Detailed analysis and evaluation on the language information supplied in four learner's dictionaries are carried out with the aim to assess the adequacy and usefulness of the supply. It has been established that for a fuller understanding of the MEANING of a word (to decode as well as to encode), a knowledge of the semantic meaning, the appropriateness of use (the pragmatic meaning), and the accuracy of usage (the grammatical meaning) is imperative. Among these, the semantic meaning forms the central and the most basic part. The general study on dictionary-use and the specific analysis of the semantic meaning entered in the four dictionaries have led to certain assumptions. Some of them are as follows:

1. In the second language learning situation guessing the meaning from the context is not always successful.
2. The meaning of a word should be defined by simpler words (i.e., the metalanguage must be simple).
3. Supplying the definition of meaning alone may not ensure receptive and productive skills. In addition, illustrative examples are also needed for comprehension and production.
4. Learners require the teacher's advice to choose the right dictionary. Moreover in the initial stages of using the dictionary teacher's help is needed for the students to develop the necessary reference skills.

5. The definitions in OALD and LDOCE are simple and direct. Some of those in CELD are too complicated. WNNCD's definitions employ very difficult words.

6. OALD, LDOCE and CELD have an edge over WNNCD in supplying many illustrative examples.

Testing the validity of these premises through the practical use of the dictionaries with the learners themselves is the sure means of authenticating the observation. Hence a series of exercises were given to the students as experiments to evaluate/measure the efficacy of the definitions and examples entered in the four dictionaries.

As a prelude to the practical work the first year under-graduate students in the General English class were asked to write a paragraph on all that they knew about dictionaries under the topic "Dictionary and Its Uses". The students were briefed to think of what a dictionary is, of its types, its uses and also to state their opinion/practice of using it regularly, etc. This exercise was given with the design to draw out information from the learners about (1) their awareness on the use of the dictionary as an effective tool in expanding their vocabulary; their knowledge on the types of dictionaries available for their
use; and (3) also to find out how many of the learners actually use the dictionary and the quantum of their reliance on this learning aid.

The following are the perceptions made by the learners:

1. In dictionaries words are arranged alphabetically.
2. There are English to English and English to Tamil dictionaries.
3. Dictionaries are useful to find out the correct spelling, pronunciation and meaning and to learn new words.

Ninety-five percent of the learners admit that they rarely use dictionaries. And they also state that when they use one, it is only a bilingual dictionary. They refer to a locally available Lifco (English-Tamil) dictionary. This dictionary gives a brief definition in English and Tamil for English words. It also marks the functional label in abbreviation for each word. It does not provide illustrative examples. Only 5% of the learners use the Oxford English Dictionary (that too the pocket edition). Those who use the Oxford English Dictionary also possess the Lifco Dictionary.

As it became evident that the first year students of a particular section were not aware of the availability of the learner's dictionaries it was decided to carry out a wider survey by including the Branch XII English Major students of
all the three year degree classes and the postgraduate English Literature students (both I and II year classes). A common Questionnaire for the students was administered to all these classes.

The aim of using this questionnaire is as follows:

To find out how many students make use of dictionaries; how often they refer to the dictionary; the main purpose of using the dictionary; the difficulties encountered in using the dictionary; how far the use of dictionary has been taught in a systematic way, etc.

The findings from the responses given by students are as given below:

1. Almost all the students own dictionaries either monolingual alone or both mono and bilingual dictionaries. This is in sharp contrast with General English students. Among them only very few own dictionaries and those who own mostly have Lifco (English-Tamil) dictionary.

2. The dictionaries had been got mostly as gifts from parents or relatives.

3. Most of the students record that the use of the dictionary was taught to them by their parents. Teachers have contributed very little to the student's knowledge of dictionary-use.

4. Oxford and Lifco dictionaries occupy the shelves of most of the students. Students are unable to specify what edition they possess.
5. When students look up words in the dictionary it is mainly for the meaning and synonyms of new words.
6. Students do not pay any attention to the Introductory pages provided in the dictionary.
7. Dictionary is found to be used more for written composition, written comprehension, than for oral comprehension and much less for oral production.
8. Students do have difficulty in finding the right meaning of the words they look up. They express the need for teachers' help/assistance to use the dictionary.

A Questionnaire for English Language Teachers was prepared in order to assess whether teaching the use of dictionary is part of the methods of teaching vocabulary expansion. The questionnaire was distributed among the college teachers in Tiruchi and Thanjavur including some other teachers who attended Refresher Course at Bharathidasan University and ELT workshop at Thanjavur.

