EXAMPLES IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOL DICTIONARIES: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

It is generally accepted that illustrative examples are useful in dictionaries, particularly school and learner's dictionaries. The South African school situation presents unique challenges to lexicographers, as most learners are being taught in English, which is not their home language, so a monolingual school dictionary is used as a learner's dictionary, and a bilingual school dictionary may not contain the learner's first language. This research aims to find out how useful examples are to South African learners, and how one can evaluate the effectiveness of examples in dictionaries.

The first method used in this thesis is the development of a table of categories, which is used to analyse, compare and evaluate illustrative examples in five different South African school dictionaries. The data from this table is presented in detail, and the results are discussed and conclusions drawn. The second method makes use of questionnaires given to learners to find out whether they are aware of the supportive functions of examples in dictionaries.

The result of the table of categories is a set of guidelines and recommendations for selecting or inventing suitable examples for use in school dictionaries. The table of categories can also be used to analyse and compare the examples in existing dictionaries. The result of the learner questionnaires is that learners do actively look for support for the definition in examples, especially if the headword is new to them, or they do not understand the definition.

The conclusion of this thesis is that examples are an important part of a dictionary entry and need to be chosen with care, to provide as much support as possible, within the space constraints of that particular dictionary.

OPSOMMING

Daar word algemeen aanvaar dat voorbeeldmateriaal in woordeboeke, veral in skool- en aanleerderswoordeboeke, baie nuttig is. Die Suid-Afrikaanse skoolbestel bied unieke uitdagings aan leksikograwe, aangesien die meeste leerders in Engels (wat nie hulle moedertaal is nie) onderrig ontvang. Gevolglik word 'n eentalige skoolwoordeboek dikwels gebruik as 'n aanleerderswoordeboek, en 'n tweetalige woordeboek bevat dikwels nie die leerder se moedertaal nie. Met hierdie navorsing word gepoog om uit te vind hoe nuttig Suid-Afrikaanse leerders voorbeeldmateriaal vind, en hoe 'n mens die effektiwiteit van voorbeeldmateriaal kan evalueer.

Die eerste metode wat in hierdie tesis gebruik word, is die samestelling van 'n tabel van kategorieë wat dan gebruik word om voorbeeldmateriaal in vyf verskillende Suid-Afrikaanse skoolwoordeboeke te analiseer, vergelyk en evalueer. Die data in hierdie tabel word omvattend aangebied, die resultate word bespreek en daar word dan tot gevolgtrekkings gekom. Die tweede metode maak gebruik van vraelyste wat onder leerders versprei is om uit te vind of hulle bewus was van die ondersteunende funksies van voorbeeldmateriaal in woordeboeke.

Die resultaat van die tabel van kategorieë is 'n stel riglyne en aanbevelings aan die hand waarvan geskikte voorbeelde vir gebruik in skoolwoordeboeke gekies of geskep kan word. Die tabel van kategorieë kan ook gebruik word om die voorbeeldmateriaal in bestaande woordeboeke te analiseer en vergelyk. Die uitkoms van die leerdervraelyste toon aan dat leerders wel aktief in voorbeelde na ondersteuning vir die definisie soek, veral as die trefwoord by hulle onbekend is of as hulle nie die definisie verstaan nie.

Die gevolgtrekking van hierdie tesis is dat voorbeeldmateriaal 'n belangrike deel van die woordeboekartikel is en dat voorbeelde met sorg gekies moet word om soveel as moontlik ondersteuning te bied sonder om die beskikbare ruimte in die spesifieke woordeboek te oorskry.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Illustrative examples in dictionaries are presented in many different ways. They may be sentences, phrases, or collocations. They may be corpus-based or made up by the lexicographer. They may contain the lemma in its simple form or they may contain an inflection of the lemma. Illustrative examples may provide semantic support, or they may provide syntactic support, or they could provide both. They may suggest cultural information, or represent the lexicographer's or publisher's opinion about the subject of the example. Illustrations may be verbal, in the form of sentences or phrases, or non verbal, in the form of photographs or artwork.

Swanepoel (2001:184) says that "we are in need of a lexicographic theory of the use of verbal examples". He explains further that this theory should explain "how verbal examples support lexicographic definitions by clearly indicating what relationship(s) exist between examples" and other parts of the dictionary entry, and "what makes a good lexicographic example".

This thesis responds to this need for research into what makes examples effective and useful for dictionary users.

Swanepoel suggests that "good examples would be those that either illustrate the use-aspects of the other elements…, add to the information the other elements already convey…, or independently contribute information to the mental representation of a lexeme" (Swanepoel 2001:184). The other elements of an entry that he refers to include the definition and grammatical information.

To study this, Swanepoel suggests working out what good examples are and testing these empirically. In this thesis, I shall go some way to finding out what makes an effective example, and I conduct a pilot study amongst users of South African school dictionaries to test examples.

According to Prinsloo and Gouws (2000:139) "improving the quality and appropriateness of examples is one of the ways of enhancing the process of information retrieval". One of the

objectives of this thesis is to find out how the quality and appropriateness of examples can be enhanced, specifically in South African school dictionaries.

I aim to find out what a South African user of school dictionaries needs in an example, and how dictionary examples can best suit their needs. To do this, I shall present and discuss a table of categories that I have developed to compare and evaluate example sentences. I will use this table to compare examples from monolingual and bilingual school dictionaries, and discuss the findings. This forms a major part of this thesis and I shall present the data with my motivation for categorising it in detail.

I have also used questionnaires at two schools in the Western Cape: a primary school and a high school, to see how learners react to examples that meet different criteria.

The intention of this thesis is to show that practical lexicography can gain by finding out what characteristics examples should contain to make them the most useful to learners and to best serve learners' needs. I will also make recommendations for further study in this area.

1.1 Research question

What is the role of examples in existing South African school dictionaries and how can they be improved?

I am specifically looking at the examples, not the whole entries. By South African school dictionaries, I mean dictionaries that are sold as school dictionaries for the South African market. They may be adapted from other dictionaries, either ESL dictionaries or other school dictionaries, or they may be original South African dictionaries. I am examining both monolingual and English–Afrikaans bilingual dictionaries, specifically for Grades 4 to 12, that is, not dictionaries aimed at very young children.

1.2 Hypothesis

My hypothesis is that currently school dictionaries are not following very clear guidelines with regard to examples, and while they ought to provide both syntactic and semantic support where possible, this is not happening. The example can be invented or authentic, as long as it contains the information needed to supplement the definition, or translation equivalent in the

case of bilingual dictionaries, and provide grammatical support to the rest of the entry. This needs to be weighed against space constraints in the dictionary.

1.3 Methodology

In this section, I will describe my research methodology, and explain how my data has been collected. I have used two main methods of collecting data: learner questionnaires and a table of categories for example sentences. Both of these methods are qualitative methods.

I shall discuss the questionnaires that I developed, and explain why I included those particular questions and words, and what I hoped to gain from the questionnaires. I will discuss the schools that I used and which learners filled in the questionnaires. I will explain how I created the table of categories and what I was looking for when I created it, and what I hoped to gain from it. I will also discuss perceived problems in both the questionnaires and the table.

1.3.1 Learner questionnaires

The four questionnaires that I used were designed as a pilot study to support my other data, and can lead to further study based on the recommendations provided in Chapter 5. I set out to find out whether learners, that is, users of school dictionaries, find value in example sentences, and whether they can identify and use the support that the examples provide. For this, I needed open ended questions, and learners to tell me what they found useful in the examples.

With the help of a teacher, I chose words that the learners were unlikely to use, but may have heard before. I did not want to use words that were too far beyond their language proficiency level, as any background knowledge is still useful.

The reason for using four different questionnaires was to make sure learners sitting next to each other did not copy each other's answers, and to use a greater number of words. It would have taken too long, and would have been boring for the learners if they were to go through one questionnaire with twelve words and the corresponding questions.

As the questionnaires play a supporting role in this study, I did not think that added value would be gained by using a larger sample. The study as it is provides guidelines for example sentences, and it would be useful to do another study on a dictionary that has examples based on these guidelines.

I used learners from the higher grades of a primary school, and the lower grades of a high school. The ages of learners therefore range from 11 to 15 years old, and the grades included Grades 6 to 10. The two schools encompass different socio-economic backgrounds of learners, and more importantly, include learners with different home languages. In the Western Cape, according to the household roster of the 2007 South African Labour Force survey, English represents 22% of people under 20's first language, Afrikaans represents 52%, and Xhosa represents 24%. The other two percent is made up of other languages. The varying economic backgrounds of the learners is useful because it is reflected by some learners owning their own dictionaries, and others relying on school resources. This in turn affects the learner's level of comfort with dictionaries and their ability to look things up quickly and efficiently.

School A is a co-ed public primary school in a lower-middle class suburb in Cape Town. The school is very involved in community projects. It is an English medium school, with learners speaking English, Afrikaans or Xhosa at home. I gave the questionnaires to a total of 18 learners: eight in Grade 6 and ten in Grade 7. (Grade 6 learners are generally 11 years old, while Grade 7 learners are generally 12 years old.)

School B is a government high school in a more affluent suburb in Cape Town. The school prides itself on its high academic standards, and range of extra-curricular activities. It is an English-medium school, with most learners having English as their home language, while there are also learners with Afrikaans and Xhosa as their home language. I gave the questionnaires to 40 learners from Grades 8 to 10, ages 13 to 15.

At School A, half the learners from two classes answered my questionnaires. I asked for learners with a range of academic abilities, but I suspect the top students were chosen for this study. At School B, the questionnaires were given to whole classes, and learners were not selected to participate.

The questionnaire situations were different in both schools: at School A, I was given a classroom and the eighteen learners. I was able to introduce the study and the learners could ask me questions. I walked around the classroom while they were filling in the questionnaires, so the learners felt they were being watched: this meant they could ask questions to clarify an instruction they did not understand, and it meant they took the questionnaires seriously, filling everything in. At School B, the learners were given an instruction letter with their questionnaire, and while the class teacher was present, she was not involved and therefore did not assist the learners or make sure that they filled in the whole questionnaire. This affected the quality of questionnaires returned from School B: many answers were left out, and whole pages were not filled in. This is worth noting for future studies. Another result of my being at School A while the questionnaires were being filled in, was that I had an informal discussion with the learners about dictionaries and example sentences, and was able to get more information from them about what they use their dictionaries for and how they see example sentences.

In the case of the learners that I saw, I told them what a definition and example sentence was, and showed dictionary entries with the different elements. With the others, I gave them an information sheet with these elements. Therefore they all knew what an example sentence was, and how to find it in their dictionary entries before completing the questionnaires.

Questionnaires

- Questionnaire 1

Learners were given three dictionary entries, each containing a headword, a part of speech, a definition and an example sentence. The first and second entries contained examples that provided obvious contextual support, and the third did not.

Learners were asked questions about each entry, such as whether they understood the definition, whether they understood the example, and whether the example helped them to understand the meaning of the word. They were then asked to provide a sentence of their own, using the word. I wanted the learners' sentences to confirm whether they understood the word in question.

The next questions asked learners to compare the examples from the previous section, and to see whether they could find differences between the three examples, and whether any of the examples were more useful, and if they could tell why.

The sixth question was a general question about examples in dictionaries and their purpose, and the final question was a very open "any comments" question.

- Questionnaire 2

This questionnaire followed the format of the first questionnaire, using different headwords. As mentioned above, this was to allow me to use more headwords than one questionnaire could accommodate.

- Questionnaire 3

Learners were given one entry with a headword, part of speech, and definition. This was followed by questions about the entry asking learners whether they understood the definition and asking them to provide their own sentence, using the word. The second question contained an entry with a lemma, part of speech, no definition, and only an example that provided a contextual clue. The learners were asked if they understood the word and the example, and to write their own sentence using the word. The third question provided an entry with both a definition and an example, and asked the same questions.

The first two entries were then provided again, this time with both a definition and an example, and the learners were asked questions based on these entries, and how their understanding of the word changed with both a definition and an example, and which they preferred. They were also asked for general comments about their dictionaries.

- Questionnaire 4

This questionnaire followed the format of the third one and again allowed the use of more headwords than one questionnaire could accommodate, while also preventing learners from copying each other's answers.

These questionnaires focused on the interaction between the definition and the example, and did not look at grammatical information at all. Asking the learners to write their own sentences confirmed whether they really did understand the words, and in many cases, where they said that they did understand, they wrote sentences that showed that they did. However,

in some cases, the examples in the questionnaires were used as models or templates, and I was unable to tell whether the learners did indeed understand the words.

1.3.2 Table of Categories for examples

The second data-collection method I employed was the table of categories that I have used to compare and analyse examples taken from different school dictionaries. This table evolved according to my requirements and research into examples, and consists of fourteen columns, with information about each example.

Before creating the features table, I chose five South African school dictionaries: three monolingual and two bilingual.

Monolingual dictionaries:

- *South African Oxford School Dictionary* second edition (SAOSD),
- *South African Oxford Secondary School Dictionary* (SAOSSD) and
- *Longman South African School Dictionary* (Longman).

Bilingual dictionaries:

- *Oxford Afrikaans–Engels English–Afrikaans Skoolwoordeboek School Dictionary* (Tweetalige) and
- *Pharos Aanleerderswoordeboek vir Skole* (Pharos).

The table of categories can be found at the end of Chapter 3.

The table contains fourteen columns of data, arranged in six sections. The first section is the example number, actual example sentence or phrase with the headword highlighted, and the part of speech. The second section indicates whether the example is a phrase or a sentence. The third section is for whether the example is a definition, whether it provides a context, or neither. The fourth section provides information about grammatical support: whether the example provides grammatical support, and if so, how. The fifth section shows whether the headword is simple or inflected in the example. The final section shows whether the example provides any other support, such as cultural information or usage restrictions not mentioned in the other columns.

Each column was added up, with totals provided for each dictionary, and for all the dictionaries together. These totals were used to generate statistics of the examples. The columns I was most interested in were the columns that contain information about the contents of the examples, and whether they assist the learner in any way.

The basis for deciding whether an example contained contextual support was that if the headword could only be replaced by a synonym or near synonym in the sentence, or a word in the same lexical set, it was marked as providing contextual support. If the headword could be replaced by any other word of the same part of speech, then I marked it in the No Context column.

For example, in the hypothetical example *I love **peaches*** where **peaches** is the headword, I found there to be no clue, as the lemma could easily be replaced by another noun. In the sentence *I enjoy eating **peaches*** the options for replacing the headword are limited to the lexical set of food. In the sentence ***Peaches** are my favourite fruit* the options have been further narrowed down to the lexical set of fruit.

I also looked at the definitions when examining the examples, as the example supports the definition by helping with comprehension. If the definition was clear and easy to understand, then it was not as important that the example showed the learner what the lemma meant. However, if the definition was too advanced or contained words that may confuse the learner, then it is vital that the example plays more of a role in aiding comprehension. To this end I have made use of a defining vocabulary when looking at the definitions. The *Longman South African School Dictionary* uses a defining vocabulary, but neither of the two Oxford dictionaries does, therefore I used the defining vocabulary from the *Macmillan Learner's Dictionary* to judge whether definitions are simple enough for school level learners.

Most of the information in the Grammatical Support columns concerns collocations, and whether the example sentence provides suggestions for common collocations. For example, the sentence *The success of the product **depends** on marketing* shows that **depends** can collocate with **on**.

The Additional Support columns contain information that may be helpful to the learner, but cannot be described by the previous columns. These sentences may contain cultural data, which would include racial and gender information. This may be more useful in a bilingual dictionary where the cultures of the different languages are different. For example, in an English–Northern Sotho school dictionary, the lemma **stick** is exemplified by sentences about hitting children or animals, all from a Northern Sotho corpus. For example, *The teacher beats the children with a* ***stick***. A reader is unlikely to find these sentences in a monolingual English school dictionary. This is considered cultural information.

Gender information would include whether gender roles are stereotyped or not, such as *His wife nagged him to* ***paint*** *the wall*. While it is difficult to avoid gender altogether, some dictionaries use strategies to avoid gender in example sentences, for example, by using "I", "we" or "you" as the subject of a sentence, instead of "he" or "she" or names. Another strategy is to use names that are not gender specific, such as Jo, Lee, or Terry.

Other information that fits in the Additional Support section is whether the word is used figuratively or idiomatically. This is valuable support, especially for a second language user of a dictionary.

I have also included whether the sentence is a command as some teachers prefer school dictionaries not to be too instructive. If learners see their dictionary as a set of instructions, they may be discouraged from using it. The examples are supposed to get learners' attention and interest, without being didactic.

Geographical location also fits in this section, as it places the dictionary in terms of a country – does a South African dictionary mention South Africa, or areas in South Africa? Does this affect users' relationships with the dictionary? This could be an including feature, or an excluding one. Are users more likely to trust their dictionary if it mentions a location that is familiar to them? Is one province mentioned more than others? By location, I do not mean language variant, for example South African English, although this is something that could be considered for inclusion in this table.

I also created related tables where I extracted statistical data from the first table and from the dictionaries, which makes it easier to compare the dictionaries to each other and to find

patterns within the dictionaries. I was also able to compare what the dictionaries actually contain with what they were intended to contain, according to the introduction in the dictionary, the How to Use page, or discussions with the editor.

Using the statistics table in Appendix C, I was able to compare the dictionaries according to various criteria, such as how many of the headwords are treated in each dictionary, and how many have examples. This shows the addressing equivalence of each dictionary. I also looked at the differences in nouns, verbs and adjectives to see if there were patterns in their treatment.

The data provided by this table of categories and the related tables offers great value in analysing and comparing different dictionaries according to very specific criteria. I was able to use it to determine whether learners' needs in example sentences are being met. I could also use it to provide recommendations for future school dictionaries. There is potential for this comparative method to be used with much broader or narrower conditions, such as comparing whole entries, not just examples.

These tables can be used by dictionary publishers as a checklist to see whether they are providing a fair number of examples – or whether they are lacking in certain areas. They can also be used as a model for practical lexicographers planning future dictionaries. Theoretical lexicographers can use this research as a basis for further research on example sentences and the support that they provide.

1.4 Plan for thesis

My thesis will begin with a discussion of the background of current literature introducing and examining illustrative examples: their purpose and uses, different types of examples, and the roles examples play in monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. I shall also look briefly at the authentic versus invented example debate. This will be followed by a look at South African schools, and the typical learner, who is different from the typical learner of the same age in a British school. I have mentioned the comparison between a South African learner and a British learner because many South African school dictionaries are based on school dictionaries or learner's dictionaries from Britain. The five South African school dictionaries that I have examined are introduced and described. All of the dictionaries feature examples,

and I shall explain the policies the publishers used for the examples in these dictionaries. I shall discuss their target markets and whether they are monolingual or bilingual. I shall also describe them in terms of macrostructure and microstructure, pointing out their differences and similarities.

The third chapter will be the practical investigation, where I discuss the results of the school survey and analyse the examples used in the table of categories. I shall show how I populated the table and motivate the decisions I made.

In Chapter 4 I shall interpret the results from the table and from the questionnaires to present what school dictionaries in South Africa contain in terms of their examples, compared to what learners require from their dictionaries in terms of examples. This chapter will also contain a discussion of the statistics that I generated from the table of categories.

Finally, I shall draw conclusions based on this study and answer the research question set out above. I shall discuss whether and how the results differ from my hypothesis. I shall also make practical recommendations for examples in future school dictionaries for South African learners, as well as suggestions for further study.

1.5 Theoretical approach and terms

Various theoretical frameworks form the basis of lexicographic theory, for example, the theory of dictionary functions (see Bergenholtz and Tarp 2002) and the theory of lexicographic texts (Wiegand 1996). I have chosen to follow the broad theoretical approach that is followed in modern-day British lexicography (see Atkins and Rundell 2008).

In this thesis, I refer to school pupils as learners, since that is what they are called in the South African school curriculum. However, school dictionaries are different from learner's dictionaries, in that learner's dictionaries are usually monolingual dictionaries for adult learners of a language. School dictionaries may be monolingual or bilingual. I use the term "users" and "learners" interchangeably in this thesis.

I have used the terms “example sentences”, “illustrative examples”, and “examples” interchangeably, but have specified when I am talking about example sentences as opposed to example phrases.

The term “entry” refers to a dictionary article, containing the following compulsory default micro-structure: a headword, part of speech, definition, and example in the case of the monolingual dictionaries; and a headword, part of speech, translation equivalent and example in the case of the bilingual dictionaries. The extended compulsory micro-structure may contain other information, such as synonyms, etymology, derivatives and so on.

Chapter 2: Background to the study

In this chapter I present a theoretical background of the literature surrounding illustrative examples, as well as the school context in South Africa. I will also, as a practical background, describe the dictionaries that will be used in this study.

2.1 Theoretical background: review of literature

My discussion on the theoretical background to this thesis begins with how illustrative examples are described and used by other lexicographers, and their place in dictionary entries.

Samuel Johnson used illustrative quotations as a starting point for his *Dictionary of the English Language* that was published in 1755. "The word-list would be generated by the illustrations, rather than preceding them". "The *Dictionary* Johnson produced contains approximately 110,000 quotations in support of 42,773 entries" (Hitchings 2005:71).

In his *Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language*, Johnson (1747:24) describes the "analogy of our language" as needing to be included in the *Dictionary*. This includes the rules by which the words are governed, including their inflections and behaviour in different parts of a sentence. Examples assist both the lexicographer and the user in this regard. About syntax, he says that English is "too inconstant to be reduced to rules, and can only be learned by the distinct consideration of particular words as they are used by the best authors" (Johnson 1747: 25).

2.1.1 What are examples and why are they in dictionaries?

According to the *Oxford Guide to Practical Lexicography*, examples are a "vital component" to a dictionary entry, and they "support and illustrate every linguistic fact" in the entry (Atkins and Rundell 2008:452).

According to Della Summers (a), (1988:12) the "importance of examples to students and teachers cannot be overemphasized". She continues by saying that examples "are absolutely essential both to extend the user's comprehension, and to provide models for students to

remember and perhaps eventually produce, by putting individual words into a range of typical contexts and appropriate phrases".

The illustrative example forms part of the "meaning explanation" (Atkins 1992/3:44) of the entry, which helps to "transmit the meaning of an item to the dictionary user". These elements of the meaning explanation include the definition, synonyms, examples, usage notes, and cross references.

"Good pedagogic examples support the *meaning* as explained in the definition and also provide model sentences, typical contexts, and frequently co-occurring words (or collocations)." (Summers 1988:12)

According to Henry Hitchings, (2005:49) Samuel Johnson intended his examples to provide a "sense of language as it appeared *in use*". However, he did not just want to show the use of a word, but also, where possible "the passages had to be tutelary, since the *Dictionary* was intended for use by students" (Hitchings 2005:77). In his Plan for the dictionary, Johnson expressed that he wanted illustrative sentences that "may give pleasure or instruction, by conveying some elegance of language, or some precept of prudence, or piety" (Hitchings 2005:77).

Michaël Abecassis (2007:17) says that "examples are used to corroborate dictionary definitions" and convey linguistic information.

Bogaards (1996:309) says that "real sentences can show in a practical way how the structural skeleton comes to life. In other words, the examples given provide models to be followed".

Yong and Peng (2007:36) say that "examples are continuations of definitions" in that they supplement and reinforce the definition. In a study of Chinese university users of dictionaries, it was found that 99% of respondents said that dictionary entries should get a definition and example. "Examples help students understand the meaning of the word and learn its usage in context".

They also explain that examples are an "effective means of showing how the lemma behaves in combination with other lexical units, that is, in context of its actual use, demonstrating its

morphological, syntactical, collocational, connotational, stylistic and sociocultural features" (Yong and Peng 2007:104).

Illustrative examples have different uses, which vary according to the type of dictionary and the proficiency of the user.

According to *The Oxford Guide to Practical Lexicography* illustrative examples have three functions: attestation, elucidating meaning, and illustrating contextual features of the word, such as syntax, collocation, register (Atkins and Rundell 2008:453). By attestation, they mean proof of a word's existence in historical dictionaries, where the examples are in the form of citations, whether credited or not. When examples serve to elucidate meaning, they help the reader to differentiate between different senses. As explained "a dictionary definition is by its nature a rather abstract construct, and there are many cases where the full sense of a difficult concept only becomes clear when you read the example" (Atkins and Rundell 2008:453).

An example of illustrating contextual features is collocations – that an example showing a typical instance of the word in use should show a common collocation of the word.

Harvey and Yuill conducted research into the use of a monolingual pedagogical dictionary and found "that examples contributed to the elucidation of meaning in a total of 34.3 % of meaning searches that were reported as successful" (1997:262). They also found that "the examples score highly in providing information; 31.8 % of all successful searches were solved using the examples alone. Combined with other parts of the entry, examples assisted in 45.5 % of the total searches reported as successful" (Harvey and Yuill 1997:269).

According to Yong and Peng (2007:157) examples have five uses: semantic, grammatical, collocation, stylistic, and pragmatic. The semantic function is explained as clarifying the meaning or equivalent (in a bilingual dictionary) distinguishing senses, supplementing data provided in the rest of the entry, specifying semantic nuances, demonstrating the semantic range of application and illustrating geographical variations in meaning.

By grammatical, they mean that the example should serve as a model for typical and correct usage, showing how the word changes in form in different sentences, and how it integrates syntactically with other words. The collocation function is described as "indicating

grammatical and lexical collocations" as a separate function, as opposed to *Oxford Practical Lexicography* including it under the umbrella of "illustrating contextual features".

In terms of the grammatical aspects of examples, Harvey and Yuill's "results lead [them] to conclude that students are far more able to access grammatical info by analogy rather than explicit coding" (Harvey and Yuill 1997:268). On inflections they say, "the examples and definitions together provided 52.5% of reported successful searches, indicating that an inflection encoded in text operates as a useful confirmatory tool for learners" (Harvey and Yuill 1997:269).

The stylistic function is also included as "illustrating contextual features" by Atkins and Rundell, but Yong and Peng explain it as showing appropriate registers, levels of usage, levels of style and regional varieties.

Yong and Peng's final category is pragmatic: showing the appropriate use of the word in terms of formality, context, association with cultural settings. This could be "coupled with language notes, usage notes or pragmatic notes" (2007:157).

Landau (2001:208) also suggests that illustrative examples have five purposes: collocational data; usage variety, such as degree of formality; connotation; grammatical context, such as transitive or intransitive verb use; and designative meaning, which is its relationship to the definition. "Often there is no better way to provide this information than by an illustrative quotation" (2001:208). He goes on to say that "for many common words, short illustrative phrases are essential to tell the reader how the definition is used in ordinary contexts".

A point made by Landau (2001:210) is that an example "does more than support the definition; it indicates its range of application and shows whether it is used metaphorically as well as literally". This is useful, as "often a metaphorical use does not justify a separate definition but can be clearly shown in an example". This is illustrated in the table of categories in Chapter 3.

According to Henri Béjoint, (2004:135) examples are mainly meant to illustrate syntactic behaviour or provide additional semantic information.

In a study of users' needs described in Béjoint (2004:165) it can be seen that the definition is the least efficient means for conveying meaning while the example is the most efficient. This conclusion needs to be interpreted carefully, since it is not confirmed by other studies. The subjects of the study were children who were asked to guess the meanings of words and the study does not include information about the level of the words, definitions or sentences. However, it does emphasise the importance of examples in dictionaries, especially for school-aged children.

Hashan Al-Ajmi (2008:17) quotes Witcut (1985) as saying that examples "can show how a word can be used, but not how it can't". The Hashan Al-Ajmi study was to find out whether the presence of an example is "better than its absence in the EFL dictionary when used for comprehension". The results showed that "students' ability to comprehend words was less when definitions were combined with examples" (Al-Ajmi 2008:17). Again, these results need to be considered in context; Al-Ajmi suggests that the EFL definitions are simple and easy to understand and thus do not necessarily benefit from added examples, and the examples were seen to contain unfamiliar words. The author also suggests that the test subjects were used to using bilingual dictionaries, where the "answer" to what they were looking up was one or two translation equivalents, which is a lot more accessible than a definition and an example sentence in the target language.

