

Drawing up the Profile of Dictionary Users

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Abstract

Dictionary users should be the main considerations in creating dictionaries. A mistake in identifying the users can make a dictionary simply a display without benefiting from it. This article starts with a review on how to draw up the profiles or characteristics of dictionary users proposed by Bergenholtz and Tarp (1995), Atkins and Varantola (1998), Denisov (2003), Tarp (2004), Bergenholtz and Nielsen (2006) and Tarp (2008). A theory on market segmentation process from Kotler and Keller (2006) is also discussed to widen the perspective on determining dictionary user profiles. Finally, thirteen variables are proposed in drawing up the profile of dictionary users.

Keywords: Dictionary; Dictionary User; Segmentation; Lexicography.

1. Introduction

Users play a critical part in the success of dictionary publishing. Without having or establishing its specific users, a dictionary will simply become a display without anyone benefiting from it. Therefore, it is essential that a dictionary user profile be drawn up and considered before making a dictionary. Other aspects, such as functions and features, can only be determined after the lexicographers have the profile of a specific user group in their mind. This is in line with what Nielsen and Mourier (2004: 123) suggest that the lexicographers need to draw up a profile of the intended user group to relate the dictionary's functions to their needs and competences.

This article starts with a review of the existing methods to determine the profiles or characteristics of dictionary users found in six references: Bergenholtz and Tarp (1995), Atkins and Varantola (1998), Denisov (2003), Tarp (2004), Bergenholtz and Nielsen (2006), and Tarp (2008). In addition, as Landau (2001: 345) has remarked that identifying the market is the first consideration in dictionary publishing, the discussion

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in this article also includes the market segmentation process based on Kotler and Keller (2006). This discussion should widen the perspective on dictionary users who are the target markets of dictionaries and contribute to a new method in drawing up the profile of dictionary users.

2. Existing Classifications and Profiles

One of the first references that makes a classification of dictionary users is Bergenholtz and Tarp (1995: 21). Their focus is on Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) dictionaries. Therefore, they distinguish four main types of user profiles for specialized dictionaries: (1) low level of encyclopaedic and foreign language competence, (2) low level of encyclopaedic and high level of foreign language competence, (3) high level of encyclopaedic and low level of foreign language competence, and (4) high level of encyclopaedic and foreign language competence. This is a simple method in determining the dictionary users because it is only based on two variables: encyclopaedic and foreign language competence.

A more complex classification of dictionary user profiles was made by Atkins and Varantola when they were working on the Research Project on Dictionary Use which was sponsored by EURALEX and the AILA Scientific Commission on Lexicology and Lexicography. Atkins and Varantola (1998: 25) draw up the dictionary user profiles using eleven variables which they call definite facts, as follows:

- Their country of origin and native language
- The number of years they have studied English
- Type of educational institution(s) where they had studied
- The purpose of their current English studies

- Whether or not their classes were held in English
- Textbooks used
- Whether they had received instruction in dictionary use
- Details of their dictionary ownership
- Their habits of dictionary use
- Their understanding of English parts of speech
- Their understanding of the grammar metalanguage used in English learners' monolingual and bilingual dictionaries.

This more complex classification does not necessarily mean better than the simpler one. The profile drawn may be more specific, but not practical to be implemented when making a new dictionary, because the questionnaire consists of ten pages. It means that it takes a lot of time, money and energy to distribute and analyse the questionnaires. In addition, it does not take into account the age of the users. Children and adults definitely need different dictionaries; consequently, age must be included in making a profile of dictionary users. Denisov (2003) and Tarp (2004) acknowledge this variable in proposing their method to produce the profile of dictionary users.

