

LATVIJAS UNIVERSITĀTE

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RĪGA 2016

UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STUDIES

**LEARNER'S DICTIONARIES AS TEACHER'S  
RESOURCES**

**MĀCĪBU VĀRDNĪCAS KĀ SKOLOTĀJA DARBA RESURSI**

BACHELOR THESIS

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RĪGA 2016

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my deepest gratitude, to my supervisor M. Philol. Rasma Mozere. Thanks to her strong support, helpful suggestions and encouragement, this work was completed, and it was carried out in time. Considering that there were moments that I did not believe in myself, the aforementioned support of lect. Mozere was a great springboard to, first, understand what I can do and, second, to move on with the plan realization.

In addition, I would like to say words of thanks to my family - father, mother and my husband, who believed in my abilities and me. Yet, a special acknowledgement is dedicated to my sonny, thanks to who came the inspiration and the driving force to demonstrate that pregnancy is not an obstacle on the way to great aims.

## ANOTĀCIJA

Bakalaura darbā ar tēmu „Mācību vārdnīca kā skolotāja darba resursi”, tiek pētītas divas mācību vārdnīcas - *Longman Learner' Dictionary of Contemporary English* un *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Students*. Šī darba mērķis ir pētīt izvēlētās mācību vārdnīcas, kā skolotāja resursus uzdevumu izstrādē četrām valodas prasmēm.

Darba procesā izveidojas trīs galvenās nodaļas, un pirmā nodaļa atbild par teorētisko fonu, kurā tiek apkopota informācija par mācīšanas materiāliem, precīzāk, par vārdu krājuma mācīšanas materiāliem un metodēm, tāpat arī tiek analizētas četras valodas prasmes lasīšana, rakstīšana, runāšana un klausīšanās. Šī informācija tiek arī tālāk pielietota praktiskajā daļā. Tāpat arī teorētiskajā daļā tiek izklāstīti mācību grāmatu lietojumi un vārdnīcu veidi. Otrā lielā nodaļa atspoguļo metodoloģiju, kas tiek pielietota darba procesā. Teorētiskajā daļā uzsvars tiek likts uz summatīvo analīzi (Summative analysis), bet praktiskajā daļā uz gadījuma izpēti (Case study). Visbeidzot, trešā nodaļa uzmanību vērš uz bakalaura darba praktisko daļu, kurā tiek salīdzinātas internetā pieejamās mācību vārdnīcas ar papīra formātā pieejamajām, tāpat arī tiek salīdzinātas abas iepriekš minētās mācību vārdnīcas, to iezīmes, gan negatīvās, gan pozitīvās, kā arī vispārējais vārdnīcu fons. Pratiskā daļa sniedz informāciju arī par autora darbu ar B1 (pre-intermediate) zināšanu līmeņa skolniekiem, viņu un skolotājas vērojumu, interviju ar skolotāju, četru valodas prasmju uzdevumi izstrādi, to realizēšanu klasē, aptaujas veikšanu latviešu valodā, kā arī datu apkopošanu un secinājumiem.

**Atslēgvārdi:** Mācību vārdnīcas, skolotājs, skolnieks, mācīšanas resursi, uzdevumu izstrāde, četras valodu prasmes, vārdnīcu salīdzināšana, Longman mācību vārdnīca, Macmillan mācību vārdnīca

## ABSTRACT

The Bachelor Thesis on the topic *Learner's Dictionaries as Teacher's Resources* studies two learner's dictionaries - Longman Learner' Dictionary of Contemporary English and Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Students. The goal of this work is to explore selected learner's dictionaries as a resource for designing tasks for developing the English language learners' four language skills.

There are three main chapters: the first chapter reflects the theoretical background, which compiled information on teaching materials, and, more specifically, on the vocabulary teaching materials and methods, as well as the analysis of four language skills -reading, writing, speaking and listening. This information is also used in the practical part. Similarly, the theoretical part sets out the textbook applications and dictionary types. The second chapter deals with the methodology that is used in the working process. In the theoretical part the focus is on summative analysis, but the practical part exploits Case study. Finally, the third chapter focuses on the practical part of the Bachelor Thesis, comparing online the learner's dictionary with the paper-format, as well as provides a comparison of the above-mentioned two learner's dictionaries, their features, positive and negative elements, as well as general background of the dictionaries. The empirical part also includes the author's work with students of B1 (pre-intermediate) level of knowledge, their teacher and the observation of them, an interview with the teacher, the author's developed tasks on the language skills, the questionnaire of the class, (in Latvian), as well as the collection of data and the conclusions.

