used to improve practical lexicography on the one hand and language learning and teaching methodologies on the other. It will be very interesting to compare the current findings with the results from the next studies that are planned in 2026, 2029, and 2032.

While the Hungarian students that participated in the studies presented by Dringó-Horváth/P. Márkus come from a predominantly monolingual background, the situation as described by **Michele F. van der Merwe** in her paper “Glossary use of multilingual student teachers in South Africa” is very different: The student teachers here all “speak more than one language and are trained in more than one language”. This is the reason why a specific trilingual glossary containing linguistic and didactic terminology in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa has been developed. The study presented here investigates the use of this glossary by undergraduate teacher students; more specifically, a project team integrated the glossary in their teaching to improve the students’ use of terminology in coursework. A pre-test and post-test were also carried out: “The findings reveal a substantial improvement in results from a post-test in comparison to marks obtained in a pre-test.”, proving that lexicographic tools developed for specific purposes can successfully improve language abilities.

**Carolina Flinz** and **Laura Pinnavaia** (“English and German thesauri for language production: examining the use-friendliness of two electronic thesauri”) examine the user-friendliness of two online thesauri for language production, namely *Thesaurus.com* for English and *openthesaurus.com* for German. Their study fills in a gap in user studies which have not yet been carried out concerning online thesauri. Participants came from an English class and a German class of second-year graduate students in Italy and had to find suitable synonyms for words in two press texts. The results “provided the evidence that, firstly, users have problems in accessing and retrieving the correct information from thesauri and, secondly, that there are aspects that lexicographers need addressing for thesauri to become better linguistic tools”. One key finding of their study is that existing thesauri can be used by native speakers successfully, but for learners “a much more dedicated tool is needed”.

While online thesauri seem not to be used very much by language learners, online machine translation tools (OMT) have been “predominantly used”, as **Magdalena Zehetgruber** and **Johannes Schnitzer** point out (“Die Verwendung automatischer Übersetzungsprogramme im Wirtschaftssprachunterricht romanischer Sprachen”).

They conducted a survey and a performance test regarding “the use of OMT in French, Italian and Spanish by students of International Management” to find out “which programmes students find particularly helpful, how they judge their quality, how precisely they employ them, and which results they can achieve”. The main reasons for mistakes that participants made when translating texts are either flaws in the tools or that they were used inappropriately. The authors point out that therefore the use of OMT tools in foreign language teaching needs to be addressed in class.

The findings from an online questionnaire presented by **Anja Smith** (“(Re)defining the role for the dictionary: towards a concept for a phraseopragmatic GFL [German as a foreign language] dictionary for French learners”) illustrate that learners may have different notions of how an ideal learners’ dictionary should look like than lexicographers. Participants in this study (French teachers and language students) pointed to their needs “to acquire a better understanding of how and in which contexts to use words”. Thus, the author suggests that “since understanding difficulties are primarily imputed to insufficient textual information, the dictionary’s major role consists in providing this information” and presents some ideas on “basic features of a future GFL phraseopragmatic dictionary”.

The second part of this volume contains papers that look into the setting for language teaching as given by, for example, the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001, 2020) or national curricula. These are relevant for language teachers at schools, universities, and other institutions who not only need to know about what these say regarding the use of dictionaries in class, but need also to be trained in how to teach the use of reference tools to their students.

**Yukio Tono** and **Naho Kawamoto** (“Developing and calibrating “can do” descriptors for dictionary use by EFL learners using the Rasch model”) present ideas on how to improve the CEFR information on dictionary use. In their study, a total of 223 university students (mainly non-English majors with language levels between A1 and B2) “were asked to indicate how well they could perform the task described in each descriptor of dictionary use [e.g. “I can predict the base form of a problem word.”] using a 5-point Likert scale”. The aim is “to develop and calibrate a comprehensive set of “can do” descriptors tailored specifically for users of English as a foreign language, with a paramount focus on optimizing the utilization of various types of dictionary information”. The results should be useful when developing dictionary skills in the future.

