ESL LEARNER DICTIONARIES:
A STUDY OF DEFINITION DIFFICULTY

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ESL teachers frequently recommend dictionaries to their students, and nearly every learner owns one. Although many dictionaries may seem much alike, there are differences in the defining styles and techniques they employ that may considerably influence how useful learners will find them. However, just what sort of definitions and explanations learners actually find most helpful and understandable is little understood.

To investigate this question, ESL students at the University of Hawaii were asked to evaluate a sample of entries illustrating different defining practices commonly used in English dictionaries. The entries were taken from two well known learner's dictionaries, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary and the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, and a widely used dictionary for native speakers, Webster's New World Dictionary.

A significant majority of these learners consistently preferred entries from Longman. Possible factors contributing to this preference, and Implications for other learners, ESL teachers, and lexicographers are discussed.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The Problem

Nearly every ESL student buys a dictionary. Given the considerable range of bilingual, native speaker, and learner varieties available, what sort of dictionaries will learners find most helpful? Research shows (1) that many learners are primarily concerned with dictionaries for finding the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases, and make far less use of the pronunciation, syntactic, and other kinds of information that dictionaries often contain; and (2) that many learners find monolingual dictionaries more helpful for this purpose than bilingual ones (Tomaszczyk 1979:112, Bejoint 1981:217).

Although many monolingual dictionaries now on the market may seem much alike to the casual observer, with closer scrutiny it becomes clear that there are numerous differences between them that may affect how useful learners will find them. These differences occur in both the range of information that these dictionaries contain as well as in how it is presented. They include such things as the words included, the defining styles and techniques used to explain these words, the use of illustrative phrases and examples, entry format, the treatment of idioms.

Some of these differences may be more important than others for comprehension purposes. For example, there is frequently a great deal of agreement between the word lists in dictionaries of similar size. And the effective use of features that influence the finding of words, such as entry format and cross referencing, is often a matter of
reading the introduction to the dictionary. Differences in defining styles and the use of verbal illustration may be more important. For even if a learner can locate the entry for a word, it will be of little help if the explanation cannot be understood.

Many lexicographers feel that dictionaries should be designed to suit the needs of the audience they are intended for (Householder and Saporta 1962:279, Cowie 1979:82). They also readily admit, however, that relatively little is known about which lexicographic practices and methods learners consider helpful, and which they do not (Bejoint 1981, Tomaszczyk 1979). In view of their primary concern with finding meaning, and their limited English abilities, it seems likely that ESL learners may be particularly sensitive to differences in defining style and definition complexity. However, just what sort of definitions and explanations learners actually find most helpful and easy to understand is not very well understood.

The Need for the Study

This question has been partially addressed in critical reviews in the professional literature that evaluate, compare and recommend various dictionaries. However, there are differing opinions reflected in these articles, and virtually all of them are written from the point of view of linguists, lexicographers, and ESL educators. Also, since selecting dictionaries for learners is an important and recurrent concern, ESL teachers are regularly exposed to conflicting publishers' claims designed to influence these decisions. More attention needs to be given to the actual learners' point of view. How helpful and understandable do the learners themselves consider the definitions and
explanations in the sorts of dictionaries being recommended to them?

It has been suggested that dictionaries might be improved by feedback supplied by non-expert native speaker informants from the ranks of their potential users (Bejoint 1979). Similarly, ESL learners may be able to provide valuable insights about which methods of defining and explaining words are most helpful for them.

The Scope of the Study

This paper is an attempt to explore this little known area of learners' perceptions and assessments of definition intelligibility. Chapter II surveys the findings of research on dictionary use among language learners, and considers some possible insights they may provide on the role of definitions and explanations. Chapter III presents an introductory overview of defining in lexicography and examines how defining styles and techniques may affect the usefulness of bilingual and monolingual dictionaries for finding meaning. Chapter IV discusses some different defining policies followed by various kinds of monolingual dictionaries that ESL learners might use, and identifies some reasons and issues behind adopting these policies. The next section, Chapter V, describes a study which was undertaken to determine the intelligibility of a sample of definitions from three widely used English dictionaries. And the last parts, Chapters VI and VII report and discuss the results, conclusions, and implications of this study.

It is hoped that this research will complement the existing literature on dictionaries for ESL learners, put relevant publishers' claims in perspective, and help ESL instructors and program directors
in deciding what dictionaries to recommend to their students. This study may also be of interest to lexicographers writing definitions with the needs and abilities of foreign language learners in mind.
CHAPTER II

LANGUAGE LEARNERS' USE OF DICTIONARIES

In contrast to the vast numbers and varieties of dictionaries produced and sold around the world, there are strikingly few published studies of how the people that buy them actually use them, or of their attitudes and expectations about them (Tomaszczyk 1979:103). Bejoint (1981:207) suggests that dictionary publishers may have undertaken such studies, but for commercial reasons they do not generally release them. The earliest of the few studies of this sort that are available explored dictionary use among native speakers. Only in the last few years have studies been done on dictionary use among foreign language learners. The former are important because they served in part as models for the latter (Bejoint 1981:207).

Xarnhart (1962) investigated dictionary use among college students in the United States. He asked teachers in 99 different colleges to rate six types of information usually contained in collegiate dictionaries in order of their importance to college freshmen. His results showed that college freshmen use their dictionaries most often to look for meaning, followed closely by spelling. Pronunciation was ranked third, and synonyms, usage, and etymologies were considered far less important (Barnhart 1962:162). It is interesting to note that it was the teachers, and not the users themselves, who supplied the data in this case.

Quirk (1973) studied what uses native English speaking British university students made of monolingual English dictionaries. His subjects were 220 first year students at University College London,
about equally divided between science and humanities majors. In addition to a wide range of questions about what dictionaries they owned and how frequently they consulted them, these students were asked to indicate how useful and important various kinds of dictionary information were to them. Ecce as well, the great majority of the respondents considered meaning by far the most frequent and important information sought after in dictionaries. Spelling was ranked second, but considerably lower than meaning. Synonyms, etymologies, usage, pronunciation, and parts of speech were considered less important (Quirk 1973:80-81).

An overall view of Quirk's results indicated that native speakers use their dictionaries almost exclusively for decoding, rarely for encoding (p. 80). It is also interesting that nearly 25 percent felt that the definitions in their dictionaries should be made "less complicated, lengthy, and opaque" (p. 84).

One of the first published studies of dictionary use among second language learners is Tomasczyk's (1979) paper "Dictionaries: Users and uses." His subjects were 284 foreign students and language majors attending American and Polish universities, and 165 language instructors and translators. Employing similar methods as the Quirk (1973) study, he also asked the informants questions about what dictionaries they used, what sorts of information they considered most important, and how satisfied they were with their dictionaries.

Tomaszczyk (1979:108-116) found that a vast majority of these foreign language learners and speakers use dictionaries. He also reported that although the use of monolingual dictionaries becomes more extensive and frequent as the subjects' proficiency increases, most of these learners continue to use bilingual ones. However, almost
all of these informants said their bilingual dictionaries were inferior and less helpful than their monolingual ones.

Like the native speakers in the Quirk (1973) study, these users seemed to use dictionaries far more often for comprehension than for production purposes. They were chiefly interested in meaning and spelling, and much less interested in grammatical information, etymologies, or pronunciation.

It is also interesting to note that the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary was the most widely used English dictionary among these informants.

A similar though somewhat smaller study by Bejoint (1981) confirmed many of Tomaszczyk's results. Bejoint questioned 122 EFL students at the University of Lyon about their use and opinions of monolingual English dictionaries.

He also found that a large majority of learners use dictionaries. The informants generally used both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, but also considered monolingual dictionaries on the whole more satisfactory and useful than bilingual ones (p. 217).

These learners also used their dictionaries primarily for decoding purposes. They were mainly concerned with finding meaning, and considerably less concerned with such things as syntactic information, pronunciation, and etymologies (p. 215).

Few of these learners read the introductory matter in their dictionaries, which may partially explain why they tend to disregard most of the coded information these sections explain (e.g. usage, grammar, regional differences). Bejoint suggests that since learners tend to overlook this sort of information, dictionaries designed for
native speakers (which generally contain much less of it) might be just as useful to learners as ESL dictionaries (p. 220).

By far the most widely used English dictionaries in this group of learners were the Oxford Advanced Learner's, the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, and the Concise Oxford Dictionary. Bejoint noted that 85 percent of these learners said they had selected their dictionaries because they had been recommended by their teachers, showing, he feels, the extent to which learners can rely on the opinions of their instructors (p. 214).

Bejoint suggests that the similarity between his results and Tomaszczyk's (1979) could possibly indicate that these are general patterns of dictionary use among foreign language learners (p. 220). He also raises an interesting question for further study: when seeking meaning, do learners rely more on definitions than examples, or vice versa (p. 213)?

Baxter (1980) investigated the influence of bilingual and monolingual dictionary use on patterns of vocabulary acquisition among EFL students in Japan. He concluded that prolonged dependency on bilingual dictionaries probably tends to retard the development of second language vocabulary and expressive fluency (p. 336).