According to Jackson, (2002:76) the top two reasons for consulting native speaker dictionaries are: to discover the meaning of a word and to check the spelling of a word. For the first reason, examples provide additional support to the user.

In a study of French students using monolingual English dictionaries the second most common reason for looking up a word was to check the syntactic patterns that the word could enter. This shows the importance of providing syntactic support in example sentences, as this information is rarely found in the definition, or elsewhere in the entry. Usage notes can provide this information, but due to space constraints in most dictionaries, these are not often used. (Jackson 2002:77)

Fraser (2008:87) explains that it is "not the lexicographer's task to isolate a word and display it on the page, … but rather to describe its behaviour, as far as possible in its native habitat: that is, with its companion words".

The function of a dictionary example "is to illustrate the most typical properties and contexts of the new word" (Laufer 1992:214).

According to Patrick Hanks, in Evidence and Intuition in Lexicography, in *Meaning and Lexicography*, when a dictionary is used as "an encoding aid to be used by foreign learners, it is desirable to focus attention on those conventions of the language that are central and typical patterns of usage and to give less prominence to what is less common" (Tomaszczky and Lewandowska-Tomaszczky 1990:35).

Examples are used in the dictionary entry to help a learner 'know' a word. "When a person 'knows' a word, he/she knows the following: …the word's syntactic behaviour in a sentence, the full range of the word's meaning, … its collocational restrictions" (Laufer 1992:213). An example in a dictionary assists the user in knowing/understanding these characteristics of a word.

While each element in a dictionary entry is useful to the user, and teaches them something about the word,

> the example illustrating the word combines in it most of the information the learner needs to have about the word. This is because a correct and natural use of a word in a sentence, or several sentences, will necessarily bring out the grammatical, semantic, pragmatic and collocational characteristics of the word (Laufer 1992:213).

For the purposes of this paper, and the research I have done on South African school dictionaries, the uses of examples that I am examining are: contextual support, which is discussed above as semantic support and helps the learner understand the word, or supplementing data provided by the definition; grammatical support, which is discussed above as syntactic support, collocations, inflections and helps the learner to use the word; and any other information that supports the rest of the entry. These purposes are discussed in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4, in relation to the table of categories in Chapter 3.

2.1.2 Types of examples

Bo Svensén, (1993:91) in his discussion on example sentences, differentiates between live and dead examples, and explains how they have different uses in a dictionary. Dead examples are phrases that contain only the elements necessary to convey the grammatical information

that requires the example. This grammatical information could be collocational data or verb behaviour in different tenses. For example, instead of providing a whole example sentence or phrase to illustrate the word ***probe***, a dead example would be ***probe*** *into* or *a* ***probe*** *into*. This shows the user that the word ***probe***, as a noun, can be used with the preposition *into*. Dead examples can also give options for different collocations, for example, *a* ***threat*** *to*.. and *a* ***threat*** *of*… would be displayed as *a* ***threat*** *to/of*…

My feeling, however, is that while this is a very useful tool in dictionaries and it helps to save precious space, it may be too advanced for school dictionaries, as although it provides sufficient grammatical information, the user needs to work out what to do with that data. Dead examples also do not provide any contextual data.

In this thesis I use the term "context" to describe the "the words surrounding a particular word that helps to give it its meaning" (Macmillan English Dictionary). I have also called this "contextual support", or "clues to the meaning" of the word. This term is used in a different way to the Wiegand theory where "context" refers to the pragmatic environment and "cotext" to the syntactic environment, such as example sentences, phrases and collocations. Co-text, in this thesis, is the text surrounding the headword, or the syntactic environment. Feurtes Olivera and Arribas-Baño tell us that "…the teaching of vocabulary is integrated either into the discursive context or its co-text. As a result, it should be recognised that the dictionary plays a didactic role" (2008:11).

According to Svensén, dead examples are formulated so that the dictionary user would understand them "to be valid in general for the construction concerned, within the relevant meaning. Live examples, on the other hand, can in some cases be slightly treacherous" (1993:91). What I believe he means here, is that more information in an example is not necessarily useful to the user: it can add too much "noise" to the example, and distract the user from the element that is being exemplified.

However, live examples should often be used in place of dead examples, in their role of supporting the definition, as live examples are more able to provide a context for the headword in question. A live example is a full sentence, using a noun phrase or pronoun and a verb phrase, usually with the finite form of the verb. An example of a live example from this study is *He* ***omitted*** *my name from the list.*

Svensén explains that live examples have three uses in a dictionary: the passive-semantic use, where the example explains what is meant by the whole of the abstract definition; passive-syntactic, where the example demonstrates a construction in which the headword can appear with the meaning concerned; and the active use, where the example provides the user with a pattern for similar uses of the word, both semantically and syntactically.

According to Rundell (1998:330) "the provision of syntactic information has been fundamental to the [monolingual learner's dictionary] tradition". This syntactic information can be explicit and come from other parts of the dictionary entry, such as part of speech indicators, or implicit and come from the examples or definition. Rundell also says that "the use of examples and definitions … (subliminally) reinforce grammatical messages" (1998:330).

Of course, illustrative examples perform different functions in different types of dictionaries, and where a certain example would be appropriate for one type of dictionary, it may be less useful in another. This brings my discussion to a brief look at monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, and production and reception dictionaries.

2.1.3 Examples in monolingual and bilingual dictionaries

Users of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries have different needs and therefore examples in monolingual and bilingual dictionaries have different requirements for being effective. This has been discussed in literature on the user perspective, which determines that the function and therefore form of a dictionary, should be according to the needs of the users. This should then "determine the nature and extent of the illustrative examples to be used in the dictionary" (Prinsloo and Gouws 2000:152).

According to the function theory, the function of a dictionary determines every aspect of the dictionary. "The functions of a dictionary can be subdivided into communicative-orientated and knowledge-orientated" functions (Tarp 2000:196). The communicative function can be further subdivided into text production in a native or foreign language, text reception in a native or foreign language and translation between a native and foreign language.

Monolingual dictionaries can be said to function as reception dictionaries: that they assist the learner to understand what they are reading or hearing. A monolingual dictionary is consulted when a user encounters a word that they do not know, and looks it up in order to understand it better. A dictionary entry that provides support for this learner needs to contain a clear definition and an example sentence that confirms this meaning for the learner. The illustrative example supports the definition.

A bilingual dictionary is often used as a production dictionary: as it is used in the production of texts. A user will typically consult it when producing a text and they know which word they would use in the source language, so look for a translation equivalent in the target language. The example supports the translation equivalent.

South African school dictionaries are often polyfunctional dictionaries, in that they generally fulfil both a text production and text reception function. According to the back cover blurb of the *Longman South African School Dictionary*, the dictionary helps the user to "find all the answers [they] need" and to "expand [their] active vocabulary". Finding answers is a text reception function and expanding their vocabulary is a text production function.

The *South African Oxford Secondary School Dictionary* provides "definitions that promote speaking, reading and writing skills", with speaking and writing being text production and reading being text reception.

The *Oxford Afrikaans–Engels English–Afrikaans Skoolwoordeboek* is explicit when it describes its text production function on the back cover: "designed to enable learners to write and speak effectively and competently in their additional language".

The difference between reception and production dictionaries is also explained by examining the terms "encoding" and "decoding". Decoding dictionaries are reception dictionaries, which are meaning-centred, while encoding dictionaries are production dictionaries, and usage-centred, according to Yong and Peng (2007:104). In a meaning-centred dictionary, examples are arranged according to senses, to help the user distinguish between the senses of the word. In usage-centred dictionaries, the examples are arranged according to the grammatical information they are exemplifying, and are often arranged from the shortest text fragment to the longest.

Production dictionaries are also called generative dictionaries in some literature. According to Zgusta, “a good generative dictionary should advise the user how to use the equivalents” (2006:224). In other words, instead of just providing a user with translation equivalents, the dictionary should provide guidance on the relationship between that word and others in the sentence.

According to Landau (2001:308), there is a conflict in English as a second language (ESL) dictionaries between providing data that is understandable for decoding purposes as well as providing accurate data for encoding purposes. He says that if a user cannot understand or decode the example, then it will not provide any assistance to encoding, or creating text using that headword.

Svensén says that “monolingual dictionaries have to describe the constructions of the headwords,” while “in bilingual dictionaries it is the syntactic features of the equivalent that are wanted” (1993: 92).

Referring back to live and dead examples, he says that dead examples (that is, short phrases that provide only the relevant grammatical information) should be used wherever possible to show general construction options in a bilingual dictionary. He explains this by saying that the user has an “imperfect knowledge of the target language” and will therefore not know what information can be taken from the example, when there is more information than necessary. The user is also unlikely to know what is a fixed expression in a live example, while in a dead example, it is clear what is fixed and what can be substituted in a sentence. Svensén provides a useful suggestion for a bilingual dictionary, which is to provide a dead example followed by a live one (1993:94).

“In bilingual dictionaries, examples have the additional merit of displaying how the lemma in the source language is translated into the target language.” (Yong and Peng 2007:104) According to *Oxford Practical Lexicography*, examples supplement the information given in the translation (Atkins and Rundell 2008:506).

A dictionary entry in the bilingual school dictionaries that I have used contains a translation equivalent followed by an example sentence, which confirms the correct translation for the

learner. In marketing material for the *Oxford Afrikaans–Engels English–Afrikaans Skoolwoordeboek School Dictionary*, the example of **fan** is given. In English, the homonym **fan** can be used for a person who admires someone else, and for a piece of equipment that cools the air. The translation equivalents, *waaier* and *bewonderaar* do not automatically tell the learner which word to use, while the example sentences *We switched on the **fan** to cool the room down* and *The pop star has many **fans** all over the world* do.

In his paper *Recent Trends in English Pedagogical Lexicography*, Rundell discusses monolingual learner's dictionaries and how they have changed and improved since 1978, when the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (LDOCE) was published. Rundell explains that in a monolingual learner's dictionary examples have "appeared extensively (rather than sporadically)" and have "an overtly pedagogical character". He describes examples as including "minimal text fragments … (*a **serious** illness*)" and other strategies that "make no claim to replicate actual performance: rather they function as templates that learners can use as a basis on which to model" their own writing or speaking (Rundell 1998:317).

2.1.4 Authentic or made up examples?

While this thesis is not about the merits of corpus-based examples and lexicographer invented examples, I do want to discuss the differences briefly, because this discussion is relevant to dictionary examples, their uses and their usefulness in dictionaries.

Rundell (1998:334) explains that most monolingual learner's dictionaries use corpora for every part of a dictionary text, "so the differences now lie in the degree to which corpus material is 'processed' on its way into the examples".

He provides dictionary examples, and shows how they "reveal (among other things): grammatical information, … selectional restrictions, … a range of very typical contexts" (Rundell 1998:334).

Grammatical information can be, for example, whether a verb can be used transitively or intransitively, passively or actively. The selectional restrictions are, for instance, whether the subject is a human agent or other possible agents.

According to Cowie (1989) in Yong and Peng, (2007:157) invented examples can be "made to include detail, whether syntactic or lexical, which throws light on the meaning or use of the entry word and can be judiciously shaped in the interests of the learner". According to Sinclair in Yong and Peng, (2007:158) authentic examples provide a reliable guide to speaking and writing in the English of today.

Yong and Peng (2007:159) sum up the debate by saying "as long as invented examples are linguistically natural, they can serve the same purpose as authentic ones". Invented examples can be more effective where only the grammatical function of a word is being exemplified, whereas authentic examples are often long and take up too much space in the entry.

Cowie (1999:134) asks if teachers or learners can even distinguish between invented or authentic examples, and research by Maingay and Rundell (1990, 1991) quoted in Laufer shows that language teachers and mother-tongue speakers of a language were unable to tell the difference between corpus examples and lexicographer examples. "There was also no correlation between the source of the example and the perceived pedagogic value." (Laufer 1992:214)

Cowie quotes Hornby (1999:134) as saying that in invented examples the lexicographer can include detail, grammatical or lexical, which sheds light on the meaning or use of the word. However, Sinclair, also quoted in Cowie (1999:134) denies that invented examples can fulfil the productive function of examples: which are to provide explanations and serve as models for speaking and writing. "Invented examples have no independent authority or reason for their existence."

I disagree with this statement, as the lexicographer, or dictionary editor, is usually an advanced mother-tongue speaker of the language of the dictionary being made, and so can be relied upon to invent utterances that are natural and feasible in their home language.

Cowie (1999:153) suggests that corpus examples "may have to be adapted to the particular study needs of learners". They may also have to be adjusted to fit the physical limits of the dictionary. He also says that "most made up examples are self-sufficient sentences or phrases".

Laufer (1992:314) says that teachers and learners "expect a learner's dictionary to clarify the meaning of new words" so while authentic examples may be more 'natural' than lexicographer-produced examples, the pedagogic value of lexicographer-produced examples "may be greater than that of authentic ones".

Confirming this, Fox is quoted in Landau as saying, "for a sentence to be looked at in isolation to make sense, it has to contain much more information than you are ever likely to find in real language, where sentences do not occur alone but come before or after other sentences, and so are a small part of a longer text" (Landau 1992:209).

Corpus examples often do not make use of a restricted vocabulary, and part of the lexicographer's task when selecting appropriate examples, is to find ones that meet the vocabulary requirements of that dictionary.

Della Summers, when discussing dictionaries as tools in language learning, says that "dictionaries deal with standard accepted meaning and use of words – archetypal use, not all possible uses" (1988:118). Harvey and Yuill agree, by stating that examples have "the primary function of showing the headword in typical usage, not of clarifying or extending the definition" (1997:262).

Landau presents a warning to lexicographers who use invented examples. He says that "using invented examples is like fixing a horse race: the lexicographer invents an example to justify his definition instead of devising a definition to fit the examples" (2001:210). This is a valid argument, but it does not consider the corpus lexicographer who wades through corpus lines to find the example that exactly matches the definition.

However, Landau also warns against using authentic corpus examples by saying "if genuineness be purchased at the price of understandability, I will forgo it" (2001:210).

Fox, quoted in Landau, says that learners and teachers often feel that they should be provided with language that is as simple as possible, but it would be misleading to present a grammatically complex word in a simple sentence, surrounded by simple words that are unlikely to surround it in natural text.

In a study by Laufer the findings showed that "lexicographer's examples are more helpful in comprehension of new words" and also in the production of a new word, although less significantly in production (Laufer 1992:217).

Rundell concludes his corpus debate by saying that "most lexicographers would probably now agree that, where the corpus provides natural and typical examples that clearly illustrate the points that need to be made, there is no conceivable reason for not using them" (1998:335). The risk is that authentic examples taken from a corpus may provide atypical uses, irrelevant and distracting material, and ineffective contexts. "So there is still a place for the more 'pedagogical' example, … which allows the lexicographer to focus on specific linguistic points without baffling the user" (1998:335).

Authentic examples or not, "a dictionary must above all not lead its users into error" (Atkins 1992/3:45).

2.1.5 What makes a good example?

An important question in this study is what makes a good example? According to Atkins and Rundell, (2008:458) "examples should be: natural and typical, informative, [and] intelligible". By "natural and typical" they mean that an example needs to be an utterance that the user of the dictionary is likely to hear spoken by first language speakers of a language. A corpus lexicographer needs to be careful not to include an utterance just because it is in the corpus: it needs to be a typical utterance for it to be a "good" example.

According to Atkins and Rundell, "an informative example is one that complements the definition and helps the user understand it better" (Atkins and Rundell 2008:460). In this thesis, I have used similar criteria to determine whether contextual support is provided.

The final requirement of a "good" example, according to Atkins and Rundell, is intelligibility: whether an example can be understood by its readers. Examples can be unintelligible due to their vocabulary or structure. As noted later in this thesis, some examples use words that are not in the defining vocabulary, and may be too difficult for

learners (see *the **height** of folly* which is discussed on page 46 in this study). Other examples have been noted for being too long and complex.

Bogaards, discussing learner's dictionaries, says that it is difficult "to know what makes an example clear to someone who does not know the meaning of the word that is exemplified" and suggests further study into this (Bogaards 1996:298).

Following on from what makes a good example, is what makes a bad example? Any sentence or phrase, whether taken from a corpus or made up by the lexicographer, does not necessarily make a good example, just because it is an example of natural speech. An example that confuses the user or provides atypical use of the headword would be a bad example. In the same way, any example that is inappropriate or offensive, or flouts the policies of the dictionary-maker would be a bad example. A school dictionary is a pedagogical tool, and as such, must be made with the same consideration to learning as other learning materials.

Prinsloo and Gouws (2000:145) discuss the "pitfalls in the way of constructing good examples". The following examples should be avoided: those that rely too heavily on context, those that are too long and contain too many distracting details, those that do not match registers – either within the example, or to the headword, those that do not provide any support, and those with content unsuited to the user group.

2.1.6 Examples in learner's dictionaries

In 1996 two studies were conducted to compare the four big learner's dictionaries that had recently been published: the fifth edition of the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (OALD), the second edition of the *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* (COBUILD), the third edition of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (LDOCE) and the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* (CIDE). I shall look briefly at elements of these that are relevant to this thesis.

Firstly, Bogaards (1996:299) mentions the cultural references made by the examples, and says that "these cultural references could be profitable to [second language] learners" but it is not known whether and to what extent readers "really use this type of information".

Secondly, Herbst made the following observations when comparing the four learner's dictionaries with regard to their examples. He mentions sexism in that on average, across the four dictionaries, 43% mentions women while 57% mention men. He does not say whether these mentions are neutral or whether a quality is assigned, so I am not satisfied with the term sexism to describe this spread of feminine and masculine occurrence in the dictionaries. Herbst does clarify and say that "some of these examples could be interpreted as conveying traditional role stereotypes" (Herbst 1996:328). An example of this from this thesis is *His mother baked him a **cake***…. Otherwise, it is unfair to call examples that refer to he/him or she/her as sexist, unless sexist attitudes are conveyed by the examples.

Thirdly, Herbst looks at the collocations that are featured in the dictionaries and whether the collocation receives special attention in the entry or whether it is part of the example. Collocation is defined as "the semantic compatibility of grammatically adjacent words" (Hartman and James 1998:22). These word combinations are less set than fixed expressions or idioms, but more set than "free combinations". Collocations are especially important for learners of another language, as equivalence across two languages is not predictable.

In this thesis I have noted where collocations occur in the examples in this thesis, but I have not noted whether they feature anywhere else in the entry, for example, as fixed expressions with their own examples.

The reason for placing this thesis in the context of learner's dictionaries, when the dictionaries that are discussed are not considered learner's dictionaries will be explained below.

2.1.7 South African schools and classrooms

The typical South African classroom is a multilingual one – with learners from different linguistic backgrounds. The most common South African classroom is one in which learners with a home language other than English are taught in English. Learners learning in their second or third language are unlikely to be at the same language proficiency level as learners who are being taught in their home language. According to the household roster of the 2007 South African Labour Force survey, the distribution of home languages for people under 20 in the Western Cape is Afrikaans 52%, Xhosa 24% and English 22%. Other languages

account for the remaining 2%. This means that 78% of all learners in the Western Cape use English dictionaries as non-mother-tongue users, so much of the research on learner's dictionaries is relevant for South African learners, even though they may not use learner's dictionaries, and instead rely on monolingual English dictionaries for mother-tongue users.

School surveys, discussed in *Does School Quality Matter: Returns to Education and the Characteristics of Schools in South Africa*, (Case and Yogo 1999:4) reveal that in 1991 schools were largely monolingual: pupils attended schools according to racial groups, and the schools for African, coloured and Indian children were poorly resourced in terms of teaching staff, textbooks, equipment, and facilities.

In *Racial Equality in Education: How far has South Africa come?* Fiske and Ladd (2005) tell that "schools serving white students had more than ten times the funding per pupil than the schools serving African students". This is a massive difference in allocation of resources, and the impact is still being felt today, even though schools were "opened" to all races in 1990. This is the legacy of Apartheid, and while the constitution allows for access to all schools being "race blind" in that schools cannot "discriminate in their admission policy against any student based on his or her race". However, most African learners still attend "African" schools, with almost 100% of students in African schools are black. This is mostly due to geographical locations of schools, and school fees for previously funded schools.

While schools are aiming for equality across the races, and thus each learner should be given equal opportunities of schooling, schools are unable to make up for all the other societal consequences and imbalances from Apartheid, and it is still more difficult for black learners than white learners to succeed at school.

This information may be obvious to any South African, but it has bearing on my discussion later in this paper, because different race groups typically represent different language groups as white learners are more likely to be first language English speakers than black learners.

In 2000 "more than 40% of the schools in the Eastern Cape still did not have basic amenities such as telephones, water and electricity", and "90% did not have libraries"! (Fiske and Ladd 2005:7) Learners at these schools are very unlikely to have their own dictionaries that are suitable for their age group and level of proficiency – in English or their home language.

These statistics show that learners should be using dictionaries aimed at their *language level*, not necessarily their *grade level* at school. It also means that they need as much support in their dictionaries as possible – where for home language learners a simple definition might be sufficient, for second or third language learners, an example sentence is essential to help them understand the meaning and use of the word in question. In indigenous South African languages there are insufficient dictionary resources, and monolingual English dictionaries have to be relied upon where under different circumstances a learner may have a dictionary in their home language as well as an English dictionary, or the learner may have a bilingual dictionary to use at school. There are also very few bilingual dictionaries, with English and an indigenous language, so learners do not have any choice of dictionaries: they have to use a monolingual English dictionary, when they are not always fluent in English. Again, support for these learners is absolutely crucial.

South African learners are also less familiar with dictionaries than learners in the United Kingdom, where many of our base dictionaries come from. In a great number of schools, there is one dictionary per school, per grade or per classroom, not per learner as lexicographers would prefer. This means that a primary school with seven grades may have one dictionary to cater for all the learners. Obviously a Grade 1 learner's dictionary needs are vastly different to a Grade 7's. Their ability to use a dictionary is also vastly different.

2.2 Practical background: description of dictionaries

In this section, I shall describe the South African school dictionaries used in this study. I will look at how the examples are presented and whether there is any extra information about the examples in the front matter of the dictionary.

The proportion of entries with examples was worked out by taking two stretches of two pages each and counting how many entries are treated in four pages. I then counted how many entries had one or more examples in them. I tried to use the same stretches of pages across each dictionary.

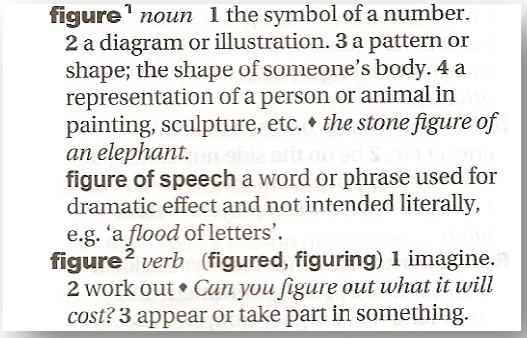
Addressing equivalence is where each sense definition or translation equivalence corresponds to an example. When there is not an example for each sense or translation in a dictionary, this

shows under-addressing, or a lack of addressing equivalence (Gouws 2002). All three monolingual dictionaries presented below exhibit under-addressing to various degrees.

The *South African Oxford School Dictionary* second edition, hereinafter referred to as SAOSD has 146 entries over four pages, with 23 (16%) of those containing examples. The A–Z is 528 pages.

Examples are in italic, running on from the definition, which is roman. Examples are introduced and separated by ♦. The headword is not highlighted in any way in the example. Examples seem to be phrases where possible, saving space. In some cases, many examples (especially phrases) are used in one entry.

The entries below show the structure and presentation of the integrated microstructure.



figure[1] *noun* **1** the symbol of a number. **2** a diagram or illustration. **3** a pattern or shape; the shape of someone's body. **4** a representation of a person or animal in painting, sculpture, etc. ♦ *the stone figure of an elephant.*
figure of speech a word or phrase used for dramatic effect and not intended literally, e.g. 'a *flood* of letters'.
figure[2] *verb* (**figured**, **figuring**) **1** imagine. **2** work out ♦ *Can you figure out what it will cost?* **3** appear or take part in something.

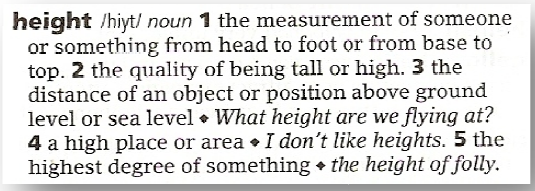
According to "How to use the dictionary", on page xv of the dictionary, "example sentences have been supplied: to illustrate distinctions between literal and figurative use of words; to supply additional and useful information about the word; when the distinction between two meanings is very fine."

The SAOSD was based on the *Oxford School Dictionary*, published by Oxford University Press UK in 1996, and is aimed at learners in Grades 4 – 9, first language English for the lower grades, and first additional and second additional language learners for the higher grades.

The *South African Oxford Secondary School Dictionary*, hereinafter called SAOSSD also contains 146 entries over four pages, with 21 (14%) entries containing one or more examples. The fonts used in this dictionary are smaller than the SAOSD, yet there are the same number of entries on a page. This means that entries take up more space and contain more information that the SAOSD entries. The A–Z is 731 pages.

The examples are in italic, running on from the definition, which is roman. Examples are introduced and separated by ♦. The headword is not highlighted in any way. There seem to be more sentences than phrases, although this will be discussed and confirmed in Chapter 4 in this thesis. There is no mention of example sentences in the front matter or back cover blurb of this dictionary.

The entry below shows the structure and presentation of the integrated microstructure used in this dictionary.

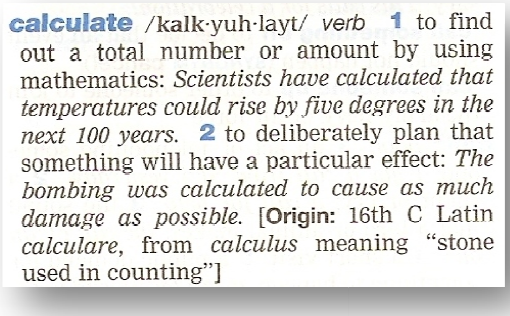

height /hiyt/ *noun* **1** the measurement of someone or something from head to foot or from base to top. **2** the quality of being tall or high. **3** the distance of an object or position above ground level or sea level ♦ *What height are we flying at?* **4** a high place or area ♦ *I don't like heights.* **5** the highest degree of something ♦ *the height of folly.*

The SAOSSD was based on the *Oxford Student's Dictionary*, published by Oxford University Press UK in 2002. SAOSSD is aimed at learners in Grades 8 to 12.

The *Longman South African School Dictionary*, hereinafter referred to as Longman, has 111 entries in four pages, with 29% of those containing examples. The A–Z is 788 pages.

Not all entries have examples – again, it seems to be a space consideration to include more headwords with shorter entries. Examples are in italics, running on from the definition, introduced by a colon and separated by a •. The headword is not highlighted in the example.

The entry below shows the structure and presentation of the integrated microstructure used in this dictionary.



calculate /kalk·yuh·layt/ *verb* **1** to find out a total number or amount by using mathematics: *Scientists have calculated that temperatures could rise by five degrees in the next 100 years.* **2** to deliberately plan that something will have a particular effect: *The bombing was calculated to cause as much damage as possible.* [**Origin:** 16th C Latin *calculare*, from *calculus* meaning "stone used in counting"]

According to the "Guide to the Dictionary" in the front matter "simple example sentences show how to use a word".

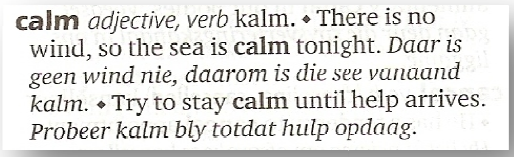
The Longman dictionary was adapted for the South African market from an American school dictionary and is aimed at learners in Grades 4 to 9.

The *Oxford Afrikaans–Engels English–Afrikaans Skoolwoordeboek School Dictionary*, referred to as the Tweetalige in this study, is a bidirectional bilingual dictionary. For this thesis I looked at the English to Afrikaans side only. Some of the items within the entries are reversed, that is, a translation equivalent on one side of the dictionary is used as a headword on the other side of the dictionary, with the same examples. The user has no way of knowing whether the reversibility principal has been followed for an entry other than by comparing the two translation equivalents in the dictionary.