Aim. To find how many teachers advocate the use of the dictionary and what dictionaries they suggest to the learners.

Hypothesis. Most of the college teachers assume that dictionary use has been taught to students at the secondary and higher secondary levels and hence do not teach or suggest the dictionary use as a method for self-learning.
Those few teachers who teach the use of dictionaries in their class, do not adapt systematic methods for the same.

Findings. Out of the 70 copies of Questionnaires distributed 40 responses were received. The responses of 19 government college teachers and 21 private college teachers are consolidated separately to observe if there is any difference in the methods used. This is because in government colleges, for the medium of instruction English and Tamil are used for two streams of students.

Majority of the teachers acknowledge the use of the dictionary for vocabulary expansion.

Dictionaries published by Oxford University Press—OALD, Concise Dictionary and Pocket Edition—are the most widely suggested dictionaries for learner's use. Very few have suggested LDOCE and CELD.

Lifco Dictionary (bilingual) occupies the second position in the recommendations of government college teachers. In the case of private college teachers, the Chamber's Dictionary takes up the second position. The Chamber's Dictionary has a wider coverage. But it does not provide illustrative examples.
Though most of the teachers claim that they teach the use of the dictionary in the classroom they admit that they do not follow any systematic method to do the same.

Some of the teachers declare that they assume/know that their students are already familiar with the methods of using the dictionary.

An Account of the Exercises in the Classroom

Learners' profile. The first year General English class that was given practical work in using dictionary consisted of students from either English or Tamil medium of instruction upto their higher secondary classes and many of them continue to study in the Tamil medium in college also. Four groups of science students formed this section—Physics EM; Physics TM; Botany EM; and Botany TM. Their general proficiency in the English language may be roughly estimated from the range of marks they have obtained in the First Semester University examination:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total No. students</th>
<th>Marks obtained out of 100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;35 35-40 41-45 46-50 51-60 61-70 70&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phy.EM</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-- 2 3 2 4 8 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phy.TM</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1 9 - 3 2 - -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bot.EM</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6 11 3 1 1 - -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bot.TM</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6 15 2 1 - - -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise I. As dictionaries were not available to the learners xeroxed copies of entries from the four dictionaries were supplied to the students.

Prose for the Young Reader is the prescribed prose textbook for a detailed study. The vocabulary items were picked up from the essays found in this book.

To start with, five words from an essay were picked up at random and their meanings alone as given in the four dictionaries (OALD, LDOCE, CELD and WNNCD) were supplied to the four different groups of students. Students were asked to interact in pairs and were asked to use the words in making their own sentences. The sentence making exercise was given as a homework and the learners' response was uniform. They had all copied sentences from the guides that they use for the examination. (The learners have the habit of memorising paragraphs and essays for the tests and examinations from the ready-made answers supplied in the guides. They also memorise sentences [using new vocabulary] that are given in the same guides for sentence-making.) The aim of giving the exercise was to find out how far the definitions given in the dictionaries helped in comprehension. But from students responses there is no way to find this.
Exercise II. For the same five words example phrases and sentences as given in the four dictionaries were supplied to the same set of four groups. The students were asked to make sentences of their own in the classroom. Students were made to read out their sentences. At least 30% of the students were able to design sentences of their own after the model of the example sentences given in the dictionaries. Many of the students repeated the examples from the dictionary entries and one or two students repeated the original sentence from the textbook. Those who used WNNCD were severely handicapped as they did not have examples to follow.

Inference. In Ex. I by going through the definition students may/may not have comprehended the meaning. But it could not be found out as they did not express themselves.

In Ex. II when examples were supplied production of sentences was made easy. This experiment of giving meaning alone first and making the students write sentences and then supplying examples and extracting new constructions was repeated several times. Every time it was confirmed that learners definitely need illustrative examples to reinforce the meaning given in the definition and that students relied on these illustrations to construct sentences of their own.
Exercise III. The students were made to go through one paragraph in an essay. Five words that are difficult, but essential to grasp the essence of the paragraph were picked up.

Task I. The students were asked to guess the meaning of those words and write them down. One mark for each correct answer was given.