**Keywords:** learner's dictionaries, teacher, students, teaching resources, task design, the four language skills, comparing dictionaries, Longman learner's dictionary, Macmillan learner's dictionary

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## Introduction

The University of Latvia teacher of English studies Rasma Mozere has said that learner's dictionaries are composed not so much for students, but mainly for teachers, so that they could build the tasks and create an interest in the students for extensive information search options. This means that this type of dictionary is not only a good aid to find the explanation, pronunciation and applications for a word, but also the material on which tasks design can be based.

There are several ways to choose the "right" dictionary for me as a teacher; however, one should not forget that the dictionary is a material through which the information is passed on to students. This in turn is important for the objectives and methods that are used in the classroom, and are based on the learner's dictionary. The students should be interested in the material and they should be encouraged to use the learner's dictionary to polish their knowledge of the English language.

Language learning is based on the four main skills, which form the knowledge of the language; the English language is no exception. It is: speaking, writing, listening and reading. Each of these skills is connected to one of the human senses, but together they form the language acquisition paradigm, and only together, they can stimulate students' language development both in school and beyond it. In the development of the present Bachelor's Thesis, the four above-mentioned skills were taken into account. In the research Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English and Macmillan Learner's Dictionary for Advance Students were chosen, which were analysed and four pre-intermediate tasks based on these dictionaries were designed. These tasks helped to distinguish the qualities of these two dictionaries, the good aspects and the weak ones. It was useful to understand with which dictionary it is easier to work and which could be the basis of designing tasks for training the four language skills.

Taking into account the above-mentioned matters, **the goal** of this present research is to explore selected learner's dictionaries as a resource for designing tasks for developing the English language learners' four language skills.

The **hypothesis** for this research is the following: Longman Learner's Dictionary offers more suggestive material for the teacher's creativity in task design for their learners than Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners does.

**Research question:** Can the learner's dictionaries serve as a resource for designing tasks for developing the English language learners' four language skills?

Therefore, when planning the current research work, four language-learning skills have been evaluated, which were included in the designed tasks. This allowed the author to better understand the nature of the four skills and the needs of the students when creating tasks on the basis of both learners' dictionaries.

The **enabling objectives** are:

1. To gather and analyse the literature that contains information on dictionaries, their apportionment, the resources for the teacher for teaching and the characteristics of teaching for each language skill;
2. To compare and analyse two learner's dictionaries (Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English and Macmillan Dictionary for Advance Learners);
3. To create and pilot an interview for the teacher;
4. To observe the pre-intermediate level students in their English lesson;
5. To create four tasks for each language skill based on the two dictionaries (reading, writing, speaking and listening);
6. To analyse the obtained data;
7. To create and pilot a questionnaire for students in Latvian;
8. To summarize and describe the collected findings.

**The methods** of the present research:

- Summative analysis as a research comparative analysis for the theoretical part, which helped to gather the information, analyse and compare it, and use it for practical purposes;
- Case study for the empirical part that allowed observing the class and the teacher, collect the data, create the tasks, design and pilot the questionnaire and analyse the obtained facts.

The present research consists of introduction, three chapters, conclusions, thesis and appendices.

The **first chapter** deals with the theoretical part of the paper, which analyses and describes the teacher's resources, particularly for vocabulary teaching, then the information on four language skills and how they are taught, the types of dictionaries and the use of textbooks in the teaching process. The **second chapter** deals with the methodology of the present research, which focuses on summative analysis as a research comparative analysis. The **third chapter** concentrates on the empirical part. It describes the two learner's dictionaries, its characteristics, similar and different features; the characteristics of online learner's dictionaries, the observation

of pre-intermediate students in their English lesson, the interview with the teacher, the four created tasks for each language skill, based on the two learner's dictionaries, the task piloting in the classroom, the questionnaire for the students in Latvian and the description of the findings of this work.

# 1 Teacher's Resources for Teaching English

This chapter deals with resources that might help a teacher to teach vocabulary, communication and the awareness of the English language as such. In particular, it concentrates on the resources for teaching vocabulary, as well as the dictionary types that help in the teaching process, especially the learner's dictionaries as a resource for teachers.

Nowadays, there are many ways to teach students, and resources to use in the teaching process. It is important to distinguish precisely the ones that suit the training programme best, the students' language proficiency level as well as the teacher's desires and abilities to select and pass information to students.