Of the 80 entries in four pages, 70 (87%) have examples. The relatively small number of entries per page is due to the entries being longer, with more examples. The English–Afrikaans side of the A–Z is 277 pages.

The examples follow the part of speech and translation equivalent, and are presented with the source language (English) first, in roman, with the headword in bold, followed by the translation in the target language (Afrikaans) in italics, with the headword not emphasised in any way. Most examples are sentences rather than phrases. In entries with more than one example, examples are separated by ♦.

The entry below shows the structure and presentation of the integrated microstructure used in this dictionary.


calm *adjective, verb* kalm. • There is no wind, so the sea is **calm** tonight. *Daar is geen wind nie, daarom is die see vanaand kalm.* • Try to stay **calm** until help arrives. *Probeer kalm bly totdat hulp opdaag.*

According to the Tweetalige style guide used by compilers and editors, examples were required for each headword, and the compilers could present more than one example if necessary, "for particularly tricky entries". Allowance was also given for more than one example in cases with "difficulties in meaning, grammar and collocation". In terms of whether to use phrases or sentences, the style guide states: "Phrases should be used where the usage is quite simple, mainly in order to save space. But bear in mind that some lemmas will need full sentences to show proper word order. Phrases are placed before sentences." However, the developers decided later that sentences were preferable, and more appropriate to the target market.

The Tweetalige is aimed at learners in Grades 4 – 10. The range is wide because it caters to first language learners in the lower grades and first and second additional language learners in the upper grades.

The *Pharos Aanleerderswoodeboek*, hereinafter referred to as Pharos, is also a bidirectional bilingual dictionary, aimed at high school learners. Pharos has an Afrikaans to English side, followed by an English to Afrikaans side. Again, for the purposes of this thesis, I only looked at the English to Afrikaans side. In this dictionary, most entries follow the reversibility principle: the example sentences are identical on both sides.

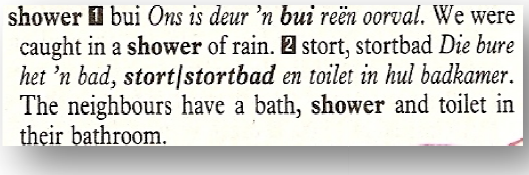
Pharos contains the smallest number of entries over four pages of the dictionaries in this study, but each entry contains one or more examples. The fonts used are smaller than those in the Tweetalige, but each entry is treated with more examples, as will be seen in the discussion in Chapter 4. The English–Afrikaans side of the A–Z is 262 pages.

Each entry has at least one example, often more than one, and all are sentences, not phrases. The examples follow the translation equivalent, and are not introduced or separated by any

mark or punctuation. The examples on the English to Afrikaans side are presented with the target language (Afrikaans) first, followed by the English examples. The Afrikaans examples are in italics, with the headword in bold, while the English sentences are roman, with the headword in bold. This ordering is opposite to the Tweetalige (above). The reason for this is given in the Preface, as the Afrikaans example sentences appear first, "because the user's first requirement, once he has grasped the meaning of the headword, is to see how the translation(s) are used". Where there is more than one example per sense in an entry these are separated by **[a]**, **[b]**.

According to the Preface in the front matter, "example sentences consist mainly of words included as headwords".

The entry below shows the structure and presentation of the integrated microstructure used in Pharos.


shower 1 bui *Ons is deur 'n* ***bui*** *reën oorval.* We were caught in a **shower** of rain. 2 stort, stortbad *Die bure het 'n bad,* ***stort/stortbad*** *en toilet in hul badkamer.* The neighbours have a bath, **shower** and toilet in their bathroom.

"In the first example sentence of each entry the headword is not inflected – only in exceptional cases are inflected forms (plural, participles, attributive adjective, etc.) given. This has been done to clear up any difficulties beginners might encounter."

According to Madaleine du Plessis, the compiler of the *Pharos Aanleerderswoordeboek*, the examples were to "show how you can use the words in sentences". The examples were checked by school teachers, to ensure that they would "fall within the comprehension and grasp of the dictionary's target group". Inflections were avoided "to ensure a direct link between a lemma and the bold word in its example sentence. (The book would have become too voluminous and expensive if additional sentences were added to cater for tenses, plurals, and so on.)" The information in the Preface builds on from this. "Special attention was paid to collocations as their structures differ from those in the native language."

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter provides the theoretical and practical background from which this research stems. Lexicographic theory about illustrative examples shows how vital this element is in dictionaries, specifically learner's dictionaries. The differences between monolingual and bilingual dictionaries are also discussed.

This chapter also introduces the South African school context and shows how South African learners, although they may be learning through the medium of English, are unlikely to be first language English speakers, and therefore use monolingual school dictionaries as learners of English would use them. I have also presented the five school dictionaries used in this research, explaining how the dictionaries use examples and what the compilers intended the examples to do.

Chapter 3: Practical investigation

In this chapter, I shall analyse and discuss my example sentence table of categories, and present the motivations for categorising the examples as I have. This table can be found at the end of this chapter. I shall also present and discuss the results of the learner questionnaires.

3.1 Table analysis

As stated in Chapter 2, the examples come from five South African school dictionaries. Some of these dictionaries are based on dictionaries published in the United Kingdom and United States and others were compiled in South Africa. I chose 24 words randomly, keeping to the same words in each dictionary, where the dictionary contained the word as a lemma. I only chose nouns, verbs and adjectives, so that I could compare these part of speech categories. If a word was polysemous, I used all senses in that entry. For example, the verb **keep** has five senses in the *South African Oxford School Dictionary*, four of which are exemplified. In the *Longman South African School Dictionary* there are seven senses of **keep**, six of which are exemplified. I have used all of the senses in this study, rather than choosing one example or some examples from an entry, as in some cases the examples are meaningless on their own, but are useful when compared to other examples in that entry. I did not use examples from idioms or expressions. For example, in the Pharos dictionary, **keep** has eight senses followed by seventeen fixed expressions. The expressions may contain valuable examples, but these are not used in this study. Where a lemma does not feature in the category table, it means either that the lemma is not treated in that dictionary or that it is not exemplified. There is another table, in Appendix C, that contains data on whether entries are treated in each dictionary, and how many senses each has.

The words used in this study are: *cake*, *calculate*, *calm* (noun), *calm* (adjective), *calm* (verb), *figure* (noun), *figure* (verb), *height*, *hemisphere*, *keep* (verb), *keep* (noun), *offset*, *omit*, *prevail*, *prevailing*, *prey* (verb), *probe* (noun), *shower*, *testimony*, *textbook*, *therapeutic*, *thermometer*, *threat*, *threaten*.

I have used a 2500 word defining vocabulary from a Macmillan learner's dictionary to help me to decide whether a definition is too complicated for the level of the dictionary user. I chose this dictionary specifically because it was not one that I used in my research, so it can be seen as neutral, and decisions I make based on the defining vocabulary are objective.

The basis for the columns and the allocation of the criteria for example sentences is discussed on page 7 in the Introduction of this thesis.

The *South African Oxford School Dictionary* second edition

The first set of examples comes from the *South African Oxford School Dictionary* second edition (SAOSD).

Example 1*, a **cake** of soap* is a phrase, and I have marked it as not providing any contextual support, because knowing soap does not help the learner to understand the word **cake**. This example is provided for the second sense of cake, "a shaped or hardened mass", and so the example tells the user what the shaped or hardened mass can be. The example provides grammatical support in that it shows the collocation "*cake of [noun]*". The lemma is uninflected, and I have found no additional support provided by the example.

*Her speech was **calculated** to stir the crowd.* Example 2 is a sentence, and it is illustrating the second sense of the verb **calculate**, defined as "plan something deliberately; intend". I have indicated that the example does provide contextual support, as one could only replace the word with a synonym or near-synonym, such as "… *was intended/planned to stir* …". Grammatical support is provided by a collocation, "*calculated to [verb]*" and the lemma is in an inflected form: the past tense of the verb, in a passive sentence. I marked this example as providing gender information, as the subject in the sentence is "*her*", but this is a neutral gender marker as it does not assign a quality onto the gender. It may be useful for statistical purposes, in that the dictionary may be found to contain examples with only one gender represented, or only positive examples referring to one gender.

*It is important to stay **calm** in an emergency.* Example 3 is a sentence that illustrates the second sense of the adjective **calm**. Words like "*important*" and "*in an emergency*" give clues to the meaning of **calm**, which is defined as "not excited or agitated". The word "agitated" might be too difficult for a learner to understand, as it is not in the defining vocabulary, so the example, with its simpler words, supports the definition at a more accessible level. The collocation "*stay **calm***" provides grammatical support. **Calm** is uninflected in the sentence, and I did not find additional support provided by this example.

Example 4, *the stone **figure** of an elephant* is a phrase used to illustrate the noun **figure**, which is defined as "a representation of a person or animal in painting, sculpture, etc". I marked this example as providing contextual support, since the headword can be replaced by synonyms or near synonyms, for example, "… *stone sculpture/carving/statue*…". "Representation" in the definition is not in the defining vocabulary, so the example helps to make the entry more understandable. I did not find grammatical support in this example. The headword is in its uninflected form, and I did not find additional support.

Example 5, *Can you **figure** out what it will cost?* is a question illustrating the verb **figure**, which is defined as "work out". Here, the definition could be misleading, as "work out" also means training, or doing physical exercises to keep fit. The example therefore provides semantic support because it shows that there is something, a cost, to work out, thereby taking away possible confusion. One could also "…*calculate/add up what it will cost*". The collocation "***figure** out*", is illustrated, which is important, as **figure** is rarely used on its own in this sense. I found no other information provided by this example.

Example 6, *at the **height** of the holiday season*, is a phrase used to illustrate the third sense of the noun **height**. The definition is "the highest or most intense part". The word "intense" in the definition may be too difficult for learners, as it is not in the defining vocabulary, but the example contains simple words that they are more likely to use and understand. The ***height** of the holiday season* is a common phrase, used in tourism, as well as news broadcasts, making it familiar to learners. So, while there is nothing in the example that I have marked as providing contextual support, the phrase is helpful to the extent that it will provide support for the definition. Grammatical support is also provided by the collocation "***height** of*", which is how the word is commonly used. I have not marked this example as providing additional support or information.

*The southern and northern **hemispheres***, example 7, is a phrase illustrating the second sense of the noun **hemisphere**, which is defined as "half the earth". I have indicated that "southern" and "northern" provide contextual clues, which complement the definition. I did not find grammatical support or additional support in this example.

Example 8 consists of two phrases: ***keep** still*; ***keep** it hot* to illustrate the verb **keep**. The definition for the second sense of **keep** is "stay or cause to stay in the same condition etc".

The definition may be too difficult for younger learners, and so the example is valuable in that it shows common use of the word, even though it does not provide actual contextual clues. There is nothing else in the rest of the phrases that assists the user in understanding **keep**, but these are common phrases that the learner is likely to have heard or used. I marked this example as providing grammatical support by showing that **keep** can be used transitively and intransitively. The example also shows that **keep** can be used about a human agent, as in "[*You*] ***keep*** *still*" or a non-human agent, as in "***Keep*** *it hot*", which is useful for learners. The additional information provided by this example is that it has been used as an instruction. Although this example consists of two phrases, I have referred to it as one example in the table and statistics as it is presented in the dictionary as one example. Both phrases could also have been presented as sentences.

Example 9, *She* ***keeps*** *laughing* is a sentence used to illustrate the third sense of the verb **keep**, which is defined as "do something continually". Again, I have found the definition to use difficult vocabulary, as "continually" is not in the defining vocabulary. The example provides contextual support with "*laughing*", which shows a continuous action. I did not find grammatical support, but it is useful to see that here the verb is inflected, while in the previous example it is not, which shows learners different ways in which **keep** can be used. The example makes use of a gender marker, "she", but again, it is not assigned a quality.

Example 10, ***keep*** *a promise*, is an example of the fourth sense of **keep**: "respect and not break". This use of **keep** is very specific to promises, commitments and vows, and the example helps to show this, while the definition is less specific. I marked this example as not providing contextual support, although it does support the definition by suggesting what could be respected and not broken. There is no grammatical or other support provided by this example.

Example 11, ***keep*** *a diary*, again shows the specific thing that one can "make entries in" as defined. Neither "entry" nor "entries" is in the defining vocabulary.

The four examples for **keep** complement each other by showing the specific things that the different definitions refer to. These definitions may be beyond the grasp of the younger or less fluent learner on their own, but the short examples provide a context to each definition,

while also serving as comparisons between them. They also show the transitive and intransitive uses of **keep**. Of the four examples, one is inflected, while the others are not.

Example 12, *She earns her **keep***, illustrates **keep** as a noun. This sense is defined as "maintenance; the food etc. that you need to live". Here again, the definition may be more complicated than the word it is defining, as "maintenance" is not in the defining vocabulary, so the example shows a common use of the word. I have marked this as providing a contextual clue, because the word "*earns*" shows that **keep** is something that needs to be worked or paid for. I did not find grammatical support provided by this example, and I indicated that gender is marked. It is interesting to note that the three examples where gender has been mentioned so far all refer to "she" or "her".

*Defeats are **offset** by successes* (example 13) illustrates the verb **offset**, which is defined as "counterbalance or make up for something". "Counterbalance" is not in the defining vocabulary, and as it is the first word in the definition, it may put learners off. The second part of the definition "make up for something" could be misinterpreted as "to make up for something I did wrong" as in, "I was rude to my friend, but made up for it by sharing my lunch with her". The example is very useful if the definition is confusing, as "defeats" and "successes" are antonyms, and so the sentence suggests that they balance each other. Thus, I have marked the example as containing contextual clues. I did not find grammatical support or additional support in this example.

Example 14, ***omit** to close the door* is a phrase used to illustrate the second sense of the verb **omit**. The definition is "fail to do something" which is likely to be understood by the users of this dictionary. I have marked this example as not providing contextual clues, since there is nothing in the sentence that helps the learner understand the meaning of **omit**, which could be replaced by words such as "want", "like", "try" while still making sense. However, since the definition is clear and easy to understand, this is not necessarily a problem, as the sentence would also make sense if **omit** was replaced by "fail". The grammatical support provided by this example is "***omit** to*". There is no additional support given. The problem with this example being a phrase is that it does not show the typical use of the word and may be seen as an instruction, which is atypical use of the word. A more typical example would be "X **omitted** to close the door" which would not make the sentence much longer, if space is a

concern, but would be a more useful example. If the lexicographer wanted to keep the lemma in its uninflected form, they could try "Don't **omit** to lock the door".

Example 15, *The **prevailing** wind is from the south-west*, is a sentence illustrating the first sense of the verb **prevail**, which is defined as "be the most frequent or general". I indicated that this sentence does provide contextual clues – although without the definition, the contextual clues may not be enough. **Prevailing** could be replaced by an adjective, such as "strongest", "cold", "sea" and so on. Grammatical support is provided by the collocation "***prevailing** wind*". I did not find additional support in this example.

Example 16, *good sense **prevailed***, illustrates the second sense of **prevail**, which is defined as "be victorious". While this phrase is not marked as providing contextual clues, it does provide a common way of using the word, so learners would find it useful if they did not understand the definition, which contains a non-defining vocabulary word. I did not find grammatical or additional support in this example.

*The problem **preyed** on his mind* (example 17) illustrates the verb **prey**, which is defined as "hunt or take as prey; cause to worry". This is an interesting example because the definition provides both the literal and the figurative meaning (as one sense) while the example only illustrates the figurative meaning, which is the one that needs the most support. Contextual support is provided by "*problem*", which suggests something that causes worry. The sentence provides grammatical support with the collocation "***preyed** on*". I noted additional information in the gender marked by the sentence, and the fact that the sentence is figurative. These are both useful for statistical purposes more than anything else.

Example 18, *a **probe** into corruption at the highest level* is a phrase illustrating the second sense of the noun **probe**, which is defined as "an investigation". I have marked this example as not providing contextual support. This could have been marked as providing clues, since the example does support the definition, but there are no actual words in the phrase which help the learner to understand what **probe** means. "***Probe** into*" could be replaced by near synonyms, such as "investigation into" but it could also be replaced by something entirely different, such as, "discussion of". "Investigation" in the definition is not part of the defining vocabulary, so the definition may be too advanced for younger learners. I have indicated that grammatical support is provided by the collocation "***probe** into*" and I have noted figurative

use and crime as additional support. Again, the additional information can be used for statistical purposes. This is the first mention of crime in this study, and it would be interesting to see if examples in a dictionary are weighted towards crime. This may be a problem, especially in a school dictionary. However, it would be difficult to find an example for the word **probe** that does not involve crime. This would need to be taken into account when compiling statistics.

Example 19, *a **shower** of stones*, illustrates the second sense of the noun **shower**. The definition is "a lot of small things coming or falling like rain". I have marked this example as not providing contextual support, although it is not necessary, since the definition is clear and simple. The grammatical support that I noted was the collocation "***shower** of*". I did not indicate additional information.

*Exercise can have a **therapeutic** effect*, example 20, illustrates the adjective **therapeutic**, which is defined as "treating or curing a disease etc". I found this sentence to contain contextual support, because **therapeutic** could be replaced by words with a similar meaning, such as "healthy", "beneficial". I found grammatical support in the collocation "***therapeutic** effect*" and I did not find additional support in this example.

Example 21, *the **threat** of drought*, is a phrase illustrating the second sense of the noun **threat**, which is defined as "a sign of something undesirable". The definition may be too complicated for younger users of the dictionary, as neither "undesirable" nor "desirable" are in the defining vocabulary, so the example is useful because it provides contextual clues: **threat** introduces something bad or undesirable, such as a drought. It also provides grammatical support with the collocation "***threat** of*".

Example 22, *High crime rates **threaten** the stability of the country*, illustrates the second sense of the verb **threaten**. The definition is "be a threat or danger to a person or thing". This sentence does provide contextual clues as the user will know that "*high crime rates*" are a negative issue, and any effect they have on the "*stability of the country*" will be negative, which helps users to understand the meaning of **threaten**. **Threaten** can be replaced in the sentence by near synonyms such as "endanger". Grammatical support is provided by the transitive use of the verb, and I noted that the example mentions crime, which can be used for statistical purposes.

Summary of examples in the *South African Oxford School Dictionary* second edition

In the above selection of 22 lemmas, there are eight nouns, twelve verbs, and two adjectives. Ten of the examples are sentences and twelve are phrases. Thirteen examples provide contextual clues, while nine do not. Fourteen examples provide grammatical support. Sixteen of the lemmas are in their simple form and six are inflected. I found additional information in seven examples.

Information that I find notable is that four of the examples provide neither contextual support nor grammatical support, so it would be useful to find out if these examples do provide some value. The examples are 8, 10, 11 and 16. Examples 8, 10 and 11 are all illustrating different senses of the verb **keep**, and as I noted above in the relevant paragraphs, while each example does not provide much support on its own, the different examples for **keep** work together to illustrate the different uses of the different senses. The examples are short and do not take much space, but they do provide accessible examples for the learners to use.

Example 16, illustrating **prevailed** did not provide grammatical or contextual support, although I noted that it does provide a typical use of the word, which will be helpful to learners.

The column for additional support has been marked seven times, and while these numbers are too small to generate useful statistics, it is valuable to get an idea of what statistics could be generated for a dictionary. Four of the 22 examples mention gender, three mention “she/her” and one mentions “his”. As discussed above, none of these examples places a value on the gender, but in a larger study it would be interesting to see if a dictionary does contain value judgments on gender. Two examples mention crime, and two are used figuratively.

It is notable that many of the definitions contain words that are not in the defining vocabulary. This means that the examples are more important in helping the users understand what the word means.

Based on the data on these examples, my evaluation of the dictionary is that the examples are helpful, in that most of them do provide contextual support or grammatical support, but the dictionary would benefit from the inclusion of more sentences than phrases, and improving

the addressing equivalence, as discussed in Chapter 2. This will be examined further in Chapter 4.

The *South African Oxford Secondary School Dictionary*

The second dictionary I studied was the *South African Oxford Secondary School Dictionary* (SAOSSD). I used the same defining vocabulary while analysing this dictionary, as it provides a useful guide to what learners should understand even though they are at a higher level.

Example 23, *fish **cakes***, illustrates the second sense of the noun **cake**, which is defined as "a savoury food in a round flat shape". "Savoury" is not in the defining vocabulary. I have marked this phrase as not providing contextual support, although it is a phrase that should be familiar to most learners in this age group. I have also marked it as not providing grammatical support, although it could be argued that it provides a common collocation, and that it suggests an alternative to "a cake of fish", for example. The lemma is inflected. I found no additional support provided by this example.

*A **cake** of soap*, example 24, is the same as example 1 from SAOSD above. In SAOSSD, it illustrates the third sense of **cake**, and is defined as "a shaped mass of something". As before, I did not find any contextual clues, and grammatical support is provided in that it shows the collocation "***cake** of [noun]*". The lemma is uninflected, and I have found no other support.

Example 25, *There are a lot but it's difficult to put a **figure** on it*, illustrates the second sense of the noun **figure**, which is defined as "an amount or number". I have indicated that this sentence does provide a context, as the learner can see that the sentence is referring to something to do with a number that is less vague than "*a lot*". The words used in the definition also provide synonyms that the learner will understand, and the sentence will not make sense if words other than synonyms or near synonyms are used. I did not find grammatical or additional support in this example.

Example 26, *Rose has a slim **figure***, is a sentence that illustrates the third sense of **figure**. The definition is "the external form or shape of something, especially of the human body". This definition may be too complicated for younger users of this dictionary, as "external" is not in the defining vocabulary, but the example is clear and simple. "*Slim*" is a word used

mostly to describe body shape, especially that of a woman, and Rose is a girl's name, which further contextualises **figure**. I did not find any grammatical support in this example, but I did indicate that the sentence marks gender, and for the first time in this study, provides a name. This is another interesting aspect to examine, since names are cultural indicators. In this case, Rose is an English girl's name. However, as in the sentences above, the gender is not assigned a value, although **figure** is generally used to describe a woman's body. One is unlikely to talk about Rob's figure.

*She is an important **figure** in twentieth-century history*, example 27, illustrates the sixth sense of **figure**, which is defined as "a person as seen or studied". I indicated that this example does provide contextual clues, as "*she*" marks it as being about a person or animal and the rest of the sentence can only be about a person. One is unlikely to talk about an important horse in history, but "She is an important person in twentieth-century history" means the same as the example. I did not find grammatical support in this example, and I indicated gender as additional information.

Example 28, *What **height** are we flying at?* illustrates the third sense of the noun **height**. The definition for this sense is "the distance of an object or position above ground level or sea level". I marked this sentence as providing contextual support, because "*flying*" suggests a **height**. However, the sentence would still make sense if **height** were replaced by "speed". The definition is clear and easy to understand though. Grammatical support is provided by the use of "***height**… at"*. No additional information was found.

Example 29, *I don't like **heights*** illustrates the fourth sense of **height**, which is defined as "a high place or area". There are no contextual clues in this example, as **heights** could be replaced by any noun – "I don't like apples", "I don't like aeroplanes", "I don't like the wind". However, the definition is simple and easy for learners to understand, and the purpose of this example is more to show how to use the word. I have marked it as providing grammatical support, because if a learner was unfamiliar with this word, perhaps they might use it as "a **height**" or "the **height**". I did not indicate additional information.

Example 30, *the **height** of folly* is used to illustrate the fifth sense of **height**, which is defined as "the highest degree of something". I have marked this example as not providing contextual clues. As "folly" is a formal word that is not in the defining vocabulary, and is unlikely to be

used by learners, it may be more confusing than helpful. Examples that are not easily understandable by learners are discussed in the section on good examples, on page 27. This example has provided grammatical support with the collocation "***height** of*". There is no additional support.

These three examples used to illustrate **height** do not necessarily provide contextual support, but their purpose is more to show how to use the word in a sentence, comparing "***height** at*", "***heights***", and "***height** of*" in the different senses.

Example 31, *the Northern* and *Southern **hemisphere**, Eastern **hemisphere**, the Western **hemisphere*** is an interesting example, because it is part of the definition, rather than a separate element of the entry. The definition of the second sense of **hemisphere** is: "either of the halves into which the earth is divided either by the equator (the *Northern* and *Southern hemisphere*) or by a line passing through the poles (*the Eastern hemisphere*, including Europe, Asia, and Africa; *the Western hemisphere*, the Americas)." As part of the definition, it is difficult to analyse this as an example, but it is useful to examine it as a way of presenting information that is both part of the definition, and partly an example. In the entry the four named hemispheres are marked as examples, by the italics, but since these are the only four hemispheres of the world, they could be seen as defining information, rather than examples. I have marked this in the Definition column, but as shall be seen later, some examples in the bilingual dictionaries are used as definitions, which is what this column is for. I have not indicated that the examples provide grammatical support, although one can see that while Northern and Southern have initial capitals, **hemisphere** is written with a lowercase H. This could be seen as grammatical support, but I have not marked it as such, as in this thesis I see grammatical support as guidelines to using the word in a sentence.

*She **kept** quiet about it*, example 32, is a sentence used to illustrate the first sense of the verb **keep**. The definition is "to stay or cause something to stay in a specified state, position, or condition". The definition is long, and could be difficult for learners to understand, since "specified" is not in the defining vocabulary that I have used. I have marked this example as not providing contextual clues to the meaning of **keep**. I did not find grammatical support in this example, and the word is inflected. This is particularly useful as **keep** has an irregular past tense. Gender has been marked in the Additional Support column.

Example 33, ***Keep*** *still please,* is also used to illustrate sense one of **keep**. This sentence is also marked as not providing contextual clues, although it is a common phrase that learners are very likely to have heard before, and to understand. While this sentence is also marked as not providing grammatical support, it is useful to compare it with the previous sentence, as this time **keep** is not inflected. The additional support that I noted is that the example is an instruction, as in the previous dictionary.

I'll ***keep*** *it hot for you*, example 34, is the third sentence illustrating the first sense of **keep**. This is the first occurrence in this study of more than one example being used for one sense. Again, I did not find contextual clues in this example, although, used with the other two examples, one gets a better idea of the meaning of this sense of **keep**. I did not find grammatical support, and this sentence also uses the uninflected form of **keep**.

Example 35, *You can* ***keep*** *the change*, illustrates the second sense of **keep**, which is defined as "to have possession of something and not give or throw it away". If a learner understands the meaning of change to be "coins and notes in small units" as defined in this dictionary, then the example does provide contextual clues to the meaning of **keep**. "Change" is something that is typically exchanged at the end of a transaction, and so by being told to "***keep*** *the change*" when it is usually given away, one is "having possession" of it and not "giving or throwing it away". I did not find grammatical support, or additional support in this example.

She's ***kept*** *the letter all these years*, example 36, illustrates the same sense of **keep**. "All these years" provides a context of a long time, thus "have possession of something" over an extended period of time. This sentence did not provide grammatical support, and **kept** is an inflected form of the verb. I marked this example as containing gender information.

Example 37, *The strap* ***keeps*** *breaking*, is a sentence used to illustrate the third sense of the verb **keep**. This is defined as "to continue doing something, to do something frequently or repeatedly". I indicated that this sentence does provide contextual support, as "*breaking*" suggests a continuous action. This sentence does not provide grammatical support and the verb is inflected. I did not find additional support.

Example 38, ***Keep*** *straight on*, illustrates the fourth sense of keep. This is defined as "to continue in a specified direction". I have marked this example as not providing contextual support, although it is a common and simple phrase that learners are likely to understand. "*Straight on*" sounds to me like a phrase less likely to be used in South Africa: learners may be more familiar with the sentence "**Keep** going straight". I did not find grammatical support, and the word is uninflected. I marked it in the Additional Support column as being an instruction.

As discussed with the previous dictionary, the different examples for **keep** all complement each other, and while they may not each provide contextual or grammatical support, they can be used together to differentiate between the meanings of the different senses, and to show how the different senses are used. They also show that **keep** can be used transitively (***keep*** *the change*) or intransitively (***keeps*** *breaking*).

