

**AN EVALUATION OF STRUCTURAL MARKERS IN SOME
NORTHERN SOTHO/ENGLISH BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES: A
LEXICOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE**

by

LETSOALO ALYDIA MODJADJI

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

in

TRANSLATION STUDIES AND LINGUISTICS

in the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

(School of Languages and Communication Studies)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR R.N. MADADZHE

NOVEMBER 2012

DECLARATION

I, Alydia Modjadji Letsoalo, declare that the dissertation entitled “An Evaluation of Structural Markers in some Northern Sotho/English Bilingual Dictionaries: A Lexicographic Perspective” is my own original work and that all the sources I have used have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....

A.M. Letsoalo (Ms)

████████████████████

.....

Date

DEDICATION

To my late father, Solomon Mashikashike Letsoalo, and my whole family.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for giving me the strength, wisdom and courage to continue my studies even at a time when I was hopeless.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Professor R.N. Madadzhe for believing in me. His guidance, wisdom, fatherly love and selflessness were a source of inspiration. I would not have gotten this far without him.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to Mr M.C. Mphahlele for his kindness, guidance and assistance throughout this study. Not forgetting Ms J.M. Mothiba for always giving me her ears and a shoulder to cry on and guiding me throughout my academic years.

In addition, my thanks go to my mother and my brothers and sisters for their unwavering support and love. Without them this study would not been successful. I would like to say thank you to you all and I love you!

Again, I would to thank my mother's colleagues, Mmane Mavis, Jane and others, for their help every time I needed it and for never getting tired of me. I truly appreciate your assistance. Thanks are also due to my fellow students, Tebogo Mothiba, Mokgadi Koma and Simon PulengGulwako, for always encouraging me not to give up when things were difficult in my life.

Lastly, my gratitude goes to my nieces, Leeto, Bohlale, Lesego, Napiadi and Relebogile, for their little smiles which gave me a reason to hold on to life. Undoubtedly, you are my little angels and I love you!

ABSTRACT

Structural markers, front matter, contextual guidance and cross-referencing are some of the important features of bilingual dictionaries which are often taken for granted. This study evaluates the presentation of structural markers in some Northern Sotho/English Bilingual dictionaries, with special reference to *Pharos: Popular Northern Sotho Dictionary* and *Sesotho sa Leboa/English Pukuntšu Dictionary*. The study further evaluates the use of the front matter, contextual guidance and cross-referencing in bilingual dictionaries. The study has established that bilingual dictionaries can become user-friendly if they identify and use appropriate strategies, as this leads to communicative success. By contrast, the incorrect application of a comma or a semicolon may lead to a misinterpretation of the supplied equivalents in bilingual dictionaries.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	2
1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY	4
1.4 OBJECTIVES	4
1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN	5
1.5.1 Primary research method	5
1.5.2 Secondary research method	5
1.5.3 Data analysis	5
1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	5

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION	7
2.2 GOUWS (1999)	7
2.3 MACHIMANA (2009)	8
2.4 MPHAHLELE (2002)	9
2.5 GOUWS AND PRINSLOO (2005)	10
2.6 NKHUMELENI (2005)	11
2.7 GOUWS (2004)	12
2.8 GOUWS (2002)	13
2.9 LAUW (1998)	13

2.10 MOHLALA (2010)	14
2.11 MANONG (2004)	15
2.12 HOSANA (2009)	17
2.13 MONGWE (2006)	18
2.14 SINGH (1982)	19
2.15 CONCLUSION	20

**CHAPTER 3: THE USE OF SEMICOLONS, THE FRONT MATTER
AND CONTEXTUAL GUIDANCE**

3.1 INTRODUCTION	22
3.2 DEFINITION OF POLYSEMY AND SEMICOLONS	22
3.3 THE USE OF SEMICOLONS	23
3.4 THE PRESENTATION OF ARTICLES IN NORTHERN SOTHO DICTIONARIES	25
3.5 THE FRONT MATTER	26
3.6 CONTEXTUAL GUIDANCE	35
3.7 CONCLUSION	37

**CHAPTER 4: THE USE OF THE COMMA, THE COLON AND THE FORWARD
SLASH**

4.1 INTRODUCTION	38
4.2 DEFINITION OF A COMMA	38
4.3 DEFINITIONS OF SYNONYMS AND PARTIAL SYNONYMS	39

4.4 THE USE OF A COMMA AND COMMA VARIANTS	39
4.5 THE PRESENTATION OF ARTICLES IN NORTHERN SOTHO DICTIONARIES	44
4.6 CROSS-REFERENCING	47
4.7 THE USE OF A COLON	48
4.8 THE USE OF THE FORWARD SLASH	52
4.9 CONCLUSION	54
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION	
5.1 INTRODUCTION	56
5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS	56
5.3 FINDINGS	57
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS	58
REFERENCES	59

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

There are a number of different structural markers (indicators) in a dictionary, such as full stops, commas and semicolons. According to Gouws (2003), the purpose of a structural indicator as a functional entry in a dictionary article is to help the user to identify and distinguish the different items and to find them as quickly as possible. The entries can be divided into two subtypes: typographic and non-typographic structural indicators. As Gouws explains, typographic structural indicators are formed by using different graphical aids e.g. italics, bold, etc. Non-typographic structural indicators, by contrast, are signs such as the asterisk, parenthesis, and punctuation marks used to find, identify and interpret items.

Gouws (2003) further states that the misplacement of commas and semicolons greatly influences the order and arrangement of the items included in the article. Various structural markers function to indicate the relations between different items, or have roles and meanings between different items. Typographic structural indicators are usually found in the macrostructure of the dictionary. By contrast, non-typographic structural indicators are usually found in the microstructure of the dictionary, like the mostly used commas and semicolons. The structural markers that are visible in bilingual dictionaries are few, mainly bold letters, commas and semicolons. This study will focus specifically on commas and semicolons. Dictionaries that will come under scrutiny in this study are *Pharos: Popular Northern Sotho Dictionary* (Kriel, 2007) and *Sesotho sa Leboa/English Pukuntšu Dictionary* (Mojela, Mogodi, Mphahlele and Selokela, 2006).

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

A dictionary is a reference book that defines words and phrases, providing multiple meanings. The most frequently used dictionary is a language dictionary which contains the majority of frequently used words in a language. Language dictionaries are made for different types of users: scholars, office workers, schools, and second language learners (www.wisegeek.com/what-is-a-dictionary.htm). A dictionary consists of lemmas or headwords found in the macrostructure on the left hand side of the dictionary and are words listed alphabetically and in bold. Headwords are normally followed by phonetic transcriptions which indicate pronunciation, the meanings of the words, and examples of their usage. This information appears in the microstructure on the right hand side of the dictionary.

Dictionaries are usually divided into two types, namely, monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. Monolingual dictionaries are those whose lemmas are of the same language as the translation equivalents, whereas bilingual dictionaries present translation equivalents of two languages (Bejoint, 2004). In addition, monolingual dictionaries are those in which the lemmas are explained, defined or described, while bilingual dictionaries are those in which the lemmas simply have translation equivalents and are of a different language.

In bilingual dictionaries, there are structural markers such as typographic and non-typographic structural markers. In this study, the focus is on the commas and semicolons which are found in the microstructure of bilingual dictionaries. Gouws (1999) states that the use of commas and semicolons in a bilingual dictionary should not be done arbitrarily, as this may cause the user to fail to get the right translation equivalent. This is why there should be an explanation of how commas and semicolons work in the opening pages of the dictionary. In this regard, Machimana (2009:5) advises that the lexicographer should supply contextual guidance that will enable the dictionary user to comprehend what is being explained after each and every translation equivalent.

Commas are usually used in dictionaries to separate synonyms, while semicolons are used to separate polysemous words. However, the use of commas and semicolons in bilingual

dictionaries does not always reflect this function. The following example from a Northern Sotho/English dictionary illustrates this point:

(1) **ahlola** judge, decide, condemn (Kriel, 2007:3)

The use of commas in Example (1) above is incorrect, because **judge**, **decide** and **condemn** are not full synonyms but near synonyms. These words cannot replace each other and still retain the same meaning. The correct presentation of the lemma should therefore be:

(2) **ahlola** judge; decide; condemn

Another example from the same dictionary is as follows:

(3) **baagi** builders, citizens (Kriel, 2007:5)

The words **builders** and **citizens** are not synonyms but polysemous words. Thus, they are meant to be separated with a semicolon. **Builders** refer to people who build houses or construct buildings, whereas **citizens** are people who acquire certain rights by virtue of being born in a particular country. The correct presentation of the lemma is therefore as follows:

(4) **baagi** builders; citizens

The misplacement of structural markers in bilingual dictionaries is not peculiar to *Pharos: Popular Northern Sotho Dictionary* (Kriel, 2007). It is also a phenomenon in *Sesotho sa Leboa/English Pukuntšu Dictionary* (Mojela *et al.*, 2006). The following example attests to this point:

(5) **above** adj godimo; kagodimo (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:122)

In this case, the use of the semicolon is incorrect, because **godimo** and **kagodimo** are partial synonyms and they can definitely replace each other in some contexts. For example, one can

say *e godimoga fridge* or *e kagodimoga fridge*. So the correct presentation of the lemma is as follows:

(6) **above** adj godimo, kagodimo

The incorrect usage of structural markers in the examples above indicates that this is a topic worth investigating.

1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to examine the use of structural markers in some Northern Sotho/English bilingual dictionaries. The research will try to answer the following questions:

- What are the challenges pertaining to the use of structural markers in Northern Sotho/English bilingual dictionaries?
- Are structural markers correctly presented in bilingual dictionaries?
- Which strategies are appropriate in achieving communicative success in Northern Sotho/English bilingual dictionaries?
- Are bilingual dictionaries user-friendly?

1.4 OBJECTIVES

This study has the following objectives:

- To determine the challenges pertaining to the use of structural markers in some Northern Sotho/English bilingual dictionaries.
- To find out if structural markers have been correctly presented in bilingual dictionaries.
- To identify strategies that are appropriate in achieving communicative success in Northern Sotho/English bilingual dictionaries.
- To determine if bilingual dictionaries are user-friendly.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

This study employs the explorative qualitative research design to examine why and how structural markers are used in some Northern Sotho/English bilingual dictionaries.

1.5.1 Primary research method

In this case, firsthand information has been obtained from two dictionaries: *Pharos: Popular Northern Sotho Dictionary* (Kriel, 2007) and *Sesotho sa Leboa/English Pukuntšu Dictionary* (Mojela *et al.*, 2006).