## 1.1 Resources for teacher teaching vocabulary

Diamond and Gutlohn in their book *Vocabulary Handbook* states that 'vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings' (Diamond and Gutlohn, 2006: 3). Vocabulary is new word strategy utilization in practice; to be able to fully perceive the word, its origin, use and nature (2006: 3). Taking into consideration Michael Graves (2000) findings, there are four types of vocabulary teaching strategies that must be taken into account by the teacher to convey vocabulary knowledge to students:

wide or extensive independent reading to expand word knowledge, instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of texts containing those words, instruction in independent word-learning strategies, and word consciousness and word-play activities to motivate and enhance learning. (Graves, 2000, discussed in Diamond and Gutlohn, 2006, 3)

Scott Thornbury (2002) has emphasized several instructions on how vocabulary teaching could be more effective. He claims that students need concrete tasks and teaching strategies to be able to form their 'mental lexicon' and to make associations with them. Teachers should assume that in the teaching process new words could cause 'initial fuzziness' (Thornbury, 2002: 30). It is because one of the main matters is to see the goal of how the learner is going to learn and the teacher is going to teach. By making associations with the words, the learning process can be facilitated. Teachers need to discourage students from using the translation of the word in their native language, while encouraging them to use the English language to explain the new word (2002: 30). Thus, it promotes the use of language and the student develops vocabulary.

Vaughan Jones has said that in our days 'meaning is divorced to the form' (Jones, 2016), this means that in most of the cases of teaching tasks there is such situation: there is a task, but it

has no meaning. For example, a sentence: *Josh was a happy boy*. In this situation, it could be some grammar or vocabulary task, where the information should be added. However, this sentence is not interesting, because we do not know who is that Josh, why he is happy and how old is he. This task does not give the students further interest to develop thinking. They just add the necessary information and that is it, and they forget about it; but if it would be written that, for instance, *You are a happy \_\_\_\_\_, because...* The task would have a meaning and now in a higher level (Jones, 2016).

New words should be displayed in interpretive context, in that way students would be introduced with the meaning of the word (Thornbury, 2002: 30). Seeing only an overview, one can understand the full meaning of the word so that it would be used for further use of the language. It is very important that teachers would pay attention to the word pronunciation, especially to the word stress (ibid). This is because often, without paying attention to a student's pronunciation, with time it becomes a habit for the learner. In some cases pronouncing words wrongly, they can mean something else, thereby changing the entire content of meaning. This may cause problems in further learning and communication with others.

The teacher should try to involve everyone in the learning process as much as possible (Thornbury, 2002: 30). Involving everybody in the lesson can be achieved that all students learn and are taught. This means that all the engaged can create a similar level of knowledge; of course, assuming that someone will be more interested in, but someone less. However, language teaching will take place, and no one will be neglected.

The meaning of words can be learned more quickly if they are linked to each student's personal experience, thus creating associations (Thornbury, 2002: 30). If this is done, then by forming associations the student, while writing, speaking or reading, would remember how the word is to be associated with his/her life and this in turn facilitates new word memorization. However, not all vocabulary that students need can be taught, so one must try to provide learners with additional materials to raise enhanced interest in the vocabulary (ibid.). Words not only need meaning, but also tasks. If the tasks have aim to develop interest, in the student, to learn and be more open-minded, not only concentrate on one specific language field; then the task is not only successful, but also engaging for the student to develop thinking, to evolve a desire to work and learn. Only by creating independent understanding of the vocabulary, the student can distinguish what will be more necessary in one's life.

### **1.1.1 Ways and rules of how to teach vocabulary**

There are no acceptable or unacceptable ways to teach vocabulary. Everything depends on the teacher, the student and the methods that are used by everyone involved. It is important for the teacher to have the desire to teach and for the students to learn; it is relevant to explain why it is important to know vocabulary and where it will come in handy in life. However, one of the most important elements is to create interest in the pupils. Thus, the teacher can inspire in them not only the will to learn basic vocabulary, but to also a willingness to look for additional information (Schmitt, 2000: 142).

As a satisfactory figure of how many words to teach, scientists name 2000 words. It is a number that will allow a student to communicate with a native speaker, but it can also stimulate an interest in further studies (2000: 143).

Further, the teacher faces the question of which words to highlight more in the teaching process. Here the curriculum compilers give most of the guidance, but the teachers who want to make minor deviations from the rules need to set objectives that show the benefits students may gain from these words, and how they may be useful to them in life. For example, generally people use everyday language. This means, phrases of politeness, talks about the weather, travel topics and others. However, for example, ship construction, building construction and other themes will not be the ones that will be useful to all students. Therefore, the focus must be on the basic vocabulary (ibid.). However, teachers examining the training program may face with the lack of time, because in a class the teacher must make an effort to teach students communication in another language, they should also teach grammar, which often takes a very large part of the limited lesson time. In this case, it would be advisable to combine vocabulary teaching with grammar topics, thus acquiring new knowledge in several spheres (ibid.).

'Learners can see for themselves how certain grammatical structure and sequences of words lead to certain meanings. In addition "knowing" the first 2000 words should increase comprehensible language input [...].' Thereby students make progress not only in the speaking ability, but also improve their skills to read and write (Schmitt, 2000: 144).