In a pilot study for the present paper, MacFarquhar surveyed dictionary use among 66 Asian foreign students enrolled in ESL classes at the University of Hawaii. These students were young adults from Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Indonesia seeking a variety of degrees in science, business administration, and the humanities. Most were in their 20's, and had been studying English for at least seven years.
Although this study involved fewer respondents and asked fewer questions than the Baxter (1980) and Bejoint (1981) studies it was modeled on, the major results were again highly similar. Most of these learners owned and used both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries. They were also primarily concerned with dictionaries for comprehension purposes (finding meaning), not production, and most said they used their dictionaries most frequently while reading.

Very few of these learners claimed to have read their dictionary introductions carefully, and, not surprisingly, few said they looked up syntactic, pronunciation, or usage information very frequently either.

In contrast to several of the studies mentioned above, very few of these learners were familiar with the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary or the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. About a third of these students said they used the American Heritage Dictionary, Paperback Edition (1976). This is the one recommended on many University of Hawaii ESL syllabuses, again showing the potential importance of teacher recommendations for dictionaries.

Conclusion

There is a good deal more useful and important data in the articles mentioned above than the brief summaries reported here include. Both language instructors and lexicographers would be interested in these appraisals of learners' language needs and reference skills. And the specific comments and suggestions that these learners made about a wide range of dictionary contents and organizational features are also quite instructive.
However, much of this information is more directly relevant to topics that lie outside the focus of this paper. What is especially important here is that all of the studies that have investigated learners' use of dictionaries show that they are primarily concerned with dictionaries for decoding purposes—for locating the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions.

There are several things that may influence how useful a dictionary will be to learners for finding meaning: (1) which words it contains; (2) how easy it is to find the words one is interested in; and (3) how understandable the explanations for the words are. Some of these features may be more important than others, however. The word lists in dictionaries of similar size may frequently be highly congruent (Barnhart 1962:164). This is probably a result of some of the chief methods used to select dictionary contents: word frequency counts, and a certain amount of eavesdropping and even outright copying from other competing dictionaries (Sledd 1972:120). It has been suggested, for example, that

Nearly all college dictionaries agree close to 90% of the time upon the choice of words to be entered, and differ largely in the number of abbreviations, geographical names, and biographical names to be included (Barnhart 1962:164).

The effective use of features that influence how easy it is to find words, such as entry format and methods of cross referencing, is often a matter of reading the introduction and becoming familiar with the particular systems a dictionary employs. However, even if a learner can find the entry for the word he is interested in, it will be of little help if the explanation cannot be understood. Thus a more fundamental factor determining how useful a dictionary will be to
learners for decoding purposes may be the difficulty of the actual definitions and explanations themselves. Although dictionaries can be distinguished according to many criteria, defining styles and definition intelligibility may be of key importance as far as learners are concerned.

There are also several reasons why the ways in which dictionaries present such things as syntactic, usage, and pronunciation information are probably not as important as clarity of meaning. Not only do most learners apparently pay little attention to grammatical information, but the effective use of this sort of material also usually depends on how familiar a user is with the coding systems being employed. Since these coding systems are frequently complex (Yorkey 1979:397), most learners will have to invest considerable study to master them (Scholfield 1982:188). Thus whatever system a learner has taken the time to become familiar with will probably be found the most understandable and useable. A similar argument could be made about the various pronunciation schemes that dictionaries employ. Etymologies were ranked very low in all of these studies, and spelling, apparently another major concern of many learners, can of course be found with little difference in any dictionary.

This writer does not mean to overstate this point, however. There are important differences in the ways different dictionaries present syntactic, pronunciation, and other kinds of information, and learners that do regularly use this sort of material may have valuable comments and suggestions to make about them. But since the studies surveyed here show that meaning is apparently the primary concern of
the majority of learners, it is felt that it is more important to focus on learner perceptions of definition difficulty and intelligibility.
Learner assessments of these other areas of lexicographic practice would also be interesting and could be explored in further studies.
CHAPTER III
DEFINING IN BILINGUAL AND MONOLINGUAL DICTIONARIES

In Chapter II it was observed that most learners consult dictionaries primarily for meaning, and that definition difficulty may play a key role in determining how useful learners will find a dictionary for this purpose. It was also noted that many learners say they find monolingual dictionaries more helpful and satisfactory than bilingual ones. This section will examine how defining styles and techniques may affect the usefulness of bilingual and monolingual dictionaries for finding meaning.

Defining in Lexicography

There are several general methods of defining usually employed by lexicographers. Some of the more common include defining by synonym, explanation, and contextualization.

With the method of synonyms, the user is given a synonym that presumably he already knows. The dictionary tells the user that the word being defined means the same thing as another word. Some advantages of this method are that such definitions can be simple, brief, and take up little space. However, because synonyms have similar but rarely exactly the same meaning and semantic range, this method used by itself alone runs the risk of misleading users (Robinson 1950:95).

In defining by explanation, meaning is expressed with a phrase or sentence that analyzes and explains the word being defined. One of the main advantages of this type of definition is that it can be made quite accurate and pinpoint specific senses for many sorts of words. A
possible disadvantage of this technique is that such definitions can be
difficult to write well and can take up a good deal of page space
(Robinson 1950:97).

**Contextualization** involves using the **word** being defined in a
context to illustrate its meaning, usually by providing an example phrase
or sentence that will show the user its meaning and use (Robinson 1955:
107).

In addition to selecting methods of defining, lexicographers
must also decide how to order multiple meanings. Some words may have
more than one meaning, usually called senses. For example, the word
"gather" can mean "to bring together," "to pick," "to increase gradually,"
or "to infer." Such words are called **polysemous** (Read 1973:171).
**Lexicographers** must decide how to arrange the various senses of a
polysemous word within an entry.

Many dictionaries handle polysemy by what is known as the
historical principle. Lexicographers examine dated records and samples
of actual usage, and then enter the oldest senses of a word first and
the newest last. The well known **Oxford English Dictionary** (1961) uses
this approach. Another method is to group related meanings together
(Mello Vianna 1981:xix). A third technique is based on word frequency
and semantic counts. Selections of running print are examined to find
how frequently the various senses of polysemous words occur. These
senses are then arranged in order of decreasing frequency: central,
or most **common meaning**, specialized meanings, and then rare or obsolete
meanings (Hulbert 1955:80).

A monolingual dictionary will often define words by several, or
even a combination of all of the **methods** of defining mentioned above.
Its treatment of polysemy will be largely dependent on policy decisions made by its editors (Hulbert 1955:81).

Defining in most bilingual dictionaries is usually done somewhat differently than in monolingual ones, for a variety of reasons. Since a major part of the bilingual dictionary market is made up of students, business men, and travelers, compactness and portability are important. There is a limit to how many words and how much information about them a bilingual dictionary can contain and still remain pocket sized or even very portable. The result is that bilingual dictionary users are very likely to encounter words that their dictionaries do not contain. The compilers of bilingual dictionaries try to compensate for this with small print and brief definitions. Most bilingual dictionaries thus tend to use the synonym method of defining almost exclusively. In this case the synonym given is usually a one or two word translation equivalent in the target language. Martin (1962:156) has summarized this common practice of bilingual definition writing as follows: "We want to boil our material down to essentials. In the interest of conciseness, we should aim at a single translation equivalent whenever possible."

Polysemy is frequently handled by listing additional one or two word translation equivalents. Some examples illustrate these common monolingual and bilingual definition formats:

**appear** ....**intr.v.** 1. To come into **view**, become visible: a boat appeared on the horizon. 2. To come into existence. 3. To seem or look: The coat appears to be blue. 4. To **seem** likely: It appears that they will be late. .........Syns: appear, look, seem, **v.** Core meaning: To have the appearance of: **He** appeared happy but he really wasn't. (Hello Vianna 1981:49).
bilingual

appear... valores, aparecer(se), mostrarse, (a)personarse, presentarse; britar, surgir, parecer, semejar; (for.) comparecer, (a)personarse. (Cuyas 1956:31).

This technique (bilingual) is not without its drawbacks, however. As Martin (1962:156) has observed.

There are, apparently, two purposes behind the common technique of piling up a group of synonyms in the target language: 1) to suggest to the translator a range of choices; 2) to give a clearer picture of the semantic spectrum of the entry item. But unless you give explicit directions for choosing among synonyms, the list will be confusing.

Some of the larger, more expensive bilingual dictionaries of major languages do include some contextualization and description, but the definitions in most of the smaller sized bilingual dictionaries that so many learners use are usually one word translation equivalents for as many different senses of a word the compilers decide to include.

In summary then, most monolingual dictionaries tend to employ both more room and a wider range of defining methods than most bilingual ones do. Whereas monolingual dictionary definitions tend to be combinations of explanation, description, contextualization, and synonyms, bilingual dictionary definitions tend to be brief translation equivalents. Monolingual dictionaries thus tend to provide not only more detailed and explicit definitions, but they also do more of the work of distinguishing specific senses of the user.

Another of the bilingual lexicographer's chief difficulties is that appropriate translation equivalents in the target language cannot always be found. Although it is usually possible to find equivalents for whole sentences, it may frequently be difficult to find exact...
correspondences for individual lexical items in two languages (Al-Kasimi 1977:62).

This is especially problematic with culture specific words. Since languages reflect and express the cultures of their speakers, many cultures simply do not have words for things native only to other cultures.