In classifying dictionary users, Denisov (2003: 84) claims the following five categories and the types of dictionaries considered suitable for them. They are (1) children and pupils (school dictionaries); (2) students of languages, teachers of Russian and professional linguists (philological dictionaries); (3) non-language students, technical professionals (terminological dictionaries); (4) the so-called "mass reader" (normative reference dictionaries, cultural and usage dictionaries), and (5) tourists, Soviet specialists abroad, businessmen and the like (phrasebooks or pocket

dictionaries). One of the important variables which is not included in this category is the proficiency level of the users. In general, users with lower proficiency in the second language would prefer bilingual dictionaries than monolingual ones, and vice versa. Therefore, proficiency level also plays a significant role in determining dictionary users.

Tarp (2004: 225) points out proficiency level as the first out of five variables which should be taken into account in order to produce a more detailed profile of the potential dictionary user. The other four variables which should also be considered are: Adult or child, Emigrant or other type of learner, “Joint” or separate culture, and Level of general culture. The unique characterization in this proposal is the heavy emphasis on culture. It is obvious that language is a part of culture, so any description of a language and its parts must also consider the cultural aspect. The consideration on the cultural aspect is even more important for international languages, such as English language. The English learners’ dictionaries, initially published in the 1930s, opened the trend for the inclusion of grammatical and cultural data on some basic aspects of the English language (Fuentes Olivera and Nielsen, in print). However, one of the many problems of the famous British learners’ dictionaries is that they are compiled for foreign language learners in general without taking the very different cultural backgrounds of the target users into account (Tarp, 2004: 228). For example, Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defines *handball* as ‘a team game for two teams of seven players, usually played indoors, in which players try to score goals by throwing a ball with their hand.’ Since handball is never played in some Asian countries, an Indonesian who reads that definition might think that *handball* is like basketball, but with more number of players. In this case, it is obvious that the extent of cultural data to be included in English learner’s dictionaries should be tailored to the particular group of users.

One variable which is also important, but not mentioned by Tarp (2004) is the user's proficiency level in his or her native language. In a country where the national language is imposed by the government (e.g. Indonesia) and in multilingual countries such as Singapore (four official languages) and South Africa (eleven official languages), it is necessary to determine not only what their native language is, but also how well they master their native language. His variable is mentioned by Bergenholtz and Nielsen (2006: 285-286). In general, they note eight characteristics that must be taken into account in order to draw up a profile of a specific user group:

1. Which language is their native language?
2. At what level do they master their native language?
3. At what level do they master a foreign language?
4. How extensive is their experience in translating between the languages in question?
5. What is the level of their general cultural and encyclopaedic knowledge?
6. At what level do they master the special subject field in question?
7. At what level do they master the corresponding LSP in their native language?
8. At what level do they master the corresponding LSP in the foreign language?

They consider these eight variables are the most important ones in drawing up a profile of a specific user group, but they also mention that there may be other relevant types of characteristics for a particular dictionary. These variables work well for determining the users of LSP dictionaries. They do not include the age as one of the variables because it is very unlikely for a child to use an LSP dictionary. LSP dictionaries are of course mostly (if not all) only used by adults.

For LGP dictionaries, Tarp (2008: 138) lists twelve criteria or variables which must all be included to identify the precise characteristics of a dictionary user:

1. What is the mother tongue of the learner?
2. To what extent does the learner master their mother tongue?
3. To what extent does the learner master the foreign language in question?
4. How great is the learner's general cultural knowledge?
5. How great is the learner's knowledge of culture in the foreign-language area in question?
6. Why does the learner wish to learn the foreign language in question?
7. Does the foreign-language learning process take place spontaneously or consciously?
8. Is the foreign language being learned within or outside the foreign-language area concerned?
9. Is the learner exposed to their mother tongue during the learning process?
10. Does the learner use a specific textbook or didactic system?
11. Does the learner use a specific didactic method?
12. Is the learning process related to a specific subject?

Based on these characteristics, it can be assumed that Tarp only focuses on adult learners. He does not include the age as one of the criteria for drawing up the profile of a dictionary user.