The paper “The use of (online) dictionaries at the interface of curricular requirements and practice” by **Andrea Abel** presents the results of a study of the South Tyrolean framework guidelines provided by the German and the Italian school boards at all levels of education for German and Italian as first and second languages, as well as for English as a foreign language in this multilingual region of Italy. These findings are contrasted with the results of an online survey with 644 language teachers regarding the actual use of lexicographic resources in class. While lexicographical resources (both printed and digital) “form a substantial part of the framework guidelines in South Tyrol”, these are not consistently reflected in school practice (“20% of teachers do not work with diction-

ary resources”). The author also points out that there is a “clear discrepancy [. . .] regarding the normative expectations for the use of digital media and their implementation”.

In her paper “The use of lexicographic online resources by foreign language teachers and the effectiveness of teacher training courses”, **Martina Nied Curcio** develops a workshop and experiment designed for Italian teachers of German as a foreign language. Her hypotheses are that teachers primarily still use paper dictionaries, do not allow the use of online resources in class, know only a few online dictionaries themselves, assume that students have the ability to use online dictionaries successfully, are uncertain about the use of these sources themselves and thus do not know how to teach dictionary use. Her findings show that there “is a vital need for teaching how to use modern lexicographic resources” and that “foreign language courses could be an excellent place in which to do this”. Evidently, much can be gained when language teachers are trained dictionary users.

**Valeria Zotti** (“Have electronic corpora made dictionaries obsolete? Some encouraging results from an international teaching experience (in the field of French artistic vocabulary)”) also develops ideas on how to promote dictionary use in classes. In her experiment, she contrasts results that participants achieved when decoding “French texts of varying degrees of specialization” and when translating a sample of French texts into Italian or English either by using dictionaries and/or by exploring corpus data. One of her findings is that after “consulting the corpora, the students became even more aware of the fact that lexicographers have in fact selected relevant data to describe these words, presenting a structured synopsis that [. . .] is easy to consult” and “that their original preference for ‘free online data, without proof or reliability’ was no longer valid”. These results should clearly encourage more teaching of dictionary use in classes.

While Valeria Zotti develops ideas on improved language teaching using not only dictionaries, but also corpus data, **Shigeru Yamada** (“Super” instructions in the use of EFL dictionaries”) focuses on the role of the language teacher to help students with understanding and using dictionary content. He presents many examples of information (e.g. definition, grammar, pronunciation) in dictionaries of English as a foreign language that need further instruction by teachers in class. These instructions are “intended to maximize the value of the dictionaries, remedying or overcoming the infelicities” and are “given by the EFL teacher who shares the same background with the student”. Ideally, though, a native speaker should support non-native language teachers. The author’s ideas cannot only help to improve language teaching, but are also useful to lexicographers who want to further improve their learners’ dictionaries.

In the last paper in this volume by **Thomai Dalpanagioti** (“Integrating frame semantic resources in EFL instruction with a focus on deliberate metaphor”), the author suggests to use frame semantic resources such as FrameNet and MetaNet in EFL teaching, more specifically in improving metaphorical competence. She presents data from experiments in a university EFL classroom showing that “frame-aided instruction can enhance learners’ metaphorical competence as this is reflected in L2 written data and

learners' own perceptions". One possibility is that teachers used these sources "implicitly [. . .] to inform their instructional practices and decisions without asking learners to act as researchers". The author also encourages further research that "could explore ways of making them [FrameNet and MetaNet] more accessible and attractive to both teachers and learners".

We hope that all papers in this volume will demonstrate the necessity and potential of training in the use of language resources such as dictionaries, translation tools, corpora, etc. in teacher study programmes and their reflection in curricula and course book development. Lexicographers should also look into ways of further promoting the use of lexicographic resources in class rooms.

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