There are numerous examples of these sorts of cultural/linguistic gaps in the literature, especially with words referring to things such as religion, climate, technology, food, kinship, social and political institutions, flora and fauna, clothing and handicrafts.

Nguyen (1981) describes many of these kinds of differences between English and Vietnamese. For example, because of the multiple religions in Vietnam, Vietnamese contains many vocabulary items for honorific classifications of deities, genii, and spirits, and a whole range of different terms for various kinds of places of worship that do not have equivalents in English (p. 58). He reports 25 different items for the English verb "carry," and at least ten different vocabulary items for various kinds and states of rice (p. 59). Although most of these terms and concepts can be explained in English, the bilingual lexicographer would be hard put to find brief, accurate, translation equivalents. The same sort of difficulties would arise in trying to find Vietnamese equivalents for such American terms as coffee break, hitchhike, garage sale, gas-guzzler, or Alcoholics Anonymous (p. 65).

Nida (1964) has also commented on the difficulties of producing accurate translations. "Languages are basically part of culture, and words cannot be understood correctly apart from the local cultural phenomena for which they are symbols" (Nida 1964:97).
He mentions that in Yucatan, Mexico, there is almost no climatic correspondence to the four seasons of the temperate zones, making terms like "Spring" and "Autumn" difficult to translate into the local languages without considerable adaptation. Similarly, he reports that the word "desert" has no equivalent in the languages of these tropical areas (p. 91). He suggests that the greater the differences between two Cultures, the greater the difficulty in translating accurately is likely to be.

Other words just do not translate well. Zgusta (1970:7) discusses the difficulty of translating English "boyhood" into French. There is no really good equivalent. One can say "adolescence," or "jeunesse," but these are not restricted to male children in French like "boyhood" is in English. "Etat de garcon" gives a closer approximation of the sense of "boyhood," but it is not something that native speakers of French would use.

Similar items may not have the same semantic range in two different languages. Whereas English has "fingers" and "toes," Arabic has only one word, "isba," for both (Al-Kasimi 1977:64).

Slang, idioms, and figures of speech are also often difficult to translate accurately. Such terms and expressions may not have parallels in another language, or if there are similar concepts, they may be expressed quite differently.

There are also many linguistic differences between languages that may make finding good equivalents difficult. For example, the English nouns "food," "faith," and "love" must be translated as verbs in certain Indian languages of Mexico (Nida 1947:15).
Research shows that culture specific words, slang, rarer lexical items, and idiomatic expressions are among the types of information that learners most frequently look for in dictionaries (Bejoint 1981:218). In view of the difficulties of translating and defining many of these items in bilingual dictionaries, it is not surprising that learners may often find bilingual dictionaries less satisfying and helpful than monolingual ones (Tomaszczyk 1979, Bejoint 1981).

Conclusion

Because of limitations such as those discussed above, many lexicographers and ESL teachers consider bilingual dictionaries inadequate for advanced learners and foreign students.

During their career of studying English as a second or foreign language, students are likely to use three different kinds of dictionaries, each for a particular purpose, each with more or less value at each successive stage of their study.

The first kind, and the first that students are likely to use, is a bilingual dictionary . . . . Most teachers try to discourage their use, correctly recognizing their limitations and dangers. On the other hand, it is quite understandable that students, swimming in unfamiliar waters and often over their heads, should grasp at what appears to be the closest and safest straw. For special purposes, of course, bilingual dictionaries can be a respectable resource and a scholarly reference.

Objections to foreign students using a bilingual dictionary stem from at least two dangers in the practice: (1) At the initial stage of learning, students may assume that a language is just "a bag full of names," and that there exists a word-for-word correspondence between their own language and English . . . . (2) Students may become overly dependent, and then prolong their reliance, on its use. At some point in the study of English, preferably sooner than later, teachers should wean their students away from these word glosses and encourage them to use an . . . English-English dictionary (Yorkey 1974:16).
... a bilingual dictionary as a learning tool is better than nothing before and until the refugee can graduate into the use of a monolingual dictionary of English. It is in fact desirable that he/she be encouraged to switch to it as soon as possible (Nguyen 1981:67).

It should first be made clear that within the foreign language teaching system, bilingual dictionaries are designed to aid the learner in the early stages of his work on a foreign language, the ultimate goal being for him to acquire an ability to use monolingual dictionaries of various types ... (Tomaszczyk 1981: 289).

Although bilingual dictionaries are undoubtedly useful and important tools for beginning and lower intermediate learners, the research and the professional opinions surveyed here agree that advanced learners should probably be encouraged to use monolingual ones. The question then remains: What sort of monolingual dictionaries will learners find most helpful? By recommending a really useful monolingual dictionary, teachers might have better success in weaning learners away from bilingual ones.
CHAPTER IV

MONOLINGUAL DICTIONARIES FOR ESL LEARNERS

In the preceding chapter it was argued that there are a variety of reasons why advanced learners and foreign students may frequently find the definitions and explanations in monolingual dictionaries were helpful for finding meaning than those in bilingual dictionaries. There is a considerable range of monolingual dictionaries for learners to choose from, however. In this section, the various kinds of monolingual dictionaries available will be described, and then some critical evaluations and professional opinions as to which of them would be most helpful for learners will be surveyed. A number of questions and issues about the effectiveness of different defining policies and features used by some well known and highly recommended dictionaries will be discussed.

Types of Monolingual Dictionaries

There is currently a very large range and variety of monolingual English dictionaries on the market. Many of them, however, will not be suitable for the needs of advanced learners and foreign students. To begin with, a distinction should be made between general purpose dictionaries and dictionaries for specific purposes. General purpose dictionaries are designed to cover the lexical needs of as wide an audience as possible. These typically contain information about a word’s spelling, syllabification, pronunciation, part of speech, origin, meaning, and sometimes its usage and synonyms. Special purpose dictionaries are designed for more specific needs and limited uses.
These include dictionaries for spelling and word division, such as *Webster's Instant Word Guide* (1972), pronunciation dictionaries such as *Kenyon & Knott's Pronouncing Dictionary of American English* (1953), or other specialized word lists such as dictionaries of medical terminology, technical vocabularies, and so forth. Most foreign students will be primarily interested in general purpose dictionaries, and it is with these that this study is concerned.

General purpose English dictionaries come in a considerable variety of sizes. The largest are the vast, unabridged compilations such as the *Oxford English Dictionary* (1961), *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (1976), or *Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary* (1963) which all contain upwards of 450,000 entries.

The next largest are the standard college or semiabridged sizes, usually containing approximately 150,000 entries. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (1976), the *American Heritage Dictionary, New College Edition* (1975), and the *Random House College Dictionary* (1975) are some well known examples of these.

After the college sizes come the various abridged and concise models with anywhere from 50,000 to 100,000 entries. The *American Heritage Dictionary, Paperback Edition* (1976) with 55,000 entries, the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1976) with 74,000, and *Webster's New World Dictionary, Compact Edition* (1974) with 56,000 are common examples of this size.

The smallest English dictionaries are the assorted pocket sized editions designed for fast, simple reference usually containing less than 50,000 entries. Well known examples include *Webster's New World Dictionary* (1974).

Another major distinction among dictionaries is whether they are designed (1) for adults or for children, or (2) for native speakers or learners.

All of the examples mentioned above are designed primarily for adults. There are also numerous English dictionaries designed for children and younger users, and these come in several sizes as well. Children's dictionaries range from smaller works designed for preschoolers to larger intermediate dictionaries intended for middle and high school users.

Probably the most widely known school dictionaries in the United States are the Thorndike-Barnhart series. These include the Thorndike-Barnhart Beginning Dictionary (8th edition, 1974) with 26,000 entries designed for grades 3–8; the Thorndike-Barnhart Intermediate Dictionary (2nd edition, 1974) with 57,000 entries for grades 5–8; and the Thorndike-Barnhart High School Dictionary (1965) with 75,000 entries intended for use in grades 9–12. Some British examples include the Oxford Children's Dictionary in Color (1976) with 15,000 entries designed for grades 1–3, and the Oxford School Dictionary (1974) with 30,900 entries for grades 5–8. These dictionaries generally have larger print, more simplified entries, and more pictures than those designed for adults. Their word lists also reflect considerations of the sorts of terms younger users are likely to encounter. Complex or specialized words that may be included in adult dictionaries of comparable size will often be omitted from junior dictionaries.
In recent decades, lexicographers have become increasingly interested in how monolingual dictionaries for ESL learners might need to be different than those designed for native speakers (Jain 1981:274). A number of monolingual dictionaries designed specifically for ESL learners have been produced, also in a variety of different sizes. The smaller models contain a few hundred basic words, such as Alter's Essential English Dictionary (1978). The New Horizon Ladder Dictionary of the English Language (1969) contains 9500 entries based on 5000 of the most commonly used words in written English. There are several ESL dictionaries in the 20,000 to 35,000 entry range such as Chambers Second Learners' Dictionary (1978), West's International Reader's Dictionary (1977), and the Oxford Students' Dictionary (1978). The largest ESL dictionaries are comparable to abridged versions of college dictionaries designed for native speakers. The Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (1974) contains 50,000 headwords, and the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1978) has 55,000.