3. Segmentation

By viewing a dictionary as a product and dictionary users as target markets, it probably possible to consider the consumer market segmentation variables in drawing up the

profile of dictionary users. According to Kotler and Keller (2006: 247-258) there are four major segmentations:

1. Geographic segmentation: dividing the market into different geographical units such as nations, states, regions, counties, cities, or neighborhoods.
2. Demographic segmentation: dividing the market into groups on the basis of variables such as age, family size, family life cycle, gender, income, occupation, education, religion, race, generation, nationality, and social class.
3. Psychographic segmentation: buyers are divided into different groups on the basis of psychological/personality traits, lifestyle, or values.
4. Behavioral segmentation: buyers are divided into groups on the basis of their knowledge of, attitude toward, use of, or response to a product.

From the four segmentations above, it is the demographic one which is the most popular to distinguish customer group mainly because consumer needs, wants, and usage rates and product and brand preferences are often associated with demographic variables (Kotler and Keller 2006: 249). In addition, it is also the easiest one to be measured. Furthermore, some variables in the demographic segmentation can also be applied in determining the profile of dictionary users. Some adjustments, however, have to be made.

From the twelve variables mentioned in the demographic segmentations, some of them should be omitted and some others may be grouped together as they seem to overlap with one another. Family size and family life cycle are not important in drawing up the profile of dictionary users. Age and generation can be put into one variable, that is, age; race and nationality can be simplified into nationality; and, income and social

class can be merged into social class. Therefore, the applicable ones only comprise seven variables, namely: age, gender, occupation, education, religion, nationality, and social class.

4. Proposed Variables

From the discussion on the seven references mentioned previously (Bergenholtz and Tarp 1995; Atkins and Varantola 1998; Denisov 2003; Tarp 2004; Bergenholtz and Nielsen 2006; Tarp 2008; and Kotler and Keller 2006), a new proposal for drawing up the profile of dictionary users can be made. The variables and the rationale to choose them are explained below.

4.1 Native Language Competence

Taking the native language of the user into consideration has been stated as one of the most important criteria in creating a dictionary. However, the question should not simply ask about the native language, like one of the variables mentioned by Atkins and Varantola (1998). The question should be made more specific, that is, about the level of the mastery of the native language, as pointed out by Bergenholtz and Nielsen (2006) and Tarp (2008). The mother tongue of which one is a native speaker might be officially defined variously as ‘the language spoken by the individual from the cradle,’ ‘parent tongue,’ ‘thinking language,’ ‘language of their homes,’ ‘language of everyday use,’ and so on (Pattanayak, 1998: 125). Therefore, two people from the same country of origin may have different competence in their native language.

The competence in native language can at least be divided into two: colloquial and proficient. Colloquial competence means that the speaker can use his or her native language in conversation but not in formal speech and writing. This is usually the case

for the people who are either under-educated or experience language attrition. Under-educated people have low access to formal vocabulary and grammar. Therefore, a dictionary targeting at this group must have a limited set of vocabulary in all of its parts. This is also the case for other people, though highly educated, but experience language attrition due to the intense and prolonged interaction with the foreign language. For example a German who has lived and spent his secondary school and university years in the U.S, might feel more comfortable using English than German. It is possible that he can write better in English, his second language, than in German, his native language.

4.2 Foreign Language Competence

It is difficult to make clear divisions of the foreign language competence. Wingate (2002) differentiate between an intermediate learner and an advanced learner in terms of the number of lessons. Wingate defines an intermediate learner as a foreign language student who has attended at least 450 lessons, and an advanced learner has attended more than 800 lessons. Nation (2001: 20) claims that language users probably need a vocabulary of 15,000 to 20,000 words to read with minimal disturbance from unknown vocabulary. Neither the number of lessons nor the number of vocabulary is the valid measure for foreign language competence. There are other aspects that influence the competence, such as, the teacher, the teaching method, the number of students in the class, the exposure to the foreign language, the learner's attitude, etc.