1.5.2 Secondary research method

This research is also library-based. It has made use of library materials such as books, reports, journal articles and dissertations. Electronic resources such as the internet also provided a means to obtain valuable information on the subject.

1.5.3 Data analysis

This study is explanatory in nature, because data were analysed and explained once identified. This means that structural markers such as commas and semicolons have been analysed in terms of their presentation in Northern Sotho/English bilingual dictionaries. Having identified their unsystematic presentation in the microstructure, the researcher has explained how they should be systematically presented in the same microstructure.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research will be helpful to lexicographers, language practitioners and translators, as it will enable them to correct the mistakes usually made when using structural markers in bilingual dictionaries. It will help them to create better, useful, clear, user-friendly and up-to-standard dictionaries. It will also help dictionary users to learn the correct words in the second language. Because the study has focused on structural markers, it will assist

dictionary users to understand the dictionary better in terms of the use of commas and semicolons.

1.7 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter One presents the introduction, background to the study, aim and objectives of the study, research methodology and significance of the study.

Chapter Two highlights views of different scholars on the value of structural markers in dictionaries.

Chapter Three deals with the use of semicolons, the front matter and contextual guidance in bilingual dictionaries.

Chapter Four concentrates on the use of the comma, the colon and the forward slash in bilingual dictionaries.

Chapter Five is the conclusion which presents the findings and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present a literature review on the value of structural markers in bilingual dictionaries and also the importance of the front matter and contextual guidance. The chapter presents various scholars individually and then assesses their work. In this regard, the chapter highlights the work of prominent scholars in lexicography, such as Gouws (1999), Machimana (2009), Mphahlele (2001), Gouws and Prinsloo (2005), Nkhumeleni (2005), Gouws (2004), Gouws (2002), Lauw (1998), Mohlala (2010), Manong (2004), Hosana (2009), and Mongwe (2006).

2.2 GOUWS (1999)

As earlier noted, Gouws (1999:12) is of the view that the choice of commas and semicolons should not be made arbitrarily. Commas and semicolons serve as structural markers which make a definite contribution at the microstructural level to ensure the transfer of semantic information, that is, polysemy and synonymy. Structural markers should be taken into serious consideration when presenting translation equivalents in bilingual dictionaries. Gouws (1999:15) lays emphasis on this point when he states:

The semantic comment in a translation dictionary has to be comprehensive enough for a user to detect the mutual relationship between members of the target language synonym paradigm without any problem. The ordering of the synonym clusters, i.e. the target language synonym paradigm, has to reflect the usage frequency of the different senses of the lexical item in its polysemous senses. The internal ordering of the translation equivalents in a target language synonym paradigm has to reflect the usage frequency of the target language.

Of importance here is that readers must have enough information to select the correct equivalents in the target language. Moreover, equivalents have to be placed in a particular

order, from the most popular (frequently used) to the less popular. Consider the following example:

(1) **dula** v sit; stay; reside; remain (Mojela *et al.*, 2006)

This article is wrongly presented, because in some places the wrong structural markers have been used while in other places the right markers are in place. The semicolon between **sit** and **stay** is correct, whereas the semicolon between **stay** and **reside** is wrong as there should be a comma there instead. **Stay** and **remain** are partial synonyms, because they can replace each other in some contexts. The semicolon between **reside** and **remain** is correct. So the correct presentation of this article is:

(2) **dula** v sit; stay, reside; remain

or

dula v sit, remain; stay, reside

This example shows that semicolons are meant to separate polysemous senses and commas are meant to separate synonymous senses.

2.3 MACHIMANA (2009)

According to Machimana (2009), the ordering of senses in bilingual dictionaries is of importance to target users because, among other aspects, this helps the target users to retrieve the appropriate and accurate translation equivalents of a specific lemma in a source language. This is why it is important for the structural markers to be entered correctly. Machimana (2009:17) puts this succinctly when he states:

The use of commas and semicolons in separating the translation equivalents in the dictionary microstructure also helps in the ordering of senses in a logical and systematic manner. This helps the user to discern whether the translation equivalents are synonyms, near synonyms or polysemous senses as they are arranged in the user guide of a dictionary.

Machimana's study is important and relevant to this study because it shows how structural markers should be useful to the dictionary user and why they should be introduced and explained in the front matter (user guide) of the dictionary. Incorrect presentations of lemmas can be seen in the examples under Gouws (1999) and under Mphahlele (2001). The lexicographer should have supplied contextual guidance that will enable the dictionary user to comprehend what is being explained after each and every translation (Machimana, 2009:5). This is the reason why there should be an explanation of how things work and what they mean both in the front matter and in the dictionary.

2.4 MPHAHLELE (2001)

Structural markers are important items in a dictionary because they are meant to ensure good communication and understanding among dictionary users. This means that commas and semicolons should be used consistently and systematically in bilingual dictionaries. If this is not done, retrieval of the correct information becomes difficult. In this regard, Mphahlele (2001:42) makes the following observation:

This accurate and consistent use of structural markers must be used in translation dictionaries so that a user can have a good use of synonyms and polysemous senses of the lemma. The lexicographers must know that commas and semicolons represent one way of making the specific values.

Moreover, the lexicographer's knowledge of the target language should be up to standard. The lexicographer must know that commas and semicolons should be used consistently to separate target language forms in the translation equivalent paradigm.

Mphahlele (2001) again points out that dictionaries would be easier to use if the structural markers, which are commas and semicolons in this case, are all in the correct places. Consequently, this study aims to conscientise stakeholders – from lexicographers to dictionary users – on the importance of structural markers and the order in which they should be presented. The following examples show the correct use of structural markers:

(3) a. **aga** build, construct (Kriel, 2007:3)

b. **bogale** brave; cruel; sharp; angry (Kriel, 2007:11)

What the two examples above suggest is that entries will be more understandable where there is contextual guidance. Mphahlele (2001:5) notes that contextual guidance is given by means of words or phrases typically written in brackets next to each translation equivalent in the translation equivalent paradigm.

2.5 GOUWS AND PRINSLOO (2005)

Gouws and Prinsloo (2005) indicate that the use of commas and semicolons in a dictionary should not be underestimated. This is so because their absence will cause miscommunication, misunderstanding, and most of all communication embarrassment.

When compiling dictionaries, lexicographers need to keep the intended user in the foreground, so that they can make it easier for the user to access the information in the dictionary. This is why Gouws and Prinsloo (2005:172) make the following assertion:

The success of a dictionary consultation process does not only rely on whether the dictionary contains the relevant data a user is looking for and whether the user manages to find this data. The quicker and easier the access to a specific item or data type the higher is the level of appreciation the user has for the dictionary and the better are the chances of successful dictionary consultation procedures.

Most readers do not expect to find mistakes in a dictionary, because it is a book of reference and must therefore be correct at all times. Of course, this can be achieved by using, among others, structural markers correctly.

Gouws and Prinsloo (2005:175) indicate that structures are not devised for the sake of structures, but rather to order the data and to guide the user to the data on offer so that the relevant lexicographic functions and the genuine purpose of the dictionary can be achieved. Structural indicators improve the access confidence of the user and diminish the access time.

This means that with the proper guidance of and in the dictionary, the user will hardly be lost and the dictionary will be a truly user-friendly tool of reference.

All the structures in a dictionary are important. These are the front matter, the centralist (structural markers, contextual guidance, reversibility principles, zero equivalence, paraphrasing, transliterating, the microstructure and macrostructure), and the back matter; and they should all never be taken for granted.

2.6 NKHUMELENI (2005)

Nkhumeleni (2005) indicates that it is wrong to think that structural markers such as commas and semicolons are not important to be included in the front matter procedure, as these markers ensure communicative equivalence between the source and the target language. The mistake that lexicographers often make is to think that dictionary users know the different uses of commas and semicolons. Nkhumeleni (2005:34) emphasizes that

the front matter text of a dictionary is a very important structural component of a dictionary because it acts as a path that leads the dictionary user to the successful retrieval of the information. That is, every dictionary user must first consult this component structure (the front matter text) before he moves to the centralist of the dictionary.

One believes that everything that is recorded in the front matter should be recorded in the centralist. For a user to come across something that is not in the front matter would be problematic as it will interrupt the user. Nkhumeleni (2005:1) states that users need more guidance to ensure the successful retrieval of information. This means that explaining how everything works in the front matter will help the user to know what to expect in the centralist and to understand the information. Contextual guidance is also important and it should be included in the dictionary, both in the front matter and in the centralist.

In compiling their dictionaries, both Kriel (2007) and Mojela *et al.* (2006) took the front matter for granted, as they did not include much information about what to expect in the centralist and also neglected the back matter. For example, they do not say anything about

structural markers, but different structural markers are used throughout the dictionary. So the front matter does not quite go hand-in-hand with the dictionary. There is just too little information in the front matter.

In response to this, this study will try to help improve the front matter of these two dictionaries, so that the dictionary user does not end up using the dictionary or the language in an incorrect way.

2.7 GOUWS (2004)

The user's guide text included in the front matter of a dictionary is not the user's guide to the front matter but the user's guide to the dictionary as a whole. It is a functional component of the dictionary and not of the front matter, and therefore it is a textual constituent (Gouws, 2004:69). All structural markers are important. Lexicographers and meter lexicographers did not take the front matter seriously in the past. Gouws (2004:86) states the following:

The proper use of outer texts in bilingual dictionaries can improve the quality of the information transfer. However, the construction of outer texts must be done in a scientific way and the lexicographers should be familiar with the underlying theoretical motivations. A dictionary culture should be established where dictionary users know that outer texts are just as much a part of the dictionary as the translation equivalents given for a source language lemma.

Gouws (2004:72) goes on to say that for the planning of the outer texts and the selection of data to be included, these texts should form an integral part of the dictionary conceptualization plan. A front matter should not only be where the lexicographer is being thankful, acknowledging and expressing his or her gratitude to the people who were useful in the compilation project. Everything in the dictionary is important, but of more importance is the information that tells and explains the things that users are going to find in the dictionary. Gouws (2004:68) advises that a user-driven lexicography should compel lexicographers to plan their dictionaries in such a way that their target users can achieve an optimal retrieval of information. Thus, lexicographers should plan their work with the users in mind.