Example 39, *She earns her* ***keep*** illustrates the first sense of the noun **keep**, which is defined as "food, clothes and the other essential things you need to live". This is the same example that was used in the previous dictionary, so I have marked it in the table in the same way. Thus, it has been marked as providing a contextual clue, in that **keep** is something that can be earned. I did not mark it as providing grammatical support, and I indicated gender in the Additional Support column. It is useful to note that the definition in this dictionary, aimed at older learners, is simpler than in the dictionary for younger learners.

He ***omitted*** *my name from the list*, example 40, illustrates the first sense of the verb **omit**. The definition is "to leave or miss something out". This is a simple definition that the learners are likely to understand, so while I marked the example as not providing contextual support, I do not see this as a problem. Grammatical support is provided by the use of "***omit*** … *from*". The word is inflected, and I indicated gender in the Additional Support column.

Example 41, *The problem* ***preyed*** *on his mind* is the same example used in SAOSD to illustrate the second sense of the verb **prey**, which is defined as "to cause anxiety or worry to someone". While SAOSD lumped the two senses together, this dictionary splits them into literal and figurative senses, with the first one being the literal sense about animals hunting and killing other animals for food. I marked this example as providing contextual support, although as the definition is simple and easy to understand, it may not be necessary. The

sentence provides specific grammatical support with "***preyed** on*". I noted additional information in the gender marked by the sentence, and the fact that the example is figurative.

Example 42, *a **shower** of stones*, is also the same example used in SAOSD to illustrate the second sense of the noun **shower**. The definition is "a lot of small things falling or arriving like rain". I have marked this example as not providing contextual support, although it is not necessary, since the definition is clear and simple. The grammatical support that I noted was the collocation "***shower** of*". I did not indicate additional information.

Example 43, also illustrating the second sense of the noun **shower**, is *a **shower** of letters*. Again, I found no specific contextual support, but I do not think one is necessary, with the simple definition. I marked it as also providing "***shower** of*" as grammatical support.

*There's a **threat** of rain*, example 44, illustrates the second sense of the noun **threat**, which is defined as "a sign of something unwelcome". It is interesting to compare this example with the example used in SAOSD, which is *the **threat** of drought*. Drought is always seen as a negative situation, so by using "drought" in the example, one can see that **threat** is a sign of something negative, or undesirable. In this example, however, "rain" can be welcome or unwelcome, so there is nothing in the sentence that suggests **threat** is a sign of something undesirable. This example could be used conversationally at an event where rain is not welcome, such as a cricket match or an outdoor function, although there is no indication in the example that this is the case. I have thus marked it as not providing a contextual clue, although it may be a familiar sentence to learners. The grammatical support is again "***threat** of*", and I did not find additional support in this example.

Example 45, *Technology was seen as a **threat** to people's jobs*, illustrates the third sense of **threat**: "a person or thing that might cause danger or catastrophe". This example does provide contextual support, because one can work out that technology can be seen as a danger to people's jobs. The example provides grammatical support with the collocation "***threat** to*". I did not find any additional support. In both examples of **threat** in this dictionary the lemma is uninflected, which is interesting to note, as the plural form is used very rarely.

*The clouds **threatened** rain*, example 46, illustrates the second sense of the verb **threaten**. The definition is "to be a warning of something unwelcome". This is useful to compare with

example 44, as here the "*clouds*" are threatening rain, and the user will know that clouds are a precursor to rain. I did not indicate any grammatical or additional support in this example.

Example 47, *Costs are **threatening** to rise*, illustrates the third sense of **threaten**, which is defined as "to seem likely to be or do something unwelcome". I did not find any contextual support in this example, as **threatening** could be replaced by "going", "starting" and so on – none of which mean "seem likely". I did find grammatical support in the form of the collocation "***threatening** to*", and the lemma is inflected. The additional information that I indicated was that the example is a figurative sentence, using personification.

The two examples for the verb **threaten** show its transitive and intransitive uses.

Summary of examples from the *South African Oxford Secondary School Dictionary*

In the selection of 25 examples from the *South African Oxford Secondary School Dictionary*, there are fourteen nouns and eleven verbs, and no adjectives. Nineteen of the examples are sentences and six are phrases. This is a much higher number of sentences than in the previous dictionary. I marked eleven examples that provided contextual clues and thirteen that did not. In this dictionary one example was part of the definition (example 31). Eleven examples provided grammatical support. Sixteen of the lemmas are in their simple form and nine are inflected. I found additional information in ten examples.

In this dictionary I found five examples that provided neither contextual nor grammatical support. Of those five, there are two that do not provide any additional support either. These are *fish **cakes*** and *I'll **keep** it hot for you*, both of which I explained as being common enough for learners to understand their contexts.

From the Additional Support column, I found seven cases where gender is marked: five used "she/her" and only two used "he/his". I found two cases where an instruction is given and two where the example is figurative.

Interestingly, although SAOSSD is aimed at a higher level of learner, only two definitions contained words that were not in the defining vocabulary.

My evaluation of the dictionary is that the examples are less helpful than the SAOSD, as less than half of them provide contextual support or grammatical support. The dictionary would benefit from more supportive examples, and from improving the addressing equivalence, as discussed in Chapter 2. This will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

The *Longman South African School Dictionary*

The following examples are from the *Longman South African School Dictionary* (Longman). This dictionary does use a defining vocabulary, so I have not checked the definitions against the Macmillan defining vocabulary.

Example 48, *a birthday **cake***, illustrates the first sense of the noun **cake**, which is defined as "a sweet food made by baking a mixture of flour, butter, sugar, and eggs". I marked this phrase as not providing contextual clues, as **cake** can be replaced by "present", "party", "song" and so on. However, the concept is very common, and so learners are most likely to know the context. This example does not provide grammatical support. I marked it as containing additional information, as a birthday cake is a cultural concept.

Example 49, *fish **cakes*** illustrates the second sense of **cake**: "a small amount of food that is made into a round shape and then cooked". This is the same example as provided in SAOSSD, example 23. As I said there, this phrase does not provide contextual support, although it should be familiar to most learners in this age group. It does not provide grammatical support. The lemma is inflected, and I found no additional support provided by the example.

*Scientists have **calculated** that the temperatures could rise by five degrees in the next 100 years*, example 50, is used to illustrate the first sense of the verb **calculate**, which is defined as "to find out a total number or amount by using mathematics". I marked this example as providing contextual support, as terms like "*scientists*", "*temperatures*", "*rise by five degrees*" and "*100 years*" all suggest sums or calculations. The grammatical support provided by this sentence is the collocation "***calculated** that*". In the Additional Support column, I indicated "conservation" as a theme, that may be useful for statistical purposes, since conservation and ideas surrounding conservation may be topical at certain times, and may therefore date the dictionary or place it within the learner's frame of reference.

Example 51, *The bombing was **calculated** to cause as much damage as possible* illustrates the second sense of **calculate**, defined as "to deliberately plan that something will have a particular effect". **Calculated** could be replaced by "planned" which is a near synonym, but it could also be replaced by "going" "found", which would change the meaning of the sentence. Therefore, I have marked this sentence as not providing contextual clues. Grammatical support is provided by the collocation "***calculated** to*". I noted that the example mentions crime in the Additional Support column.

Example 52, *The captain asked the passengers to stay **calm***, illustrates the first sense of the adjective **calm**. The definition is "relaxed and not angry or upset". The clear definition, together with the knowledge that "*captain*" and "*passengers*" generally involve flying, which could be seen as a high risk activity, will help the learner understand the meaning of **calm**. I have marked this example as providing contextual support. I did not mark it as providing grammatical support, and I did not find additional support.

*The city is **calm** again*, example 53, illustrates the second sense of **calm**, which is defined as "peaceful and without any trouble". I did not find any contextual support in this example, as **calm** could be replaced by almost any adjective: "dirty", "busy", "noisy". However, the definition is simple and easy to understand, so the example does not necessarily need to contain contextual support. I did not find grammatical support or additional support in this example.

Example 54, *The ocean was **calm*** is used to illustrate the third sense of **calm**: "without any big waves". Again, the sentence does not provide contextual clues – the ocean could be "dirty", "rough", "cold", "teeming with sharks". But the definition is clear and the example illustrates its use. I did not mark this example as providing grammatical or additional support.

Example 55, ***calm** weather*, illustrates sense four of **calm**, which is defined as "not windy or stormy". This phrase does not provide contextual, grammatical or additional support, but when read with the simple definition it is clear what the phrase means.

The four examples above may not provide much support on their own, but when used together they allow the reader to see the differences between the four senses of **calm**.

Example 56, *the **calm** of the evening* illustrates the noun **calm**, which is defined as "a time when it is peaceful and quiet". Again, the example does not provide any clues to the meaning of **calm**, but the definition is clear. I did not find grammatical or additional support.

Example 57, *the **figure** 8*, is used to illustrate sense one of the noun **figure**. The definition is "a number". I noted that this example does provide contextual support, as **figure** could only be replaced by "number" in this phrase. I did not note any grammatical or additional support.

*The latest crime **figures** show a drop of 2%*, example 58, illustrates the second sense of **figure**, defined as "facts about something that say how many there are or how often something happens". This sentence does provide contextual support, as one could only replace **figures** with a word like "statistics" or "numbers". I did not find grammatical support, but I noted that the sentence is about crime, which I marked in the Additional Support column.

Example 59, *one of the most important **figures** in South African history*, is used to illustrate sense three of **figure**, which is defined as "an important or famous person". This phrase is interesting to compare with example 27 from SAOSSD *She is an important **figure** …* because example 59 does not provide an indication that **figure** should be a person. In this sentence it could be replaced by many different words: "stories", "books", "houses", "areas", while "*She*" in example 27 immediately makes it clear that a **figure** is a person. Therefore, I did not mark this sentence as providing contextual support. I did not find grammatical support in this example, but I did mark it as providing additional support as it mentions South Africa, which I marked as location.

Example 60, *She had a good **figure***, illustrates the fourth sense of **figure**: "the shape of someone's body". Again, it is useful to compare this example with example 26 in SAOSSD, which mentions a "*slim **figure***". "Slim" is used about a human body, specifically a woman's body, while "good" can be used to describe anything, so it does not give us clues to the meaning of **figure**. "*She*" does narrow it down to a person, but "*had*" could imply ownership, so **figure** could be replaced by "car", "idea", "job". The definition is very clear, so the example does not necessarily need to provide more information. This sentence does not provide grammatical support, and I marked that it provides gender information.

*I could see a dark **figure** in the distance*, example 61, illustrates the fifth sense of **figure**, which is defined as "a shape or object with the form of a person". I marked this example as not providing contextual support, as there is nothing in the sentence that shows us what **figure** means. I could see a dark mountain, city, or shape in the distance. If the **figure** were walking then the meaning would be narrowed down to a person or animal. I did not note any grammatical support or additional support.

Example 62, *a six-sided **figure***, illustrates the sixth sense of **figure**: "a shape in mathematics". The definition is clear, and **figure** in the example could be replaced by the word "shape" and very little else. I did not note grammatical or additional support.

Example 63, *I **figured** it was time to leave*, illustrates the first sense of the verb **figure**, which is labelled as informal. The definition is "to have a particular opinion after thinking about a situation". I found contextual support because **figure** can be replaced by near synonyms like "thought" or "decided". I did not find grammatical or additional support in this example.

*Marriage didn't really **figure** in their plans*, example 64, is used to illustrate the second sense of the verb **figure**, which is defined as "to be included as an important part of something". I marked this example as containing contextual support, as one can see that "*marriage*" is (or is not) part of "*their plans*", and **figure** could not be replaced by any verb. I did not find any grammatical support or additional information.

Example 65, *He was of medium **height***, illustrates the first sense of the noun **height**. The definition is "how tall someone or something is". This is a difficult one to categorise in terms of contextual support, as "*He was of medium…"* suggests some sort of measurement given to a person, but he could be of medium intelligence, medium weight, medium build. Most of the alternatives that I have found are around body shape and measurement, so I feel that this narrows it down sufficiently to provide a context. The definition is clear and simple, so it is not necessary for the example to provide more information. The grammatical support that I have found is the construction "*of … **height***". I marked this sentence as containing gender information. This sense also directs the learner to a picture at the cube entry, which has **height** labelled.

Example 66, *The aircraft was flying at a **height** of 10,000 metres* illustrates the second sense of **height**, "the distance something is above the ground". This example provides contextual support – "*aircraft*", "*flying*" and "*10,000 metres*" all reinforce the meaning of **height**. This sentence also provides grammatical support in the form of the collocation "***height** of*" which is especially useful since the previous example shows another construction. I did not find additional support.

*She'd always been scared of **heights***, example 67, is used to illustrate the third sense of **height**, which is defined as "a high place or position". This sentence does not provide contextual support, as she could have been scared of anything. However, the definition is clear, and does not necessarily need support. I found grammatical support in the plural: a learner may be tempted to use **height** in the singular, but in this use it is more common in the plural form. I noted that this sentence marks gender.

*At the **height** of the tourist season, all the hotels are full*, example 68, illustrates sense four of **height**. The definition is "the time when something is busiest or most successful". This sentence does provide contextual support, because it shows what happens at the busiest time of the tourist season. I also indicated that it provides grammatical support with the collocation "***height** of*". No additional support was marked.

Example 69, *the southern **hemisphere***, is used to illustrate the first sense of the noun **hemisphere**, which is defined as "one half of the Earth". I marked this phrase as providing contextual clues, as "southern" suggests a half. The definition is very clear, and the example aids the learner's comprehension by showing how the Earth can be divided into **hemispheres**. I did not find grammatical support or additional support in this example. This entry also directs the learner to the globe entry, which has labelled artwork showing the northern and southern hemispheres.

Example 70, *the left **hemisphere** of the brain*, illustrates sense two of **hemisphere**, "one of the two halves of the brain". I marked this phrase as providing contextual clues because it shows how the halves of the brain are divided, or what the two halves are called. I did not find grammatical support or additional support in this example.

*You can **keep** the book. I don't need it*, example 71, is used to illustrate the first sense of the verb **keep**, which is defined as "to continue to have something". This is the first example in this study that consists of more than one sentence. The example does provide contextual support, as the second sentence suggests that the "You" was going to give it to the "me", so by telling them to **keep** it, they can continue to have it. I did not find grammatical or additional support in this example.

Example 72, ***Keep** calm and call the doctor immediately* illustrates sense two of **keep**. The definition is "to stay in a particular state". This example does provide contextual support, because "calling a doctor immediately" suggests an emergency, so a common instruction, which means the same, would be "stay calm" or "remain calm". I did not find grammatical support, but I did mark this sentence as being an instruction in the Additional Support column.

Example 73, *Food prices **keep** on rising* illustrates the third sense of **keep**, defined as "to continue doing something". "Rising" suggests a continuous action, so a learner can find contextual clues in this sentence. The grammatical support provided here is the collocation "***keep** on*". I marked this sentence as containing economic information in the Additional Support column.

Example 74, *Where do you **keep** the sugar?* illustrates sense four of **keep**, which is defined as "to have something always in the same place". Looking at the definition, one can see that **keep** could only be replaced by a near synonym like "store", "have", but without the definition, one could replace **keep** with "put", "want" and so on, so I have marked this sentence as not providing contextual support, but I do not think it is necessary, because the definition is clear. This example does not provide grammatical or additional support.

*They're **keeping** her in hospital until tomorrow*, example 75, illustrates sense five of **keep**. The definition is "to make someone stay in a place". The phrase "until tomorrow" suggests that she is to stay where she is, so I have marked this sentence as containing contextual support. There is no grammatical support, but this is the first example of **keep** that shows it in an inflected form. The additional information provided by this example is that it contains gender.

Example 76, *She **kept** her word and paid back the money*, illustrates sense six of **keep**, which is defined as "to do something you have promised or agreed to do". Paying back the money suggests a promise or agreement, so I have marked this sentence as providing contextual clues. I did not note any grammatical support, although again, this example uses an inflected form of **keep**. Gender has been marked as additional support.
The different examples for the verb **keep** show that it can be used transitively (***kept** her word*) or intransitively (***keep** calm*).

Example 77, *His name was **omitted** from the list*, is used to illustrate the first sense of the verb **omit**, "to not include something". On its own, the sentence does not provide contextual clues, as **omitted** could be replaced by "taken", "read", "copied", but **omit** is easy to understand in conjunction with the definition. The grammatical support provided by this example is "***omitted** from*" and gender has been marked. This entry also provides the synonym "leave out" as additional support. (I have not noted this in the category table, as it is not part of the example.)

*She **omitted** to tell me that she was married*, example 78, illustrates the second sense of **omit**. The definition is "to not do something" and it is labelled as formal. Here I marked the sentence as not providing contextual support, as **omitted** could be replaced by verbs such as "wanted", "forgot", "waited". In this case, the example does not necessarily need to provide a context, since the definition is clear. The grammatical support in this sentence is the collocation "***omitted** to*", and the additional information is gender.

It is useful to use these two sentences together and note that **omit** can be used with *to* and *from*.

Example 79, *the attitudes that **prevailed** in the 1960s*, illustrates the first sense of the verb **prevail**. The whole entry is labelled as formal. The definition for sense one is "to exist or be common among a group of people". I said that this phrase does provide a context, since **prevail** can be replaced by "were common", "existed" which are near synonyms, and suggested by the definition. I did not find grammatical or additional support in this example.

*Justice **prevailed** in the end*, example 80, illustrates the second sense of **prevail**, "to be successful after a struggle". I marked this as not providing contextual clues, because

prevailed could be replaced by "failed" or "took place". However, the definition is clear, so the example does not necessarily need to provide a context. I did not find grammatical support in this sentence. I did mark it as providing additional information, as the sentence is about crime, although this may be a tenuous link.

Example 81, *Do you want to have a **shower**?* is used to illustrate the second sense of the noun **shower**. It is defined as "an occasion when you wash your body under a shower". Here, the sentence does not provide contextual support for **shower**, since **shower** could be replaced by almost any other noun: "pear", "cake", "house", "party". The definition is clear and simple, and learners are likely to understand the meaning without the example. The example does provide grammatical support with the construction "*have a **shower***". I did not find additional support.

Example 82, *a **shower** of sparks*, illustrates the fourth sense of **shower**, which is defined as "a lot of small things that fall through the air together". I did not mark this phrase as providing contextual support, although it is not necessary as the definition is clear. The grammatical support that I noted was the collocation "***shower** of*", and I did not find additional information.

Example 83, *a history **textbook***, is used to illustrate the noun **textbook**. The definition is: "a book about a subject which students use". This phrase does provide contextual support, as learners will know that "*history*" is a subject, and "*book*" shows that a **textbook** is a kind of book. I did not find grammatical or additional support. This entry directs learners to the Thesaurus box at the entry for "book". I have not noted this in the additional information column as it is not part of the example.

*Pollution in the river poses a **threat** to fish*, example 84, illustrates the second sense of the noun **threat**, which is defined as "something that may cause damage or harm". I said that this sentence does provide contextual support, as pollution is a negative thing, and in a river it would be a danger to the fish. This sentence also provides grammatical support in the form of the collocations "***threat** to*" and "*pose a **threat***". I noted conservation as a theme in the Additional Support column.

Example 85, *the **threat** of famine*, illustrates the third sense of **threat**. The definition is "the possibility that something bad will happen". This phrase provides contextual support in the same way that example 21 above, *the **threat** of drought*, does: famine is "something bad", so **threat** can be seen to introduce something undesirable. The grammatical support is also the same, the collocation "***threat** of*".

*Illegal hunting **threatens** the survival of the white rhino*, example 86, illustrates the second sense of the verb **threaten**, which is defined as "to be likely to harm or destroy something". The definition is simple, and the example provides contextual support, because the learner will understand that "hunting" is a danger to the "survival of the white rhino". I did not find grammatical support, but I did mark conservation as a theme in the Additional Support column.

Example 87, *dark clouds that **threatened** rain*, illustrates the third sense of **threaten**. The definition is "to seem likely to happen". This example does provide contextual support, as dark clouds are usually an indication of rain. I did not find grammatical or additional support in this phrase.

Both of the sentences illustrating **threaten** show that the verb is used transitively.

Summary of examples from *Longman South African School Dictionary*

The 40 examples taken from Longman's include 26 sentences and fourteen phrases. There are twenty nouns, sixteen verbs and four adjectives. Fifteen of the examples use words in their inflected form and 25 of the headwords are uninflected in the examples. I found contextual support in 23 examples, and grammatical support in thirteen examples. It is interesting to note the relatively low proportion of examples that provide grammatical support (32%) in this selection. Seventeen of the examples provide some form of additional support.

The Longman dictionary uses a defining vocabulary of 2000 words in the definitions, and this is clear when comparing definitions to SAOSD and SAOSSD above.

Based on the data on these examples, my evaluation of the dictionary is that the examples are helpful, with most of them providing contextual support. However, very few of these examples provide grammatical support. This dictionary would benefit from including more

sentences, and improving the addressing equivalence, as discussed in Chapter 2. This will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

The *Oxford Afrikaans–Engels English–Afrikaans Skoolwoordeboek*

The following examples come from the English side of the *Oxford Afrikaans–Engels English–Afrikaans Skoolwoordeboek*, hereinafter known as the Tweetalige. In a bilingual dictionary the examples are supporting the lemma and the translation equivalent, not the definition. As only the examples on the English–Afrikaans side of the dictionary are being discussed, it should be noted that these examples would be used for text reception for Afrikaans users: learners who are reading an English text and wanting to find the Afrikaans equivalent, and text production for English users: learners who are writing an Afrikaans text and need an Afrikaans equivalent for an English word. Therefore, it should be noted that this research does not look at examples containing the translation equivalent, but rather the lemma in the source language. The translation of these examples and their target language require a separate study.

Example 88, *Would you like a slice of **cake**?* illustrates the noun **cake**. I marked this sentence as providing contextual information as "*slice of*" suggests something that can be cut into slices and eaten. I also marked this example as providing grammatical support with "*slice of **cake***". There is no additional support.

*Can you **calculate** what it will cost to put on a play?* Example 89 illustrates the verb **calculate**. This sentence provides contextual support with the phrase "*cost to …*" as it suggests working out an amount. I did not find grammatical or additional support in this example.

Example 90, *There is no wind, so the sea is **calm** tonight*, is used to illustrate the adjective **calm**. This sentence provides contextual support with the explanation that "*there is no wind*" and the learner will see that if there was wind, the sea would not be **calm**. I did not find grammatical or additional support.

Example 91, *Try to stay **calm** until help arrives* is the second example for **calm**. I marked this sentence as providing contextual support because one can assume that the subject of the sentence is not **calm** if they are expecting help. I noted grammatical support in the collocation

"*stay **calm***", and marked that this sentence is an instruction. It is useful to note that the two examples for **calm** show two different agents: the sea, as an inanimate agent and a person as a human agent can both be **calm**.

*The accountant is good with **figures***, example 92, is used to illustrate the first sense of the noun **figure**. This sentence provides contextual support, because an accountant is typically good with numbers, so if the learner did not know the meaning of **figure**, they would be able to deduce that it is a synonym for "number". I did not find grammatical support or additional information in this example.

Example 93, *She has a good **figure***, is used to illustrate the second sense of **figure**. This is the same sentence as used in Example 60 in the Longman dictionary. The sentence does not provide grammatical support, as **figure** could be replaced by almost any noun: "*She has a good dog"*, for example. The user could be expected to be an English speaker looking for an Afrikaans equivalent, so the example is primarily there to make sure that the learner is using the correct example, in which case it does provide sufficient support. The learner is not able to replace **figure** with "number" in this sentence. I did not find grammatical support, and marked the sentence as providing gender information.

Example 94, *I saw a **figure** by the window* illustrates the same sense of **figure**. Again, without knowing the meaning of **figure**, one could replace it with any noun, so I have said that this sentence does not provide contextual support. It also does not provide grammatical or additional support.

Example 95, ***Figure** 1 is a section through the skin*, is the third example for the second sense of **figure**. It is showing typical use of **figure** as a label or caption. I have said that it does provide contextual support, as it could only be replaced with a similar noun: Picture 1, Illustration 1. I did not find grammatical or additional support. All three examples illustrating the second sense of **figure** are used in their uninflected form.

Example 96, *I can't **figure** this out!* is illustrating the verb **figure**. This example does provide contextual support, as one could replace **figure** with "work". This sentence also provides grammatical support with the collocation "***figure** out*".

*What is the **height** of that tree?* Example 97 illustrates the noun **height**. This does not provide contextual support, since **height** could be replaced by "name", "age", as well as similar measurement words like "girth". It does provide grammatical support with the collocation "***height** of*".

Example 98, *Are you afraid of **heights**?* is the second sentence that illustrates **height**. This sentence is similar to examples 29, *I don't like **heights***, and 67, *She'd always been scared of **heights***, in that it does not provide any contextual support. Grammatical support is provided by ***heights***, as in examples 29 and 67. I did not find additional support.

Example 99, *February is in the **height** of summer*, illustrates the second sense of the noun **height**. This sentence does provide contextual support, because in South Africa, February is in the middle of summer so the learner can see that **height** is to mean something like "middle" or "peak". The example also provides grammatical support with the collocation "***height** of*". I did not mark this sentence as providing additional information, although it can be argued that it is marking location: February is only the height of summer in the southern hemisphere. However, being an English–Afrikaans dictionary, it is assumed that the users are in South Africa.

Example 100, *South Africa is in the southern **hemisphere*** confirms the previous paragraph. It is used to illustrate the noun **hemisphere**. I found that the example does provide contextual support, as the learner will know where South Africa is. I did not find grammatical support, but I did mark it as providing additional support with location.

*I will **keep** this magazine in case I want to read it again later*, example 101, illustrates the first sense of the verb **keep**. I found that it did provide contextual support, because the sentence explains why "I" will keep the magazine, and thus what the **keeping** entails. There is no grammatical or additional support.

Example 102, *Where do you **keep** the tea?* is used to illustrate the same sense of **keep**. It is a similar sentence to example 74 in Longman above (*Where do you **keep** the sugar?*), which is marked as not providing contextual support. It is possible, but unlikely for one to say "Where do you buy / drink / use the tea?" I have not marked the sentence as providing grammatical support or additional support.

Example 103, *The police helped to **keep** the peace during the march*, also illustrates the first sense of **keep**. This sentence can be said to contain contextual support because keeping the peace is one of the police's functions, and crowds may be expected to not stay peaceful during a march. "***Keep** the peace*" is a common construction using **keep**, so I have marked this sense as providing grammatical support. I have also marked the sentence as providing additional support, with the theme crime, although that may be a tenuous link.

Example 104, ***Keep** quiet!* illustrates the second sense of the verb **keep**. It does not provide actual contextual support, although it is a common instruction that learners are likely to have heard many times before. I have marked it as being an instruction in the Additional Support column.

*She **kept** playing although she had a sore leg*, example 105, is used to illustrate the third sense of **keep**. "*Playing*" suggests continuation, and "*although she had a sore leg*" means that it is notable that she kept playing. Therefore I have marked this sentence as providing contextual support. I did not indicate grammatical support, and I marked this sentence as containing gender.

Example 106, *He was **omitted** from the team because he wasn't fit* illustrates the verb **omit**. This sentence does contain contextual support because one can only replace **omitted** with a similar word or phrase such as "left out", "excluded". I also noted grammatical support in the form of "***omit** from*". This sentence also contains gender.

It is interesting to compare the two examples above in terms of gender: *she* kept playing despite her injury and *he* was not fit enough to be included in the team. These are isolated examples, and I have not included enough examples in my sample to make a valid generalisation, but this would be a useful statistic to look at: is *she* always strong and fit and brave, and is *he* always unfit and incompetent?

Example 107, *I prefer a **shower** to a bath* illustrates the first sense of the noun **shower**. This sentence does provide contextual support because the learner will know what a bath is, and if they do not know what a **shower** is, they will be able to deduce the meaning from the context. I did not find grammatical or additional support.