These learners dictionaries often differ from native speakers' dictionaries in several ways, reflecting what the lexicographers involved believe to be the needs of ESL learners. Especially the larger sized ESL dictionaries often provide more detailed guidance on matters of syntax, pronunciation, and cultural restrictions. They also frequently make much more use of verbal illustration and example phrases than native speaker dictionaries might. Native speakers' dictionaries, however, usually contain more etymological information, and define more and rarer senses.
Critical Evaluations of Monolingual Dictionaries

As illustrated above, there is a great variety of types and sizes of general purpose English dictionaries currently available. Which would be the most helpful for ESL learners? Unfortunately, publishers' advertisements and endpapers usually tend to sound rather similar, and are probably of limited reliability and usefulness. Competition between publishers is intense, making marketing and advertising important aspects of successful dictionary production. As a result, almost every dictionary claims to have the clearest definitions, to be the most up-to-date, the most indispensable, and the most readable.

Critical reviews in the professional literature are more informative, usually providing far more candid and specific appraisals of the merits and shortcomings of various dictionaries. However, there are differing opinions as to which dictionaries to recommend to learners and foreign students here as well.

Although, as Bejoint (1981:210) has pointed out, the best dictionary for decoding purposes is the one containing the most entries. the huge, unabridged sizes will generally be too large, bulky, and expensive for almost all learners. Similarly, the word lists in the smaller, pocket sized editions will probably not be large enough to cover the academic and linguistic needs of most advanced learners and foreign students.

One of the most commonly reported frustrations about dictionaries among language learners is discovering that the word being sought is not in the dictionary one is using (Tomaszczyk 1979:115, Bejoint 1981:220). With smaller dictionaries, learners are more likely to encounter such missing words and expressions. Smaller dictionaries also tend to contain
fewer derivations, making them less useful not only for decoding purposes, but for spelling purposes as well. Yorkey (1979:394) suggests that most advanced learners and foreign students will probably need a dictionary containing at least 50,000 entries to avoid these sorts of frustrations.

Yorkey has critiqued numerous dictionaries in the 50,000–150,000 entry range and discussed their usefulness for foreign learners. In Yorkey (1969) he suggested that Funk and Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary (F&W) or The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, College Edition (RHD) would probably be the most useful to advanced ESL learners. In Yorkey (1974), the then recently published American Heritage Dictionary (AHD) was the most highly recommended. F&W and Webster’s New World Dictionary (WNWD) were considered excellent choices as well. The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (OALD) was judged by far the best ESL dictionary then on the market, and probably as useful as the native speakers’ dictionaries. In Yorkey (1979), the newly published Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDCE) was assessed the most complete and useful dictionary then available for ESL students (p. 395).

Jackson (1979), reviewing OALD, felt it was a dictionary that no advanced student of English could afford to be without (p. 10).

Tomaszczyk (1981), discussing developments in bilingual lexicography, stated that Hornby’s OALD and LDCE were models that makers of both bilingual and native speakers’ dictionaries could profitably follow (p. 287).

In the opinion of Arnold (1981), WNWD would be the best choice for college freshmen, but AHD, RHD, and Webster’s Eighth College Dictionary would be less helpful.
Hartmann (1981) highly commends both OALD and LDCE for a wide variety of features and coverage.

Bauer (1980) compared the OALD to the LDCE across a variety of features and concluded that LDCE was probably the better of the two.

These are some of the many opinions and recommendations given to a number of dictionaries in the literature. By far the most frequently and highly recommended ESL dictionaries are OALD and LDCE. Among the native speaker dictionaries, WNWD and AHD seem to frequently receive many good recommendations as well.

Some Issues in Monolingual Defining

It is interesting that these particular dictionaries are all highly recommended, because there are some test case differences between them that may affect how useful learners will find not only these, but other dictionaries designed like them as well. Perhaps the most noticeable and important difference for the purposes of this study is that they are probably state of the art examples of three different sorts of defining policies widely used in English dictionaries.

Nearly all monolingual dictionaries claim to have clear, easy to understand definitions. There are, however, some important differences in the defining styles and techniques that various dictionaries employ. Perhaps most importantly, there are considerable differences in the vocabularies that various dictionaries use to write their definitions. Several of the ESL dictionaries mentioned above write all of their definitions in specially selected, limited defining vocabularies of up to 2000 words. Others, such as most ESL and intermediate native speaker dictionaries, try to avoid using difficult and abstruse words in their
definitions, but do not use a special defining vocabulary to achieve this. Still others, usually native speakers' dictionaries for adults, use virtually unlimited defining vocabularies, and make the least attempt to limit their definitions to only simple words.

In summary then, English dictionaries can be placed in three general categories according to defining vocabularies:

1) those using special, limited defining vocabularies.
2) those that attempt to avoid difficult words in definitions.
3) those using unlimited vocabularies for defining.

LDCE is an example of the first type. Its publishers claim that one of its major, distinguishing advantages is that it uses a specific, limited defining vocabulary in its definitions and examples.

All the definitions and examples in the dictionary are written in a controlled vocabulary of approximately 2000 words which were selected by a thorough study of a number of frequency and pedagogic lists of English, particular reference having been made to A General Service List of English Words (1953) by Michael West. This very important feature marks this dictionary out from any but the smallest of its predecessors as a tool for the learner and student of language. The result of using the vocabulary is the fulfillment of one of the most basic lexicographic principles—that is that the definitions are always written using simpler terms than the words they describe, something that cannot be achieved without a definite policy of this kind (Procter 1980:viii-ix).

OALD also claims to have made its definitions as clear and simple as possible, but followed a different policy in doing so. It is an example of the second type.

Definitions have been made as simple as possible. No special definition vocabulary has been used. It would have been possible, perhaps, by long experiment, to arrive at a vocabulary of two or three thousand words adequate to define the whole number of words dealt with. But the compilers could have no confidence that the definition vocabulary would be known to the users of the
dictionary. It seemed better to make definitions on the general principle (1) that common words should be explained by means of other common words . . . , and (2) that less common words should be defined by the use of a wider vocabulary (Hornby 1948:iv-v).

WNWD is an example of the third type of defining policy. Designed primarily for native speaking adults, it understandably has the largest defining vocabulary of the three. The introductions in its various editions state that every effort has been made to make its definitions as comprehensive and precise as limited entry space will allow (WNWD 1971:vi). This dictionary thus uses whatever words its definers feel most appropriately explain any given entry. Of the three, it makes the least effort to limit its definitions to simple words.

The concept of defining vocabularies and their application to ESL lexicography stem in large part from research done on vocabulary selection and word frequency in the 1920's, 30's, and 40's. In the interests of improving the teaching of reading, several studies were undertaken to determine the frequency with which English words are used. The usual technique was to record every word that appeared in various 1,000,000 to 5,000,000 word selections of written English, and then count how often each word appeared. Word lists of the most frequently occurring English words were then compiled to be used by teachers, textbook writers, and examiners.

Some of the earliest of these word lists were drawn up by E. L. Thorndike (1921, 1932). He examined selections of running print from various literary sources, textbooks, and newspapers. Horn (1926) produced a similar list based on personal letters. Faucett and Maki (1932) combined the findings of these two studies. A council of experts
was convened in 1934 under the auspices of the Carnegie Corporation to investigate the significance of these sorts of word lists for vocabulary selection in ESL. The fruit of this conference was the *Interim Report on Vocabulary Selection* (1936), a list of 2000 words selected primarily on the basis of their frequency, but also giving some weight to their structural and defining values, universality, and range of application (p. 13). The reason for these multiple criteria was that the conferees felt that a word's frequency alone might not equal its usefulness. They therefore decided to screen the most frequently occurring words according to these other more subjective criteria as well. However, the report concluded that "we noted a close correspondence between our judgement and the results of the objective method (the word frequency counts) within the first 1500 words" (p. 13).

West combined this list with another word count done on magazines by Irving Lorge (1938) to produce the *General Science List of English Words* published in 1953. This list represented what was then thought to be the 2000 most essential English words for ESL students to learn.

One of the earliest attempts to apply word counts to ESL lexicography was undertaken by C. K. Ogden. Ogden tried to develop a simplified form of English containing a total of 850 words selected largely on the basis of frequency and range. He believed that any learner that mastered his system of 850 words would have an expressive range equal to that possible with the 20,000 words most common to native speaker repertoires (Ogden 1934:3). Along with his textbook, *Basic English* (1934), Ogden also published *The General Basic English Dictionary* (1942). This work attempted to define the "20,000 most commonly occurring words of English" using only the 850 words of *Basic*
English and an additional 50 "international words" (Ogden 1942:v).

West further refined the notion of limited defining vocabularies for ESL dictionaries. In order to simplify the ESL student's learning load, he was especially interested in deriving a "minimum adequate definition vocabulary" for ESL dictionary making (West 1935:7).

West developed a list of 1,490 words on the basis of essentially the same criteria used in the Interim Report (Vest 1935:22), and wrote a dictionary of 24,000 entries with it (1977). This dictionary, An International Reader's Dictionary, has been periodically revised and reprinted and is still widely available today (Kister 1977:191). LDCE is probably the largest and most ambitious attempt to produce a dictionary using a limited, defining vocabulary thus far.