2.8 GOUWS (2002)

It is important for lexicographers to find a way of helping dictionary users to find the relevant data or its equivalent easily. Gouws (2002:137) states that the retrieval of information demands a reconstruction of lemma signs, and this reconstruction process exceeds the boundaries of the single article. Furthermore, Gouws (2002:141) emphasizes that

in a dictionary, the focus on the user and his/her ability to retrieve the needed information from the presented data should never be subordinate to space-saving procedures. A knowledge of the alphabet and a bit of lexicographic endurance will allow the user to reach the desired lemma without too many problems. Especially if the way in which lemmata are ordered in a niche is explained in the users' guideline of the dictionary, the system of niching does not impair the outer access structure of the dictionary.

Gouws (2002:155) stresses that the consistent application of a well-explained system is necessary to ensure the success of a dictionary as an authoritative reference source. This means that if everything is done correctly, with the user in mind and with complete up-to-standard information in the front matter, centralist and the back matter, it will be an up-to-standard (bilingual) dictionary. A strict ordering of senses (or structural markers) will guide the user to the desired equivalent. Gouws (2002:140) goes on to say that the decision to use a microstructural ordering system which relies on sinuous lemma files should not be taken without proper consideration and an awareness of the needs and reference skills of the intended target user. So it would be wise for the translator to be bilingual, because this will help him or her to use the senses correctly.

2.9 LAUW (1998)

Lauw (1998:173) indicates that stylistic and register divergence should necessitate context. Contextual guidance should be included in a dictionary to help the dictionary user retrieve the correct information in the shortest possible time. Long lists of equivalents are often given in bilingual dictionaries and the less competent user has little chance of knowing the significance of conventions (which are not explained in the explanatory introduction). The user also has little chance of making the right choice (Lauw, 1998:175). The importance of the front matter cannot, therefore, be overemphasized.

The structural markers in a monolingual dictionary should be different from those in a bilingual dictionary. In this regard, Lauw (1998:181) explains:

The best approach seems to be the appropriation of letter system from monolingual dictionaries along with the numerical system denoting senses. The letters will create the new units with nonsemantic boundaries within which finer distinctions within the category of partial synonymy can be made. Semicolons can then for example be used to separate synonyms that display differences that can be shown up by means of labels. Commas can separate near-absolute synonyms. It is important that the lexicographer explains the changes made to the inner access structure as well as the changes to the article structure in an introduction or user's guide.

Lauw (1998) opines that the distinction of structural markers is usually done better in some monolingual dictionaries, whereas polysemy is indicated by means of a numerical article internal system wherein, instead of commas and semicolons, different usages are given different letters of the alphabet as indicators. In cases where these usages fall within the scope of specific senses, the letters combine with the numerical sense indicators. Even though not consistently applied in monolingual dictionaries (possibly because of lack of space), this system is very relevant to translation dictionaries (Lauw, 1998:178). As far as this study is concerned, commas, colons and semicolons are the main focus in terms of structural markers.

2.10 MOHLALA (2010)

Mohlala (2010) notes that in bi-directional bilingual dictionaries, where both source and target languages are presented, it is expected that meaning of lemmata be given in the form of translation equivalents. So everything in the dictionary should be taken seriously, from the translation equivalents themselves, reversibility principles, zero equivalents, contextual guidance, structural markers, the front matter, centralist, back matter, paraphrasing to transliterating. Mohlala (2010:11) states the following: “what is important as far as the treatment of lemmata is concerned, is that whatever information is included must be well arranged, not haphazardly done so that it addresses properly users' frustrations”.

This means that whatever is included in the dictionary as treatment of lemmata must be in order, whether it is the translation equivalents (which must be arranged from the mostly used to the not so popular) or structural markers or contextual guidance. This is one of the things that should be in the front matter and it should be well explained. An example from Mojela *et al.* (2006:197) which illustrates the importance of ordering information appropriately is given below:

(4) **tomorrow** *adv* bosasa; gosasa; ka moswane; ka moso

The structural marker (the semicolon) used here is incorrect, which makes this presentation wrong. This is because all the translation equivalents in the above example derive from Sepedi and can replace each other in all contexts. Moreover, **ka moso** is also Tswana/Sotho.

This example illustrates that nothing in a dictionary should be taken for granted, as all aspects are important. Mohlala (2010:3) advises that if a lemma has more than one translation equivalent which are synonymous, or which are just semantically related, or if a lemma has other lemmata which are synonyms, the dictionary user has to be informed by the way the microstructure is presented. In this case, it should be presented with commas since the translation equivalents are synonymous, and it should have semicolons only if the equivalents were polysemous senses.

2.11 MANONG (2004)

Manong (2004) holds the view that an explanation of the commas, semicolons and other structures of the dictionary should be presented in the front matter so that the user will be enabled to retrieve the required information. That is, if everything in the dictionary is fully explained in the front matter, the dictionary user will not be lost, but will find the dictionary user-friendly. Manong (2004:v) describes the front matter as

an extra linguistic information such as contextual guidance to assist dictionary users to retrieve semantic information found in a translation equivalent paradigm. It assists users to have a good choice of the equivalents. Articles with contextual guidance are regarded as user-friendly because they assist the user to retrieve the required equivalents and also to use the required equivalents in a communicative functional

way. The front matter is an important component of a dictionary that plays an important role in assisting the dictionary user to get any semantic information with ease.

One agrees with Manong that contextual guidance and the front matter are very important structures of the dictionary. They make things easier for dictionary users to retrieve the correct information. A dictionary with adequate information in the front matter and sound contextual guidance will be a good, user-friendly dictionary, and users will be pleased with it. Every dictionary user must be advised to go through the front matter first before going through the dictionary, and every time one gets confused one should revisit the front matter.

Manong (2004) states that commas and semicolons should be used consistently and systematically in bilingual dictionaries, because commas and semicolons are what direct the dictionary user to retrieve the required translation equivalent. Structural markers are what tell the user what sense the translation equivalent falls under (which could be either a polysemous or synonymous sense). For example:

(5) **bala** read; count, reckon; include (Kriel, 2007:6)

This presentation is incorrect because count and reckon cannot replace each other. The correct presentation is:

(6) **bala** read; count; reckon; include

And with contextual guidance it will be:

(7) **bala** read (a book); count (money/people); reckon (remember/balance); include (me)

If all the entries or lemmas in bilingual dictionaries were entered as in Examples (6) and (7) above, no dictionary user would be lost, and no time would be wasted in retrieving meaning, since users would be guided by the contextual guidance.

2.12 HOSANA (2009)

Hosana suggests that commas and semicolons are to be used lexicographically to separate translation equivalents, and also to indicate that there is no one-to-one semantic relation between the equivalents. By contrast, separation by commas should indicate that translation equivalents can replace each other in any context. Hosana (2009:26) states:

The different microstructure items in the translation profile have to display the necessary interaction so as to promote article internal cohesion in the semantic information. Semantic information in a dictionary is part and parcel of the semantic comment. This means that both semantic information and contextual guidance play an equal role in the microstructure of a dictionary. Translation equivalents and contextual guidance help users achieve communicative success.

Hosana (2009:14) emphasises the fact that contextual guidance serves an important purpose in a bilingual dictionary, because it assists the user to choose the adequate translation equivalent from a translation equivalent paradigm. Some of the translation equivalents are confusing in themselves, but with the help of contextual guidance it would be easier to make the right choice. Consider the following example:

(8) **dula** sit down, live, stay, dwell (Kiel, 2007:29)

This presentation is wrong because only **live** and **stay** can replace each other in all contexts. **Dwell** can replace **live** and **stay** only in some contexts, so it is a partial synonym. As for **sit down**, it is a polysemous sense, so it is meant to be separated with a semicolon. It would also be wrong if all the translation equivalents were separated by semicolons. The correct presentation is as follows:

(9) **dula** sit down; live, stay, dwell

And with contextual guidance it will be:

(10) **dula** sit (down); live (in Polokwane), stay (in Polokwane), dwell (in Polokwane)

This is how a lemma or an article should be presented, from the structural markers to the contextual guidance. Contextual guidance is what guides and helps the user to understand where and how the translation equivalent can be used. With this, the dictionary user cannot be lost.

2.13 MONGWE (2006)

As suggested by Mongwe (2006:69), in order to achieve communicative success in terms of translation equivalents, dictionaries should consistently give guidance, since an omission of contextual guidance means that the user is confronted with a list of equivalents and is left ‘stranded’ when it comes to the choice of an appropriate target language form. A lack of contextual guidance will lead a dictionary user nowhere. In some dictionaries, limited contextual guidance is provided. According to Mongwe (2006), the front matter can be subdivided into the table of contents, foreword, acknowledgement, and users’ guidelines. These sub-sections are included to thank the people who took part in the compilation of the dictionary, to introduce the dictionary or explain what is in it, and to guide the user. Mongwe (2006:51) illustrates:

Dictionary users are given usage information which guides them in retrieving information without difficulties. In other words this is used to ensure successful use of the dictionary. This information should be explained very clearly in the dictionary’s information on usage for the dictionary users. The symbols are explained in the users’ guidelines. The dictionary articles contain items, representing word class and structural indicators which help the user to identify and interpret the items. Structural indicators are divided into typographical and non-typographical indicators. This is compulsory text in any dictionary.

Mongwe’s suggestion is valid and useful, and the researcher supports his statements. Indeed, a (bilingual) dictionary serves a great purpose and structural markers should therefore be used correctly to help users identify and interpret information. Let us look at another example:

(11) **tears** *n* megokgo; dikeledi (Mojela *et al.*, 2006)

This is a wrong presentation, because **megokgo** and **dikeledi** are synonyms that can replace each other in all contexts. The correct presentation is:

(12) **tears** *n* megokgo, dikeledi

With contextual guidance, the entry will be as follows:

(13) **tears** *n* megokgo (mahlo aka atšwa megokgo), dikeledi (mahlo aka atšwa dikeledi).

According to Mongwe (2006:64), the purpose of bilingual dictionaries is to assist the speakers of the various languages spoken in South Africa in learning each other's languages in order to promote multilingualism. There is no doubt that these dictionaries serve a useful purpose. The researcher agrees with Mongwe's views, because dictionaries are meant to help promote multilingualism, which can be well achieved if all the structures of a dictionary are arranged properly.