Example 108, *All the **showers** in the hostel were occupied*, illustrates the same sense of **shower**. This example provides contextual support by referring to "*hostel*" and "*occupied*", and there are not many things in a hostel that could be occupied; only areas that a person could go into. I did not find grammatical or additional support in this example. Neither "*hostel*" nor "*occupied*" is in the defining vocabulary, so this example may give users some trouble.

*The weather office predicts scattered **showers***, example 109, illustrates the second sense of **shower**. This sentence does provide a contextual clue, in that the "*weather office*" is most likely to predict the weather, which can include rain, in the form of "*scattered **showers***", sun, snow, and so on. "*Scattered showers*" is a common collocation for **shower**, so I have indicated that this sentence does provide grammatical support.

Example 110, *The judge listened to the **testimony** of the witness at the trial* is used to illustrate the noun **testimony**. Contextual support is provided by words in the legal or courtroom lexical set, such as "*judge*", "*witness*", "*trial*". I did not find grammatical or additional support.

Example 111, *We are using a new **textbook** for Geography* this year illustrates the noun **textbook**. Contextual support is given because Geography is a school subject, and a learner can see that a **textbook** is a book used for that subject. I did not find grammatical or additional support.

*A **thermometer** measures temperature* is example 112. This sentence is used to illustrate the noun **thermometer**. This example is in the form of a definition, which is a useful strategy for example sentences, especially in bilingual dictionaries where definitions are not provided in either language. I did not mark this sentence as providing grammatical or additional support.

Example 113, *We took her **threat** seriously* illustrates the first sense of the noun **threat**. I marked this as providing contextual support, since the meaning is narrowed down by "*seriously*" – one is most likely to only take communication, such as an offer, **threat**, or warning seriously. I did not find grammatical support of the headword in this example, but it does contain the construction "*take… seriously*", which although does not include the

headword **threat**, is a useful construction for the user. I marked this sentence as containing gender.

Example 114, *The **threat** of war hurts the economy*, is used to illustrate the second sense of **threat**. I noted that this sentence does contain contextual support, as war is likely to hurt the economy, and so the suggestion that war is imminent is also going to hurt the economy. The collocation "***threat** of*" provides grammatical support, and I marked this sentence as containing additional support in the economic theme.

*She **threatened** to call the police if he didn't leave her alone*, example 115, illustrates the first sense of the verb **threaten**. This sentence provides contextual support because **threaten** can only be replaced by a near synonym, such as "warned". Grammatical support is provided in the form of the collocation "***threatened** to*", and I have noted gender and crime in the Additional Support column.

Example 116, *They were **threatened** with a gun* is used to illustrate the same sense of **threaten**. I marked this sentence as providing contextual support, because to **threaten** suggests an imminent danger, and a gun is dangerous. I found grammatical support in the collocation "***threaten** with*" as well as "*were **threatened***". I marked this sentence as containing crime.

Example 117, *The weather is **threatening** to get worse* illustrates the second sense of **threaten**. As with the other weather examples used with **threaten** (examples 46 and 87), this does indicate that the weather will get worse, so a context has been provided. The collocation "***threatening** to*" is grammatical support and I did not find additional support.

Example 118, *The drought is **threatening** our crops* is also used to illustrate the second sense of **threaten**. Again, the learner is likely to know that a drought will be a danger to the crops, so can work out that **threaten** is introducing a danger. There is no grammatical support or additional information.

Summary of examples in the Tweetalige

The Tweetalige contains 31 examples, all of which are sentences. While not containing as many entries as the monolingual dictionaries, each sense is exemplified. One example is a

definition and 24 provide contextual support. Thirteen examples provide grammatical support. Ten examples show the headword in its inflected form, while 21 are in their simple form. I found ten sentences that provide additional support.

My evaluation of the dictionary based on the analysis of these examples, is a positive one, because a high proportion of the examples provide contextual support. However, very few of them provide grammatical support, which is vital for a text production dictionary. This dictionary would benefit from more grammatical support. This evaluation is supported by the graphs that are discussed in Chapter 4.

The *Pharos Aanleerderswoordeboek vir skole / Learner's Dictionary for Schools*
The following examples come from the English–Afrikaans side of the *Pharos Aanleerderswoordeboek vir skole / Learner's Dictionary for Schools*.

Example 119, *His mother baked him a **cake** for his birthday*, illustrates the first sense of the noun **cake**. I noted that this example provides contextual support with the words "*baked*" and "*birthday*". A **cake** is something that is baked, and to have a cake for one's birthday is a familiar concept. The grammatical support I found in this example is the collocation "*bake … a **cake***", and I noted that it contains gender, with both "*his*" and "*mother*". It also provides cultural support with the notion of a birthday cake.

Example 120, "*Susan, please bring me a new **cake** of soap to the bathroom"*, illustrates the second sense of **cake**. This example also provides contextual support with "*soap*" and "*bathroom*", although "*bathroom*" is providing a context for "*soap*" more than **cake**. "***Cake***" could only really be replaced by "piece", so I have marked this sentence as providing contextual support. The grammatical support that the example provides is "*a **cake** of*" – which may clear up any confusion caused by "*soap*" being a non-count noun, and **cake** being a count noun. The sentence contains gender information, with a name, Susan, which is an English girl's name. I have also noted that it is an instruction, although it is more specifically a request. The sentence is direct speech.

*There was a day of **calm** after the wind had dropped*, example 121, illustrates the noun **calm**. Contextual support is provided by the phrase "*after the wind had dropped*" which suggests that a day of **calm** is different to a day of wind. The grammatical support that I noted is "(*a*

day) *of* ***calm***" which shows that calm is a non-count noun. I did not find additional support in this example.

Example 122, "*John, I know you're cross with Joe, but stay* ***calm****; don't fight with him"* illustrates the first sense of the adjective **calm**. There is contextual support in this sentence, provided by "*cross*" and "*don't fight*". These clues suggest that staying **calm** is different to fighting. The grammatical support is the collocation "*stay* ***calm***". I noted that this sentence is an instruction, and provides gender information with "*him*" and the two boys' names, John and Joe. This sentence is contained within quotation marks, which shows that it is direct speech. This is not necessarily useful on its own, but it may be useful to compile statistics of data like this. This example is also notable by its length, which is something that is not analysed in this study, but will be mentioned in Chapter 4.

Example 123, *After the storm the sea became* ***calm*** *again*, is used to illustrate the same sense of **calm**. Contextual support is provided by the phrase "*after the storm*", suggesting that a **calm** state is different to a stormy state. I did not find grammatical support or additional support in this example.

It is useful to note that the first example used to illustrate this sense of **calm** refers to people being **calm**, and the second example refers to the sea being **calm**.

It is ***calm*** *today, but it was quite windy yesterday*, example 124, illustrates the second sense of the adjective **calm**. Here, similar support to example 123 is given: the sentence compares **calm** to "*windy*". I did not find grammatical or additional support. As a user of this dictionary, I do not think enough support has been given to show me which translation equivalent to use between the first sense, which is translated as "kalm" and the second sense, translated as "stil".

Example 125, *She has a beautiful* ***figure*** *and lovely long legs*, illustrates the first sense of the noun **figure**. The "*lovely long legs*" suggest **figure** has something to do with a body, and "*she*" shows that a woman's body can be described as a **figure**. I did not find grammatical support, but I did mark the example as providing gender information.

Example 126, *The headmaster is an important **figure** in a small village*, is used to illustrate the same sense of **figure**. Here, contextual support is provided in the sentence, as "*headmaster*" shows that a **figure** is a person, and in this case, a man. There is no grammatical support, and I marked the example as containing gender information.

Example 127, "*I can't make out this **figure**. Is it a 1 or a 7?"* illustrates the second sense of the noun **figure**. The contextual support clearly shows the user that this **figure** is a number. I did not find grammatical support, and noted direct speech as additional support. What is notable about this example is that it is made up of two sentences. The second sentence is valuable because it provides the contextual support, that would otherwise be missing from this example. It could be reduced to one sentence with "*Is this **figure** a 1 or a 7?*" if necessary.

*The **height** of Table Mountain is 1113 metres*, example 128, illustrates the first sense of the noun **height**. The context provided is "*metres*" so one can see that **height** involves measurement. The sentence is also providing context with "*Table Mountain*" as a mountain that can be measured. Grammatical support is provided by the collocation "***height** of*" and I have marked this sentence as providing a location.

Example 129, *Because of his **height** he has to stoop when he enters the door*, is used to illustrate the second sense of **height**. This sentence provides contextual support with "*stoop*" – only a tall person with a remarkable **height** would need to stoop. I did not find grammatical support, but I did mark this sentence as containing gender.

These two sentences are useful to compare, as they clearly show the difference between the two senses of **height**. The first sense uses **height** as something to be measured, while the second uses **height** to mean notably tall. The word "*stoop*" in this example is not in the defining vocabulary, so it may give learners trouble if they do not understand the meaning.

Example 130, *It gets very hot here in the **height** of summer*, illustrates the third sense of **height**. Here, contextual support is provided by "*very hot*" and "*summer*" so one can work out that **height** is sometime during summer, or at the peak of summer. Grammatical support is provided by the collocation "***height** of*". I did not find additional support.

*"Don't give away all the apples - **keep** some for us."* example 131, is used to illustrate the first sense of the verb **keep**. This sentence provides contextual support with the first clause, which suggests that to **keep** something is different or opposite to giving it away. I did not find grammatical support, but I marked the sentence as being an instruction in the Additional Support column. It is also marked as direct speech.

Example 132, *I **keep** my bicycle in the garage*, illustrates the same sense of **keep**. Contextual support in this sentence is provided by "*bicycle*" and "*garage*", as a garage is a place to store or **keep** a bicycle. I did not find grammatical or additional support in this sentence.

Example 133, "*I won't eat up all my sweets now but **keep** a few for tomorrow"* illustrates the second sense of **keep**. Again, the first clause of the sentence provides a context for **keep**: in that **keep** must mean something different to "*eat now*". I did not find grammatical support in this sentence, and marked it as being direct speech in the Additional Support column.

As with **calm** above, a user may have difficulty using these sentences to work out the difference in the two senses, translated as "hou" and "aanhou" respectively, especially since the "apples" sentence and the "sweet" sentence are quite similar: instead of giving away, or eating something now, they will be **kept**, either "*for us*", or "*for tomorrow*".

*"Can you **keep** a secret?"* example 134, is used to illustrate the third sense of **keep**. This sentence provides contextual support with the word "*secret*" and the lexical set surrounding secrets: they can only be told, shared, or **kept**, and as the sentence is in the form of a question, one can guess what the speaker wants to know. Grammatical support is provided by the collocation "***keep** a secret*". The sentence is direct speech, which I noted in the Additional Support column.

Example 135, *If you want to **keep** a monkey, you first have to tame it* illustrates the fourth sense of **keep**. Contextual support is provided in this sentence, by suggesting that you need to tame a monkey before you have it as a pet. Unfortunately, "*tame*" is not in the defining vocabulary that I have used, so learners may not be familiar enough with it to use it as a clue. There is no grammatical or additional support in this sentence.

Example 136, *My uncle has a farm and **keeps** mainly cattle* is used to illustrate the fifth sense of **keep**. This sentence does provide contextual support, because it tells the user what the farmer farms. I did not find grammatical support, but I did indicate that the sentence contains gender with "*uncle*". Comparing examples 135 and 136 in English, a user could think that these meanings of **keep** were the same, as they both refer to owning animals, although they are translated as "aanhou" and "boer met" respectively.

*We sat close to the fire to **keep** warm*, example 137, illustrates the sixth sense of **keep**. Contextual support is provided because the user will know that fire provides warmth, so one will either get warm or stay warm by sitting "*close to the fire*". I did not find grammatical or additional support in this sentence.

Example 138, "*Be quick; don't **keep** me waiting!"* illustrates the seventh sense of **keep**. This sentence provides contextual support with the first clause: the user will see that "***keep** me waiting*" is different or opposite to being quick. I did not find grammatical support, but indicated that this example is an instruction in the Additional Support column, and it is direct speech.

Example 139, *"Put the meat in the fridge, otherwise it won't **keep**."* is used to illustrate the eighth sense of **keep**. The first clause provides contextual support: if meat is not put in the fridge, it will go bad, so "*won't **keep***" means the same as "will go bad". I did not find grammatical support, and I indicated that this sentence is an instruction, and direct speech in the Additional Support column.

The ten sentences used to illustrate **keep** show that the verb can be used transitively (***keep** me waiting*, ***keep** a monkey*) or intransitively (*won't **keep***).

*Owls **prey** on mice and other small animals*, example 140, is used to illustrate the verb **prey**, which follows the noun in this dictionary. The sentence does provide contextual support, because the learner is likely to know that owls hunt and eat "*mice and other small animals*". Grammatical support is provided with the collocation "***prey** on*" and I did not find additional information in the example.

Example 141, *We were caught in a **shower** of rain*, illustrates the first sense of the noun **shower**. This example does provide contextual support because "*we were caught*" suggests that the rain was unexpected, and a "***shower** of rain*" is a short period of rain, which may be less predictable than an extended period of rain. The grammatical support provided by this sentence is the collocation "***shower** of*".

Example 142, *The neighbours have a bath, **shower** and toilet in their bathroom*, illustrates the second sense of **shower**. This sentence provides contextual support with the words "*bath, toilet, bathroom*" as a **shower** is a common fixture in a bathroom, along with a bath and a toilet. I did not find grammatical or additional support in this example.

*"Class, please turn to page 56 of the **textbook**"*, example 143, illustrates the noun **textbook**. This example provides contextual support with the word "*Class*" used as a form of address, so the user will know that it is a teacher talking, in class, about a particular subject, and "*page 56*" shows that a **textbook** is a book. I did not find grammatical support, but I did indicate that this sentence is an instruction, and is direct speech.

Example 144, *A **thermometer** measures temperature* illustrates and defines the noun **thermometer**. This sentence does not provide grammatical or additional support.

Example 145, *Most animals run away when danger **threatens***, illustrates the first sense of the verb **threaten,** which is translated as *dreig*. This example does provide contextual support, because the user will know that "*animals run away when danger*" is near, or approaches. The grammatical support that I marked for this sentence is that **threaten** can be used intransitively. I did not find additional support.

Example 146, *The robber **threatened** the shopkeeper with a gun* illustrates the same sense of **threaten**. Contextual support is provided by "*robber*" and "*with a gun*" – as both of those elements would be threatening to a shopkeeper. Grammatical support is provided by the construction "***threaten** … with*" and the learner can see that threaten can also be used transitively. The translated sentence shows that in this case, **threatened** is translated as *het gedreig*.

Summary of examples from Pharos

Pharos has illustrated eleven of the 24 words with 28 examples. As with the Tweetalige, all the examples are sentences. I found all of them to contain contextual support and eleven to contain grammatical support. Only three examples contain an inflected form of the headword, while 25 examples contain the headword in its simple form. This is in agreement with the policy mentioned in the Preface of the dictionary, which states that the first example of a sense will contain the simple form of the headword, and only subsequent examples for a sense may contain inflections.

These sentences are generally longer than the examples found in other dictionaries: the lexicographers appear to have compromised space for clarity. This compromise is discussed further in Chapter 4. Sixteen of the sentences contain some form of additional support. A feature of the Pharos examples that I have not found in the other dictionaries, is the use of quotation marks indicating direct speech. I cannot see why they are being used, unless it is to specifically show a spoken rather than written text.

My evaluation of the dictionary based on the analysis of these examples, is that the examples consistently provide contextual support, although very few of them provide grammatical support, which is vital for a text production dictionary. The clear contextual support may be at the expense of space, and clarity. This dictionary would benefit from more grammatical support, and simpler, shorter sentences where possible. This evaluation is supported by the graphs that are discussed in Chapter 4.

In a total of 146 examples from all five dictionaries, 114 (78%) are sentences and 32 are phrases. Three (2%) are definitions, or in the one case, part of the definition; 98 (76%) provide contextual support, 63 (43%) provide grammatical support and 60 (41%) provide additional information of some sort. These figures will be interpreted in Chapter 4.

3.2 Results of learner questionnaires

As part of my research, I gave learners at two different schools questionnaires on example sentences. There were four questionnaires, each presenting the questions differently, or using different headwords for the entries. In each case, headwords were used that the learners may have come across, but were unlikely to know or use themselves.

The first introductory question in all the questionnaires asked was what dictionary the learner used: of the 18 respondents from School A, only three did not have one. When asked which dictionaries the other learners used, most of them used an Oxford dictionary – but their titles were often confusing, so I could not tell exactly which dictionaries were being used. There were school dictionaries accessible in each classroom. The final introductory question was whether the dictionary had example sentences or not. Six learners said their dictionary did have examples, six learners said "sometimes", three said that their dictionary did not have examples, and one did not answer. The learners did not have their dictionaries with them, so they could not check the answer if they were unsure. I also used this question to see if they knew what example sentences were.

When asked what dictionaries the School B learners used, all forty of them had a dictionary, and Oxford, Longman, Collins, Chambers all came up. When asked whether their dictionaries contained example sentences, 24 said they did, one said it did not, six said they did not know and nine did not answer the question.

What follows is a discussion of the questions in the questionnaires and a summary of the results. The actual questionnaires can be found in Appendix E.

Questionnaire 1

The first questionnaire gave three dictionary entries, with a headword, definition, and example sentence each. The first word, **obscure**, had an example sentence that almost defined the word: *He **obscured** the painting by hiding it behind a curtain*. The second word, **predicament**, had an example sentence that provided a context: *I was in a **predicament** when I lost my wallet and had to borrow money*. The third word, **recalcitrant**, had an example sentence with no contextual support: *My brother is **recalcitrant***.

All the definitions were checked against the defining vocabulary and although "disobedient", the definition for recalcitrant was not in the defining vocabulary, I felt it would be easily understood by this group of learners.

Each entry had a question asking whether the learner knew the word before and questions on the learner's understanding of the word, the definition, and the example sentence, and asked

learners to use the word in a sentence of their own. This was followed by questions asking learners if they could tell the difference between the sentences (whether they could see that the sentences were different) and general questions about example sentences.

The learners did not seem able to tell the difference between the examples: this is either because they did not understand the question, or they could not see any differences. They treated the three examples the same.

When asked which example sentence helped the learners to understand the word, one learner responded that they all helped because she thought that they were "difficult words, so the example sentences help us to know or understand more". When asked to describe the uses of examples, they said they were "to help people understand the word better". One learner said that they "allow you to see the words in everyday language". Another said that examples "help you to understand a word better and be able to use it correctly and in context".

When asked whether the example sentence helped the learners to understand the words better, an overwhelming majority said yes (37 "yes", compared to four "no", and one "sort of").

The learners were asked to provide their own example sentences for each of the words, which enabled me to see whether they showed an understanding of the word. Some of the learners copied the examples provided, or used them as templates, others did not understand the question, and explained the headword, but some sentences did show a genuine understanding of the word, and could give a compiler a better idea of how the examples are used and understood.

Questionnaire 2

The second questionnaire followed the same format as the first one, but had different words. **Absurd**'s and **euphoria**'s example sentences both gave contextual clues: *His suit made of plastic was an **absurd** outfit to wear to the party* and *I felt such **euphoria** when I found out I'd won the scholarship*. There were no clues in the sentence for **pensive:** *My brother looks **pensive***. I also asked whether the learners knew the words before seeing them here, and asked if they understood the definitions and the example sentences.

The School A learners did not know these words: one learner knew **absurd** before seeing it in the questionnaire, and one "sort of" knew it, and one learner "sort of" knew **pensive** before seeing it here, but after reading the entries provided most of the learners exhibited an understanding of all three words with their own example sentences. The sentences for **pensive,** which gave the least information in the example, showed the least understanding of the word. The example, however, may have no bearing on their understanding of the word, since the definition, *thoughtful*, is easy to understand and to use in a sentence.

Exactly half of the School B learners knew the three words, with most knowing **absurd**, and very few knowing **pensive** before encountering them in this questionnaire. The example sentences helped in 33 cases, and did not (or not really) help nine learners. The sentences that they wrote showed that they understood the meanings of the words in most cases, and were able to use them themselves.

When asked whether the learners could see any differences between the sentences, one learner's response was, "some are more detailed, making it easier to interpret meaning". When I asked them to explain why any was more helpful, a learner answered, "**Euphoria**, because by using the word 'won' it shows that the person must have felt happy". Another learner said the sentence for **absurd** was more helpful, because "from the details you could interpret the meaning. I can see that a suit made of plastic would be silly, and therefore absurd must be a synonym for silly".

Questionnaire 3

The third questionnaire gave the learners three dictionary entries: one with only a definition: **pang**; **hanker** with an example sentence; and **rancid** with both. The definition for **pang** is: "a sudden strong and painful feeling". The example for **hanker** is: *I **hankered** for a puppy when I lived in a flat*. **Rancid** is defined as "smelling or tasting bad because it's stale or off" and the example is *Please take the **rancid** butter out of the fridge – it stinks!*

The **pang** definition is clear and simple and would be understandable by the learners, but it does not say that it is a very specific kind of pain – such as the pain one feels with a hunger **pang**, or a **pang** of guilt. One will not feel a **pang** when one stubs one's toe. Many of the learners' examples are evidence of this missing information, as all of their sentences use **pang** as a synonym for pain.

Most of the learner sentences provided for **hanker** are all grammatically and semantically correct, which shows that the learners either knew the word before, or the sentence was clear and helpful enough. In the category table, I would mark it as containing contextual support, and grammatical support with the collocation ***hankered*** *for*. Some of them did, however, use **hanker** transitively, as in "I **hankered** my parents for a fish …"

The learners all used **rancid** correctly in their sentences.

To summarise, for the word with both a definition and an example, the learners could write a sentence that showed that they understood the word. For the entry with only a definition, very few learners used the word correctly in a sentence, and for the entry with only an example, some of the learners who used the word correctly modelled it on the example – so perhaps did not understand the meaning of the word.

The learners were then given the first two words again, with both a definition and an example, and asked whether they found the entry more helpful when it had a definition, example, or both. They all answered both. "It was easier when it had both because I could understand it and see it in context." "It helped me to understand and use the word more."

Questionnaire 4

Here, I gave three entries again, one with a definition, **hone**, **avid** with an example, and **rancid** with both, and asked which the learners found easier to understand.

The verb **hone** is defined as "to improve a skill by practising it". The example for the adjective **avid** is *I'm an* ***avid*** *reader and I'll read any book I find!* The adjective **rancid** has the same entry as questionnaire 3.

Only two of the twelve learners knew **hone** before seeing it in the questionnaire, and most of them seemed to understand the meaning, but they did not use it correctly in a sentence. An example of a grammatically incorrect sentence is "I **hone** chemistry".
Most of the learners also did not know **avid** before seeing it here, and did not use it correctly in a sentence, other than those who used the example as a template.

Most learners used **rancid** correctly, given the information provided.

For the entry with only a definition, the learners said that they understood the definition, but very few used the word correctly in a sentence. For the entry with only an example, most of the learners who used the word correctly modelled it on the example, so perhaps did not understand the meaning of the word, although most of them said that they did understand what the word meant. When the entry contained both a definition and an example, the learners were more imaginative with their sentences, and did not just model the example provided. Most of them used the word correctly in a sentence.

Again, most of the learners preferred the entry with both a definition and an example. "It helped when it had a definition and an example sentence. It helped me to understand better."

While this survey was intended as a pilot study and by no means comprehensive, it certainly helped to show how learners respond to dictionary entries with examples and different types of examples. I am able to see what was missing from these questionnaires, and how better to phrase certain questions so that the learners understand them better. Another study based on this one, with a greater sample size, would be beneficial to the study of example sentences.

It is useful to see that learners who did not know a particular word could use it competently in a sentence after getting a definition and a useful example sentence.
The questionnaires all look at only the semantic support that the examples give – there is nothing about grammatical support. When discussing example sentences, the learners seemed to only think about the contextual support, which may be as a result of me leading them in that direction, or it may be because that is all they think example sentences provide.

Discussion

I discussed inflections with the School A class: I gave them two example sentences for the verb **fish,** and asked them which sentence they would prefer in their dictionaries.

They all preferred the sentence that used an inflected form of **fish** (**fishing**). This would be worth studying in more detail, because the word I used was a very simple word that they all knew and could easily use, and would be unlikely to look up in a dictionary. We also do not know what the learners mean by "preferred". By examining inflections in the questionnaire

format, the learners would be less likely to be influenced by their peers. I would also choose words, as I did for the questionnaires, that were slightly beyond their comprehension level.