Tarp (2008: 141) proposes the following classifications of learners for the reception of texts in a foreign language:

- a. Beginners are learners who need the foreign language explained in their mother tongue (using explanations or simply equivalents)

- b. Intermediate learners are learners who can understand a simple foreign language explanation based on a reduced vocabulary.
- c. Advanced learners are learners who are able to understand complex explanations in the foreign language.

The problem with these classifications is the abstract division between simple and complex foreign language explanations. The degree of complexity of a text may be determined by various factors. One scholar may assume that it is the number of words in a text that makes it more complex than another text. Another scholar may consider that it is the number of compound-complex sentences that really count. Yet, another expert may also hypothesize that it is the type of vocabulary that determines the level of complexity of the text. Still another issue is the schemata of the reader. A graduate management student might feel comfortable understanding complex text about management, but may experience difficulties in comprehending a simple text about phonology. The classification of learners should be based on the result of the proficiency test of the second language.

For English language as a foreign language, there are two widely used tests to determine the level of competence of the learner, they are IELTS and TOEFL. IELTS, the International English Language Testing System, is designed to assess the language ability of candidates who need to study or work where English is the language of communication. It is jointly managed by the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (Cambridge ESOL), British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia. This test is recognised by universities and employers in many countries, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the USA. It is also recognised by professional

bodies, immigration authorities and other government agencies. Based on the IELTS band scores, learners are divided into nine groups:

IELTS Band Score	Description
9. Expert user	Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
8. Very good user	Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
7. Good user	Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
6. Competent user	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
5. Modest user	Has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.
4. Limited user	Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
3. Extremely limited user	Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
2. Intermittent user	No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.
1. Non user	Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.

Source: *IELTS Handbook 2007*

One of the problems with the IELTS band score description above is the integration of the four different language skills into one. For example, a learner who has excellent receptive skills (reading and listening) but poor at productive skills (writing and speaking) will only obtain a modest score. The new Internet-Based TOEFL solves

this problem by providing a separate description for each language skills. The following is an extract for the Reading Skills. The complete description for Listening, Writing, and Speaking skills can be found in the booklet of *TOEFL iBT Performance Feedback for Test Takers 2007*.

Reading Skills	
High	<p>Test takers who receive a score at the HIGH level typically understand academic texts in English that require a wide range of reading abilities regardless of the difficulty of the texts.</p> <p>Test takers who score at the HIGH level, typically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a very good command of academic vocabulary and grammatical structure; • can understand and connect information, make appropriate inferences and synthesize ideas, even when the text is conceptually dense and the language is complex; • can recognize the expository organization of a text and the role that specific information serves within the larger text, even when the text is conceptually dense; and • can abstract major ideas from a text, even when the text is conceptually dense and contains complex language.
Intermediate	<p>Test takers who receive a score at the INTERMEDIATE level typically understand academic texts in English that require a wide range of reading abilities, although their understanding of certain parts of the texts is limited.</p> <p>Test takers who receive a score at the INTERMEDIATE level typically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a good command of common academic vocabulary, but still have some difficulty with high-level vocabulary; • have a very good understanding of grammatical structure; • can understand and connect information, make appropriate inferences, and synthesize information in a range of texts, but have more difficulty when the vocabulary is high level and the text is conceptually dense; • can recognize the expository organization of a text and the role that specific information serves within a larger text, but have some difficulty when these are not explicit or easy to infer from the text; and • can abstract major ideas from a text, but have more difficulty doing so when the text is conceptually dense.
Low	<p>Test takers who receive a score at the LOW level typically understand some of the information presented in academic texts in English that require a wide range of reading abilities, but their understanding is limited.</p> <p>Test takers who receive a score at the LOW level typically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a command of basic academic vocabulary, but their understanding of less common vocabulary is inconsistent;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have limited ability to understand and connect information, have difficulty recognizing paraphrases of text information, and often rely on particular words and phrases rather than a complete understanding of the text; • have difficulty identifying the author's purpose, except when that purpose is explicitly stated in the text or easy to infer from the text; and • can sometimes recognize major ideas from a text when the information is clearly presented, memorable or illustrated by examples, but have difficulty doing so when the text is more demanding.
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4.3 Cultural distance between native and foreign languages