One of the main assumptions behind adopting limited, defining vocabularies in ESL dictionaries is that definitions written with such vocabularies will be easier for learners to understand (West 1935:11). The publishers of dictionaries that follow this policy will generally take pains to point this out, asserting it as an established fact (Procter 1980:viii-ix). However, for a variety of reasons, this seemingly obvious and reasonable assumption may not in fact be correct.

West discussed this problem in some detail. "If you are writing the explanations of English words in English, how do you know that the foreigner will know the explaining words which you use?" (West 1935:7). The answer, according to West, is simply that one does not know, and therefore all dictionary compilers must make assumptions about the vocabularies of the users (p. 7).
What words may the lexicographer assume known? An English speaking child aged 12 knows about 8,000 words. May we therefore assume that he knows the first 8,000 commonest words in the English language, e.g., as shown by Professor Thorndike's Word-frequence list? Unfortunately this is an unsatisfactory criterion. E. Dale ... has studied the knowledge of words of the Thorndike list among American high school children ... the correspondence between frequency and knowledge is not great ... The fact that a word is used often by expert writers does not ensure that it is known to a child or a foreigner with a small vocabulary (West 1935:9).

Many of the word counts that served as the basis for these limited, defining vocabularies were based on selections of literary English. Because a word may be frequent in these environments does not necessarily mean that it will be known by an ESL learner.

People with small vocabularies tend to know many essential names and nouns, which often have no substitutes (West 1935:10). Many names for things like common foods, clothing, and objects do not occur very frequently in literature and written English. As a result, word counts based on the written language often omit many words that are probably quite useful to foreigners, but include many less useful ones (Richards 1974:72).

West points out, for example, that the most common 8,000 words according to Thorndike's list (1932) include "Escutcheon, evince, festal, and flaunt" but not "airplane, marmalade, padlock, or radio" (West 1935:9). Similarly, Richards has shown that the first 2000 words of the Thorndike-Lorge lists do not include words like "soap, soup, basin, bath, oven, dish, chalk, stomach, or trousers" (Richards 1974:72).

Also, a learner's vocabulary is going to reflect his particular background, interests, and environment (West 1935:11). Long (1982) gives an example of an ESL learner with very limited English skills who
happened to work in a bakery. Although his general English repertoire was extremely limited, he knew many highly specialized terms for many different kinds of rolls and pastries. This illustrates the point in question: a word's frequency does not necessarily correlate with its utility or its being known by second language learners.

In addition, the General Service List, a major basis for many of the limited, defining vocabularies now in use, was itself largely based on writings from the 1920's, 30's, and 40's. New words and senses have entered the language since then, and usage and word frequencies may have changed as well. The relationship between contact with spoken language and what words a learner knows is also not fully understood. These factors suggest that the utility and the accuracy of word lists such as the General Service List may be questionable.

Yet another reason why learners may not know the words on assorted word lists is that high frequency words tend to be low in information content. Similarly, sentences composed mainly of high frequency words also tend to be low in information content. Richards (1974:72) illustrates this phenomena as follows:

A) He came in and put a thing on the bed.
B) Mr. Smith shuffled into the bedroom and placed a jacket on the bunk.

Sentence B conveys more information than sentence A because it contains words of low frequency such as "shuffle," "bedroom," "place," "jacket," and "bunk."

Learners with the interests of adults are likely to need and learn not only high frequency words, but other lower frequency, higher information content words as well (Richards 1974:73).
Additional means of assessing word utility and selecting vocabulary such as availability and familiarity have been proposed since the publication of the General Service List (Richards 1974:75-77). In brief, there may be other important factors influencing word utility besides the criteria developed by the authors of the Interim Report and the General Service List.

In conclusion, the extent to which learners actually know the words on lists such as the General Service List remains to be determined. Similarly, it is also not known whether definitions written with limited, defining vocabularies based on such lists are in fact easier for learners to understand than definitions written with larger vocabularies.

Opinions in the literature about the effectiveness of limited, defining vocabularies for ESL dictionaries are mixed. Although one of the principle originators of such defining vocabularies, West acknowledges that these vocabularies may be "better able to define the concrete than the abstract" (West 1935:12). He also states that definitions in limited vocabulary may tend to be longer:

In defining with an unlimited vocabulary, we can select one or two apt words which match the idea. In defining within a smallvocabulary, we are compelled to explain at length. The less the user bows, the more carefully we have to explain, and the more difficult it is to explain (West 1935:13).

Learners may not only be unfamiliar with the defining words, they may also prefer more concise, less roundabout explanations. Compare, for example, the explanations for "bas-relief" and "history" in each of these dictionaries:
bas-relief...a form of art in which figures are cut out of the stone or wood surface of a wall so that they stand out slightly from the background, which has been cut away (p. 73).

history....(the study of) events in the past, such as those of a nation, arranged in order from the earlier to the later, esp. events concerning the rulers and government of a country, social and trade conditions, etc. (p. 534).

bas-relief....method of carving or moulding in which a design stands out from a flat surface (p. 725).

history....branch of knowledge dealing with past events, political, social, economic, of a country, continent, or the world (p. 412).

bas-relief....sculpture in which the figures project a little from the background (p. 35).

history....an account of what has happened, esp. in the life of a people, country, etc. (p. 205).

Whether or not learners would find any of these styles especially helpful is difficult to judge.

Stein (1979:6) and Moulin (1979:78) believe that while special, limited, defining vocabularies are probably helpful to learners, they may achieve simplicity at the expense of accuracy. Yorkey (1979:394) feels that it is difficult to tell (1) whether such vocabularies really result in definitions that are easier for learners to understand, or (2) whether such definitions are any less accurate than ones written with larger vocabularies. Bauer (1980:106) thinks that this technique may occasionally make definitions slightly more clumsy, but that it is probably a helpful one for learners. Baxter (1980:334) feels that dictionaries using controlled defining vocabularies are the best choice.
for ESL learners. Jain (1981:276) thinks that both the LDCE and OALD policies "bring the meaning of items within the reach of the learner in terms of his United word repertoire." Bejoint (1981:220) feels the data on learner use of dictionaries may indicate that dictionaries designed for native speakers might be as useful to learners as ESL dictionaries, but suggests that the use of controlled vocabulary in definitions needs further investigation.

There are other problems with the claims (1) that the use of a special limited, defining vocabulary results in definitions that are always written in simpler terms than the words being defined; and (2) that such definitions will be easier for learners to understand. West (1935:8) pointed out that in all dictionaries there will always be some words that will be difficult to define in terms simpler than the headword itself. For example, consider the LDCE entry for "salt":

salt.....a very common colourless or white solid substance (sodium chloride) found in the earth and in seawater and with many uses including preserving food and Improving its taste (p. 983).

Also, a comparison of many LDCE, OALD, and WNWD entries leads one to question just how much simpler or even how different many of LDCE's limited vocabulary definitions may indeed be:

LDCE (special defining vocabulary) (pp. 2–3)

Abeyance.....the condition of not being in force or in use, at or for a certain time . . .

Abreast.....side by side, on the level, and facing the same direction . . .

Abridge.....to make (something written or spoken) shorter by using fewer words; cut short . . .
**OALD** (avoids difficult words)  (pp. 2–3)

**Abeyance...**condition of not being in force or in use for a time . . .

**Abreast...** (of persons, ships, etc.) on a level, side by side, and facing the same way . . .

**Abridge...** make shorter, esp. by using fewer words . . .

**WNMD** (unlimited defining vocabulary)  (pp. 1–2)

**Abeyance...** temporary suspension, as of an activity or ruling . . .

**Abreast...** side by side . . .

**Abridge...** to shorten, lessen, or curtail . . .

It would appear that many of **LDCE's** definitions may have been derived from **OALD's**, and it is difficult to say whether learners would actually find any of these sets of definitions easier to understand.

There are other features of the definitions and explanations in these dictionaries that may also affect how useful learners will find them. All have similar numbers of entries, and similar word lists. **OALD** has 50,000 entries, **LDCE** has 55,000, and the compact edition of **WNMD** has 56,000. The word lists in all three include a great deal of slang, idiomatic expressions, and culture specific words; information learners indicate they frequently look up in dictionaries (Bejoint 1981:218). However, whereas **OALD** and **LDCE** contain both British and American terms and meanings, **WNMD** is primarily concerned with American English.

The ways in which their entries are organized may also affect learner perceptions of their usefulness. A major difference here is that **OALD** usually lists related words as subentries within longer main entries. **WNMD** and **LDCE**, on the other hand, both tend to avoid subentries. All three, however, list idiomatic expressions as subentries in bold, dark type within a related main entry.
LDCE and OALD distinguish different senses of a word with bold, dark numbers. WNWD also indicates polysemy with numbers, but they are not in such dark, noticeable type. LDCE and OALD entries do not include etymologies. WNWD does, but they come at the beginning of the entry in such a way as to sometimes make it difficult to find where the definition itself begins. OALD and LDCE make extensive use of verbal illustration and example sentences, WNWD uses considerably less. OALD claims 50,000 examples, LDCE claims 69,000.

It is difficult to judge which format is the most readable. All use similar type size, but LDCE and WNWD write out their examples in full. OALD replaces the headword with a tilde where it is repeated in examples, compound nouns, or related expressions. Whether learners find any of these features more helpful for meaning retrieval is also little understood.