3.3 Table of categories

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
	SAOSD												
1	a **cake** of soap	n		1			1	1	cake of	1			
2	Her speech was **calculated** to stir the crowd.	v	1			1		1	calculated to		1	1	gender
3	It is important to stay **calm** in an emergency.	adj	1			1		1	stay calm	1			
4	the stone **figure** of an elephant	n		1		1				1			
5	Can you **figure** out what it will cost?	v	1			1		1	figure out	1			
6	at the **height** of the holiday season	n		1			1	1	height of	1			
7	the southern and northern **hemispheres**	n		1		1					1		
8	**keep** still; **keep** it hot	v		1			1	1	transitive / intransitive	1		1	instruction
9	She **keeps** laughing.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
10	**keep** a promise	v		1			1			1			
11	**keep** a diary	v		1			1			1			
12	She earns her **keep**.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
13	Defeats are **offset** by successes.	v	1			1				1			
14	**omit** to close the door.	v		1			1	1	omit to	1			
15	The **prevailing** wind is from the south-west.	v	1			1		1	prevailing wind		1		
16	good sense **prevailed**.	v		1			1				1		
17	The problem **preyed** on his mind.	v	1			1		1	preyed on		1	1	figurative; gender
18	a **probe** into corruption at the highest level.	n		1			1	1	probe into	1		1	figurative; crime
19	a **shower** of stones	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
20	Exercise can have a **therapeutic** effect.	adj	1			1		1	therapeutic effect	1			
21	the **threat** of drought	n		1		1		1	threat of	1			
22	High crime rates **threaten** the stability of the country.	v	1			1		1	transitive	1		1	crime
		22	**10**	**12**		**13**	**9**	**14**		**16**	**6**	**7**	
	SAOSSD												
23	fish **cakes**	n		1			1				1		
24	a **cake** of soap	n		1			1	1	cake of	1			
25	There are a lot but it's difficult to put a **figure** on it.	n	1			1				1			
26	Rose has a slim **figure**.	n	1			1				1		1	gender, name
27	She is an important **figure** in twentieth-century history.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
28	What **height** are we flying at?	n	1			1		1	height … at	1			
29	I don't like **heights**.	n	1				1	1	heights		1		
30	the **height** of folly.	n		1			1	1	height of	1			

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
31	the Northern and Southern **hemisphere, the** Eastern **hemisphere,** the Western **hemisphere**	n		1	1					1			
32	She **kept** quiet about it.	v	1				1				1	1	gender
33	**Keep** still please.	v	1				1			1		1	instruction
34	I'll **keep** it hot for you.	v	1				1			1			
35	You can **keep** the change.	v	1			1				1			
36	She's **kept** the letter all these years.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
37	The strap **keeps** breaking.	v	1			1					1		
38	**Keep** straight on.	v	1				1			1		1	instruction
39	She earns her **keep**.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
40	He **omitted** my name from the list.	v	1				1	1	omit ... from		1	1	gender
41	The problem **preyed** on his mind.	v	1			1		1	prey on		1	1	figurative; gender
42	a **shower** of stones	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
43	a **shower** of letters	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
44	There's a **threat** of rain.	n	1				1	1	threat of	1			
45	Technology was seen as a **threat** to people's jobs.	n	1			1		1	threat to	1			
46	The clouds **threatened** rain.	v	1			1					1		
47	Costs are **threatening** to rise.	v	1				1	1	threatening to		1	1	figurative: personification
		25	**19**	**6**	**1**	**11**	**13**	**11**		**16**	**9**	**10**	
	Longman	**S**											
48	a birthday **cake**	n		1			1			1		1	cultural
49	fish **cakes**	n		1			1				1		
50	Scientists have **calculated** that temperatures could rise by five degrees in the next 100 years.	v	1			1		1	calculate that		1	1	conservation
51	The bombing was **calculated** to cause as much damage as possible.	v	1				1	1	calculate to		1	1	crime
52	The captain asked the passengers to stay **calm**.	adj	1			1				1			
53	The city is **calm** again.	adj	1				1			1			
54	The ocean was **calm**.	adj	1				1			1			
55	**calm** weather	adj		1			1			1			
56	the **calm** of the evening	n		1			1			1			
57	the **figure** 8	n		1		1				1			
58	The latest crime **figures** show a drop of 2%.	n	1			1					1	1	crime
59	one of the most important **figures** in South African history	n		1			1				1	1	location
60	She had a good **figure**.	n	1				1			1		1	gender
61	I could see a dark **figure** in the distance.	n	1				1			1			

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
62	a six-sided **figure**	n		1		1				1			
63	I **figured** it was time to leave.	v	1			1					1		
64	Marriage didn't really **figure** in their plans.	v	1			1				1			
65	He was of medium **height**.	n	1			1		1	of … height	1		1	gender
66	The aircraft was flying at a **height** of 10,000 metres.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
67	She'd always been scared of **heights**.	n	1				1	1	heights		1	1	gender
68	At the **height** of the tourist season, all the hotels are full.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
69	the southern **hemisphere**	n		1		1				1			
70	the left **hemisphere** of the brain	n		1		1				1			
71	You can **keep** the book. I don't need it.	v	1			1				1			
72	**Keep** calm and call the doctor immediately.	v	1			1				1		1	instruction
73	Food prices **keep** on rising.	v	1			1		1	keep on	1		1	economics
74	Where do you **keep** the sugar?	v	1				1			1			
75	They're **keeping** her in hospital until tomorrow.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
76	She **kept** her word and paid back the money.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
77	His name was **omitted** from the list.	v	1				1	1	omit from		1	1	gender
78	She **omitted** to tell me that she was married.	v	1				1	1	omit to		1	1	gender
79	the attitudes that **prevailed** in the 1960s	v		1		1					1		
80	Justice **prevailed** in the end.	v	1				1				1	1	crime
81	Do you want to have a **shower**?	n	1				1	1	have a shower	1			
82	a **shower** of sparks	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
83	a history **textbook**	n		1		1				1			
84	Pollution in the river poses a **threat** to fish.	n	1			1		1	pose a threat, threat to	1		1	conservation
85	the **threat** of famine	n		1		1		1	threat of	1			
86	Illegal hunting **threatens** the survival of the white rhino.	v	1			1					1	1	conservation
87	dark clouds that **threatened** rain	v		1		1					1		
		40	**26**	**14**		**23**	**17**	**13**		**25**	**15**	**17**	
	Tweetalige												
88	Would you like a slice of **cake**?	n	1			1		1	slice of cake	1			
89	Can you **calculate** what it will cost to put on a play?	v	1			1				1			

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
90	There is no wind, so the sea is **calm** tonight.	adj	1			1				1			
91	Try to stay **calm** until help arrives.	adj	1			1		1	stay calm	1		1	instruction
92	The accountant is good with **figures**.	n	1			1					1		
93	She has a good **figure**.	n	1				1			1		1	gender
94	I saw a **figure** by the window.	n	1				1			1			
95	Figure 1 is a section through the skin.	n	1			1				1			
96	I can't **figure** this out!	v	1			1		1	figure out	1			
97	What is the **height** of that tree?	n	1				1	1	height of	1			
98	Are you afraid of **heights**?	n	1				1	1	heights		1		
99	February is in the **height** of summer.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
100	South Africa is in the southern **hemisphere**.	n	1			1				1		1	location
101	I will **keep** this magazine in case I want to read it again later.	v	1			1				1			
102	Where do you **keep** the tea?	v	1				1			1			
103	The police helped to **keep** the peace during the march.	v	1			1		1	keep the peace	1			
104	Keep quiet!	v	1				1			1		1	instruction
105	She **kept** playing although she had a sore leg.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
106	He was **omitted** from the team because he wasn't fit.	v	1			1		1	omit from		1	1	gender
107	I prefer a **shower** to a bath.	n	1			1				1			
108	All the **showers** in the hostel were occupied.	n	1			1					1		
109	The weather office predicts scattered **showers.**	n	1			1		1	scattered showers		1		
110	The judge listened to the **testimony** of the witness at the trial.	n	1			1				1			
111	We are using a new **textbook** for Geography this year.	n	1			1				1			
112	A **thermometer** measures temperatures.	n	1		1					1			
113	We took her **threat** seriously.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
114	The **threat** of war hurts the economy.	n	1			1		1	threat of	1		1	economics
115	She **threatened** to call the police if he didn't leave her alone.	v	1			1		1	threaten to		1	1	gender; crime
116	They were **threatened** with a gun.	v	1			1		1	threaten with, were threatened		1	1	crime

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
117	The weather is **threatening** to get worse.	v	1			1		1	threaten to		1		
118	The drought is **threatening** our crops.	v	1			1					1		
		31	**31**		**1**	**24**	**6**	**13**		**21**	**10**	**10**	
	Pharos												
119	His mother baked him a **cake** for his birthday.	n	1			1		1	bake a cake	1		1	cultural; gender
120	"Susan, please bring me a new **cake** of soap to the bathroom."	n	1			1		1	a cake of	1		1	gender; name; instruction; direct speech
121	There was a day of **calm** after the wind had dropped.	n	1			1		1	day of calm	1			
122	"John, I know you're cross with Joe, but stay **calm**; don't fight with him."	adj	1			1		1	stay calm	1		1	gender; names; instruction; direct speech
123	After the storm the sea became **calm** again.	adj	1			1				1			
124	It is **calm** today, but it was quite windy yesterday.	adj	1			1				1			
125	She has a beautiful **figure** and lovely long legs.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
126	The headmaster is an important **figure** in a small village.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
127	"I can't make out this **figure.** Is it a 1 or a 7?"	n	1			1				1		1	direct speech
128	The **height** of Table Mountain is 1113 metres.	n	1			1		1	height of	1		1	location
129	Because of his **height** he has to stoop when he enters the door.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
130	It gets very hot here in the **height** of summer.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
131	"Don't give away all the apples - **keep** some for us."	v	1			1				1		1	instruction
132	I **keep** my bicycle in the garage.	v	1			1				1			
133	"I won't eat up all my sweets now but **keep** a few for tomorrow."	v	1			1				1		1	direct speech
134	"Can you **keep** a secret?"	v	1			1		1	keep a secret	1		1	direct speech
135	If you want to **keep** a monkey, you first have to tame it.	v	1			1				1			
136	My uncle has a farm and **keeps** mainly cattle.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
137	We sat close to the fire to **keep** warm.	v	1			1				1			

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
138	"Be quick; don't **keep** me waiting!"	v	1			1				1		1	instruction; direct speech
139	"Put the meat in the fridge, otherwise it won't **keep**."	v	1			1				1		1	instruction; direct speech
140	Owls **prey** on mice and other small animals.	v	1			1		1	prey on	1			
141	We were caught in a **shower** of rain.	n	1			1		1	shower of	1			
142	The neighbours have a bath, **shower** and toilet in their bathroom.	n	1			1				1			
143	"Class, please turn to page 56 of the **textbook**."	n	1			1				1		1	instruction; direct speech
144	A **thermometer** measures temperature.	n	1		1					1			
145	Most animals run away when danger **threatens**.	v	1			1		1	intransitive		1		
146	The robber **threatened** the shopkeeper with a gun.	v	1			1		1	threaten with; transitive		1	1	crime
		28	**28**		**1**	**27**		**11**		**25**	**3**	**16**	
	Total	**146**	**114**	**32**	**3**	**98**	**45**	**62**		**103**	**43**	**60**	
			78%	22%	2%	67%	31%	43%		71%	29%	41%	

Chapter 4: Interpretation of the data

In this chapter I examine the category table and the analysis; different graphs and tables related to the category table; the description of the dictionaries; and the results from the learner questionnaires. I extract and discuss data and statistics from all of these sources and interpret them – both in terms of what support is being provided by examples in these dictionaries, as well as in terms of what learners need, based on the questionnaires.

4.1 Category table

4.1.1 Sentences and phrases

The category table has revealed some useful information about the illustrative examples used in the dictionaries in this study. Simple statistics, such as the percentage of example sentences (78%) as opposed to example phrases (22%), show that dictionary compilers tend towards using example sentences in school dictionaries. This has been supported by policies in the style guides of the dictionaries: that there is a preference towards using sentences rather than phrases, despite phrases taking up less space in the dictionary. The only dictionary that has a higher number of phrases than sentences is the SAOSD, with just over half (55%) of the examples being phrases.

The following information can be seen clearly in Category Table 2 (Appendix A), in which differences between sentences and phrases are highlighted. Sentence information is highlighted in blue and phrase information is highlighted in pink. This table also shows the examples where no support is given, highlighted in red for phrases and purple for sentences. The Tweetalige and Pharos have no highlighting, as they both only contain sentences, so there is no need to compare sentences and phrases.

In SAOSD, the phrases correspond with the “no context” column: of the twelve phrases, nine provide no contextual support. All nine that provide no contextual support are phrases. All ten sentences do provide contextual support.

If the example phrases are not providing contextual support, are they providing grammatical support? In most cases they are, as only three example phrases do not provide grammatical support. Of those three, none provide additional support. Of the ten sentences, seven provide

grammatical support. The Additional Support column is populated by five sentences and two phrases.

In SAOSSD, six examples are phrases, five of which provide no contextual support. Of the nineteen sentences, eleven (58%) provide contextual support. The phrases provide grammatical support in four cases, while the sentences provide grammatical support in seven examples. All ten instances of additional support are found in example sentences, not phrases.

The Longman dictionary contains 26 sentences and fourteen phrases. Of the fourteen phrases, eight provide contextual support while six do not. Of the sentences, fifteen provide contextual support and twelve do not. This is not as noticeable a disparity as in the two Oxford dictionaries.

Of the thirteen cases where grammatical support is provided, eleven are sentences and only two are phrases. There are only two cases where additional support is provided by an example phrase. The other fifteen cases of additional support are found in the sentences.

Across the three monolingual dictionaries, one can see that phrases are less useful than sentences. Of the 55 sentences found in the monolingual dictionaries, only five (9%) provided no support at all. One of them, example 74, in Longman, for the headword **keep**, is discussed in Chapter 3 as providing support by being compared to the other examples for **keep**. The same could be argued for examples 53, 54 and 61 – they are all one of a number of examples for one sense (**figure** and **calm**). The only example sentence in SAOSSD that does not provide any support is example 34, which is also for the headword **keep**.

Of the 32 phrases, six (19%) do not provide any support. It could be argued that all of these phrases provide support of some sort, since they are distinguishing between different senses, or showing different uses of the same sense of a word.

In the two bilingual dictionaries, there are only sentences, so one cannot compare between sentences and phrases. Since sentence structures differ between languages, it is important that bilingual dictionaries do contain sentences, as a learner may be unable to create a whole meaningful and grammatically correct sentence based on a phrase.

This data supports the conclusion that example phrases are less useful at providing support than example sentences, and my recommendation is that unless there is a good reason for using a phrase in a particular instance, that a sentence is used instead. In agreement with this, Williams, quoted in Xu (2006:156) says that example phrases are "abstract and unnatural".

One can also refer back to the literature in Chapter 2 where Svensén describes "dead" examples as phrases that can be used as templates or models by the learner. This may be a valid alternative to example phrases, but the dictionary user needs to be told how to use this model phrase. Based on Svensén's suggestion of using a live example followed by a dead one, one could replace example 6, *at the **height** of the holiday season* with the sentence *Hotels are full at the **height** of the holiday season* followed by the phrase … *the **height** of*.… This would need to be a convention consistently applied to the dictionary, and explained in the front matter.

4.1.2 Contextual support

The contextual support section in the table divides examples into those that provide support for the definition with a context, and those that do not. I have also included a Definition column which is populated by three examples: two of which provide a definition as the example, such as example 144 *A **thermometer** measures temperature*. The other example in this column is example 31, where the actual definition contains example phrases. Because there was such a low incidence of these defining examples, I did not examine them further. For statistical purposes I added the three examples in the Definition column to the contextual support figures. Using a definition as an example is not as useful in a monolingual dictionary as there is already a definition, hopefully a clear and comprehensive definition, and a defining example sentence may only confuse the user. The definition/example such as the one used in example 31 may be used effectively in dictionaries, as this one is.

In the Pharos dictionary every example is found to contain contextual support (or a definition), while in the other four dictionaries, there is a lower incidence of contextual support.

My main aim for looking for contextual support in the examples is if a learner does not understand the definition, will the example help? An example of how this has worked in this study is example 13, *Defeats are **offset** by successes*. The first part of the definition is a non-

defining vocabulary word and the second part of the definition could be misinterpreted, but the example clearly shows what **offset** means and how it is used.

This support is especially valid in South African schools, where learners may not have the language skills and fluency for a monolingual dictionary aimed at first language English speakers. Their dictionaries need to give as much support as necessary. This is confirmed by the literature on the functions of examples as discussed in Chapter 2. It is important that dictionary makers select sentences that do provide contextual support, even when such support is not seen as necessary for simple words. Dictionary compilers also need to be made aware of typical school situations: that a school in which each learner has their own grade-specific dictionary is not the norm in South Africa.

Part of making a definition clear and comprehensive is the use of a defining vocabulary. In order to confirm whether examples need to provide contextual support, I used a defining vocabulary to check definitions to make sure that they are understandable to the user. A defining vocabulary is described in the *Oxford Guide to Practical Lexicography* (Atkins and Rundell 2008:449) as "a finite list of high-frequency words (typically the most frequent 2,000 to 3,000 words in the language) which the learner is expected to 'know' sufficiently well to be able to understand any definition in the dictionary". Of the three monolingual dictionaries, the Longman uses a defining vocabulary of 2 000 words, while neither of the Oxford dictionaries uses one.

In SAOSD there are nine definitions that contain words that are not in the defining vocabulary that I checked. These are marked NDV in the definitions column in Category table 2 (Appendix A). Of those ten, six correspond with examples that provide contextual support. This support is useful as the example then plays a bigger role in supporting a definition that the learner may not understand. The four examples that do not provide contextual support and belong to a definition that contains non-defining vocabulary words may make the entry inaccessible to some learners. The four examples are for the noun **height**, the verb **keep**, the second sense of the verb **prevail**, and the noun **probe**. The definitions of **keep** are supported by four example sentences, which may not provide contextual support on their own, but do provide support when they are used by the learner to differentiate between the different senses.

In SAOSSD there are two definitions that contain words that are not in the defining vocabulary. One of these, example 32, is one of three examples for the first sense of **keep**. Again, the six senses of **keep** are illustrated by seven examples so the learner is given a lot of support for this word. It is interesting to see that the dictionary aimed at older learners has more simple definitions. This could simply be due to their dates of publication: SAOSD was first published in 1996, while SAOSSD was first published in 2006: that is ten years of developing and refining dictionary policies between the two school dictionaries.

4.1.3 Grammatical support

Grammatical support is another purpose of example sentences that the literature in Chapter 2 focuses on, specifically for the text production function of a dictionary.

The grammatical support that I was looking for was guidance in writing a sentence using vocabulary (the headword) that the learner may not be familiar with, and grammar that may be different to the learner's home language, if it is not English. Most of the instances I found provided common collocations for the headword, for example, *What is the **height** of that tree? He was **omitted** from the team …* which show us **height of** and **omit from**. Out of 146 sentences examined 55 (38%) provide this type of grammatical support. It is difficult to draw conclusions and say whether this is significant, because many of the headwords do not need grammatical support of this kind.

The types of grammatical mistakes that learners could make, for example, are incorrect collocations, incorrect use of a plural, using a transitive verb intransitively. For example, a learner could see from example 40, *He **omitted** my name from the list* that ***omit** from* is the correct collocation to use, not ***omit** on*. An example of an incorrect plural use is prevented with example 67, *She had always been scared of **heights.*** The learner can see not to write … *scared of a **height*** or *the **height***.

Collocations are defined by Hartmann and James (1998:22) as "the semantic compatibility of grammatically adjacent words" and they are important because "collocability is difficult for foreign-language learners" and a dictionary that caters to non first language speakers needs to include them as much as possible.

I have also looked at whether the example shows that verbs can be used transitively or intransitively. This is difficult to quantify because an example cannot show how a word cannot be used. I have indicated transitive/intransitive use where there are two or more examples for the same sense of a verb, and where the examples show different uses. An example of this is found in examples 145 and 146: *Most animals run away when danger* ***threatens*** and *The robber* ***threatened*** *the shopkeeper with a gun* show that **threaten** can be used transitively and intransitively. Both examples also have different inflections of the word **threaten**. These sentences also show that different agents can **threaten**, and different agents can be **threatened**, as well as the fact that something intangible, like danger, can **threaten**, and that animals can be **threatened**, while the second sentence shows that a person can **threaten** another person with something.

4.1.4 Simple or inflected forms of the headword

The table of categories in Chapter 3 also shows whether the lemma is inflected in the illustrative example. Out of the 146 examples, 103 (71%) of the headwords are uninflected in the example, and 43 (29%) are inflected. In Pharos there is a specific note in the Preface saying that the headword should not be inflected in the first example for each word. "In the first example sentence of each entry the headword is not inflected – only in exceptional circumstances are inflected forms (plural, participles, attributive adjective, etc.) given. This has been done to clear up any difficulties beginners might encounter." The other dictionaries do not seem to have such a policy decision, so it is interesting to note that 71% of examples use the word in its uninflected form. As mentioned in the results of the learner questionnaire, the learners I spoke to in an informal discussion "preferred" the sentence using an inflected form of the headword, but this would need to be studied in greater detail before effectiveness of simple or inflected words is determined. The example needs to be natural and typical use, so it is important to prevent sentences from sounding forced if the inflected (or not inflected, as the case may be) form is not the most natural and typical use of the headword.

4.1.5 Additional support

The Additional Support column shows the different kinds of information that the illustrative examples provide that is not contextual or grammatical. These are elements such as whether gender has been indicated in the sentence; whether the example is an instruction; whether the example makes use of figurative language; whether it makes a cultural reference; whether it mentions a geographic location; crime; and conservation.

It is difficult to quantify this support and say whether it is useful or not, but the Additional Support section in the table of categories is useful to gather data on this. For example, cultural and geographical support can be seen as useful, while other support such as gender, can be used for statistical purposes.

Gender references include anything such as whether "he, she, his" or "her" is used in the sentence, or whether a gender-specific name is used. This table shows that of the thirty examples with references to gender, there are twenty references to "she" or "her" – as in *She **kept** quiet about it.* and only twelve references to "he" or "him" – as in *The problem **preyed** on his mind*. There are two examples that refer to both genders: *His mother baked him a **cake** for his birthday*. There are some sentences, for example, for the word **figure** that can only be about women – *She has a good **figure***, *Rose has a slim **figure***. On the other hand, when **height** is about a person, we have *He was of medium **height***, *Because of his **height***…, which only contain references to men, although there is not a semantic reason for this. Again, the sample size is too small to come to conclusions about gender inclusion in these dictionaries, although it would be an interesting study to find out the gender balance in a specific dictionary.

I have also noted where gender-specific names are used. In these examples we have Rose, Susan, John and Joe – all of which mark gender and give an indication of language. The use of gender-specific titles would also be noted, should they occur, but in this study there were no examples that used Mr, Mrs, Miss or Ms.

Names also give an indication of language as Rose, Susan, John and Joe are all English first names. This may be an excluding feature in a dictionary. Dictionary compilers need to be aware that a South African dictionary needs to include South African names.

Most of the gender references are neutral and no quality or stereotype is assigned, for example, *She **kept** quiet about it.* There is no way of knowing, just from the sentence, whether it is a noble thing that she kept quiet about it, or whether it is suspicious. It would, however, be worthwhile to check that attitudes such as the one discussed in the chapter describing the category table, examples 105 and 106 in the Tweetalige dictionary are not reinforced throughout the dictionary. These examples tell us that *she **kept** playing despite her*

sore leg while *he was **omitted** from the team for not being fit*. The same dictionary tells us that *we took her **threat** seriously* (example 113). This could lead a reader to wonder if "she" is always brave, determined and to be taken seriously, while "he" is unfit and unreliable. As mentioned before this is too small a sample to make this kind of generalisation about the whole dictionary.

It is interesting to compare this information with a comment in an article by Della Summers, describing the new LDOCE: "examples are often conversational, and women feature as the protagonists in many of them" (Summers 1988:13). This comment suggests that previously women did not feature in examples, which is quite a contrast to this research, where women feature in 67% of the examples.

Herbst (1996:328) also discussed gender references in his comparison of four learner's dictionaries, as can be seen in Chapter 2. His statistics (43% feminine and 57% masculine) are also very different to the statistics found in this thesis. It is good to see that dictionaries are correcting their imbalances, but they may be going too far to correct them.

Bogaards (1996:299) mentions that "cultural references could be profitable" to learners, which is why I noted cultural references in the table of categories. Culture has been noted twice in the Additional Support column, both in reference to a birthday cake. Having a cake for one's birthday is a cultural concept, one that would be known by South African learners. This serves to make it a familiar concept to use in an example that would be familiar to learners.

Crime and conservation are currently topical, and perhaps more applicable to South African dictionaries. They would not have been noted had they not appeared more than once, so I felt it was worth commenting on these topics.

Crime has been mentioned six times in this sample. In most cases, these instances were for the word **threaten** – which suggests normal usage – **threaten** often does suggest violence or the use of weapons. Crime has also been found under **figure**: *The latest crime **figures** show…* would be a familiar phrase to South African learners. It would be a concern in a school dictionary if crime were used gratuitously where other themes could be used to exemplify headwords as effectively.

Conservation has been mentioned three times in this study – referring to temperatures rising, pollution and rhino hunting. These issues could be topical and thus included by the dictionary compliers, or they could be included because learners will be familiar with them, and they are sentences which may be common in news broadcasts or school textbooks.

I have marked location in this column to show where a particular place has been named. In the four cases indicated, the places have been South Africa and Table Mountain. Mentioning South Africa in a South African dictionary allows the learners to relate to the sentence, and therefore to the dictionary, where using another country in the same sentence may create distance: learners who read the sentence, *Australia is in the southern* ***hemisphere*** are less likely to make the connection between the word **hemisphere** and its meaning, if they do not know where Australia is, or that it is a country.

However, the other location mentioned is Table Mountain, which is in the Western Cape. If a learner is in another province and only comes across Western Cape examples, they are less likely to relate to the sentence. Lexicographers need to ensure that they do not just include locations that are familiar to them and that they need to be aware of their whole market and include other locations.

Economics is another theme that has featured twice in this table. One would need to make sure that the concepts used in this theme are understood by the age group that the dictionary is intended for, as economics could be too advanced for learners. The two examples in this study are about food prices, and the threat of war, both of which are likely to be understood by the dictionary users.

Another interesting result found in the Additional Support column is the use of figurative examples. In the 146 examples, four instances of figurative use of a word have been marked, for example *The problem* ***preyed*** *on his mind*. It is important to note that all of these instances are in the monolingual dictionaries. Figurative speech is very difficult to translate and for new users of a language to understand, so it makes sense to not use it in example sentences in a bilingual dictionary. However, figurative speech is a very important part of a language, and many native speakers use figurative language without being aware that they are doing so. It is therefore something that needs to be considered when compiling a dictionary for reception, as

the user may need to look up a term that they have come across and the literal meaning may not help them to understand the figurative meaning.

It would be particularly useful for a dictionary to contain one sentence with the lemma used in a literal sense and one with the lemma used in a common figurative sense. Again, space constraints would probably not allow two illustrative examples for words with both uses, unless the entry was split to include them as different senses. An interesting example is the verb **prey**. In SAOSD it is given one sense, with both the literal and figurative meanings. The example shows the word in its figurative use. In SAOSSD **prey** has two senses, and again, only the figurative sense is illustrated.

Another trend that I noted in the Additional Support column is that nine examples in the Pharos dictionary are in quotation marks, signalling direct speech. There is no apparent reason for this. Six of these examples are instructions as well, but there are examples that are instructions that are not in quotation marks, so being an instruction is not a prerequisite for the direct speech. Seven of the direct speech examples contain contractions, such as “don’t” and “won’t”, which marks them as spoken language rather than written language, but there are also examples in quotation marks that do not contain contractions, so direct speech is not contingent on contractions.

The information found in the Additional Support section is also what makes an example, and therefore a dictionary, engaging to a learner. If a learner consulting a dictionary finds the examples interesting and varied, they are more likely to respond to the dictionary positively.

4.1.6 Category Table 3

I used the third version of the category table (see Appendix B) to find how many examples provide support in more than one area. The orange highlighting shows the examples that provide contextual, grammatical and additional support. There are three examples (14%) in SAOSD, one (4%) in SAOSSD, four (10%) in Longman, five, (16%) in the Tweetalige and six (21%) in Pharos that provide support in all three areas.

As mentioned above, one must be aware when interpreting these results that support in the Additional Support column may not be valuable as actual support in the dictionary.

The purple highlighting shows the examples that provide contextual and grammatical support. SAOSD has four examples (18%), SAOSSD has two examples (8%), Longman has two examples (5%), Tweetalige has six examples (19%) and Pharos has five (18%).

The green highlighting shows examples that provide grammatical and additional support. There are two each in SAOSD (9% and 8% respectively) and four (10%) in Longman, while the two bilingual dictionaries have no examples that provide both grammatical and additional support, and not contextual support.

The yellow highlighting shows examples that provide contextual and additional support. SAOSD has two examples (9%), SAOSSD and Longman have three examples each (12% and 10% respectively), Tweetalige has four examples (13%) and Pharos has ten (36%).

These statistics may not be useful on their own, as the numbers in this sample are too small, but added together, one can see what proportion of each dictionary provides support in more than one area. Fifty percent of SAOSD examples provide support in more than one area, 32% of SAOSSD, 35% of Longman, 45% of Tweetalige and an impressive 75% of Pharos fulfil these criteria.

This method can be used to analyse all the examples in one dictionary to find out which examples can be improved.

One can compare these figures with the figures provided by Category Table 2 (Appendix A) which show that three examples in SAOSD, two examples in SAOSSD and Tweetalige and six examples in Longman provide no support. There are no examples that provide no support in Pharos.

The Pharos dictionary performs well in all the categories showing that it provides the most support out of all the dictionaries. It is clear that the examples were chosen or written with this in mind. However, it must be noted that this is offset by the space that these supportive sentences take up. Without doing a word count comparison of the dictionaries, one can see that the Pharos examples are longer than the other dictionaries. Many of the Pharos examples contain two clauses or phrases, or even sentences, making them more complicated, and less accessible to learners of English (who do not speak Afrikaans). As mentioned in Chapter 2,

dictionary compilers need to be aware of any extra "noise" or distraction in the examples. An example of a sentence that provides too much noise is example 122: *"John, I know you're cross with Joe, but stay **calm**; don't fight with him."* This sentence is marked as providing contextual support, grammatical support and additional support. A sentence that provides just as much support, but takes less space and includes less distracting noise, is *"John, stay **calm** and don't fight with Joe"*. This is an eight word sentence instead of a fourteen word sentence, and still provides contextual support with *don't fight* and *stay **calm***. Grammatical support is provided by the same collocation, *stay **calm***, the headword is still uninflected, and the Additional Support column would still include gender, names, instruction, and direct speech, as in the original Pharos example.

This shows that an example can remain natural (or even be more natural) while still providing as much contextual, grammatical and additional support as a more cumbersome sentence.

4.1.7 Graphs

I have created five graphs to compare data found in the category table and the dictionaries. These can be seen in Appendix D.

Graph 1 shows the number of headwords treated (out of a possible 24); number of senses treated; number of examples. The difference in the shapes of the monolingual and bilingual graphs is very clear: monolinguals have more senses treated, while the bilingual dictionaries have more examples than senses. This supports the functions of each dictionary: that the monolingual dictionaries provide more headwords and senses, so that learners are more likely to find what they are looking for, while the bilingual dictionaries provide more support for the entries, so that users are able to produce text using the information in the dictionary. This graph also shows that while SAOSSD and Longman have the same number of senses treated, Longman contains more examples. This data provides useful information about the spread of text in the dictionaries and the addressing equivalence.