Tarp (2004: 228) wrote that the compilers of a learner's dictionary must also have at least some knowledge about the target group's cultural background and whether this is close to or far from the culture related to the language that is being learned. There are two main points from this statement, that is, the necessity for a compiler to know the target group's cultural background and the distance between the two cultures. An English language dictionary made for Danish students does not need as much cultural explanation as that for Chinese students, because the cultural distance between the U.K and Denmark is not as far as that between the U.K and China.

The best way to solve the issue related to cultural differences is to have experts from both cultures to work together. A good example is the *Oxford Fajar Advanced Learner's English – Malay Dictionary* (2000), which is a collaborative work between Albert Sydney Hornby (U.K) and Asmah Haji Omar (Malaysia). In the same sense, the forthcoming monolingual *Oxford Primary Dictionary for Eastern Africa* which will be published on 5 June 2008, should have also been written by both experts from the U.K and the Eastern Africa. In this case, the lexicographers may need to provide more thorough explanation for the culturally bound articles, so that the users can understand them better. For example the Danish word *ymer* which is defined by Ordbogen.com as

‘soured whole milk’. Based on this definition, a non-Danish dictionary user may think that *ymer* is the same as *yoghurt*, while they are actually different.

4.4 Residence status

Learners who stay in their home country may require different dictionaries from those staying in other countries for various reasons. For immigrants, learning a new language is a part of the process of integration into the new country. Therefore, authors of learner’s dictionaries which are designed for immigrants must remember the special lexicographical needs of such users, including the selection and explanation of words referring to relevant laws, institutions, and cultural phenomena (Tarp 2008: 144). The market for these immigrants has increased over time. Based on the United Nations data, between 1960 and 2005 the number of international migrants in the world more than doubled, rising from an estimated 75 million in 1960 to almost 191 million in 2005, an increase of 121 million over 45 years.

People who only stay in other countries for short periods of time will also have different lexicographical needs. These people should prefer using a dictionary which is easy to carry and contains phrases which are usually used in casual conversation. Denisov (2003: 84) notes that dictionaries created for tourists may simply be phrasebooks or pocket dictionaries for practical purposes. Other people who stay in other countries for short periods of time, but with different purposes, may also prefer the same type of dictionaries.

4.5 Age

A dictionary aimed at children must be different from that aimed at adults. It is the fact that children have smaller vocabulary than adults. Anglin (1993) found that six-year-olds know about 3,000 root words, eight-year-olds about 4,500 root words, and ten-year-olds

about 7,500 words. In addition, Nippold (1998) wrote that their lexicons would gradually expand so that by early adulthood, they will understand and use at least 60,000 different words. In a further study, Nippold (2006: 371) found that in a sample of conversational speech, a 6-year-old child will produce sentences of approximately six words in length, on average, but a 30-year-old adult will exhibit a mean sentence length of at least 10 words. Therefore, a dictionary for children must contain not only a limited set of vocabulary but also shorter sentences, compared to a dictionary targeted at adults.

4.6 Education level

The education level has a positive correlation with the number of the vocabulary and the amount of information needed for each article. The higher the education level of the targeted users, the more vocabulary and information expected. If the education level becomes one of the main variables, the lexicographer must consider the curriculum for each education level which is particular to each country. In Singapore, for example, there are clear differences between the English language requirements of primary, secondary, and tertiary level students, which in turn affects their information seeking needs when using dictionaries.