2.14 SINGH (1982)

As far as Singh (1982) is concerned, the general structure of a dictionary is decided at the beginning of the work. Whatever the type and size of the dictionary, there are certain features common to all dictionaries. Every dictionary has roughly three parts. The first part contains the prefatorial matter (front matter), introduction and the reader's guide. The second part is the dictionary proper (central list). The third part contains the appendices (back matter) – supplementary material for providing additional information generally required by and valuable to language learners. These three are the most important structures that dictionaries need to have, because all other structures fall under these three structures. The importance of notation is explained by Singh (1982) as follows:

The user of a dictionary is not a lexicographer. He does not read the dictionary as a novel from cover to cover but consults it for some information usually about an individual entry. It is, therefore, not sufficient for a lexicographer only to define the lexical units in a proper way but also to present them in such a way that it is understood clearly and accurately. For this every dictionary should have an organized system of notations. There should be a proper presentation of entries and matters related to them so that it is self-explanatory.
(www.ciil-ebooks.net/html/lexico/link10.htm)

This means that the dictionary should be made with the dictionary user in mind. Not everybody will read a dictionary from cover to cover; most people would simply look for specific lemmas and their definitions. So, dictionary users need to be made aware of the importance of the front matter, contextual guidance, structural markers and the dictionary as a whole. According to Singh (1982), the reader's guide, also known as the front matter or 'Explanatory notes', is the most important part of the introduction (www.ciil-ebooks.net/html/lexico/link10.htm). It provides details of the various features of the dictionary to enable the reader to use it effectively. The different components of the Reader's Guide usually consist of the headword, structural markers, contextual guidance, the front matter itself, and explanations of things that are to be expected in the dictionary and how they work.

2.15 CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that the front matter is important and everything that can be confusing to the dictionary user should be recorded in the front matter, because the front matter is the pacesetter of the dictionary. The front matter should contain a reference as well as descriptions and explanations of everything or anything that may be confusing in the dictionary, such as structural markers, contextual guidance, zero equivalence, reversibility principle, paraphrasing and transliterating. All of this needs to be addressed first in the front matter.

The chapter has shown that Kriel's 2007 dictionary and Mojela *et al.*'s 2006 dictionary are found wanting, because their front matters have none of the aspects mentioned above. From the literature reviewed, it is evident that the front matter is an important structure of the

dictionary; without the front matter, the dictionary will be useless to most users as they will be lost from the word go, because they will not know what to do. The chapter has also highlighted the fact that contextual guidance makes things easier for the dictionary user.

CHAPTER 3

THE USE OF SEMICOLONS, THE FRONT MATTER AND CONTEXTUAL GUIDANCE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the use of semicolons, the front matter, and contextual guidance in bilingual dictionaries.

3.2 DEFINITION OF POLYSEMY AND SEMICOLONS

Finch (2003:237) explains polysemy as the existence of multiple senses of a word. Therefore, polysemy refers to words with numerous senses or meanings. Such words cannot replace each other in different contexts. In bilingual dictionaries, polysemy works together with semicolons. Semicolons are punctuation marks which are used to separate translation equivalents which cannot replace each other, thus making them polysemous senses. Translation equivalents are the explanations or words that carry the same meaning as the lemma or headword. A lemma can have a number of translation equivalents. According to wiki.answers.com/topic/semicolon, a semicolon is a type of punctuation mark that is used to join two independent clauses similar in topic. This is applicable when writing a book or an essay, but in lexicography or dictionary writing a semicolon is used for separating the polysemous senses. In some dictionaries, mostly monolingual dictionaries, polysemous senses are separated with numbers instead of semicolons.

The online dictionary, Wikipedia, says the following about the semicolon:

The semicolon (;) is a punctuation mark with several uses. The Italian printer Aldus Manutius the Elder established the practice of using the semicolon to separate words of opposed meaning and to indicate interdependent statements. The modern uses of the semicolon relate either to the listing of items or to the linking of related clauses. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semicolon)

Most people do not like using semicolons; they would rather use commas. This is mainly because they do not quite know the difference in meaning of these structural markers.

3.3 THE USE OF SEMICOLONS

A semicolon has several uses in a dictionary, but the most important is that it is used to separate independent words or translation equivalents – words that stand alone with the correct meaning but can never replace each other. If this was understood and implemented by lexicographers, the dictionary user would not be constantly lost and would not experience communication embarrassment. Examples of incorrect entries abound in the two bilingual dictionaries under scrutiny in this study. The first example is as follows:

(1) **baletši** musicians, bell-ringers (Kriel, 2007:7)

The example in (1) above is incorrect, because a comma has been used to separate words that are not synonymous. The correct usage should be:

(2) **baletši** musicians; bell-ringers

Let us scrutinise another example:

(3) **banamedi** passengers, riders, horsemen (Kriel, 2007:7)

This is a wrong presentation, because **passengers** can never replace **riders** and **horsemen** since **passengers** is polysemous to the other two equivalents. Again, **riders** and **horsemen** are synonyms to each other. The correct presentation of Example (3) above is as follows:

(4) **banamedi** passengers; riders, horsemen

The semicolon has been described as a difficult punctuation mark to use. The following observation is quite pertinent:

Lots of people aren't quite sure how to use a semicolon. The semicolon might be the most misunderstood punctuation mark in the English language. This dot-comma combination is often used where a period, colon, or even a plain old comma belongs. (Donovan, 2007)

Semicolons are often confusing because they are often found where commas or any other punctuation marks are meant to be. As already stated, a semicolon is one of the most confusing structural markers. Therefore, one has to be careful in using it. For a dictionary user, it would be best if the semicolon and the use of it were to be recorded in the users' guide of the dictionary (that is, the front matter). Another reason why the semicolon confuses users and ends up in wrong places is that it is used too often in writing in general. Conversely, where it is supposed to be used it is not used. For example:

(5) **aka** tell a lie, hook, kiss (Kriel, 2007:3)

These equivalents are correct, but they can never replace each other as they are polysemous senses. They are three different things, though correct as equivalents. The correct presentation is:

(6) **aka** tell a lie; hook; kiss

Wikipedia notes that "the semicolon is often used to separate elements of a string of text. The semicolon is commonly used as parts of emoticons, in order to indicate winking" (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semicolon). Semicolons are sometimes used in the same row as commas but emphasizing the differences between the groups or types of things listed or compared. For example:

(7) a. Every species has genders: horses: stallion, mare; humans: women, men.

or

b. **amana** v regarding; in connection with, with regard to (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:2)

3.4 THE PRESENTATION OF ARTICLES IN NORTHERN SOTHO DICTIONARIES

In bilingual dictionaries, semicolons are required to separate translation equivalents that cannot replace each other in any context because they are polysemous senses. However, this does not always happen in Northern Sotho/English dictionaries. Consider the example below:

(8) **baeng** guests, strangers, visitors (Kriel, 2007:6)

In this case, two of the equivalents are synonymous, that is **guests** and **visitors**, but **strangers** cannot be used to replace any of the two because it has a polysemous sense. The presentation is therefore wrong in terms of its use of both commas and semicolons. The correct entry is:

(9) **baeng** guests, visitors; strangers

In (9) above, **guests** and **visitors** have been correctly captured because a comma denotes that they are synonyms. By contrast, **strangers** is not a synonym to the preceding two entries but is polysemous to them.

Although the study thus far has only highlighted incorrect capturing of articles, it is important to mention that in some instances Northern Sotho dictionaries have reflected the articles correctly, as the following example illustrates:

(10) **add** v hlakanya; oketša; tšhela (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:122)

This presentation is correct because the translation equivalents express polysemous senses. As a result, they cannot replace or substitute each other. Another example in this regard is as follows:

(11) **agriculturalists** n balemi; balemiši (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:123)

The translation equivalents in (11) above are all correct but they differ in meaning, because **balemi** means **the workers** whereas **balemiši** means **the supervisors**. Thus, the two equivalents cannot replace each other in sentences.

Apart from Mojela *et al.* (2006), Kriel (2007) has also in some instances captured articles correctly, as evident in the example below:

(12) **thaba** mountain; be glad, rejoice, be cheerful (Kriel, 2007:157)

What one discerns in Example (12) above is that **mountain** is different from the other three translation equivalents that are synonyms and can replace each other, because **be glad**, **rejoice**, and **be cheerful** all mean be happy or smile.

3.5 THE FRONT MATTER

The dictionary is seen as a reference tool or a book of reference, so everything in it should be taken into consideration and given proper attention individually. Every dictionary structure needs to be focused on and dealt with individually before moving on to the next structure. All the guidance in this case appears in the reader's guide, also known as the front matter. Singh (1982) notes that the reader's guide is the most important part of the dictionary's introduction, as it provides details of the various features of the dictionary to enable the reader to use it effectively.

The front matter is a place where lexicographers should explain, describe and let the dictionary user know what to expect and how everything works in the dictionary. Aspects such as zero-equivalents, reversibility principle, paraphrasing, transliterating, contextual guidance and even structural markers should be explained in the front matter. Of interest also

is that there are no major differences between monolingual and bilingual dictionaries on this issue, as the following quotation explains:

Notation in a bilingual dictionary does not differ essentially from that in a monolingual dictionary. In a bilingual dictionary usually the front matter is given in both the source and the target language. Here information, not only of the source language, but also of the target language is given in terms of its history, writing system, pronunciation etc. The principles and the method of presenting equivalents are given. It would be useful if the dictionary presents a brief grammatical sketch of the two languages, thus providing a contrastive grammar. (Singh, 1982)

If every important structure of the dictionary was included in the front matter, then everything would be easy for the dictionary user. Even the list of the alphabet or the fact that the lemmas are entered in alphabetical order should be included in the front matter of the dictionary.

Looking at the two dictionaries chosen for this study, Kriel (2007) and Mojela *et al.* (2006), one observes that their front matters are incomplete, because they have almost nothing in them. Most of the important structures that should appear in the front matter are not there. See Figure 1 and Figure 2 below.

MOKGWATŠHOMIŠO WA PUKUNTŠU YE

Pukuntšu ye e na le dikarolo tše pedi. Pukuntšu ya mahlakore a mabedi e šoma ka dipolelo tše pedi ka go lekana, ke gore bobedi bjalo ka polelo ya gae le polelotebanywa. Se se ra gore Sesotho sa Leboa le Seisemane di hlalošwa go swana moo e lego gore di šoma bjalo ka polelo ya gae le polelotebanywa. Ke gore Sesotho sa Leboa-English e ka karolong ya mathomo ya pukuntšu mola English-Sesotho sa Leboa e le ka karolong ya bobedi.