Graph 2 shows all the sections in the category table: number of examples, sentences versus phrases, whether the example contains contextual support, grammatical support and additional support. This graph helps to see the data clearly, so one can compare the amounts in each column easily and compare the dictionaries. One can clearly see the relatively low

columns of support in SAOSD and SAOSSD, and the higher columns in the other dictionaries. The contextual support columns are particularly high in the two bilingual dictionaries. The grammatical support column is over half the height of the total number of examples in SAOSD, while the other dictionaries have a relatively low column for grammatical support – all the others are less than half of the total number of examples.

The same data is represented in Graph 3, with the variables placed on opposite axes, so one can compare different values across the dictionaries. Here, one can see that although Longman has the highest number of examples, the Tweetalige has the highest number of sentences, Pharos provides the most contextual support, SAOSD provides the most grammatical support and Longman provides the most additional support.

If one reduced these quantities to a percentage of examples provided by each dictionary, Graph 4 is the result. One can use this graph to see any values that are remarkably higher or lower than the others.

The pie graph, Graph 5, shows the spread of additional information and how much each category of additional information is represented. This can show a dictionary compiler or researcher whether, for example, crime is mentioned too often in a dictionary.

4.2 Learner questionnaires

The learner questionnaires were valuable as they provided an insight firstly into whether learners notice contextual support, secondly, what they notice, and thirdly, whether they can use the contextual support that is provided by the examples. This was a small study, and to get more accurate and useful results, a more substantial survey needs to be conducted. However, the following interpretations have been made from the findings of this initial study.

From questionnaires 1 and 2, where learners were given three dictionary entries with example sentences, the learners all valued the examples and preferred entries with examples than entries without examples. While not really understanding the differences between the examples, some learners noticed that some examples were more detailed and thus provided more information about the headword. Learners actively used “clues” in the examples to help them work out the meaning of the words. For example, in questionnaire 2 a learner says that

the word “won” in the example shows that **euphoria** means happy. Another word in the questionnaire, **absurd**, was understood by a learner, because “from the details [in the example] you could interpret the meaning”.

From questionnaires 3 and 4, where learners were given three dictionary entries with a definition, an example sentence, or both, learners all preferred the entries with both a definition and an example. Between the entries with a definition and the entries with an example, the learners seemed to understand the headword more, and make more grammatically correct and sensible sentences from the entry with just an example than the entries with just a definition.

4.3 Conclusion

The interpretations in this chapter were made from the findings of the table of categories, other related tables, graphs, lexicographic theory, and the learner questionnaires. The data in these sources has resulted in the conclusions and recommendations that are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In this chapter I present my findings and summarise them. I answer the research question and discuss the hypothesis presented in Chapter 1. Recommendations for future research and future dictionary projects based on this research are provided.

5.1 Outline of thesis

In Chapter 1 I introduced this thesis, and asked the question: What is the role of examples in existing South African school dictionaries and how can they be improved? I presented my hypothesis, and described the methodology I used to answer the research question. The qualitative methodology included a table of categories that I used to compare examples in dictionaries and find patterns and statistics. The methodology also included learner questionnaires given to learners at two Western Cape schools.

Chapter 2 contains the theoretical and practical background to the thesis. I discussed literature concerning illustrative examples, learner's dictionaries, monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, and the school context in South Africa. I introduced the five South African school dictionaries that I would be examining in the thesis.

Chapter 3 contains a practical investigation of the examples in the five school dictionaries with detailed descriptions of the examples in the dictionaries, as they populate the table of categories. Chapter 3 also contains the results of the learner questionnaires.

In Chapter 4 I interpreted the results of the table of categories as well as related tables and graphs which were generated to show patterns in the dictionaries. I interpret the results of the learner questionnaires and discuss the findings from the tables, graphs and questionnaires.

5.2 Research question

With this thesis I set out to find out what the role of examples is in existing South African school dictionaries, and how examples can be improved in order to be more useful to learners.

Using existing literature as a theoretical background to this study, I compared examples from five South African school dictionaries according to different criteria. The criteria I considered were:

- whether the example is a sentence or a phrase, and whether this has an impact on the effectiveness of the example,
- whether the example provides contextual support or not,
- whether the example provides grammatical support or not,
- whether the headword is inflected in the example, and finally,
- whether the example contains additional support.

I also gave questionnaires to learners at a primary school and a high school in the Western Cape, which I used to find out whether learners used examples to help them understand difficult headwords, and whether they could tell if some examples provided more support than others.

5.3 Conclusion to table

The interpretation of the table of categories has revealed a number of patterns and ideas about examples that one would not be able to see just by reading through examples in the dictionaries.

The data supports the conclusion that phrases are less useful at providing support than sentences, and my recommendation is that unless there is a good reason for using a phrase in a particular instance, that a sentence is used instead. A phrase can be used with a sentence, but it is recommended that in school dictionaries, using phrases as the only way of illustrating a sense is avoided.

Another option is to use dead examples as phrases that can be templates or models for a particular grammatical structure that is particular to the headword. This may be a valid alternative to example phrases, but the dictionary user needs to be told how to use dead examples correctly, and the dictionary would need to present them consistently. These dead examples would still need to be used in conjunction with example sentences or live examples.

My intention when looking for contextual support in the examples was to answer the question: if a learner does not understand the definition, would the example help? Contextual support provides a context or a clue to the meaning of the word, and should support the definition. With the majority of South African learners not having English as their home language, but being taught in English, monolingual dictionaries need to provide the kind of support that is required in a learner's dictionary for second language users.

It is thus important that sentences that do provide contextual support are selected, even when such support is not seen as necessary for simple words. A common occurrence in South African schools is that one dictionary is shared by many classes or even grades, so lexicographers need to be aware that a dictionary may be used by a much wider audience than was initially intended.

In terms of grammatical support, the table of categories shows illustrative examples that give guidance in writing a sentence using vocabulary that the learner may not be familiar with, and grammar that may be different to the learner's home language. It is impossible for examples to show all the ways with which a word can be used, and of course an example sentence cannot tell a user how not to use a word. However, if there is a way for the example to support the grammatical information provided by the rest of the dictionary entry, it should be used. Grammatical information that can be illustrated by one or more examples is collocations, transitive and intransitive use and inflections.

The additional support that I found in these examples can be used for statistical purposes, to decide whether a dictionary is balanced with its coverage of gender, location, and attitudes, and whether this coverage is fair and natural. In a previous generation of dictionaries, where masculine pronouns appeared a lot more frequently than feminine ones, gender stereotypes and negative attitudes were reinforced in the examples used. It is reassuring to note that gender coverage is more balanced in these school dictionaries, and I did not find any examples containing negative gender stereotypes. It is also useful to note any culturally sensitive items. Again, I did not find any in these examples.

Using the category table to compare the amount of support provided by the dictionaries, one can see that Pharos provides the most support out of all the dictionaries. It is clear that the examples were chosen or written with this supportive function in mind. However, as

discussed in Chapter 4, this is at the cost of space; the Pharos dictionary also contains the fewest number of examples.

From what I can see in the table, while most examples provide support in some form, they do not seem to have been written or selected to provide the most effective support in the most efficient way. In some examples learners need to wade through long sentences in order to find some sort of support, and in other cases, the examples are so brief that they do not provide any support at all.

A typical South African learner is likely to not have English as a home language, so dictionary entries need to provide as much support as possible to help learners with both text production and text reception. Definitions that used words in a restricted vocabulary are more accessible to learners, but in cases where definitions are not simple and clear, the examples are more important.

While this table shows very valuable patterns and trends, it is important for the lexicographer to bear in mind that the typical dictionary user *consults* the dictionary rather than reading it, and is very unlikely to notice, for example, more instances of women than men in example sentences, unless the difference was significant.

5.4 Conclusion to learner questionnaires

The learner questionnaires were valuable to this study as they provided insights into what learners noticed in the examples provided, and whether the support given was helpful. It could be seen that learners who did not understand the headword actively used contextual support in the examples to discover what the word meant and how to use it. The learner questionnaires have shown that learners do get value out of example sentences, and do use them when consulting a dictionary entry to elucidate meaning.

5.5 Response to hypothesis

My hypothesis was that South African school dictionaries do not follow clear guidelines with regard to examples, and while they ought to provide both syntactic and semantic support, this is not happening in these dictionaries.

This thesis has shown that:

- sentences provide more support than phrases
- contextual support is important for learners who use a monolingual English dictionary when their home language is not English
- grammatical support is especially important in bilingual dictionaries, because although the learner will know the word from the translation equivalent, they need help with the grammatical structure of a language that is different to their home language
- examples need to be engaging and interesting to get learners' attention
- learners do actively look for clues in examples to help understand words they do not know.

5.6 Recommendations for further study

The table of categories can be used in different ways, depending on who is using it. One can populate the table with examples from one dictionary, and find areas where the dictionary is lacking sufficient support for the headwords. One can also use the table to make sure that the examples are balanced – for example, in terms of gender references or location, and that the examples are not weighted to a particular subject matter such as crime.

Another way this table can be used is to compare dictionaries according to different criteria – as I have used it, but with different information in the columns. One can determine whether there is a pattern in the structure of examples: how do they use tenses, are they written actively or passively, are the sentences simple or complex?

One can also use a similar table of categories for whole entries in a dictionary in order to find out what support each entry provides. Other forms of support include artwork, synonyms and antonyms, usage notes, etymology, cross references, and labels. This can be used in conjunction with word frequency data and a defining vocabulary to find out which words do need more support. Words that are frequent and in the defining vocabulary may not need as much support as more difficult, less common words.

The learner questionnaires can be developed and used more comprehensively. While there is much literature on whether dictionary users use and benefit from examples, there is room for research into what learners take from examples, and whether different sentences work better

or not. One could replicate parts of the questionnaires used in this study to find out what learners gain from contextual support, and develop questionnaires further to include sections on grammatical support and additional support. Do learners engage with examples that are interesting and varied? Does this change their attitude about the whole dictionary?

5.7 Recommendations for dictionaries

This research can benefit practical lexicography by giving lexicographers a tool to monitor the example sentences in a particular dictionary – either while planning a new edition, or when starting a new dictionary project. Guidelines can be set out, and checked against the table of categories. Graphs can be generated to confirm that the guidelines or policies are being followed.

Some guidelines from this study that could be used to enhance the quality of dictionaries through the example sentences are:

- use sentences rather than phrases
- include contextual support as a matter of course, as users of monolingual dictionaries may not be mother-tongue speakers of the language of the dictionary
- include grammatical support where possible, especially taking note of collocations, transitive and intransitive use, and inflections
- ensure that examples contain an equal spread of gender references
- ensure that names used reflect the user group
- ensure that there is an even spread of locations throughout the dictionary
- keep the examples interesting and engaging where possible.

5.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, a summary of the thesis has been presented, with recommendations offered for dictionaries. Further research has also been suggested.

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Appendix A: Category table 2

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
	SAOSD												
1	a **cake** of soap	n		1			1	1	cake of	1			
2	Her speech was **calculated** to stir the crowd.	v	1			1		1	calculated to		1	1	gender
3	It is important to stay **calm** in an emergency.	adj	1		NDV	1		1	stay calm	1			
4	the stone **figure** of an elephant	n		1	NDV	1				1			
5	Can you **figure** out what it will cost?	v	1			1		1	figure out	1			
6	at the **height** of the holiday season	n		1	NDV		1	1	height of	1			
7	the southern and northern **hemispheres**	n		1		1					1		
8	**keep** still; **keep** it hot	v		1			1	1	transitive / intransitive	1		1	instruction
9	She **keeps** laughing.	v	1		NDV	1					1	1	gender
10	**keep** a promise	v		1			1			1			
11	**keep** a diary	v		1	NDV		1			1			
12	She earns her **keep**.	n	1		NDV	1				1		1	gender
13	Defeats are **offset** by successes.	v	1		NDV	1				1			
14	**omit** to close the door.	v		1			1	1	omit to	1			
15	The **prevailing** wind is from the south-west.	v	1			1		1	prevailing wind		1		
16	good sense **prevailed**.	v		1	NDV		1				1		
17	The problem **preyed** on his mind.	v	1			1		1	preyed on		1	1	figurative; gender
18	a **probe** into corruption at the highest level.	n		1	NDV		1	1	probe into	1		1	figurative; crime
19	a **shower** of stones	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
20	Exercise can have a **therapeutic** effect.	adj	1			1		1	therapeutic effect	1			
21	the **threat** of drought	n		1	NDV	1		1	threat of	1			
22	High crime rates **threaten** the stability of the country.	v	1			1		1	transitive	1		1	crime
		22	**10**	**12**	**10**	**13**	**9**	**14**		**16**	**6**	**7**	
	SAOSSD												
23	fish **cakes**	n		1			1				1		
24	a **cake** of soap	n		1			1	1	cake of	1			
25	There are a lot but it's difficult to put a **figure** on it.	n	1			1				1			
26	Rose has a slim **figure**.	n	1		NDV	1				1		1	gender, name
27	She is an important **figure** in twentieth-century history.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
28	What **height** are we flying at?	n	1			1		1	height … at	1			
29	I don't like **heights**.	n	1				1	1	heights		1		

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
30	the **height** of folly.	n		1			1	1	height of	1			
31	the Northern and Southern **hemisphere, the** Eastern **hemisphere,** the Western **hemisphere**	n		1	1					1			
32	She **kept** quiet about it.	v	1		NDV		1				1	1	gender
33	**Keep** still please.	v	1				1			1		1	instruction
34	I'll **keep** it hot for you.	v	1				1			1			
35	You can **keep** the change.	v	1			1				1			
36	She's **kept** the letter all these years.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
37	The strap **keeps** breaking.	v	1			1					1		
38	**Keep** straight on.	v	1				1			1		1	instruction
39	She earns her **keep**.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
40	He **omitted** my name from the list.	v	1				1	1	omit ... from		1	1	gender
41	The problem **preyed** on his mind.	v	1			1		1	prey on		1	1	figurative; gender
42	a **shower** of stones	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
43	a **shower** of letters	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
44	There's a **threat** of rain.	n	1				1	1	threat of	1			
45	Technology was seen as a **threat** to people's jobs.	n	1			1		1	threat to	1			
46	The clouds **threatened** rain.	v	1			1					1		
47	Costs are **threatening** to rise.	v	1				1	1	threatening to		1	1	figurative: personification
		25	**19**	**6**	**2**	**11**	**13**	**11**		**16**	**9**	**10**	
	Longman	**S**											
48	a birthday **cake**	n		1			1			1		1	cultural
49	fish **cakes**	n		1			1				1		
50	Scientists have **calculated** that temperatures could rise by five degrees in the next 100 years.	v	1			1		1	calculate that		1	1	conservation
51	The bombing was **calculated** to cause as much damage as possible.	v	1				1	1	calculate to		1	1	crime
52	The captain asked the passengers to stay **calm**.	adj	1			1				1			
53	The city is **calm** again.	adj	1				1			1			
54	The ocean was **calm**.	adj	1				1			1			
55	**calm** weather	adj		1			1			1			
56	the **calm** of the evening	n		1			1			1			
57	the **figure** 8	n		1		1				1			
58	The latest crime **figures** show a drop of 2%.	n	1			1					1	1	crime

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
59	one of the most important **figures** in South African history	n		1			1				1	1	location
60	She had a good **figure**.	n	1				1			1		1	gender
61	I could see a dark **figure** in the distance.	n	1				1			1			
62	a six-sided **figure**	n		1		1				1			
63	I **figured** it was time to leave.	v	1			1					1		
64	Marriage didn't really **figure** in their plans.	v	1			1				1			
65	He was of medium **height**.	n	1			1		1	of … height	1		1	gender
66	The aircraft was flying at a **height** of 10,000 metres.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
67	She'd always been scared of **heights**.	n	1				1	1	heights		1	1	gender
68	At the **height** of the tourist season, all the hotels are full.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
69	the southern **hemisphere**	n		1		1				1			
70	the left **hemisphere** of the brain	n		1		1				1			
71	You can **keep** the book. I don't need it.	v	1			1				1			
72	**Keep** calm and call the doctor immediately.	v	1			1				1		1	instruction
73	Food prices **keep** on rising.	v	1			1		1	keep on	1		1	economics
74	Where do you **keep** the sugar?	v	1				1			1			
75	They're **keeping** her in hospital until tomorrow.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
76	She **kept** her word and paid back the money.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
77	His name was **omitted** from the list.	v	1				1	1	omit from		1	1	gender
78	She **omitted** to tell me that she was married.	v	1				1	1	omit to		1	1	gender
79	the attitudes that **prevailed** in the 1960s	v		1		1					1		
80	Justice **prevailed** in the end.	v	1				1				1	1	crime
81	Do you want to have a **shower**?	n	1				1	1	have a shower	1			
82	a **shower** of sparks	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
83	a history **textbook**	n		1		1				1			
84	Pollution in the river poses a **threat** to fish.	n	1			1		1	pose a threat, threat to	1		1	conservation
85	the **threat** of famine	n		1		1		1	threat of	1			
86	Illegal hunting **threatens** the survival of the white rhino.	v	1			1					1	1	conservation

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
87	dark clouds that **threatened** rain	v		1		1					1		
		40	**26**	**14**		**23**	**17**	**13**		**25**	**15**	**17**	
	Tweetalige												
88	Would you like a slice of **cake**?	n	1			1		1	slice of cake	1			
89	Can you **calculate** what it will cost to put on a play?	v	1			1				1			
90	There is no wind, so the sea is **calm** tonight.	adj	1			1				1			
91	Try to stay **calm** until help arrives.	adj	1			1		1	stay calm	1		1	instruction
92	The accountant is good with **figures**.	n	1			1					1		
93	She has a good **figure**.	n	1				1			1		1	gender
94	I saw a **figure** by the window.	n	1				1			1			
95	**Figure** 1 is a section through the skin.	n	1			1				1			
96	I can't **figure** this out!	v	1			1		1	figure out	1			
97	What is the **height** of that tree?	n	1				1	1	height of	1			
98	Are you afraid of **heights**?	n	1				1	1	heights		1		
99	February is in the **height** of summer.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
100	South Africa is in the southern **hemisphere**.	n	1			1				1		1	location
101	I will **keep** this magazine in case I want to read it again later.	v	1			1				1			
102	Where do you **keep** the tea?	v	1				1			1			
103	The police helped to **keep** the peace during the march.	v	1			1		1	keep the peace	1			
104	**Keep** quiet!	v	1				1			1		1	instruction
105	She **kept** playing although she had a sore leg.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
106	He was **omitted** from the team because he wasn't fit.	v	1			1		1	omit from		1	1	gender
107	I prefer a **shower** to a bath.	n	1			1				1			
108	All the **showers** in the hostel were occupied.	n	1			1					1		
109	The weather office predicts scattered **showers.**	n	1			1		1	scattered showers		1		
110	The judge listened to the **testimony** of the witness at the trial.	n	1			1				1			
111	We are using a new **textbook** for Geography this year.	n	1			1				1			

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
112	A **thermometer** measures temperatures.	n	1		1					1			
113	We took her **threat** seriously.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
114	The **threat** of war hurts the economy.	n	1			1		1	threat of	1		1	economics
115	She **threatened** to call the police if he didn't leave her alone.	v	1			1		1	threaten to		1	1	gender; crime
116	They were **threatened** with a gun.	v	1			1		1	threaten with, were threatened		1	1	crime
117	The weather is **threatening** to get worse.	v	1			1		1	threaten to		1		
118	The drought is **threatening** our crops.	v	1			1					1		
		31	**31**		**1**	**24**	**6**	**14**		**21**	**10**	**10**	
	Pharos												
119	His mother baked him a **cake** for his birthday.	n	1			1		1	bake a cake	1		1	cultural; gender
120	"Susan, please bring me a new **cake** of soap to the bathroom."	n	1			1		1	a cake of	1		1	gender; name; instruction; direct speech
121	There was a day of **calm** after the wind had dropped.	n	1			1		1	day of calm	1			
122	"John, I know you're cross with Joe, but stay **calm**; don't fight with him."	adj	1			1		1	stay calm	1		1	gender; names; instruction; direct speech
123	After the storm the sea became **calm** again.	adj	1			1				1			
124	It is **calm** today, but it was quite windy yesterday.	adj	1			1				1			
125	She has a beautiful **figure** and lovely long legs.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
126	The headmaster is an important **figure** in a small village.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
127	"I can't make out this **figure.** Is it a 1 or a 7?"	n	1			1				1		1	direct speech
128	The **height** of Table Mountain is 1113 metres.	n	1			1		1	height of	1		1	location
129	Because of his **height** he has to stoop when he enters the door.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
130	It gets very hot here in the **height** of summer.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
131	"Don't give away all the apples - **keep** some for us."	v	1			1				1		1	instruction

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
132	I **keep** my bicycle in the garage.	v	1			1				1			
133	"I won't eat up all my sweets now but **keep** a few for tomorrow."	v	1			1				1		1	direct speech
134	"Can you **keep** a secret?"	v	1			1		1	keep a secret	1		1	direct speech
135	If you want to **keep** a monkey, you first have to tame it.	v	1			1				1			
136	My uncle has a farm and **keeps** mainly cattle.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
137	We sat close to the fire to **keep** warm.	v	1			1				1			
138	"Be quick; don't **keep** me waiting!"	v	1			1				1		1	instruction; direct speech
139	"Put the meat in the fridge, otherwise it won't **keep**."	v	1			1				1		1	instruction; direct speech
140	Owls **prey** on mice and other small animals.	v	1			1		1	prey on	1			
141	We were caught in a **shower** of rain.	n	1			1		1	shower of	1			
142	The neighbours have a bath, **shower** and toilet in their bathroom.	n	1			1				1			
143	"Class, please turn to page 56 of the **textbook**."	n	1			1				1		1	instruction; direct speech
144	A **thermometer** measures temperature.	n	1		1					1			
145	Most animals run away when danger **threatens**.	v	1			1		1	intransitive		1		
146	The robber **threatened** the shopkeeper with a gun.	v	1			1		1	threaten with; transitive		1	1	crime
		28	**28**		**1**	**27**		**11**		**25**	**3**	**16**	
	Total	**146**	**114**	**32**	**14**	**98**	**45**	**63**		**103**	**43**	**60**	
			78%	22%	2%	67%	31%	43%		71%	29 %	41%	

Appendix B: Category table 3

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
	SAOSD												
1	a **cake** of soap	n		1			1	1	cake of	1			
2	Her speech was **calculated** to stir the crowd.	v	1			1		1	calculated to		1	1	gender
3	It is important to stay **calm** in an emergency.	adj	1			1		1	stay calm	1			
4	the stone **figure** of an elephant	n		1		1				1			
5	Can you **figure** out what it will cost?	v	1			1		1	figure out	1			
6	at the **height** of the holiday season	n		1			1	1	height of	1			
7	the southern and northern **hemispheres**	n		1		1					1		
8	**keep** still; **keep** it hot	v		1			1	1	transitive / intransitive	1		1	instruction
9	She **keeps** laughing.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
10	**keep** a promise	v		1			1			1			
11	**keep** a diary	v		1			1			1			
12	She earns her **keep**.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
13	Defeats are **offset** by successes.	v	1			1				1			
14	**omit** to close the door.	v		1			1	1	omit to	1			
15	The **prevailing** wind is from the south-west.	v	1			1		1	prevailing wind		1		
16	good sense **prevailed**.	v		1			1				1		
17	The problem **preyed** on his mind.	v	1			1		1	preyed on		1	1	figurative; gender
18	a **probe** into corruption at the highest level.	n		1			1	1	probe into	1		1	figurative; crime
19	a **shower** of stones	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
20	Exercise can have a **therapeutic** effect.	adj	1			1		1	therapeutic effect	1			
21	the **threat** of drought	n		1		1		1	threat of	1			
22	High crime rates **threaten** the stability of the country.	v	1			1		1	transitive	1		1	crime
		22	**10**	**12**		**13**	**9**	**14**		**16**	**6**	**7**	
	SAOSSD												
23	fish **cakes**	n		1			1				1		
24	a **cake** of soap	n		1			1	1	cake of	1			
25	There are a lot but it's difficult to put a **figure** on it.	n	1			1				1			
26	Rose has a slim **figure**.	n	1			1				1		1	gender, name
27	She is an important **figure** in twentieth-century history.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
28	What **height** are we flying at?	n	1			1		1	height … at	1			
29	I don't like **heights**.	n	1				1	1	heights		1		
30	the **height** of folly.	n		1			1	1	height of	1			

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
31	the Northern and Southern **hemisphere, the** Eastern **hemisphere,** the Western **hemisphere**	n		1	1					1			
32	She **kept** quiet about it.	v	1				1				1	1	gender
33	**Keep** still please.	v	1				1			1		1	instruction
34	I'll **keep** it hot for you.	v	1				1			1			
35	You can **keep** the change.	v	1			1				1			
36	She's **kept** the letter all these years.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
37	The strap **keeps** breaking.	v	1			1					1		
38	**Keep** straight on.	v	1				1			1		1	instruction
39	She earns her **keep**.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
40	He **omitted** my name from the list.	v	1				1	1	omit ... from		1	1	gender
41	The problem **preyed** on his mind.	v	1			1		1	prey on		1	1	figurative; gender
42	a **shower** of stones	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
43	a **shower** of letters	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
44	There's a **threat** of rain.	n	1				1	1	threat of	1			
45	Technology was seen as a **threat** to people's jobs.	n	1			1		1	threat to	1			
46	The clouds **threatened** rain.	v	1			1					1		
47	Costs are **threatening** to rise.	v	1				1	1	threatening to		1	1	figurative: personification
		25	**19**	**6**	**1**	**11**	**13**	**11**		**16**	**9**	**10**	
	Longman	**S**											
48	a birthday **cake**	n		1			1			1		1	cultural
49	fish **cakes**	n		1			1				1		
50	Scientists have **calculated** that temperatures could rise by five degrees in the next 100 years.	v	1			1		1	calculate that		1	1	conservation
51	The bombing was **calculated** to cause as much damage as possible.	v	1				1	1	calculate to		1	1	crime
52	The captain asked the passengers to stay **calm**.	adj	1			1				1			
53	The city is **calm** again.	adj	1				1			1			
54	The ocean was **calm**.	adj	1				1			1			
55	**calm** weather	adj		1			1			1			
56	the **calm** of the evening	n		1			1			1			
57	the **figure** 8	n		1		1				1			
58	The latest crime **figures** show a drop of 2%.	n	1			1					1	1	crime
59	one of the most important **figures** in South African history	n		1			1				1	1	location
60	She had a good **figure**.	n	1				1			1		1	gender

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
61	I could see a dark **figure** in the distance.	n	1				1			1			
62	a six-sided **figure**	n		1		1				1			
63	I **figured** it was time to leave.	v	1			1					1		
64	Marriage didn't really **figure** in their plans.	v	1			1				1			
65	He was of medium **height**.	n	1			1		1	of … height	1		1	gender
66	The aircraft was flying at a **height** of 10,000 metres.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
67	She'd always been scared of **heights**.	n	1				1	1	heights		1	1	gender
68	At the **height** of the tourist season, all the hotels are full.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
69	the southern **hemisphere**	n		1		1				1			
70	the left **hemisphere** of the brain	n		1		1				1			
71	You can **keep** the book. I don't need it.	v	1			1				1			
72	**Keep** calm and call the doctor immediately.	v	1			1				1		1	instruction
73	Food prices **keep** on rising.	v	1			1		1	keep on	1		1	economics
74	Where do you **keep** the sugar?	v	1				1			1			
75	They're **keeping** her in hospital until tomorrow.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
76	She **kept** her word and paid back the money.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
77	His name was **omitted** from the list.	v	1				1	1	omit from		1	1	gender
78	She **omitted** to tell me that she was married.	v	1				1	1	omit to		1	1	gender
79	the attitudes that **prevailed** in the 1960s	v		1		1					1		
80	Justice **prevailed** in the end.	v	1				1				1	1	crime
81	Do you want to have a **shower**?	n	1				1	1	have a shower	1			
82	a **shower** of sparks	n		1			1	1	shower of	1			
83	a history **textbook**	n		1		1				1			
84	Pollution in the river poses a **threat** to fish.	n	1			1		1	pose a threat, threat to	1		1	conservation
85	the **threat** of famine	n		1		1		1	threat of	1			
86	Illegal hunting **threatens** the survival of the white rhino.	v	1			1					1	1	conservation
87	dark clouds that **threatened** rain	v		1		1					1		
		40	**26**	**14**		**23**	**17**	**13**		**25**	**15**	**17**	
	Tweetalige												
88	Would you like a slice of **cake**?	n	1			1		1	slice of cake	1			
89	Can you **calculate** what it will cost to put on a play?	v	1			1				1			