Task II. Meanings of these five words from the four dictionaries were supplied to the four different sets of students. Students were asked to translate the paragraph into Tamil. The purpose of this exercise was to test the comprehension of the meaning of the words. One mark was given for the correct translation of each of these words. The following are the lists of marks scored for the two tasks.

Task I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total No. students</th>
<th>Marks obtained out of 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phy.EM</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phy.TM</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bot.EM</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bot.TM</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inference. Guessing the meaning (in Task I) was not very successful. This is evident from the marks scored. The number of zeroes is very large in Task I. The zeroes either vanish or decrease in number in Task II. Hence it is inferred that supplying the meanings (by definition) has enhanced comprehension.

This exercise was repeated three times, each time with different sets of five words.

Every time it was found that learners' performance improved after using the dictionary entry. This has clearly established the fact that in the case of our students guessing the meaning from context is not a very useful practice, but that they should be supplied with the meaning. As the teacher cannot always do this for all the words the students encounter, they should be encouraged to look up the meaning in the dictionary.
This was further confirmed by a similar experiment conducted in the final year (III year) B.A. English (Major) class. These students specialize in English language and literature and were able to perform in a better way than the I year General English class.

Exercise IV. In all the previous exercises Physics EM students always used entries from OALD; Physics TM used WNNCD; Botany EM, LDOCE; and Botany TM used CELD. For this exercise also the same practice continued. Students were supplied with a set of five words along with their definitions and illustrative examples. As usual the students were asked to write sentences of their own by using the five words. Besides, they were asked to state whether they found the definitions to be easy or difficult and to comment on the usefulness of the examples. The users of WNNCD often complained about the difficult language of its definition and about the missing of the examples. The observations of the other three dictionary users (OALD, LDOCE and CELD) and evaluation of their sentences are given in the appendix. The weak students in all the groups needed the teacher's help to understand the task given and to comprehend the meaning from the definition.

Because of the wide ranging learner variability in general intelligence it was very difficult to measure the
relative merit of the dictionary entries. Hence it was resolved to give the entries from the four dictionaries to all the students as against supplying entries from one dictionary to one specific group. While doing exercises of translating the words and writing sentences of their own by using given words, students were asked to state their difficulty/ease in understanding the definitions and following the examples in the four dictionaries. The following is the average drawn after comparing the students' responses. Number of students who have stated that the definitions and examples are easy to follow: OALD, 42; LDOCE, 50; CELD, 25; WNNCD, 6.

The III year (English Major) students were also made to use the entries from the four dictionaries and they were asked to state their preference among the four dictionaries. Out of 41 students the preferences are as follows: OALD, 17; LDOCE, 13; CELD, 9; WNNCD, 2. This roughly corresponds with the I B.Sc. students' observation regarding the relative ease they find in using the four dictionaries. It may be observed that the preference for LDOCE is higher in the case of I year students.

Exercise V. During the practical sessions for all the earlier exercises only the relevant meanings and examples for the specific context in the text were always supplied.
To find out how the students can pick out specific information from the actual entries in the dictionaries the following exercise was given to another set of I year degree students belonging to B.A. Economics TM and B.A. English Major. The Economics students belonged to a below average group in language proficiency and the English major students were of average and above average groups.

A paragraph from a newspaper cutting was given to the students. From that paragraph the word means (in the sense of method) was picked up. The sentence from which the word was picked up is as follows: "A visitor to Bidar district cannot but notice the use of the camel as a means of transport for goods even today." The students translated this sentence orally and gave the translation equivalence of the word. The entries for this word in the three dictionaries (OALD, LDOCE and CELD) were supplied to the students and a set of questions were put to them. The entries are given in the Appendix and the following are the questions asked and the responses of the students.

State which dictionary you have used: (a) OALD, (b) LDOCE, (c) CELD. Ten students from each group used each of these three dictionaries.

1) Is means singular or plural?
   a) singular    b) plural   c) don't know.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dictionary</th>
<th>Economics TM</th>
<th>English Lit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a b c</td>
<td>a b c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OALD</td>
<td>2 7 5</td>
<td>6 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDOCE</td>
<td>3 5 2</td>
<td>10 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELD</td>
<td>6 2 2</td>
<td>2 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) Is *means* noun or verb?

   a) noun  b) verb  c) don’t know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dictionary</th>
<th>Economics TM</th>
<th>English Lit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a b c</td>
<td>a b c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OALD</td>
<td>1 7 2</td>
<td>9 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDOCE</td>
<td>4 6 1</td>
<td>10 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELD</td>
<td>- 4 3</td>
<td>2 2 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3) Can *means* be used with singular/plural verb?

   a) singular  b) plural  c) both  d) don’t know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dictionary</th>
<th>Economics TM</th>
<th>English Lit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a b c d</td>
<td>a b c d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OALD</td>
<td>3 5 1 1</td>
<td>6 4 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDOCE</td>
<td>5 3 1 1</td>
<td>- - 10 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELD</td>
<td>1 3 1 5</td>
<td>- - 10 -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4) Different meanings are given for the word *means*. Which meaning is the most suitable for the word used in the passage? Give the number from the dictionary entry.