- Hlokomela gore mantšu ka moka ao a hlalošwago goba dihlalošwa dikarolong ka moka tša pukuntšu a ngwalwa ka boso. Ka morago ga lentšu leo le hlalošwago, karolo ya polelo e latela ka sebopego sa khutsafatšo gomme gwa latela mantšu a phetolelo ka polelotebanywa.
- Pukuntšu ye e emetše tlhontšu ya polelo ka go bea ka pukuntšung mehuta ka moka ya dibopego tša polelo, e lego dihlalošwa tše nnyane go mantšu, dihlalošwa tša mantšu le dihlalošwa tša go feta mantšu. Ka mantšu a mangwe, o tla hwetša dihlalošwa tše ka moka ka mo pukuntšung ye.

Hlokomela mohlala wo o latelago:

man (n)-monna, human being

Dikhutsofatšo

adj - lehlaodi

n - leina

v - lediri

con - lekopanyi

dem - leekiši

prep - letlema

poss - lerui

neg - mofime wa kganetšo

int - lelahlelwa

int p - lebotšiši

pro - lelalaina

abbr - khutsofatšo

excl - lewaomakalo

det - Atikhiler

Dingwalwatshwano

Dingwalwatshwano di swaiwa ka dinomoro tše lekeletšego ka pele ka morago ga

Dingwalwatshwano. Go fa mohlala.

Fola'

Fola'

- Tlhomišo, kudu ya mantšu, e laola ka moo dingwalwatshwano di swanetšego go tšenywa ka gona ka pukuntšung. Se se ra gore dingwalwatshwano tšeo di šomišwago kudu di tšenywa pele ka gare ga makroseteraktšhara bjalo ka sehlošwa goba lentšu leo le hlalošwago.

(Mojela et al, 2006)

Figure 1: The front matter of *Sesotho sa Leboa/English Pukuntšu Dictionary*

PLEASE READ THIS

Before starting to use this dictionary, please read this explanation:

thuše, thušê must help
. . ga/sa/se . . not help

The first part of this powerful convention means that a verb ending in -e or -ê has a positive meaning of 'must do something', used in examples such as:

mo thušê! 'Help him' (*Imperative*)
ke nyaka gore le thušê 'I want you to help' (*Subjunctive*)

The second part of this convention means that, if a **ga** or **sa** or **se** occurs before the verb ending in -e or -ê, it has a negative meaning, for example:

ga ba thuše 'they are not helping' (*Indicative*)
ge ba sa thuše 'if they are not helping' (*Situative*)
ba ba sa thušego 'those who do not help' (*Relative*)
gore ba se thušê 'so that they do not help' (*Subjunctive*)
go se thušê 'not to help' (*Infinitive*)
ba se thuše 'they usually do not help' (*Habitual*)
ba se thušê 'then they did not help' (*Consecutive*)
se thušê! 'don't help!' (*Imperative*)

Figure 2: The front matter of *Pharos: Popular Northern Sotho Dictionary*

The front matters of these two dictionaries do not contain information that is important in terms of guiding users. For example, there is nothing about structural markers (the use of commas and semicolons) or polysemous senses and synonyms; neither is there any information on other structures of the dictionary as well as how articles will be separated. All that one can see in Figure 1 and Figure 2 above is an introduction which contains a list of the staff members, family members, contributors and the people who inspired them, consultants and prefixes.

The front matter cannot be taken for granted. As Nkhumeleni (2005:v) states, the front matter text is an important dictionary component that contains information regarding how to use the dictionary. This dictionary component should always be considered as important by both the lexicographer and the users of the dictionary. This means that the lexicographer should make the front matter clear, simple, easy and interesting for dictionary users and users should look forward to referring to the front matter with confidence. In addition, dictionary users must make it a point to visit the front matter before and during their use of the dictionary.

Modern bilingual dictionaries are designed to fulfill a much broader range of functions than their forerunners. Consequently, there has been an increasing awareness of the importance of teaching the intended user how to make best and full use of the dictionary information and the functions provided (Yong and Peng, 2007: 87). The front matter's task is to make sure the reader or the dictionary user knows and understands what is in the dictionary, how all the dictionary structures work and are connected, and how to access the dictionary in an easy and fast way. If all of this is outlined in the front matter, the dictionary will be user-friendly and up to standard.

In the light of this, it must be stated that the front matters of Mojela *et al.*'s *Sesotho sa Leboa Pukuntšu Dictionary* (2006) and Kriel's *Pharos Popular Northern Sotho Dictionary* (2007) need serious attention. The two sections on how to use the dictionary ('Mokgwatšhomišo ya pukuntšu ye' and 'Please read this', respectively) lack sufficient information on the dictionary and its structures, structural markers, the senses and everything important that needs to be known by the dictionary user before using the dictionary and even during their

use of the dictionary when they encounter problems. The researcher therefore proposes the following front matter which would be more appropriate for both dictionaries:

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AS IT IS IMPORTANT AND WILL ASSIST YOU IN USING THIS DICTIONARY

The entries of the headwords are going to be arranged alphabetically. The headwords are also known as lemmas and are written in bold on the left hand side of the dictionary, that is, on the **macrostructure** side. The translation equivalents will be entered starting with the known or most popularly used to the unknown or less used. These will be on the right hand side of the dictionary, that is, on the **microstructure** side. Look at the following example:

(13) **knife** n mphaka, thipa

Thereafter, lexicographers should name and explain the signs and abbreviations that are used to separate the lemmas from the translation equivalents and also the figures of speech that are used between the lemmas and the translation equivalents. In Example (13) above, the (n) that appears between the lemma and the translation equivalents means that the lemma is a noun. Other examples from Mojela *et al.* (2006) are listed below.

- a. adj – adjective – lehlaodi
- b. adv – adverb – lehlathi
- c. v – verb – lediri
- d. con – conjunctive – lekopanyi
- e. dem – demonstrative – lešupi (leekši – ideophone – ide)
- f. prep – preposition – letlema
- g. poss – possessive/ssion – leruri

h. neg – negative – mofime wa kganetšo

i. int – interjection – lelahlelwa

j. int p – interrogation – lebotšiši

k. inte – intensive verb – lediriši

l. pro – pronoun – lešalaina/lešala

m. abbr – abbreviation – khutsofatšo

n. excl – exclamation mark – leswaomakalo

o. det – determin(ation) – atikhiler

Figures of speech that are to be used and those that have already been used in the dictionary should be listed in the front matter. In addition, the punctuation marks are known as structural markers in translation practice and bilingual dictionaries. Here are some structural markers and what they represent or mean in various contexts.

(,) comma – this is used to separate synonyms and partial synonyms, that is, words that can replace each other in all contexts. For example:

(14) **tear** mookgo, mogokgo, keledi (Kriel, 2007:317)

(;) semicolon – this is used to separate polysemouse senses, which are words which cannot replace each other in any context. Every word in Example (15) below can stand on its own and has its own meaning.

(15) **bala** read; count; reckon; include

(~) combining tilde – this marker indicates that what follows is an extension of the lemma. The word that comes after it that is in bold and the first word in bold (the lemma) make one word, and after the second bold what comes after is the equivalent of the combined word. If the sign is before the other word (the extensional word) it

means the word comes after the lemma, but if the sign comes after the second word (the extensional word) it means the lemma comes after the second word. For example:

(16) **tale** mosela; ~ **end** ntlha (Kriel, 2007:336)

(/) forward slash – this is often used to separate synonyms (especially in a sentence) or contextual guidance or extensional words. In the case of extensional words, the words need to be explained as well. For example:

(17) **hloke**, **hloke** must lack/miss; **..ga/sa/se..**~ not be lacking

() [] parentheses and square brackets – these are often used to indicate contextual guidance or synonyms or other words that work hand-in-hand with the one before. For example:

(18) **home page** n [computer] letlakala la khomphutha la gae (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:156)

(19) **take** tšea; ~ **to** iša; ~ **from** amoga; (**accept**) amogela... (Kriel, 2007:316)

Once all of this has been done, the lexicographer can then explain concepts such as zero equivalence. Zero equivalence is where we find transliteration and paraphrasing instead of translation. In the case where a word does not have a translation equivalent, what happens is that the lemma is transliterated or paraphrased. In some cases, the lexicographer may opt for borrowing. See the two examples below.

(20) **computer** n khomphutha, khomphuthara

(21) **ntepa** n a triangular animal skin skirt worn to cover the buttocks (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:77)

The lemma in Example (20) above has been transliterated. The word has been borrowed from English and modified to look and sound like a Sepedi word. By contrast, Example (21) has

been paraphrased. The lemma has been explained or described in the target language since there is no equivalent for it in the second language.

Reversibility principle applies when what has been a lemma in the first section of the central list (Sepedi–English) becomes the translation equivalent and what has been a translation equivalent in the first part of the central list becomes a lemma in the second section (English–Sepedi). In other words, what has been on the macrostructure now appears in the microstructure and vice versa. For example:

From the first section (Sepedi–English):

(22) **ntlha** n point; end (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:77)

From the second section (English–Sepedi):

(23) a. **end** adv bofelo; mafelelong; magomong; khutlo; khona; ntlha (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:145)

b. **point** n ntlha (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:179)

Cross-referencing also requires attention. Cross-referencing is when a lemma has another lemma that differs from it in spelling and sound but has the same meaning or sense. Both lemmas are recorded individually, but the lemma that is frequently used is given an equivalent while the other lemma is referred to under the frequently used one. For example:

(24) **motoro** car

koloi SEE motoro

sefatanaga SEE motoro

The macrostructure of a dictionary consists of headwords or entries to which definitions (in the case of monolingual dictionaries) and equivalents (in the case of translation dictionaries)

are attached (Malange, 2010:19). The macrostructure appears on the left hand side of the dictionary. As a result of this, the macrostructure serves as the base of the dictionary and constitutes the central component (list) of the dictionary (Malange, 2010:19).

By contrast, the microstructure appears on the right hand side of the dictionary, that is, on the translation equivalent side. In this regard, Malange (2010:22) states the following: “the information on the right-hand side of the headword (reference unit) is a microstructure. This refers to encyclopaedic information, definitions, equivalents that assist users to understand the presented articles (headwords)”. Malange (2010:29) goes on to assert that the translation equivalent paradigm may be associated with a microstructure where the information regarding the headword or lemma is found in the dictionary.

In the light of this, this study argues that the presentation of the macrostructure and the microstructure in the dictionary, as difficult as it may be, has to be described and explained in the front matter of the dictionary, in order for the dictionary user to have an easy, smooth access to the dictionary’s information and to enjoy using the dictionary.