Based on the *Report of the English Language Curriculum and Pedagogy Review* from the Singapore Minister of Education (www.moe.gov.sg), the English Language for primary school students focuses on developing oral language, reading, and spelling skills using authentic children's literature. A dictionary focusing on this group should at least print the entries in bigger fonts to enhance spelling abilities and provide sentence examples taken from children's literature. At the secondary level, the students are introduced to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA); listening and speaking skills are emphasised by oral presentations, drama, and debates; and students are also given

more exposure to a wide range of text types to encourage reading and to stimulate writing. Consequently, the articles in the dictionary targeting at this group must at least include the IPA, pronunciation, collocations, etc.

4.7 Language skills

Language teachers usually divide language skills into four: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. A dictionary aiming at a group interested in learning a particular skill should provide particular features as well. For example, a study conducted by Graham (2006) showed that a group of English speaking learners of French were less successful in listening than in the other language skills. The main problems highlighted by these learners were dealing adequately with the speed of delivery of texts, making out individual words in a stream of spoken French, and making sense of any words identified. A suitable dictionary for this group of students should at least have the pronunciation of each lemma. It will be even better if the collocations or common utterances are provided along with their pronunciations, so that the learners can listen to the words in a stream of speech, hence they can improve their listening skills. With the advances in technology, it may be possible to integrate the Speech Recognition Software and the Oxford Genie Application with electronic dictionaries. Consequently, the stream of speech can be decoded into written text, and the definitions or equivalents can pop up directly by pointing at the text.

Some electronic dictionaries (especially on CD-ROM) enable users to input their own speech and to compare it with a stored, 'original' recording (de Schryver, 2003: 167). One example of the user group for this type of dictionaries is a group of new entrants in banks in Hong Kong. Chew (2005) who investigated the English language skills of new entrants in banks in Hong Kong found that about three-quarters of these

new entrants expressed an interest in speaking skills. An electronic dictionary which enables the users to record their own speech—a word, a phrase, or a sentence—and to compare it with a stored recording, will be suitable to satisfy the demand of this group.

The same conditions also apply for a group of users who are interested more in the writing and reading skills. A dictionary user who is interested in writing a text will need more information about the grammar than a user who wants to comprehend a reading text.

4.8 Social class

The social class of the target group should be taken into account when creating dictionaries for commercial purposes. The price that the customer is willing to pay for a dictionary is also one of the concerns mentioned by Landau (2001: 349). The size and the content of a dictionary sometimes have to be simplified to decrease the production cost and enable the target group to purchase it. For example, in some developing countries, there is the so-called International Student's Edition of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD). The list price of the regular OALD is approximately USD30, while the International Student's Edition costs only a half of that regular price. The contents of both dictionaries are exactly the same; the only difference is that the size of the papers for the student's edition is few centimetres smaller than the regular edition.

4.9 Subject specific competence in the native language

This variable is particularly important to consider in creating LSP dictionaries. The difference in the subject specific competence in the native language may result in different expectations on the information provided in a dictionary article. A clear example for this is given in combination with the explanation of the next variable.

4.10 Subject specific competence in the foreign language

In addition to the subject specific competence in the native language, the competence in the foreign language should also be considered in drawing up the profile of an LSP dictionary user. For example, an Indonesian teacher of mathematics may be considered an expert for that subject in his native language, but he might be a layman for that subject in his foreign language. To satisfy his need to understand an English mathematics text, he will need a dictionary that simply provides at least the Indonesian equivalents of the English terms. The condition is different from a freshman at an mathematics department in an Indonesian university who is still a layman for that subject both in his native language and in the foreign language. In this situation, a dictionary which simply provides the Indonesian equivalents of the English terms will not help him to understand an English mathematics text. He should prefer using a dictionary which also provides the explanations of the terms in Indonesian language.