Conclusion

To summarize, there is a considerable range of English dictionaries that ESL learners could use. Research on learner use of dictionaries has shown that most learners view dictionaries primarily as tools for decoding unfamiliar words. Although there may be considerable congruence between the word lists in many current dictionaries of similar size, there are a variety of definition styles and formats that make it difficult to tell how useful learners will actually find a dictionary for decoding purposes. The various claims made on dictionary covers are not very revealing in this regard. Professional evaluations and reviews do more to facilitate dictionary selection, but their conclusions are not always in agreement, and they
reflect only teachers' points of view. Little is known about how helpful and understandable learners themselves actually find the explanations in various types of monolingual dictionaries. ESL learners may be able to provide valuable feedback about various methods of defining and entry format that might enable lexicographers and ESL teachers to produce and recommend more useful dictionaries.
CHAPTER V

METHODS AND MATERIALS

It has been observed in the preceding chapters that nearly all ESL students use dictionaries, and that they frequently buy the ones suggested by their teachers. Most teachers try to encourage more advanced learners to use monolingual dictionaries, and there is a variety of different dictionaries employing a range of defining policies that they often recommend. However, learner perceptions of the actual usefulness of these dictionaries remain little understood. The study reported here was undertaken to further explore the following questions:

How intelligible do learners find the explanations in the various types of monolingual dictionaries that would be suitable for their language learning and academic needs?

Do learners find dictionaries designed for native speakers more or less helpful than ESL models?

Do learners find definitions written with special, limited vocabularies more helpful than those that merely avoid the use of difficult words or those that make little or no effort to use only simple language?

If learners do show a preference for any particular dictionaries or defining styles, what factor(s) contribute to this? Do learners rely more on definitions or examples when scanning entries for meaning? How important are differences in entry format and organization?

What effect does proficiency in English have on preferences and perceptions of definition intelligibility?
How do previous habits of dictionary use influence assessments of dictionary usefulness?

Do other factors such as a learner's field of study or native language influence dictionary preferences?

In brief, the basic procedure employed was to take a number of words and their corresponding explanations from a sample of commonly available English dictionaries, mount them on cards, and then present them to ESL students at the University of Hawaii for evaluation.

In order to accurately assess learner preferences for dictionaries and defining styles, it would be desirable to survey as many learners, dictionaries, and entries as possible. But because of limitations in the methodology used and the time available, the study was based on what was felt to be a representative sampling of each of these. This section will describe the specific materials that were used and the methods that were followed.

Test Word Selection

First, a sample of 60 test words was chosen. Although 60 words is only a small fraction of a dictionary containing 50,000 or more entries, it was felt that it would probably be sufficient to provide a meaningful indication of learner preferences for defining styles and techniques. The number 60 also neatly resolved several problems of card design discussed below.

The selection was based on reports in the literature about the kinds of items learners are likely to look up in dictionaries. Bejoint (1981:218) found that learners often look up rarer lexical items, idioms, culture specific words, and slang. Yorkey (1974:17) suggests...
that phrasal verbs are especially troublesome to learners. Cowie (1981: 223) and Bejoint (1981: 218) believe that compound nouns are another difficult type of item that learners are likely to look for in dictionaries. Scanning several dictionaries at random, I intuitively selected 60 test items falling into these categories. These 60 test words are listed in Appendix A.

Dictionaries Used

The dictionaries from which these words were taken were the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDCE, 1980), the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD, 1974), and the compact edition of Webster's New World Dictionary (NWWD, 1972).

These three were chosen for the following reasons:

As we have seen, all three are widely considered in the literature to be sound reference works that might be especially helpful to learners.

Since they all contain between 50,000 and 56,000 entries, they are also probably large enough to cover most learners' academic needs (Yorkey 1979: 394).

As well known and widely available British and American dictionaries, these are likely to be easily found by readers of this study, or even actually considered for use by ESL learners and teachers.

These dictionaries are probably state of the art examples of the three categories of defining vocabularies discussed earlier in this paper. LDCE uses a special defining vocabulary of approximately 2000 words. OALD specifically attempts to keep its explanations simple, but does so by avoiding difficult words, not with a special limited
vocabulary. *WNWD* uses a virtually unlimited defining vocabulary. I also considered using the *Thorndike-Barnhart High School Dictionary*. This is an intermediate native speaker's dictionary with 75,000 entries (4th edition) widely used in American schools. *Like OALD*, it also claims to have written its explanations as simply as possible, but did not follow a special limited defining vocabulary in doing so. Although its definitions do seem more simplified than *WNWD's*, it also uses many words outside the 2000 used by *LDCE*. This puts this dictionary in the second category of defining vocabulary complexity discussed above. However, *Thorndike-Barnhart* dictionaries are probably not as well known and less widely available outside of the United States.

Since both ESL and native speaker dictionaries are included, this selection would also probably give some indication of how learners would race dictionaries for native speakers compared to ESL models.

Another factor was that all of these dictionaries have approximately equal print size. I considered using the paperback edition of the *American Heritage Dictionary* (1976, with 55,000 entries) instead of *WNWD* because the results from my pilot study indicated that many of the ESL students at the University of Hawaii actually use it. Also, this dictionary has been frequently recommended on many University of Hawaii ESL class syllabuses. However, the print size in this edition of *AHD* is considerably smaller than *LDCE's* and *OALD's*, and may have given these two an advantage due largely to greater readability.

Card Design and Assembly

After the 60 test words had been selected, the entries for them in each of these three dictionaries were photocopied, cut out, and then
glued to cards. Examples of the cards that were used in this study appear in Appendix B.

The participants were given oral instructions for two tasks. First, they were asked to read each of the three entries for the word given in the upper left of the card, and then check the entry they found most helpful and understandable. Second, they were to try to indicate which of the factors listed along the bottom of the card most influenced their decision. The choices here included: (1) clear language used in the explanation; (2) the presence of an example phrase or sentence; and (3) the ease of finding the desired information. This last reason was included because this writer felt that learners might possibly reject some entries if they considered them too long, or too cluttered with related words, phrases, or coding symbols, or if they preferred a main entry format to a subentry format or vice versa. There were a total of 15 cards among the 60 in which the entry from at least one of the dictionaries listed the word in question as a subentry under a related word. For example, on card No. 49 (Appendix B), "steppingstone" is listed as a main entry in LDCE (far left) and WNWD (far right), but as a subentry under "step" in OALD (center). There was also a blank "other" space provided so that the respondents could write in any other reasons they may have for selecting a particular entry.

While designing these cards it became apparent that if the participants were to read the cards from left to right, then whatever entry happened to be on the extreme right might seem easier to understand because it would have been preceded by two other explanations for the same word. In order to counteract this possible advantage of position, 20 words from each dictionary were placed in left hand positions, 20 in
the center, and 20 on the right throughout the total of 60 cards. The order of these occurrences was also randomized.

After one master card for each of the 60 words had been constructed, the 60 cards were then randomly grouped on 12 8½" x 11" pages, five to a page. (5 cards x 12 pages = 60 cards) Thirty-one copies of each page were then produced, making 31 copies of each card, and a total of 1360 cards. These were then placed into 186 envelopes in random sets of 10. In order to minimize any possible effects due to word order or fatigue factors, the ten cards in each envelope were then shuffled as well.

These numbers were chosen so that with 60 words and 180 participants, each learner could evaluate ten different cards, and each word would be evaluated by 30 different learners. Thirty-one copies of each card were produced to allow for one misanswered or unanswered card per word.

The Participants

The cards were distributed among two groups of high intermediate and advanced ESL students at the University of Hawaii. In order to determine what influence proficiency might have on perceptions of definition intelligibility, students in a range of different class levels were chosen. Each participant also filled out a brief questionnaire about his/her experience with English: years of study, native language, academic major, TOEFL score, and so forth. They were also asked to indicate what dictionaries they owned, and which they consulted most frequently.

The first group, (Group I), consisted of 66 foreign students from various Asian countries enrolled in summer ESL classes (1982)
designed to help them attain sufficient proficiency in English for college level work. About 20 had been sent here for the summer by their employers to improve English skills for business purposes. The rest were regular university students seeking graduate or undergraduate degrees in various fields of science, engineering, business, economics, and the humanities. Most were in their 20's, and nearly all said they had been studying English since junior high school. These 66 students were in seven different classes on three general skill levels: 42 in first level classes (ELI 70, 72, and 73, the least advanced); 7 in second level classes (ELI 80); and 17 in third level classes (ELI 100, the most advanced).

Group II consisted of 120 foreign students enrolled in eight ESL classes at the University of Hawaii during the regular Fall semester (1982). As in Group I, these were also high intermediate and advanced learners distributed over a range of proficiency levels: 50 in the first level classes (ELI 70 and 73); 36 in second level classes (ELI 80); and 34 in the most advanced classes (ELI 100, and ELI 83).

The backgrounds of these students were similar to those in Group I. The vast majority were also young adults from Asian and Pacific countries who had come to Hawaii to pursue graduate or undergraduate degrees in a variety of fields. TOEFL scores were available for approximately 50 percent of this group. A more detailed and specific profile of both Groups I and II is given in Appendix C.