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
90	There is no wind, so the sea is **calm** tonight.	adj	1			1				1			
91	Try to stay **calm** until help arrives.	adj	1			1		1	stay calm	1		1	instruction
92	The accountant is good with **figures**.	n	1			1					1		
93	She has a good **figure**.	n	1				1			1		1	gender
94	I saw a **figure** by the window.	n	1				1			1			
95	**Figure** 1 is a section through the skin.	n	1			1				1			
96	I can't **figure** this out!	v	1			1		1	figure out	1			
97	What is the **height** of that tree?	n	1				1	1	height of	1			
98	Are you afraid of **heights**?	n	1				1	1	heights		1		
99	February is in the **height** of summer.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
100	South Africa is in the southern **hemisphere**.	n	1			1				1		1	location
101	I will **keep** this magazine in case I want to read it again later.	v	1			1				1			
102	Where do you **keep** the tea?	v	1				1			1			
103	The police helped to **keep** the peace during the march.	v	1			1		1	keep the peace	1			
104	**Keep** quiet!	v	1				1			1		1	instruction
105	She **kept** playing although she had a sore leg.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
106	He was **omitted** from the team because he wasn't fit.	v	1			1		1	omit from		1	1	gender
107	I prefer a **shower** to a bath.	n	1			1				1			
108	All the **showers** in the hostel were occupied.	n	1			1					1		
109	The weather office predicts scattered **showers.**	n	1			1		1	scattered showers		1		
110	The judge listened to the **testimony** of the witness at the trial.	n	1			1				1			
111	We are using a new **textbook** for Geography this year.	n	1			1				1			
112	A **thermometer** measures temperatures.	n	1		1					1			
113	We took her **threat** seriously.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
114	The **threat** of war hurts the economy.	n	1			1		1	threat of	1		1	economics
115	She **threatened** to call the police if he didn't leave her alone.	v	1			1		1	threaten to		1	1	gender; crime
116	They were **threatened** with a gun.	v	1			1		1	threaten with, were threatened		1	1	crime

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
117	The weather is **threatening** to get worse.	v	1			1		1	threaten to		1		
118	The drought is **threatening** our crops.	v	1			1					1		
		31	**31**		**1**	**24**	**6**	**13**		**21**	**10**	**10**	
	Pharos												
119	His mother baked him a **cake** for his birthday.	n	1			1		1	bake a cake	1		1	cultural; gender
120	"Susan, please bring me a new **cake** of soap to the bathroom."	n	1			1		1	a cake of	1		1	gender; name; instruction; direct speech
121	There was a day of **calm** after the wind had dropped.	n	1			1		1	day of calm	1			
122	"John, I know you're cross with Joe, but stay **calm**; don't fight with him."	adj	1			1		1	stay calm	1		1	gender; names; instruction; direct speech
123	After the storm the sea became **calm** again.	adj	1			1				1			
124	It is **calm** today, but it was quite windy yesterday.	adj	1			1				1			
125	She has a beautiful **figure** and lovely long legs.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
126	The headmaster is an important **figure** in a small village.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
127	"I can't make out this **figure.** Is it a 1 or a 7?"	n	1			1				1		1	direct speech
128	The **height** of Table Mountain is 1113 metres.	n	1			1		1	height of	1		1	location
129	Because of his **height** he has to stoop when he enters the door.	n	1			1				1		1	gender
130	It gets very hot here in the **height** of summer.	n	1			1		1	height of	1			
131	"Don't give away all the apples - **keep** some for us."	v	1			1				1		1	instruction
132	I **keep** my bicycle in the garage.	v	1			1				1			
133	"I won't eat up all my sweets now but **keep** a few for tomorrow."	v	1			1				1		1	direct speech
134	"Can you **keep** a secret?"	v	1			1		1	keep a secret	1		1	direct speech
135	If you want to **keep** a monkey, you first have to tame it.	v	1			1				1			
136	My uncle has a farm and **keeps** mainly cattle.	v	1			1					1	1	gender
137	We sat close to the fire to **keep** warm.	v	1			1				1			

		POS	Sentence	Phrase	Definition	Contextual support	No context	Grammatical support	Comments	Simple	Inflected	Additional support	Comments
138	"Be quick; don't **keep** me waiting!"	v	1			1				1		1	instruction; direct speech
139	"Put the meat in the fridge, otherwise it won't **keep**."	v	1			1				1		1	instruction; direct speech
140	Owls **prey** on mice and other small animals.	v	1			1		1	prey on	1			
141	We were caught in a **shower** of rain.	n	1			1		1	shower of	1			
142	The neighbours have a bath, **shower** and toilet in their bathroom.	n	1			1				1			
143	"Class, please turn to page 56 of the **textbook**."	n	1			1				1		1	instruction; direct speech
144	A **thermometer** measures temperature.	n	1		1					1			
145	Most animals run away when danger **threatens**.	v	1			1		1	intransitive		1		
146	The robber **threatened** the shopkeeper with a gun.	v	1			1		1	threaten … with; transitive		1	1	crime
		28	**28**		**1**	**27**		**11**		**25**	**3**	**16**	
	Total	**146**	**114**	**32**	**3**	**98**	**45**	**62**		**103**	**43**	**60**	
			78%	22%	2%	67%	31%	43%		71 %	29 %	41 %	

Appendix C: Statistics tables

		SAOSD		SAOSSD		Longman		Tweetalige		Pharos	
headword	**POS**	treated	example	treated	example	treated	example	treated	example	treated	example
cake	n	2	1	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
calculate	v	2	1	2	0	2	2	1	1	0	0
calm	n	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
calm	adj	2	1	2	0	4	4	1	2	2	3
calm	v	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
figure	n	4	1	6	3	7	6	2	4	2	3
figure	v	3	1	4	1	2	2	1	1	0	0
height	n	3	1	4	3	4	4	2	3	3	3
hemisphere	n	2	1	2	3	2	2	1	1	0	0
keep	v	5	4	6	7	7	6	3	6	8	9
keep	n	2	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
offset	v	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
omit	v	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	0	0
prevail	v	2	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
prevailing	adj	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
prey (v)	v	1	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	1	1
probe (n)	n	2	1	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
shower	n	3	1	4	2	4	2	2	3	2	2
testimony	n	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
textbook	n	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
therapeutic	adj	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
thermometer	n	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
threat	n	3	1	3	2	3	2	2	2	0	0
threaten	v	2	1	3	2	3	2	2	4	1	2
		46	22	**60**	28	**60**	40	**22**	32	**24**	28
			47%		46%		66%		145%		116%
untreated		2		1		0		9		13	
unexampled			4		11		9		0		0
treated		22		22		24		15		11	

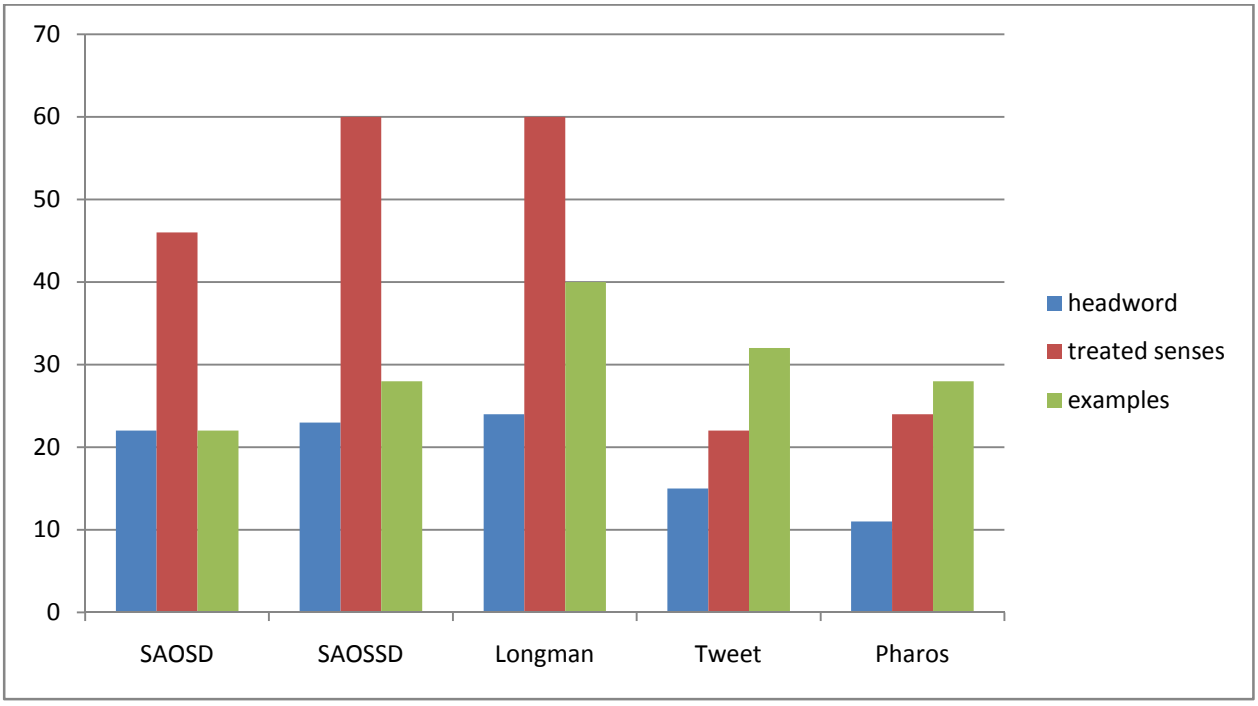
Nouns		SAOSD		SAOSSD		Longman		Tweetalige		Pharos	
cake	n	2	1	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
calm	n	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
figure	n	4	1	6	3	7	6	2	4	2	3
height	n	3	1	4	3	4	4	2	3	3	3
hemisphere	n	2	1	2	3	2	2	1	1	0	0
keep	n	2	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
probe (n)	n	2	1	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
shower	n	3	1	4	2	4	2	2	3	2	2
testimony	n	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
textbook	n	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
thermometer	n	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
threat	n	3	1	3	2	3	2	2	2	0	0
		24	8	34	16	31	20	13	17	12	13
			33%		47%		65%		130%		108%

Verbs		SAOSD		SAOSSD		Longman		Tweetalige		Pharos	
calculate	v	2	1	2	0	2	2	1	1	0	0
calm	v	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
figure	v	3	1	4	1	2	2	1	1	0	0
keep	v	5	4	6	7	7	6	3	6	8	9
offset	v	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
omit	v	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	0	0
prevail	v	2	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
prey (v)	v	1	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	1	1
threaten	v	2	1	3	2	3	2	2	4	1	2
		19	12	23	12	22	16	8	13	10	12
			63%		52%		72%		162%		120%

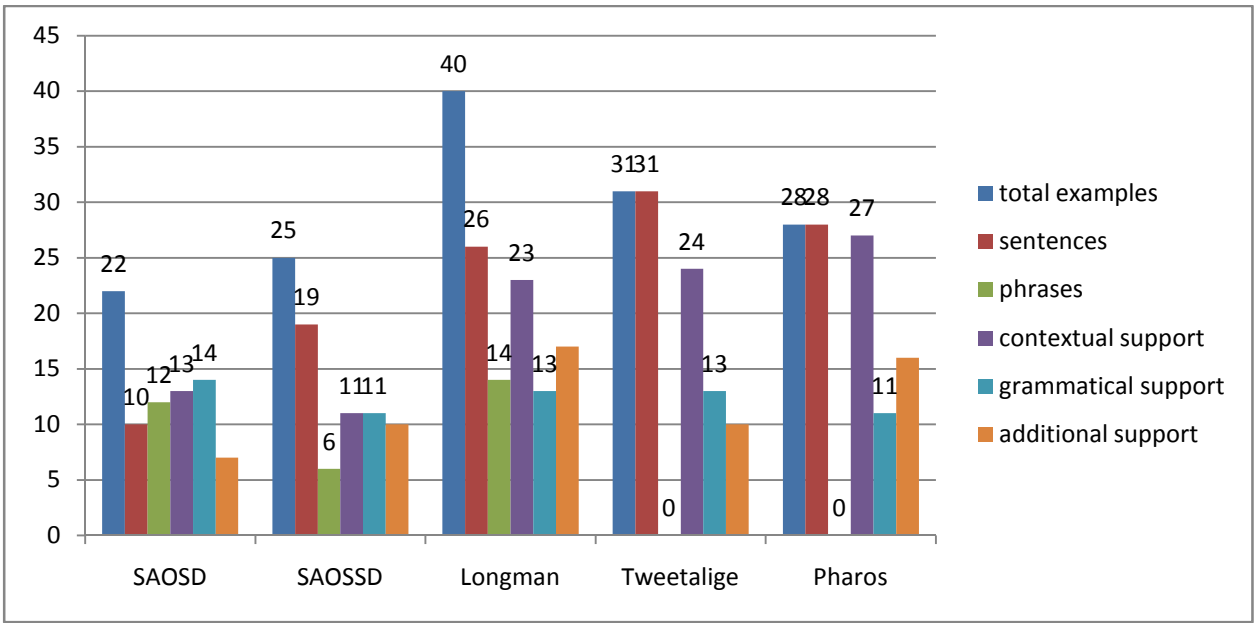
Adjectives		SAOSD		SAOSSD		Longman		Tweetalige		Pharos	
calm	adj	2	1	2	0	4	4	1	2	2	3
prevailing	adj	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
therapeutic	adj	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
		3	2	3	0	7	4	1	2	2	3
			66%		0%		57%		200%		150%

Phrases versus sentences		SAOSD		SAOSSD		Longman		Tweetalige		Pharos	
Sentences		9	55%	19	83%	17	68%	0		0	
Phrases		11	45%	4	17%	8	32%	30	100%	34	100%

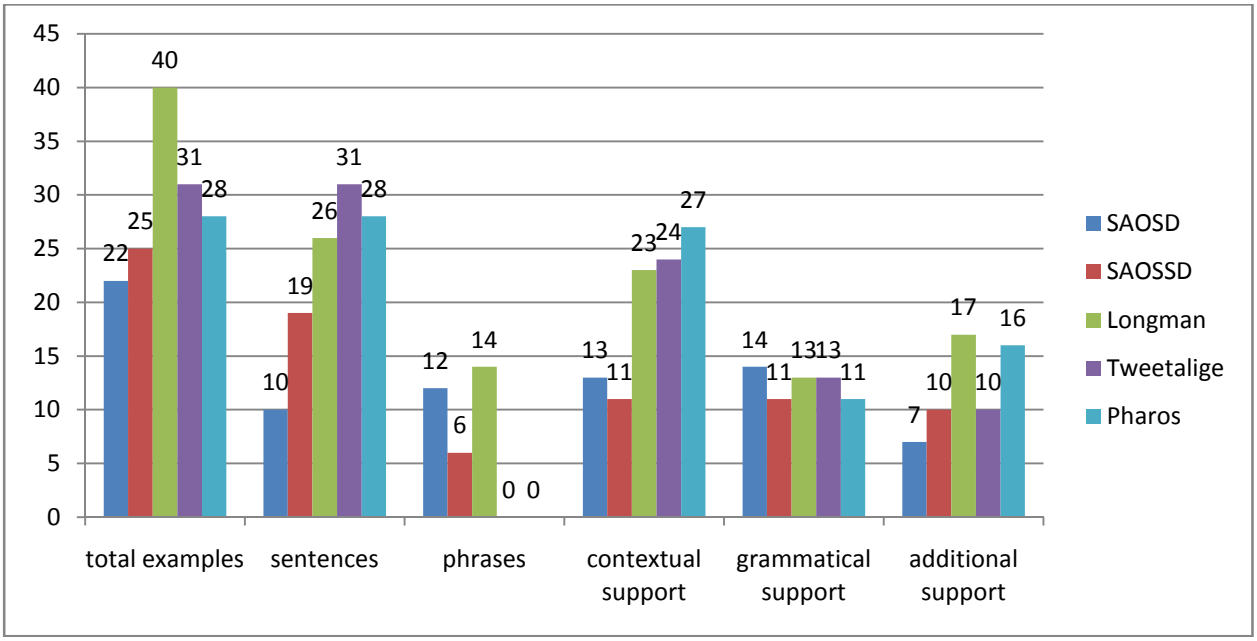
Appendix D: Graphs



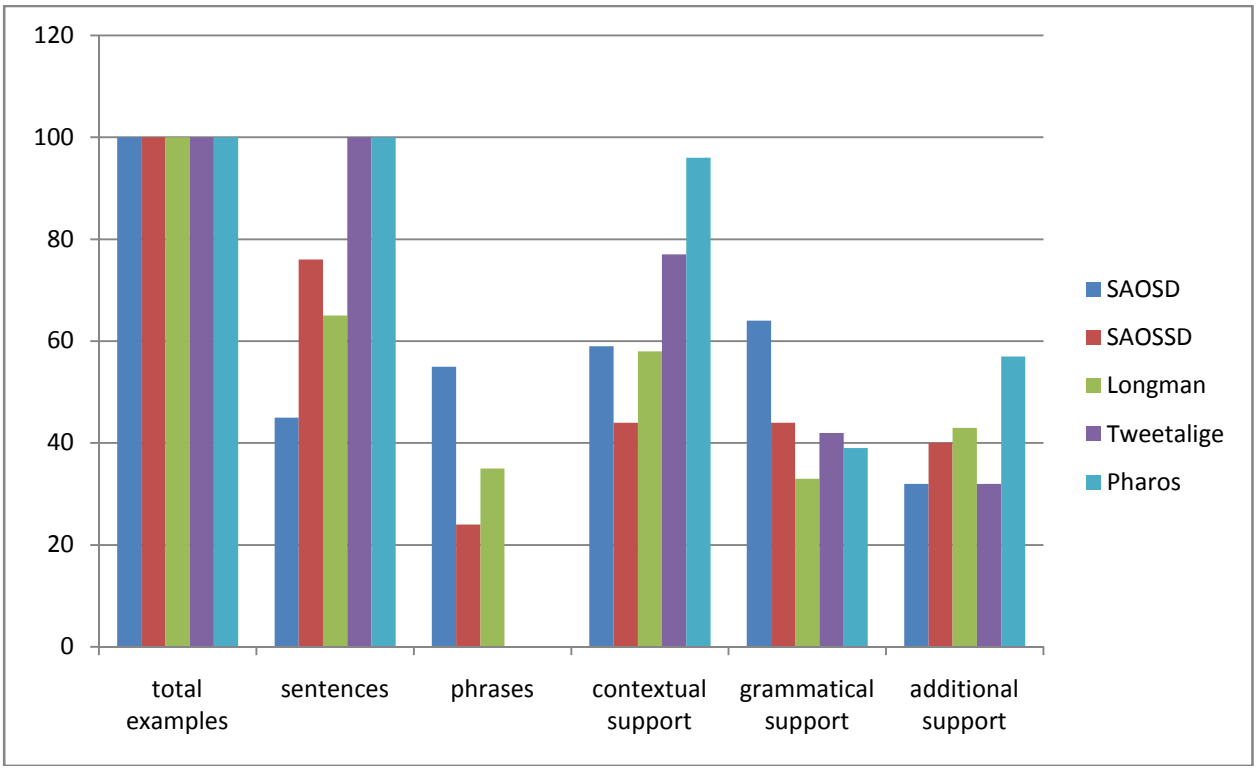
Graph 1



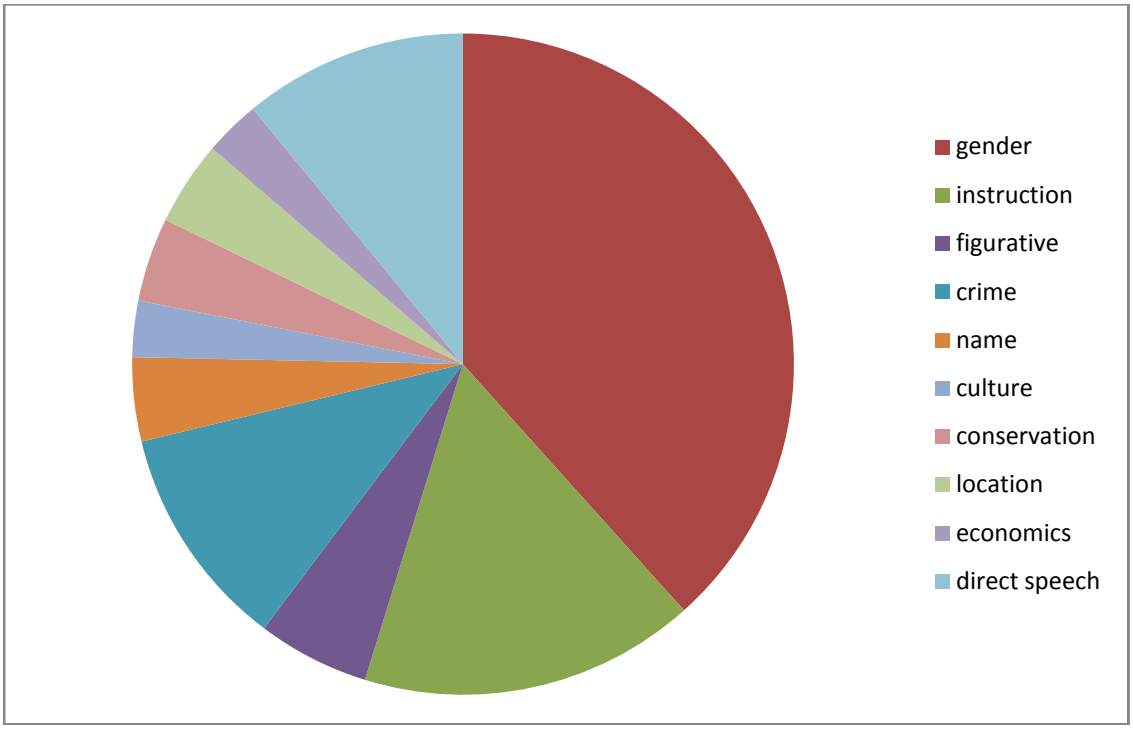
Graph 2



Graph 3



Graph 4


gender
instruction
figurative
crime
name
culture
conservation
location
economics
direct speech

Graph 5

Appendix E: Questionnaires

Questionnaire 1

School: _____

Grade: _____

What dictionary do you use? _____

Does it have example sentences? _____

1. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

obscure (verb) to prevent something from being seen *He **obscured** the painting by hiding it behind a curtain.*

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

b) Do you understand the **definition**? _____

c) Do you understand the **example sentence**? _____

d) Did the **example sentence** help you to understand the word better? ____

e) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

2. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

predicament (noun) a difficult situation *I was in a **predicament** when I lost my wallet and had to borrow money.*

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

b) Do you understand the **definition**? _____

c) Do you understand the **example sentence**? _____

d) Did the **example sentence** help you to understand the word better? ____

e) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

3. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

recalcitrant (adjective) disobedient *My brother is **recalcitrant**.*

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

b) Do you understand the **definition**? _____

c) Do you understand the **example sentence**? _____

d) Did the **example sentence** help you to understand the word better? ____

e) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

4. Now answer these questions about all three entries.

a) Can you tell the difference between the three **example sentences**? If so, what differences can you see?

_____

_____

b) Which **example sentence** was the most helpful? Why?

_____

_____

_____

c) Which **example sentence/s** helped you to understand the word? Why?

_____

_____

d) Which **example sentence/s** helped you to use the word? Why?

_____

_____

5. Write your own example sentences for each of these 3 words – think of a sentence that will help somebody else use the words. The sentences must show that you know how to use the words.

_____

_____

_____

6. What are the uses of example sentences in dictionaries?

_____

_____

_____

7. Do you have any comments about your dictionary, or dictionaries in general?

_____

_____

_____

Questionnaire 2

School: _____

Grade: _____

What dictionary do you use? _____

Does it have example sentences? _____

1. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

absurd (adjective) very silly *His suit made of plastic was an **absurd** outfit to wear to the party.*

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

b) Do you understand the **definition**? _____

c) Do you understand the **example sentence**? _____

d) Did the **example sentence** help you to understand the word better? ____

e) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

2. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

euphoria (noun) great happiness and excitement *I felt such **euphoria** when I found out I'd won the scholarship.*

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

b) Do you understand the **definition**? _____

c) Do you understand the **example sentence**? _____

d) Did the **example sentence** help you to understand the word better? ____

e) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

3. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

pensive (adjective) thoughtful *My brother looks* ***pensive****.*

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

b) Do you understand the **definition**? _____

c) Do you understand the **example sentence**? _____

d) Did the **example sentence** help you to understand the word better? ____

e) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

4. Now answer these questions about all three entries.

a) Can you tell the difference between the three **example sentences**? If so, what differences can you see?

_____

_____

b) Which **example sentence** was the most helpful? Why?

_____

_____

_____

c) Which **example sentence/s** helped you to understand the word? Why?

_____

_____

d) Which **example sentence/s** helped you to use the word? Why?

_____

_____

5. Write your own example sentences for each of these 3 words – think of a sentence that will help somebody else use the words. The sentences must show that you know how to use the words.

_____

_____

_____

6. What are the uses of example sentences in dictionaries?

_____

_____

_____

7. Do you have any comments about your dictionary, or dictionaries in general?

_____

_____

_____

Questionnaire 3

School: _____ Grade: _____

What dictionary do you use? _____

Does it have example sentences? _____

1. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

pang (noun) a sudden strong and painful feeling

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

b) Do you understand the definition? _____

c) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

2. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

hanker (verb) *I **hankered** for a puppy when I lived in a flat.*

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

b) Do you understand what it means? _____

c) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

3. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

rancid (adjective) smelling or tasting bad because it's stale or off *Please take the **rancid** butter out of the fridge – it stinks!*

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

b) Do you understand what it means? _____

c) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

4. Read the following entries and answer the questions below:

pang (noun)
a sudden strong and painful feeling
*I felt hunger **pangs** before lunch.*

hanker (verb)
to long for something very much
*I **hankered** for a puppy when I lived in a flat.*

a) Write your own sentences using each of these words.

_____

_____

_____

b) These entries have **definitions** and **example sentences**, while the first two entries had one of each. Did it help you to understand or use the word more when the entry had both, or when it just had a definition or an example sentence?

_____

c) Do you have any comments about your dictionary, or dictionaries in general?

_____

_____

_____

Questionnaire 4

School: _____ Grade: _____

What dictionary do you use? _____

Does it have example sentences? _____

1. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

hone (verb) to improve a skill by practising it

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

b) Do you understand the definition? _____

c) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

2. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

avid (adjective) *I'm an **avid** reader and I'll read any book I find!*

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

d) Do you understand what it means? _____

e) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

3. Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below:

rancid (adjective) smelling or tasting bad because it's stale or off *Please take the **rancid** butter out of the fridge – it stinks!*

a) Did you know this word before you saw it here? _____

d) Do you understand what it means? _____

e) Write your own sentence using this word.

_____

4. Read the following entries and answer the questions below:

hone (verb)
to improve a skill by practising it
*I **honed** my table tennis skills by playing all weekend.*

avid (adjective)
eager
*I'm an **avid** reader and I'll read any book I find!.*

d) Write your own sentences using each of these words.

_____

_____

_____

e) These entries have **definitions** and **example sentences**, while the first two entries had one of each. Did it help you to understand or use the word more when the entry had both, or when it just had a definition or an example sentence?

_____

f) Do you have any comments about your dictionary, or dictionaries in general?

_____

_____

_____