3.6 CONTEXTUAL GUIDANCE

Contextual guidance is when every translation equivalent is followed by guide words, words that help emphasise the meaning or equivalence or which show the dictionary user how and in what context the lemma can be used. Yong and Peng (2007:162) explain this as follows:

The information structure of the dictionary definition can roughly be considered as being made up of two parts: core meaning and contextual meaning. ‘Core meaning’ consists of the essential part of the information residing in the definition and ‘contextual meaning’ indicates various cases and restrictions that govern the core of the meaning.

Yong and Peng (2007:145) further make this assertion:

A distinction should be made between lexical meaning and contextual meaning of a word. Theoretically, what is reflected in dictionary definitions should be lexical meaning rather than contextual meaning. As translation equivalents rather than definitions are provided in bilingual dictionaries, a greater distance is bound to exist between the basic meaning of the word and its contextual use in bilingual dictionaries than in monolingual dictionaries.

The role of contextual guidance is to help the dictionary user to retrieve and understand the correct equivalents and their meanings. If done appropriately and correctly, contextual guidance will help prevent communication embarrassment, misunderstanding and miscommunication. This is why Malange (2010:27) states that contextual guidance assists dictionary users to understand presented lemmata in the dictionaries. The entries must not confuse the users. Lexicographers must make sure that every entry in the dictionary will be understood and that everything is related. This is one of the important aspects that should be included in the front matter and it should be well explained. The following example will help users to understand the translation equivalents before they choose their equivalent of choice:

(25) **mortify** bolaya, tlaiša (Kriel, 2007:267)

This entry is correct, but now contextual guidance is going to be added to make it easier for the dictionary user to choose the appropriate equivalent:

(26) **mortify** bolaya (ketlo e bolaya), tlaiša (bamo tlaiša)

Consider another example in which contextual guidance is crucially important in conveying meaning:

(27) **motive** lebaka, kgapeletšo, hlohleletšo (Kriel, 2007:267)

The entries **lebaka** and **kgapeletšo** cannot replace each other; neither can **lebaka** and **hlohleletšo**. By contrast, **kgapeletšo** and **hlohleletšo** are partial synonyms, because **kgapeletšo** means force and **hlohleletšo** can mean force, made a fool or encouragement. So the appropriate presentation should have included contextual guidance as follows:

(28) **motive** lebaka (kena le lebaka); kgapeletšo (ebe ele ka kgapeletšo), hlohleletšo (ebe ele ka hlohleletšo...)

3.7 CONCLUSION

The focus of this chapter has been the use of semicolons in bilingual dictionaries and the importance of the front matter and contextual guidance. The chapter has shown that a semicolon is a comma with a full stop above it and it is used to separate two or three complete sentences that are related, and in bilingual dictionaries it is used to separate polysemous senses, which are words that cannot replace each other in any context. The chapter has also shown that words with meanings that can replace each other are synonyms and those with different meanings which cannot replace each other are polysemous senses.

As has been shown in this chapter, the front matter is one of the most important structures of the dictionary. Its function is to help the dictionary user know and understand the dictionary, its different structures and what they represent or stand for. It also explains to the dictionary user how the front matter as well as the dictionary should be used. It is only appropriate that what is in the dictionary should be stated, explained and elaborated upon in the front matter, as this would prevent misunderstanding by the dictionary user.

The function of contextual guidance is to assist the dictionary user to understand the translation equivalents before choosing the most appropriate one. Contextual guidance works in conjunction with structural markers to ensure correct understanding of the entries in a dictionary.

As noted in various parts of this chapter, the structure of a dictionary should be clear, formal and attractive. All entries should be arranged in alphabetical order. Lexicographers need to be careful to avoid errors. Everything in the dictionary must be in order for the dictionary to be considered up to standard, up to date and user-friendly. Dictionary users consult dictionaries for a reason, namely, to learn a new word or a new language. So lexicographers should be meticulous when compiling dictionaries, because their aim, ultimately, is to satisfy the user's needs.

CHAPTER 4

THE USE OF THE COMMA, THE COLON AND THE FORWARD SLASH

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the use of the comma (,), the colon (:), and the forward slash (/) in Northern Sotho/English bilingual dictionaries.

4.2 DEFINITION OF A COMMA

According to Wikipedia,

the comma is a punctuation mark and includes several variants in various languages. It has the same shape as an apostrophe or single closing quotation mark in many typefaces, but it differs from them in being placed on the baseline of the text. Some typefaces render it as a small line, slightly curved or straight but inclined from the vertical, or with the appearance of a small, filled-in number 9. It is used to separate parts of a sentence such as clauses, and lists of three or more things. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comma)

Following this definition and explanation, one can acknowledge the importance of commas.

Consider the following examples and how they make use of commas:

- (1) a. She makes tasty cakes, and she's very generous.
- b. Many people believe in a divinity, but not many believe in God.
- c. Cooking requires three things: patience, creativity and a love for food.

4.3 DEFINITIONS OF SYNONYMS AND PARTIAL SYNONYMS

Jackson (2002:17) states that “synonymy is a widespread relation in English, in large part because there are words with similar meaning from more than one of the strata that make up the vocabulary”. This scholar further explains that synonyms are words that can replace each other in any or all contexts, whereas partial synonyms are words that can replace each other in some but not all contexts. In lexicography, as Mongwe (2006:71) advises, it is important that dictionary users do not confuse synonyms with lists of translation equivalents which represent the different polysemous senses of the lemma.

Hosana (2009:78) states the following about partial synonyms:

Partial synonyms in translation dictionary should receive lexicographic treatment because their meaning is not totally the same. The lexicographic principle is that the frequently used synonyms should receive full treatment whilst those that are not frequently used receive cross-referencing.

If lexicographers were to save space, this is where they should do it, but this will work better if cross-referencing is done with or to complete synonyms.

4.4 THE USE OF A COMMA AND COMMA VARIANTS

With regard to the use of a comma, Wikipedia says the following:

The comma is used in many contexts and languages, principally for separating things. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word *comma* comes directly from the Greek *komma* (κόμμα), which means *something cut off* or *a short clause*. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comma)

In written language, commas are used to give readers a chance to catch their breaths and to create meaning. In bilingual dictionaries, commas are used to separate synonymous senses and partial synonyms.

Mongwe (2006:70) explains that “using commas to separate the translation equivalents in one translation equivalent paradigm indicates that the lemmata are ordered according to the frequency criterion”. Commas are thus very important, more so because they are used to separate translation equivalents that share the same meaning and can replace each other. Furthermore, “the comma may be used to perform a number of functions in writing; commas are often used as markers in prose and lists; some are used as diacritics when combined with other characters” (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comma). The following example illustrates this:

(2) **dirišwa** apparatus, equipment (Kriel, 2007:19)

The translation equivalents here are partial synonyms, because they can replace each other, though not in all contexts.

A comma can also be used to indicate a list of items. For example:

(3) Foods that may cause you problems are tomatoes, bananas, cabbage and dried beans.

In addition, a comma may be used to indicate a pause in a sentence:

(4) Excuse me, can you please point me to the direction of the bathroom?

Lauw (1998:175) notes that commas separate different target language synonyms within a given target language synonym paradigm or list of synonyms. Similarly, Wikipedia states that “if the individual items of a list are long, complex, affixed with description, or themselves contain commas, semicolons may be preferred as separators, and the list may be introduced with a colon” (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comma). Consider the following examples:

(5) a. Every species has genders e.g. horses: stallion, mare; humans: women, men.

b. Every species has genders e.g. horses – stallion, mare; humans – women, men.

c. Pardon me; did you say anything?

Commas must not be taken for granted since, as Hughes (1990:21) indicates, they help the reader to make sense of what is written. Sometimes in certain texts a comma is used where a semicolon or a full-stop should have been used, in which case it is misplaced. Often too, commas are used where they are just not necessary. In bilingual dictionaries, a comma can be used to separate the synonymous equivalents or to separate the lemma from its equivalents. The example that follows illustrates this:

(6) a. **dula** live/stay; sit; dwell

or

b. **dula** live, stay; sit; dwell

A comma can also be used in compound sentences, as stated on www.xavier.edu/writing_center/semicolon.html: “Use a comma after the first independent clause when you link two independent clauses with one of the following coordinating conjunctions: *and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet*”. The following examples support this point:

(7) a. I am going home, and I intend to stay there.

b. It rained heavily during the afternoon, but we managed to have our picnic anyway.

c. They couldn't make it to the summit and back before dark, so they decided to camp for the night.

According to the free encyclopedia, “commas are used to separate items in lists, as in *They own a cat, a dog, two rabbits, and six mice*. In English, a comma may or may not be used before the final conjunction (*and, or, nor*) in a list of more than two elements” (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comma). It is important to emphasise that commas are used to separate items in a list and generally should not appear before conjunctions such as ‘and’, ‘or’ and ‘nor’ when the list of items contains no more than two items. The sentences that follow illustrate this point:

- (8) a. They own a cat, a dog, two rabbits and six mice.
- b. A robot has three coloured lights: red, yellow and green.
- c. I need a cup, teabag, saucer, sugar, milk and boiled water to make tea.

A comma is also used to separate a number of e-mail addresses which appear in a group e-mail. For example, if the researcher sends an email to a group of friends at once the address list is going to look like this:

(9) Subject: Fwd: FW: A MUST READ

----- Forwarded message -----From: Malebo <malebomp@gmail.com>Date: Thu, Jul 12, 2012 at 9:53 AMSubject: Fwd: FW: A MUST READTo: masheGO rose Ngwato <nrose02@gmail.com>, Mamahlako Martha Phahlamohlaka <pha.mahlako@gmail.com>, Bridget Nakana <mapulanakana@gmail.com>, bramley motala <bramleymtl02@gmail.com>, ngwanamogale ramadi <ngwanas@gmail.com>, ALYDIA MODJADJI LETSOALO <kgomotso.hunadi@gmail.com>, Mapula Makwela <sponjoo@gmail.com>, Vusi Mbazima <mbazimav@gmail.com>

In bilingual dictionaries, commas are used to separate synonyms and partial synonyms. For example:

(10) a. **amogetše** received, accepted

Accepted and **received** mean one and the same thing. If you **receive** something you actually **accept** it. Consider another example:

b. **adima** v lend, borrow (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:1)

This article is correct because **lend** and **borrow** are partial synonyms. Another example is:

c. **tetema** shake, tremble (Kriel, 2007:157)

This article is correct because the equivalents can replace each other.