It is interesting to note that a majority of both groups said that they most often use a monolingual dictionary. Also, relatively few learners in both groups were users of either OALD, LDCE, or WNWD.
The participants were not informed which dictionaries were involved in the study.
CHAPTER VI
RESULTS

The results obtained in each class are given in Table 1 (next page). Class numbers are listed on the left, and the total number of cards evaluated in each class is listed on the right. The number of entries chosen from each dictionary in each class are given in the columns in the center. For example, in Group I, in ELI 70, 108 cards were evaluated. Among these 108 cards, 36 entries from QALD were judged most helpful and understandable, compared to 50 from LDCE, and 22 from WND.

How intelligible do learners find the explanations in these three dictionaries?

In both Groups I and II, the results are very similar. In every class, and at all proficiency levels, LDCE's explanations were clearly preferred. And in most classes, with a few exceptions, the rankings tended to hover roughly near the overall averages: LDCE 50 percent; QALD 30 percent; WND 20 percent. (Chi square of differences between the results of Group I and Group II not significant; overall preference pattern for these dictionaries significant at p < .01.)
## Table 1

**Number of Entries from Each Dictionary Chosen in Each Class**

### Group I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>OALD</th>
<th>LDCE</th>
<th>WNND</th>
<th>No. Cards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELI 70</td>
<td>(36)-34%</td>
<td>(50)-46%</td>
<td>(22)-20%</td>
<td>(108)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 72/2</td>
<td>(19)-27%</td>
<td>(34)-49%</td>
<td>(17)-24%</td>
<td>(70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 73</td>
<td>(33)-28%</td>
<td>(57)-48%</td>
<td>(28)-24%</td>
<td>(118)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 80</td>
<td>(20)-29%</td>
<td>(38)-54%</td>
<td>(12)-17%</td>
<td>(70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 100/1</td>
<td>(26)-29%</td>
<td>(43)-48%</td>
<td>(21)-23%</td>
<td>(90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 100/2</td>
<td>(20)-25%</td>
<td>(42)-53%</td>
<td>(18)-22%</td>
<td>(80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td>(183)-28%</td>
<td>(341)-52%</td>
<td>(132)-20%</td>
<td>(656)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Group II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>OALD</th>
<th>LDCE</th>
<th>WNND</th>
<th>No. Cards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELI 70/1</td>
<td>(46)-22%</td>
<td>(125)-59%</td>
<td>(39)-19%</td>
<td>(210)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 7012</td>
<td>(58)-31%</td>
<td>(82)-43%</td>
<td>(50)-26%</td>
<td>(190)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 73</td>
<td>(33)-33%</td>
<td>(45)-45%</td>
<td>(22)-22%</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 8011</td>
<td>(50)-28%</td>
<td>(93)-52%</td>
<td>(36)-20%</td>
<td>(179)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 8012</td>
<td>(51)-28%</td>
<td>(95)-53%</td>
<td>(34)-19%</td>
<td>(180)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 100</td>
<td>(56)-35%</td>
<td>(80)-50%</td>
<td>(24)-15%</td>
<td>(160)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 83/1</td>
<td>(26)-29%</td>
<td>(46)-51%</td>
<td>(18)-20%</td>
<td>(90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELI 8312</td>
<td>(27)-30%</td>
<td>(49)-54%</td>
<td>(14)-16%</td>
<td>(90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td>(347)-29%</td>
<td>(615)-51%</td>
<td>(237)-20%</td>
<td>(1199)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do learners find dictionaries for native speakers more or less helpful than ESL models?

In all of the classes surveyed, these learners consistently judged the ESL dictionaries (LDOCE and OALD) easier to understand than the one designed for native speakers (WNWD). It is also interesting that although both of the ESL dictionaries were preferred to the native speaker's, the gap between the total results for LDOCE (956) and OALD (530) (956 - 530 = 426) is considerably larger than the gap between OALD and WNWD (369) (530 - 369 = 161).

It could be argued that WNWD is only one example of a native speaker's dictionary, and that it may not represent all of them. I would expect, however, that the defining styles and vocabularies in other native speaker's dictionaries are sufficiently similar to WNWD's that similar results would probably be found using others as well. Other results discussed below also seem to support this.

Do learners find definitions written with special, limited defining vocabularies more helpful than those that merely avoid the use of difficult words, or those that make little or no effort to use only simple language? If learners do show a preference for any of these defining styles, what factor(s) seem to contribute to this? Do learners rely more on definitions or examples when scanning entries for meaning? How important do learners consider differences in entry format and organization?
The results from the bottom part of the cards, the "why?" responses, are given in Table 2.

Table 2
Reasons Given for Choice of Entries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Clear Language</th>
<th>Good Example</th>
<th>Easy to Find</th>
<th>No. of Cards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OALD</td>
<td>(131)</td>
<td>(96)</td>
<td>(36)</td>
<td>(183)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCE</td>
<td>(234)</td>
<td>(124)</td>
<td>(70)</td>
<td>(341)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNWD</td>
<td>(92)</td>
<td>(26)</td>
<td>(49)</td>
<td>(132)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Clear Language</th>
<th>Good Example</th>
<th>Easy to Find</th>
<th>No. of Cards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OALD</td>
<td>(219)</td>
<td>(84)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(324)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCE</td>
<td>(442)</td>
<td>(110)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>(582)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNWD</td>
<td>(186)</td>
<td>(17)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(223)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Chi square of Group II reasons for entry choice significant at p < .01.)

In Group I, the participants were asked to indicate why they chose each entry by checking the boxes and/or filling in a reason of their own in the "other" space. They were instructed to check as many factors as they thought had influenced their choice (see sample cards in Appendix B). However, because they (Group I) could check more than one factor per card, there is often no way to ascertain which factor was considered most important for a majority of entries.
In Group II therefore, the "Why?" responses were collected slightly differently than in Group I. These learners (Group II) were asked to rank the factors at the bottom of the cards by marking the most important reason on each card with an (A), and less important reasons with a (B). The Group II section of Table 2 thus lists how often each of the reasons was ranked most important. For example, among all the cards in Group II on which OALD entries were judged most intelligible, the "Why?" section was completed on 324 cards. On these 324 OALD cards, "clear language" was ranked (A) 219 times, "good example" was ranked (A) 84 times, and "easy to find" was ranked (A) 21 times.

In both Groups I and II, for all three dictionaries, the clarity of the language used in the explanation is clearly considered the most important factor most often. Since LDCE's entries are preferred in a significant majority of cases, this would suggest that learners find the use of limited defining vocabulary more helpful and easier to understand than other defining practices.

Example phrases and sentences are the next most heavily relied on in the dictionaries that frequently provide them (LDCE and OALD). MWD's low ranking in this area may just reflect the fact that its entries contain fewer examples than LDCE and OALD.

The "easy to find" alternative did not seem very important to these learners, possibly because they may not have clearly understood what it was intended to cover. In many cases, subentry listings were chosen as often or even more often than main entry listings for the same word. For example, the choices for card No. 49 ("steppingstone," Appendix 3) were clearly in favor of OALD's subentry listing for this word, despite the fact that considerably more information had to be
sifted to find it. This may suggest that learners can become accustomed to either main entry or subentry formats, and do not necessarily find either system superior. However, this question would need to be far more specifically and carefully studied than has been done here.

Another factor possibly at work in cases where "easy to find" has been ranked most important is that some entries tend to be more concise and less cluttered with coded information than others. Learners may have preferred these entries simply because, with less material to decode, essential meaning is available at a glance. But without more specific comments from the learners making these choices, it is difficult to say what the factors really are. However, of all the cards returned, less than 1 percent had anything written in the "other" space. Most of these few responses were only paraphrases of one of the other three alternatives. On the whole, the "other" space yielded little information.

Another possible limitation of the "Why?" section in both Groups I and II is that it may just have been putting words in the participants' mouths, despite the availability of the "other" space. Participants may simply find it easier to just check boxes than to supply an original reason.

In summary, some tentative conclusions suggested by these "Why?" results are: (1) in choosing entries, these learners seemed to rely most heavily on the clarity of the language used in the explanation; (2) example phrases seemed to usually play a supporting role; and (3) entry format and readability may have been the least important of the three. This suggests that LDCE's limited defining vocabulary is the chief reason why its entries were preferred in such a clear majority of cases.
What effect does proficiency in English have on preference and perceptions of definition intelligibility?

Data for two measures of proficiency are available: class level, and TOEFL scores.

Class Level

There does not appear to be any indication that the gaps between the dictionaries narrow as proficiency according to class level increases, as might be expected. The results from all of the lower level classes (ELI 70, 72, and 73), and all of the highest level classes (ELI 100, and 83) in both Groups I and II are combined in Table 3.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>OAID</th>
<th>LDCE</th>
<th>WNWD</th>
<th>No. Cards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(100; 83)</td>
<td>(155)</td>
<td>(260)</td>
<td>(95)</td>
<td>(510)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(70; 72; 73)</td>
<td>(254)</td>
<td>(470)</td>
<td>(192)</td>
<td>(916)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>21.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Chi square of differences between highest and lowest classes not significant.)