4.11 Occupation

Nowadays, there are more and more dictionaries aimed at people from particular professions. Some of the examples are a dictionary for investors (www.investorwords.com), a dictionary for painters (Larousse Dictionary of Painters, 1990), a dictionary for hackers (Webster's New World Hacker Dictionary, 2006), and even a dictionary for soap makers (<http://www.ccnphawaii.com/glossary.htm>). The Dictionary of Occupational Titles from JobGenie (www.stepfour.com/jobs/) lists 12,741 different jobs. A dictionary publisher may focus on one of the occupational titles to find a good demand for a particular dictionary. For example, a search in Yahoo.com and Amazon.com did not show any result of a dictionary for actuaries. This can be a good market because according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics from the U.S. Department of

Labor (www.bls.gov/oco/), actuaries held about 15,000 jobs in 2002, and the number keeps growing over time.

4.12 Gender

Along with the gender equity development, there are some publishers who have responded to the needs for dictionaries specifically aimed at women. A search on Amazon.com book catalogue on 12 February 2008 for “dictionary for women” showed 4,771 results. A search for “dictionary for men” from the same website, however, only showed 1,874 results. This does not show that the number of women is more than that of men. Based on the United Nation data on world population, in 2005, there were 3,282,525 thousand males and 3,232,226 thousand females (www.esa.un.org/unpp). The more number of dictionaries for women might be due to the fact that woman makes 80% of the buying decisions in all homes (TrendSight.com) that makes them a good market for many products, including dictionaries.

A dictionary for women should have some differences from a dictionary for men or for both sexes. The difference is not only on the topic or the lemmata, but also in the explanation of the articles. In some languages, the speaker’s gender determines the phonological, morphological, syntactical, or lexical forms chosen. Bradley’s study (1998) on Yanyuwa, an Australian aboriginal language, clearly shows that the choice of particular case-marking suffixes depends on the gender of the speaker, so a speaker who uses a form inappropriate to their gender will be strongly reprimanded. In this case, a dictionary of Yanyuwa language cannot be created by and aimed at both men and women as the gender differences in the language are clearly marked.

4.13 Religion

Some words may be considered offensive in some religions, but not in the others. There are also possibilities that the same word is interpreted differently in different religions. Consequently, creating a special dictionary for people from a particular religion requires knowledge on that religion. Take for example the word *heaven*. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2005) defines it as 'the place believed to be the home of God where good people go when they die.' This is different from the definition provided in the a dictionary for Buddhists entitled *Buddhism A to Z* (2003) which defines it as 'the dwelling places of the gods.' In addition, Buddhist people always use the word *heaven* in a plural form, because they believe that there are several groups of heavens.

Another example is the word *djinn* or *genie* which is defined by *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* as 'a spirit with magic powers, especially one that lives in a bottle or a lamp'. This is different from its definition found in the *Islamic Dictionary* (www.muttaqun.com/dictionary3.html): 'A creation of Allah made from smokeless fire.

They are also invited to accept Islam and will have to give account of their deeds on the Day of Judgement.' Cognizance of the great influence of religion is probably one of the reasons for Oxford University Press to produce *Oxford Wordpower Dictionary for Arabic-speaking Learners of English* (2005). Therefore, it is also important for a lexicographer to make some adjustments in the dictionary, i.e. the definitions, is the dictionary is aimed at people where a particular religion highly controls their lives.

5. Conclusion

Determining user characteristics is the first task the lexicographer has to complete to determine the user needs (Bergenholtz and Nielsen 2006: 286). This paper proposes

thirteen variables or characteristics which should be considered when drawing up the profile of dictionary users. The thirteen variables are: Native language competence, Foreign language competence, Cultural distance between native and foreign languages, Residence status, Age, Education level, Language skills, Social class, Subject specific competence in the native language, Subject specific competence in the foreign language, Occupation, Gender, and Religion. The first eight variables are useful for drawing up the profile of LGP dictionary users. The next three variables are related to LSP dictionary users. The last two variables, gender and religion, are only applicable for clearly gender marked languages and religiously governed countries, respectively.

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