Partial synonyms are words that cannot replace each other in all contexts, whereas complete or full synonyms can replace each other in all contexts because they express the same meaning. In bilingual dictionaries, they are separated by a comma. The following two tables illustrate the notion of partial synonyms and complete synonyms:

A		B		C		D		E
---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	---

Table 1: Partial synonyms

The table above represents partial synonyms, that is **intersect/interject/interact** and the one below represents 100% synonyms.

100% synonyms/complete synonyms
--

Table 2: Complete synonyms

In terms of bilingual dictionaries, Hosana (2009:77) states that

the reference marker **SEE** should always be used for cross-referencing of complete synonyms where a synonym pair has one to one semantic relationship. In case of partial synonyms, the reference marker **COMPARE** should always be used. This means that the synonym pairs (partial) are compared to one another.

This suggests that with complete synonyms there is no need to translate them all or to write the equivalents for all of them; only one has to be translated and the rest have to be referred to under the one translated. With partial synonyms, however, they have to be compared because they replace each other depending on the contexts. The example below illustrates this:

(11) **stay** dula

a. **live** SEE stay

b. **dwel** COMPARE stay

c. **remain** COMPARE stay

4.5 THE PRESENTATION OF ARTICLES IN NORTHERN SOTHO DICTIONARIES

As already indicated, in bilingual dictionaries commas are required to separate translation equivalents that can replace each other in all contexts. Often, however, they are incorrectly used in bilingual dictionaries, leading to miscommunication, as shown in the example below.

(12) **ahlola** judge, decide, condemn (Kriel, 2007:3)

The use of commas in the example above is incorrect, because **judge**, **decide** and **condemn** are not complete synonyms but partial synonyms. They are used differently, depending on the context, as the following sentences illustrate:

(13) a. They had to **judge** my work without me being there.

b. They had to **decide** on my work without me being there.

c. They had to **condemn** my work without me being there.

As the sentences above show, these words cannot replace each other and still retain the same meaning. The correct presentation of the lemma in Example (12) above should then be:

d. **ahlola** judge; decide; condemn

Consider another example of misplaced commas:

(14) **tema** paragraph, plot, passage (Kriel, 2007:156)

Paragraph and **passage** can be regarded as partial synonyms, because the term passage has two meanings, that is, a **passage** to walk through or a **passage** (paragraph) in a book, while a **plot** may mean a residential stand to build a house on or an area. In a case of this nature, a semicolon is required to separate the translation equivalents, not a comma. The correct presentation is as follows:

(15) **tema** paragraph; plot; passage

Let us examine yet another example from Kriel (2007:157):

(16) **tepa** skirt, gather much

The two translation equivalents in (16) above are two different things with two different meanings. The translation equivalents here are polysemous, because a **skirt** is a piece of

clothing while **gather much** is something that someone can do. The correct presentation of the lemma is therefore as follows:

(17) **tepa** skirt; gather much

Just as commas are often used where semicolons ought to be used, so too semicolons are often used where commas ought to be used. Consider the following example:

(18) **deaf n** sefoa; setholo (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:139)

The translation equivalents in (18) above are actually synonyms, because **sefoa** means a deaf person or animal and **setholo** also means a deaf person (Kriel, 2007). In this case, a comma is required, not a semicolon. The correct presentation is:

(18) **deaf n** sefoa, setholo

It must be acknowledged that there are instances where Kriel (2007) has used the correct entry. For example:

(19) **bonyenyane**, small(ness), little (Kriel, 2007:15)

The entry in (19) above is correct because **small** and **little** are synonymous senses as they can replace each other in most contexts. Therefore, the right structural marker has been used: it is a comma as it should be, not a semicolon.

Mojela *et al.* (2006) have also used the comma in many instances. Let us examine whether they have used them correctly. Look at the example below.

(20) **boelana** v reconcile, reunite (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:8)

The article above is correct because the translation equivalents are partial synonyms, which means they can replace each other in some but not all contexts. For example:

a. I want to **reconcile** with my husband.

b. I want to be **reunited** with my husband.

Let us look at another example where the comma has been used correctly:

(21) **boleng** n value, quality (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:9)

The article in (21) above is correct because the one translation equivalent implies the other. If someone says: ‘I want something of **value**’, we know they want something of **quality**, and if they say: ‘I want something of **quality**’, we know they want something of **value**.

4.6 CROSS-REFERENCING

Hosana (2009:84) states the following about cross-referencing:

The reference marker ‘SEE’ should always be used to indicate cross-referencing of a complete synonym where a synonym pair has one to one semantic relationship. Cross-references should be used in the treatment of synonym lemmata to show the interaction between the related lemmata.

This will help to save space in the dictionary and will also help the dictionary user to understand that the two words or senses are related and can replace each other. See the example below:

tipa knife

mphaka SEE tipa

okapi SEE tipa

Hosana (2009:77) further notes that “in case of partial synonyms, cross-referencing should not be the same as that of complete synonyms because partial synonyms do not share every aspect of their respective meanings”. This effectively means that partial synonyms should not be cross-referenced because they cannot replace each other in all contexts; only complete synonyms should have cross-referencing since they can replace each other in all contexts. Cross-referencing should be given to lemmas that are less popular and less used and should be referred to under the more popular and mostly used lemmas that have more translation equivalents. For example:

tipa knife

mphaka SEE tipa

okapi COMPARE tipa

In contrast to complete synonyms, partial synonyms should be given explanations or their own definitions.

Now let us look at two more punctuation markers that form part of structural markers in a dictionary: the colon (:) and the forward slash (/).

4.7 THE USE OF A COLON

A detailed definition of the colon can be found on Study Zone (2011) and it reads as follows:

A colon consists of two dots, one above the other **:**. The colon is often used to introduce a list of items. For example: You will need to bring three things to the party: some food, something to drink, and a small gift for the hostess. This sentence contains a list of three items. The first part of the sentence tells you that there will be three

things; then the colon tells you “here are the three things.” You can also use a colon to introduce an explanation or a definition of something. For instance: ‘I’ll tell you what I’m going to do: I’m going to quit!’ ‘Elephant (noun): a large grey mammal found in Africa and India.’

From the above quotation, one can say that a colon has several functions as it can be used to introduce a list of items, an explanation, elaboration, or a definition as well as a list of things that come after it.

Another definition of a colon can be found on the web link <http://koa.iolani.org/Keables/KeablesGuide/PartFour/SemicolonsandColons.htm#col1> where it is stated that “a colon is a good way to introduce quotations, especially longer quotations. The sentence that leads into the quotation must treat the colon as an ‘equals’ sign or an arrow”.

In most writing, a semicolon is used to separate complete and related sentences, whereas a colon is mostly followed by complete sentences which can be a simple list of examples or just an explanation. Again, www.informatics.sussex.ac.uk/department/docs/.../node17.html notes that “the colon (:) seems to bewilder many people, though it’s really rather easy to use correctly, since it has only one major use.” Its major use is to introduce. Consider the following sentences:

- (22) a. There are three colours on the traffic lights: red, yellow and green.
- b. He has three cars: Polo Classic, BMW and a Land Rover.
- c. You have three choices: rice, pap or samp.

To be a good writer, one has to know what should come before and after any structural marker or punctuation mark. It is important to note that punctuation marks have specific places where they fit; they are not meant to be used anywhere or everywhere. That is why www.informatics.sussex.ac.uk/department/docs/.../node17.html explains that a “colon is

never preceded by a white space and never followed by anything except a single white space.”

In writing, people generally do not use colons as often as they should. The reason is that often they are not aware of its value, as the following quotation indicates: “unaware of its value, many writers do not use the colon enough” (<http://koa.iolani.org/Keables/KeablesGuide/PartFour/SemicolonsandColons.htm#col1>).

Some of the uses of a colon are as follows:

i) Separation of a book title from its subtitle

(23) a. Punctuation: A useful guide

b. Pharos: Popular Northern Sotho dictionary.

c. A practical guide to lexicography: Terminology and lexicography research and practice

ii) An introduction of equivalents

Here, examples have been taken from Northern Sotho–English and English–Northern Sotho dictionaries and colons inserted.

(24) a. **tenega**: exhaustion; disgusting (Kriel, 2006:157)

b. **mafelo**: n places; fields; areas (Mojela *et al.*, 2006:51)

c. **tetema**: shake, tremble (Kriel, 2007:157)

iii) Reflection of time

Sometimes colons are used to separate hours from minutes, as in the following examples:

(25) a. 3:30 p.m.

b. 17:15

c. 5:00 a.m.

Having said all of this, it must be reiterated that in bilingual dictionaries a colon can be used to introduce translation equivalents, separating them from the lemmatas or headwords, marking the beginning of the translation equivalents. The importance of this can be illustrated by using examples from Kriel's Northern Sotho/English dictionary.

(26) **eketša** add, increase (Kriel, 2007:30)

In this example, a colon has not been used to separate the lemmata from the translation equivalents. With the introduction of a colon, the article will look like this:

(27) **eketša:** add, increase

Consider another example:

(28) **fofile** flew, jumped (Kriel, 2007:33)

The article in Example (28) above is correct, but with the introduction of a colon it is going to be as follows:

(29) **fofile:** flew, jumped

A third example would be:

(30) **dikwankwetla** giants, strongmen (Kriel, 2007:19)

This article is also presented without a colon. With the colon it is going to be as follows:

(31) **dikwankwetla:** giants, strongmen

The introduction of a colon in the examples above is suitable and effective as it serves as a means of indicating the equivalents that follow.

4.8 THE USE OF THE FORWARD SLASH

According to Wikipedia, “the slash (/) is a sign used as a punctuation mark and for various other purposes. It is often called a forward slash (a retronym used to distinguish the slash from the backslash, ‘\’), and many other alternative names” (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forward_slashes). In addition, www.informatics.sussex.ac.uk/department/docs/.../node17.html notes that the slash (/) is also called the oblique, the virgule, the stroke, the solidus or the shilling mark.

Forward slashes are generally used to separate alternatives, and they also stand for the word ‘or’. For example:

(32) a. Male/female

b. Yes/no

c. He/she

Usually, there should be no space before and after the forward slash, as in the example fruits/vegetables. However, there are exceptions with regard to a new paragraph or line. For example:

(33) a. Roses are red / violets are blue

When used between two or more names, the slash will appear as follows:

(33) b. Western Cape / Northern Cape

According to Prinsloo and De Schryver (2002), the symbol (/) is used to show a range of possibilities, or features between the two numbers of a fraction. This punctuation marker is often used in different ways and places, for example in website addresses, between two words or sentences that are related and one can be used instead of the other depending on the context.