TOEFL Scores

There was some initial indication that participants with TOEFL scores below 500 seemed to prefer LDCE to the other dictionaries by a wider margin than learners with scores above 570. However, this result proved to be insignificant. These findings are given in Table 4.
However, since TOEFL scores were available for only about 50 percent of the participants, they may not be a very useful frame of reference for interpreting these results. Since there were only ten participants with scores below 500, and only 12 with scores above 570, these results are based on data from only 22 of the 186 learners involved in this study.

How do previous habits of dictionary use (i.e. what dictionaries a learner is accustomed to using) influence learner assessments of definition intelligibility and helpfulness?

What dictionaries a participant was already familiar with did not seem to influence choice of entries very much. For example, only one regular OALD user chose a distinct majority of OALD entries. Similarly, there were only three regular LDCE users that selected a clear majority of LDCE entries. There was a slight tendency for bilingual dictionary users to rank LDCE slightly higher, and WNMD slightly lower, than regular monolingual dictionary users. These results are recorded in Table 5.
Table 5
Entry Selection and Habits of Dictionary Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OALD</th>
<th>LDCE</th>
<th>WNWD</th>
<th>No. Cards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bilingual</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictionary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users:</td>
<td>(113)-30%</td>
<td>(206)-54%</td>
<td>(61)-16%</td>
<td>(380)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monolingual</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictionary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users:</td>
<td>(219)-30%</td>
<td>(351)-48%</td>
<td>(160)-22%</td>
<td>(730)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Chi square of differences between choices made by users of bilingual, and monolingual dictionaries significant at p < .05.)

This may indicate that regular users of bilingual dictionaries find definitions and explanations in limited defining vocabulary especially helpful, and those in the unlimited defining vocabularies of native speaker's dictionaries especially difficult to understand.

How do other factors such as field of study or native language influence dictionary preferences?

There do not seem to be any noticeably different preference patterns for either LDCE, OALD, or WNWD across such variables as academic major or native language. Here as well, only a general preference for LDCE appears, followed again by OALD in second place, and WNWD last.
CHAPTER VII
CONCLUSION

In conclusion, these learners consistently indicated that the definitions and explanations given in LDCE seemed more helpful and easy to understand than those in either OALD or WNWD.

Although both ESL dictionaries (LDCE and OALD) were preferred to the native speaker's (WNWD), these learners found greater difference between the LDCE explanations and the OALD explanations than they did between those in OALD and those in WNWD.

In a vast majority of cases, the respondents said that clear language had been the chief reason for selecting most entries. Verbal illustration and example phrases also seemed to be considered helpful, but were ranked most important far fewer times.

There were no clear indications of any particular preferences for either main or subentry formats or other features possibly affecting entry readability. However, the instrument used in this study was probably not an effective measure of these features. Also, very few learners supplied comments or reasons of their own about why they had chosen entries.

There seems to be very little indication that the general preference pattern of approximately LDCE—50 percent, OALD—30 percent, WNWD—20 percent tends to level out as class level increases. Similarly, there also seemed to be no significant indication that learners find less difference between these dictionaries as their TOEFL scores increase. The general preference for LDCE explanations thus does not seem to be limited to learners of lower English proficiency alone.
There also does not appear to be any noticeable deviations from the overall preference pattern across such variables as academic major, native language, or familiarity with the dictionaries used in this study. There is some indication that regular users of bilingual dictionaries prefer LDCE slightly more, and WNWD slightly less than regular users of monolingual dictionaries.

These findings may have important implications for lexicographers, ESL teachers, and other learners. The clear preference for LDCE, and the apparent importance of its limited defining vocabulary behind it may be of interest to the compilers of learner's dictionaries in particular. These trends may indicate that a majority of learners will find defining in special, limited vocabularies like LDCE's more helpful and effective than either defining with unlimited vocabularies (such as in WNWD's) or defining that merely cries to avoid difficult words (such as OALD's). These findings may also suggest that many learners may find considerably less difference between dictionaries that employ the last two policies than those that follow the first one. That learner proficiency did not apparently influence this pattern may be of some importance as well. This would suggest that a dictionary employing such a defining policy would probably be useful to a broad range of users.

The presence of verbal illustration was frequently given as the key reason for selecting a number of entries from the dictionaries that widely use it (LDCE and OALD). Since many learners seem to find entries with example phrases more helpful than those without them, verbal illustration may also be an important feature to include throughout learners' dictionaries.
As far as ESL teachers are concerned, the results of this study would also suggest that the most helpful monolingual dictionaries to recommend to learners beyond the beginning stages of English study may be those that (1) employ a controlled vocabulary for defining purposes, and (2) widely include verbal illustration in their explanations. At present (1982), the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English is the best example of a dictionary that both consistently employs these features and is large enough for most learners academic needs. Native speakers' dictionaries such as WWD and AHD that use far larger defining vocabularies and much less verbal illustration may seem considerably less helpful to many ESL students, even those of considerable proficiency.

However, because these results are based on the responses of a modest number of learners for a relatively small sample of words and entries, these conclusions would have to be confirmed elsewhere. It should also be emphasized that it was only these learners' perceptions which were measured, not how helpful the definitions actually are. A follow up study could investigate the relationship between perceived intelligibility of a definition and the actual learning taking place. Also, these learners were shown this sample of test words in isolation. It would be interesting to see how showing the words in context would influence the results.

As mentioned above, there is also no clear indication in these results of what learners may think about entry format or readability. Main entry listings were chosen about as often as subentry listings where both occurred on the same card, but it is felt that the instrument used in this study may not provide an effective measure of these features. Very few learners commented on these types of things in the
open ended "other" section where they could have. Learner preferences for main or subentry format would also need additional investigation.

Learner preferences for various methods of ordering different polysemous senses within entries is another area that this study provides little or no indication about. It would be interesting to explore this issue further as well.

The various studies of dictionary use among second language learners also suggest that just recommending an excellent dictionary is probably not enough. It seems clear that many learners do not know how to use a monolingual dictionary like LDCE or OALD as effectively as they could. Few learners apparently read the introductory sections that explain how to use dictionaries and the various coding system they employ. This is understandable enough. In LDCE, for example, this material consists of 32 intricate pages of tiny, single spaced print that even most native speakers would probably find challenging to complete. ESL teachers thus probably need to spend more time showing learners what information such dictionaries contain as well as how to find it. Dictionaries can be truely fascinating repositories of linguistic and cultural information: it seems unfortunate that so few learners appear to be on intimate terms with them.
aberration    glaze    loophole
abject    glib    lopsided
aboveboard    great    pulsar
abstain    heiday    pungent
accessory    hiccups    put across
bulkhead    hick    pyorrhea
bum    hierarchy    quandary
buoyancy    highhanded    redeem
burlesque    hillbilly    red herring
cadense    hindsight    red letter day
in cahoots    hitchhike    red tape
cajole    board    steppe
calibrate    hobble    steppingstone
call off    hombnob    stereotype
camaraderie    hogwash    stifle
camber    hord    stigmatize
chaingang    hormone    stile
chalk up    (dark) horse    stingy
give in    look down on    stipend
glaring    loom    stipulate
### APPENDIX B

#### SAMPLE CARDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>49. steppingstone</th>
<th>50. redeem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### steppingstone

**step** /step/ v. 1. to move the foot, or one foot after the other (forward, or in the direction indicated): ~ across a stream; ~ into a boat; ~ on to/off the platform; ~ across to a neighbour's, cross (the road) to his house. ~ this way, (polite invitation to) follow sb somewhere, eg into a room. ~ on the gas: ~ on it, (a) (gas ~ gasoline) press down the accelerator pedal to increase speed. (b) (collect) hurry. ~ing-stone n (a) one of a number of flat stones placed in a shallow stream, so that it can be crossed with dry feet. (b) (fig) means of attaining sth: a first ~ring-stone to success. ~ is a pl (dated 11th)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why?</th>
<th>clear language</th>
<th>good example</th>
<th>easy to find</th>
<th>other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### redeem

**redeem** /ri-dim/ v. (11) 1 to buy or gain the freedom of; esp. (in the Christian religion) the freedom from evil; redeem a slave; redeem from sin 2 [(from)] to regain with money (what was given in exchange for money (paid or mortgaged)): redeem my watch from the pawnshop 3 to carry out, fulfil: redeem one's promise — at this cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why?</th>
<th>clear language</th>
<th>good example</th>
<th>easy to find</th>
<th>other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS IN GROUPS I AND II

1. **Native Language**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Group I</th>
<th>Group II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ocher Pacific languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ilocano</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Average Years of English Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. **Majors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group I</th>
<th>Group II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sciences</td>
<td>Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Economics</td>
<td>Business and Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-degree</td>
<td>Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* * * * *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduates</th>
<th>Undergraduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **TOEFL Scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group I</th>
<th>Group II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range: 475-575</td>
<td>Range: 448-598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average: (Not available)</td>
<td>Average: 546</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **Dictionaries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group I</th>
<th>Group II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHD: 20</td>
<td>AHD: 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other English—English (unspecified): 14</td>
<td>Other English—English: 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OALD: 7</td>
<td>OALD: 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCE: 10</td>
<td>LDCE: 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual: 22</td>
<td>Bilingual: 38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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APPENDIX C (continued)
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Faucett, L. and I. Maki. 1932. A study of English word values statistically determined from the latest extensive word counts. Tokyo: Matsumura Sanshodo.


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