Number of students who answered correctly:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dictionary</th>
<th>Economics TM</th>
<th>English Lit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OALD</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDOCE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELD</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5) Give the synonym for means as it is used in your text.

Number of students who answered correctly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dictionary</th>
<th>Economics TM</th>
<th>English Lit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OALD</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDOCE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELD</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6) Make a sentence of your own using the word means.

Number of students who answered correctly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dictionary</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OALD</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDOCE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When this exercise was given to the students for each of the questions the following were the anticipations.

1. Whether means is singular or plural may be easily understood from CELD as the language is in conversational style. Students with average intelligence may find this easily. Economics students may find it difficult to discern.

2. Noun/verb distinction may not be clear for all as it is not explicitly stated in sentences.

3. OALD indicates that singular/plural forms are possible. But means + verb is given clearly in LDOCE and CELD. Hence LDOCE and CELD users may score high.

4. Locating the correct meaning may not be very difficult as the context supplies enough clues.

5. Will be very easy for those who use CELD since synonyms are supplied alongside.
Discussion of the Results

It is observed that the performance of the students is very close to the anticipation.

For the first question whether *means* is singular or plural, it was expected that the users of CELD may find it easy to answer from the dictionary entry. Among the Economics TM students it is the users of CELD who have given more number of correct answers. Among the English Literature students, all those who used LDOCE have answered it correctly.

The second question whether *means* is a noun or verb is a difficult question for a high percentage of Economics students. It is just as anticipated. Among the English Literature students, almost all the OALD users have answered it correctly.

For the third question whether *means* can be used with singular or plural verbs it was expected that LDOCE and CELD users will find it easy to answer. The score by English Literature students attests to this. (All the 10 students who used LDOCE and CELD have answered correctly.) The poor performance in general of Economics students may be due to their low proficiency level.
For the fourth question on choosing the right meaning of the word from among many meanings and the fifth question to give synonyms for the word the users of LDOCE and CELD score high.

In making sentences of their own the users of LDOCE are relatively better than the others.

An overall observation leads to the conclusion that by and large LDOCE is consistently more helpful than the other two.

Even when the parts of speech labels are supplied in all these dictionaries students were not able to understand that. Hence a general conclusion is that the students require training to develop reference skills.
Vocabulary building is one of the major components in language learning. Constant exposure to the language and the necessity or compulsion to use the language are seen to be favourable conditions for quickening the process of the acquisition of the language skills and the accumulation of word power. But in learning English as a second language the process is rendered slow or even nullified as there is less opportunity for exposure to the language and lesser occasions for the practical use of the language—that is, there is a paucity of accidental or incidental learning. Hence learners have to rely on instructional means to know the language and to enrich their vocabulary. Vocabulary acquisition had been taken for granted on the premise that vocabulary may be learnt once the structures of the language are taught. But recent studies emphasize on conscious efforts to build up vocabulary.

In the initial stages of primary and secondary levels teachers help to build a substratum of basic vocabulary. As the learners advance in learning they have to develop strategies of their own to enrich their vocabulary. Guessing from the context, getting translation equivalents from bilingual dictionaries and other knowledgeable sources
and looking up the monolingual dictionary are some of the methods available for building up the repertoire of one’s vocabulary. The mere comprehension of meaning adds only to the passive vocabulary of an individual. To increase the bulk of active vocabulary, a complete knowledge (for both comprehension and production) of the word is essential. Guessing technique and translation equivalent will not be of any help in the production skills.