Despite its many names and uses, a forward slash can also be used in bilingual dictionaries. It can be used to separate complete synonyms, while partial synonyms can be separated with a comma. This will make things easier for the dictionary user, as long as everything is explained in the front matter of the dictionary. In bilingual dictionaries, the use of the forward slash will make the articles appear as follows:

(34) **fofela** fly/jump towards (Kriel, 2007:33)

or

(35) **fofafa** do a little flying/jumping (Kriel, 2007:33)

The forward slashes in the articles in Examples (34) and (35) above are there to emphasize that the words or phrases that appear as equivalents are actually synonyms, which means they can replace each other.

Complete synonyms must be separated with a forward slash, partial synonyms with a comma and polysemous senses with a semicolon, as exemplified below:

(36) a. **dula**: sit down; live/stay, dwell

b. **alafiša** cure, cause/help to be cured (Kriel, 2007:3)

c. **hlabilwe** has been stabbed/slaughtered/struck (Kriel, 2007:39)

With contextual guidance, the articles in (36) above will look as follows:

- (37) a. **dula:** sit down (on a chair); live (in Mankweng)/stay (in Mankweng), dwell (in Mankweng)
- b. **alafiša** cure (for my headache), cause (my headache to disappear)/help to be cured (of my headache)
- c. **hlabilwe** has been stabbed (me at the back)/slaughtered (a cow)/struck (him)

This last example is a complete entry that should be in the dictionary. A comma alone is confusing, since it separates both the synonyms and the partial synonyms, whereas they are not the same thing. Complete synonyms can replace each other in all contexts and partial synonyms only in some contexts. So it will be a lot easier and more understandable for the dictionary user if the forward slash were introduced and used to separate the synonyms, alongside a comma for the partial synonyms and a semicolon for polysemous senses.

4.9 CONCLUSION

As has been shown throughout this work, there are a number of punctuation markers used in dictionaries which are also known as structural markers in bilingual dictionaries. In this chapter, three main structural markers have been discussed: the comma, the colon and the forward slash.

As illustrated above, in bilingual dictionaries a comma should be used to separate synonyms (and partial synonyms). Synonyms can replace each other in all contexts, whereas partial synonyms can replace each other in some but not all contexts.

The chapter further discussed the function of the colon and the forward slash. The colon is one of the most important punctuation markers, as its purpose is to introduce lists,

elaborations, and definitions. In bilingual dictionaries, it should be used to introduce translation equivalents, and this in turn will indicate the end of the lemma and the beginning of the translation equivalents. The function of the forward slash is to separate words that can replace each other such as male/female and he/she. In a nutshell, any dictionary worth its name will not ignore the importance of commas, colons and forward slashes.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the conclusion of this study. It achieves this aim by offering a summary of each chapter, highlighting recommendations which are based on the findings of the study.

5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 was an introduction to the study, which included a background to the study, the aim of the study, the research methods used in the study, and the significance of the study.

Chapter 2 presented a literature review. This is where the researcher consulted a number of books or sources to get information pertaining to the study. The information presented in this chapter revolves around structural markers such as commas and semicolons (for synonyms and polysemous senses, respectively), the front matter, contextual guidance, and the general use of structural markers in bilingual dictionaries.

Chapter 3 focused on the use of semicolons and the expression of polysemous senses in bilingual dictionaries. The chapter discussed various situations which affect the way in which translation equivalents should appear in bilingual dictionaries.

Chapter 4 concentrated on the use of commas, colons and forward slashes. The chapter highlighted the fact that the correct usage of these punctuation marks in bilingual dictionaries leads to the correct interpretation of articles that appear in the dictionaries.

Chapter 5, as already noted above, is the conclusion of the study which embraces findings and recommendations

5.3 FINDINGS

The findings of the study are as follows:

- Structural markers are important and should not be taken for granted in bilingual dictionaries.
- Lexicographers often confuse structural markers such as semicolons with commas and vice versa.
- The front matter in *Sesotho sa Leboa/English Pukuntšu Dictionary* and *Pharos: Popular Northern Sotho Dictionary* is incomplete. Most of the important information that should appear in the front matter is not presented. These dictionaries do not have enough information to help dictionary users to retrieve and interpret the articles successfully and correctly.
- Contextual guidance is also of vital importance, yet it has not been taken seriously in both *Sesotho sa Leboa/English Pukuntšu Dictionary* and *Pharos: Popular Northern Sotho Dictionary*.
- There are lots of synonyms in the dictionaries listed above, but there is hardly any cross-referencing and contextual guidance for both polysemous and synonymous senses to help guide dictionary users.
- In many instances, commas and semicolons are misplaced and therefore cause confusion and communication embarrassment in *Sesotho sa Leboa/English Pukuntšu Dictionary* and *Pharos: Popular Northern Sotho Dictionary*

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings outlined above, this study makes the following recommendations:

- Structural markers should be taken seriously by lexicographers. This means a comma should be used to separate synonymous and partial synonymous senses, while semicolons should separate polysemous senses. Moreover, this should be done consistently to assist dictionary users to get the correct information or the appropriate translation equivalents.
- Anything that is likely to confuse the dictionary user should be thoroughly explained in the front matter.
- Every translation equivalent should have contextual guidance, especially in relation to partial synonyms and polysemous senses, as this will help emphasize the different meanings.
- Lexicographers need to take into consideration the interests of dictionary users when compiling dictionaries, as this will result in compiling user-friendly dictionaries.
- It is important for lexicographers to realize that a colon should be used to introduce translation equivalents and a forward slash to separate complete synonyms.
- If lexicographers feel the need to save space and money in dictionary-making, they should consider using cross-referencing: **SEE** should be used to refer to complete synonyms and **COMPARE** should be used to refer to partial synonyms.

REFERENCES

- Bejoint, H. 2004. *Modern Lexicography: An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Donovan, M. 2007. Punctuation Marks: How to Use a Semicolon. www.writingforward.com/grammar/punctuation-marks/how-to-use-a-semicolon Accessed on 2012/07/31.
- Finch, G. 2003. *How to Study Linguistics. A Guide to Understanding Language*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gouws, R.H. 1999. *Equivalent Relations in Translation Dictionaries*. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.
- Gouws, R.H. 2002. Nitching as a Macrostructural Procedure. *Lexikos* 12: 133-158.
- Gouws, R.H. 2003. *A Practical Guide to Lexicography: Terminology and Lexicography Research and Practice*. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.
- Gouws, R.H. 2004. Outer Texts in Bilingual Dictionaries. *Lexikos* 14: 67-88
- Gouws, R.H and Prinsloo, D.J. 2005. *Principles and Practice of South African Lexicography*. Stellenbosch: Sun Press.
- Hosana, N.A. 2009. *The Primacy of Semantic Comments in Xitsonga/English Dikixinari/Dictionary: A Lexicographic Analysis*. Unpublished Master's Dissertation, University of Limpopo.
- <http://koa.iolani.org/Keables/KeablesGuide/PartFour/SemicolonsandColons.htm#col1>
Accessed on 2012/08/05.
- Hughes, V. 1990. *English Language Skills*. London: Macmillan.
- Jackson, H. 2002. *Lexicography: An Introduction*. London: Routledge.

Kriel, T.J. 2007. *Pharos: Popular Northern Sotho Dictionary*. Cape Town: Pharos Publishers.

Lauw, P.A. 1998. Synonymy in the Translation Equivalent Paradigms of a Standard Translation Dictionary. *Lexikos* 8: 173-182.

Machimana, A.S. 2009. *The Ordering of Senses in English–Xitsonga Bilingual Dictionaries*. Unpublished Master's Dissertation, University of Limpopo.

Malange, S.A. 2010. *Ostensive Addressing as an Approach in the Tshivenda Translation Dictionaries: An Analysis*. Unpublished Master's Dissertation, University of Limpopo.

Manong, L.T. 2004. *Presentation of Commas and Semicolons as Structural Markers in the Microstructures of English–Northern Sotho Bilingual Dictionaries: An Analysis*. Unpublished Master's Dissertation, University of the North.

Mohlala, M.B. 2010. *The Role of Microstructure with Reference to English and Northern Sotho–English Dictionaries: A Comprehensive Lexicographic Analysis*. Unpublished Master's Dissertation, University of Limpopo.

Mojela, V., Mogodi, P.V., Mphahlele, M. and Selokela, R. 2006. *Sesotho sa Leboa/English Pukuntšu Dictionary*. Cape Town: Creda Communications.

Mongwe, M.J. 2006. *The Role of South African National Lexicography Units in the Planning and Compilation of Multifunctional Bilingual Dictionaries*. Unpublished Master's Dissertation, University of Stellenbosch.

Mphahlele, M.C. 2001. *A Model to Achieve Communicative Equivalence in Translation Dictionaries*. Unpublished Master's Dissertation, University of Stellenbosch.

Nkhumeleni, A.A. 2005. *The Front Matter Text as an Important Component of a Dictionary (Tshivenda Bilingual Dictionaries)*. Unpublished Master's Dissertation, University of Limpopo.

Prinsloo, D.J. and De Schryver, G. 2002. Reversing an African-Language Lexicon: The *Northern Sotho Terminology and Orthography No 4* as a Case in Point. *South African Journal of African Languages* 2: 161-185. tshwanedje.com/publications/reverse.pdf Accessed on 2012/09/25.

Singh, R.A. 1982. *An Introduction to Lexicography*. Ciil Occasional Monograph Series, Vol. 26. www.ciil-ebooks.net/html/lexico/link10.htm Accessed on 2012/07/25.

Study Zone. 2011. Using Colons and Semi-colons. web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/410/grammar/colons.htm Accessed on 2012/08/05.

Yong, H and Peng, J. 2007. *Bilingual Lexicography from a Communicative Perspective*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

wiki.answers.com/topic/semicolon Accessed on 2012/08/02.

Wikipedia. Comma. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comma Accessed on 2012/07/31.

Wikipedia. Semicolon. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semicolon Accessed on 2012/07/30.

Wikipedia. Slash. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forward_slashes Accessed on 2012/09/26.

www.informatics.sussex.ac.uk/department/docs/.../node17.html Accessed on 2012/08/05.

www.wisegeek.com/what-is-a-dictionary.htm Accessed on 2012/08/01.

www.xavier.edu/writing_center/semicolo.html Accessed on 2012/09/14.