The newly emerged learner’s dictionaries claim that they are the repositories of self-instructional material on language information for vocabulary building and language learning. A study on the evolution of the pedagogy oriented learner’s dictionaries also points to the fact that these compilations are specially designed to meet the needs of learners of English as a second language. As these recent dictionaries promise a possible avenue for self-learning, a close examination of the efficacy of their entries has been made in the present work. Four learner’s dictionaries (OALD, LDOCE, CELD and WNNCD) have been scrutinized to assess the adequacy of the information they supply, the level of challenge to their users, the anticipation of the problems of the learners, the type of linguistic environment given, the gaps in providing language information, the activities involved in the retrieval mechanism, etc. The work makes a comparison of the methods of presentation, the
metalanguage used in each of these compilations, the reference skills required and the quantum of help needed from the teachers to develop the reference skills in the dictionary users.

The main thrust of the analysis is on MEANING in its fuller sense. On theoretical basis a framework was evolved for this evaluation. Semantic, Pragmatic and Grammatical meanings that form the three basic components of Meaning in its larger sense were identified as the parameters to examine the efficacy of the information entered in the dictionaries. In the entries of the broad categories of CONTENT WORDS and STRUCTURAL WORDS and also IDIOMS and PHRASAL VERBS as special lexical groups of English, the sufficiency of the semantic, pragmatic and grammatical information was analysed.

The categorywise study reveals that in conveying the semantic meaning, the definitions found in OALD and LDOCE are better suited to fulfil the needs of our learners for comprehension. The metalanguage used in these definitions is simple, direct and precise. Of these two dictionaries LDOCE's definitions are much simpler with a relatively plain metalanguage consisting of a 2000-word defining vocabulary. Students with reasonably good proficiency in English will find it easy to use the OALD definitions. For students with
average proficiency LDOCE's definitions will be ideally suitable.

CELD's use of the discursive style of writing to build a rapport with its users is innovative. But as this style involves complicated constructions to enunciate meaning, it is found that many of its definitions fail to bring out the compilers' desired effect. Its use of the extra column that distinctly records the synonyms and antonyms is a novel practice and a very helpful device to find a near parallel expression for a word at hand. This device could also be useful to locate the exact entry that is needed, when the search is for encoding information for a word whose meaning is already known. WNNCD's definitions demand a native-like proficiency from its users. As such proficiency is not found to be common among second language learners WNNCD is not considered to be well suited for our learners' reference needs.

It is desirable to have a future compilation with an integration of the simple, direct, crisp and precise definitions as in LDOCE and OALD and presentation of the near equivalent synonyms and the most suitable antonyms in a distinct way as in CELD.

The paradigmatic relationships among near synonyms are clearly stated in a number of usage notes in OALD, LDOCE and
even (sometimes) in WNNCD. But CELD does not pay attention to this contrastive feature of the language.

In indicating the collocational possibilities or the syntagmatic relationships among words OALD and LDOCE are leading.

By using invented phrases and sentences as illustrative examples for the use of words OALD and LDOCE provide the sufficient contexts and thereby ensure comprehension and production. But CELD's examples from authentic texts often prove to be inadequate in supplying the right context that is needed for a proper understanding of the meaning and the use of the words. In WNNCD, examples are very few and they are also too brief to derive any benefit out of them.

Derivatives and compound words are regularly entered along with the relevant root words in OALD and LDOCE. But CELD assigns individual status to most of the derivatives. The practice of OALD and LDOCE will be very helpful for the learners to perceive some of the major patterns of word formation. In addition, LDOCE separately lists the common affixes with suitable examples.

In bringing out the pragmatic meaning of words only OALD, LDOCE and CELD are conscious of the second language learners' requirement to discern the right use of the words
with reference to the style, register, regional variation, the attitudes of the speakers/hearers, etc. WNNCD does not pay much attention to the pragmatic aspect of meaning. Even among the first three dictionaries there is no uniformity of presentation. Conveying the semantic meaning has reached certain standard practice of using hyponymy to indicate inclusiveness, analogy, comparison and contrast to show exclusiveness, examples to illustrate accurate use, etc. But clearly stating the appropriateness in using a word, i.e., using the right word for the right social context is an area that requires a more detailed study for its incorporation into the dictionary entries. Vague terms like 'formal', and 'informal' are used at present to define the pragmatic use. Moreover whether it is the scale of formality, or the specific register or the use of the active/passive construction to produce specific effect the dictionaries have not yet reached the common consensus to record them systematically. OALD is found to specify the register in which certain words are used in a more systematic way than the other dictionaries.

In giving the grammatical information, the first three dictionaries (OALD, LDOCE and CELD) are almost equally efficient. WNNCD avoids elaborate presentations on grammar. It is almost like a general English dictionary in this regard. OALD elaborates on verb patterns outside the text
and codifies the patterns within the text. LDOCE is also equally efficient in its attempts on presenting the verb patterns. CELD tries to make it simple for the learners by not using codes to indicate patterns. But it uses abbreviations in its extra column to show the colligation of the grammatical items. In the treatment of nouns though all the three dictionaries try to indicate the countable and uncountable nature of the nouns CELD alone uses the helpful method of recording this information uniformly for all the nouns. Similarly it is only CELD that gives the plural forms for all the nouns and the inflected form of all the verbs.

All the four dictionaries consciously elaborate on the Structural words. However, in recording the use of articles only LDOCE indicates the contexts where articles are not needed. The use of specific prepositions with nouns is systematically recorded only in OALD and LDOCE.

In dealing with idioms, how fixed the idioms are, is not very clearly stated in any of the dictionaries. Phrasal verbs and most common phrases are printed in the same way in LDOCE.

Among OALD, LDOCE and CELD, LDOCE seems to be a veritable language teacher in incorporating language notes
in simple language. It makes a greater impact as a pedagogical dictionary though OALD is preferred by many.

The analysis and evaluation of the dictionaries will be incomplete if there is no observation made on their use in real life. From the responses of the students for Questionnaire I, it is clear that most of the students are not aware of the availability of the existing learner's dictionaries. Secondly those few, who own or have access to these dictionaries do not know the wealth of information contained in them since they do not have the habit of going through the introductory pages. Another significant fact is that our students' language proficiency is not adequate enough for them to read the front matter on their own and readily follow the instructions and guidances given there. They need the teacher's help to understand the guidelines given by the lexicographers. Peter Strevens comments on how the valuable information in dictionaries is neglected/not known (78).

The sad fact is that this vast treasure of information is accessible only if one has the key, which lies in reading the Introductory essay and appendices. Only the most professional of EFL teachers do this, and not all of them. For very many teachers and almost all learners, the potential help available from LDs (Learner's Dictionaries) remain unknown.
Underhill also emphasises, "it is the teacher's responsibility to teach students how to use the MLD (Monolingual Learners' Dictionary) effectively" (1985).

Anticipating the limitation of the students, the compilers of the learner's dictionaries have published workbooks specifically designed to have classroom practice on using the dictionaries. The exercises in the workbooks introduce and reinforce the necessary reference skills that are needed to use each of these dictionaries. As these dictionaries maintain their individuality of style in their entries the worksheets brought out for OALD cannot be used for LDOCE or any other dictionaries and CELD's related publication will not hold good for OALD.

It is perceived that the language teacher has the responsibility of introducing the most suitable dictionary and also of instructing the learners to develop the reference skills through regular practice.

The college teacher's responses to Questionnaire II show that many of them assume that the students do not require any training for using the dictionary. But the experiments in the classroom have proved that students are in need of the teacher's help. Peter Streven's observations are most relevant in this context (1987, p. 91):
i) those learners who use LDs are generally introduced to them by EFL teachers;

ii) LDs are useful to teachers as well as learners;

iii) hence, although they are designed for learners, it is upon teachers that the effectiveness of LDs chiefly depends;

iv) the great majority of users of LDs exploit only a tiny fraction of the information available within them;

v) the restricted exploitation of LDs follows from the complexity of the codings used and the relative inability of learners and unwillingness of teachers to read and act upon the separate chapters in which the codings, etc. are explained;

vi) yet the users of these restricted fractions of the information available find LDs worth using, because the knowledge they obtain is available in other dictionaries and is of further use which the learner and teacher have a strong and using use.

Universities design the syllabus for the curriculum and the teachers follow what has been prescribed. Though a syllabus is primarily concerned with what is to be learned, it will be more effective if the possible/available methods of learning can also be given as a guidance. Especially in the context of second language learning, the research work carried out could be translated into classroom use only through the syllabus designers. Hence the teaching of the use of the dictionary has to be incorporated into the language syllabus at least for the first semester at the tertiary level. In using dictionaries, Adrian Underhill (1985) has observed a gain of two distinct kinds of
information: Specific Information and Incidental Awareness. Specific information is obtained by a specific question the learner puts to a dictionary and incidental awareness is everything else that the learner may notice unconsciously while he looks for specific information. These two kinds together form the learning potential of a dictionary.