All vocabulary training programs should include clear objectives, which, combined with the understandable tasks can give students the opportunity to learn, even not knowing that they will be evaluated (2000: 145). For students who are at the beginner level it is important to teach vocabulary "explicitly", so that later they can use their knowledge by learning and applying the words of which they are not familiar. It all has to be put in the program in a coherent way so that

in the future lesson drafting large deviations, from what has been done before, are not created. This is significant because if the task conditions rapidly change, the student can become confused, thus providing that the subject matter be not taught properly (2000: 146). Schmitt (2000) emphasizes that

traditional approaches to vocabulary teaching have unsurprisingly focused on activities for the explicit study of vocabulary. There are numerous sources that illustrate a wide variety of vocabulary exercises, including teachers' reference books such as *Techniques in Teaching Vocabulary* (Allen, 1983), *Vocabulary* (Morgan and Rinvoluceri, 1986), *Working with Words* (Gairns and Redman, 1986), *Teaching and Learning Vocabulary* (Nation, 1990) and others. (2000: 146)

Nowadays, technology plays a huge role. It is a great way to find new training materials on how to attract students to studies and create an interesting learning environment. Learning tasks are not only colourful and eye binding they are combined with sounds. In most of the learning process, this feature can help students to remember the new words easier. It is good that tasks and software options go along with the training requirements, so every teacher can choose what fits her/ him and the students (Schmitt, 2000: 146).

Schmitt further continues by invoking Sökmen (1997) with his research on vocabulary teaching, where he names seven principles of vocabulary teaching:

- 'Build a broad picture of the new word for the students;
- Combine new words to the already well-known;
- Create opportunity for students to take well-known words and new words in tasks;
- Alleviate tasks with explanations;
- Build the words so that they could speak to the students interests;
- Choose a variety of strategies;
- Encourage on individual work' (Sökmen, 1997 quoted in Schmitt, 2000:146-147).

When the teacher create a lesson following these instructions, it is possible to ensure that students learn with pleasure. Coordinating tasks, explaining the essence and purpose of them, applying topics that are interesting for a particular age group, one can ensure that students engage in a lesson, learn and participate more with their own ideas of what could be added and what should be changed. Just creating alive learning environment, where everyone is a participant, can make both the teacher and the student happy.

Doff in his book *Teach English* lists the four main points that should be followed by the teacher before going to the classroom and beginning work with students. First, the teacher must set the lesson objective, which explains where the particular lesson would arrive. Secondly, one

must understand which new vocabulary items in this particular lesson would be new and unheard for the pupils. Thirdly, the teacher should go through the main lesson phases. This means that the teacher should understand what could be the updates for the exercises in the lesson. Finally, the teacher should establish tasks for each phase (Doff, 1988: 93).

## **1.2 The choice of training materials**

In the choice of training materials, the teacher must combine several linguistic spheres into the training operation so that they can complement each other (Tomlinson, 2003: 37). It is now even more difficult because textbooks are supplemented with a variety of complex tasks; once they had read-only tasks. Exercises are replenished by listening tasks, as well as the books have included mini dictionaries where the vocabulary is individually selected by theme and accompanied by pictures. Therefore, the presented material in textbooks for the teaching process needs to be thought over by each teacher.

Before making the choice of the textbook and tasks, it is important to set targets to be achieved in the teaching process. If the target is not set, then the learning process can become pointless. As well as in teaching, in the planning of lessons it is relevant to set aims (McGrath, 2002: 58). Then, it is good to choose teacher's own teaching materials. The reason for this is that these tasks show the individuality and the special treatment of students. Howard and Major (n. d.) believe that making a research on textbooks in the end may give the benefit to better understand what works for a certain curriculum (Howard and Major, n. d.). One could develop the ideas, themes and tasks of the textbooks, and supplement them with their own designed tasks.

Nunan (1989) has produced guidance, which may facilitate the creation of teaching tasks. There he discloses secrets of how to draw up tasks for language teaching. One of the prerequisites is to set goals that should be achieved (Nunan: 1989: 14).

Nowadays, a huge role in people's everyday life play technologies and language acquisition is one of the spheres, which they affect. That is why it is important to understand how a laptop can be given the role of a participant and facilitate interest of a student in language learning. Tomlinson (2003) names seven varieties of media, including, 'static text, animated text, sound, voice, still graphics (photo, illustration, diagrams, icons, maps), animated graphics and video' (Tomlinson, 2003: 199). These options can be used in the teaching process, which might improve the teaching/ learning course and help in the development of the teacher-selected tasks.

A computer may be not only technology that can provide material with which to work, but also a great help in clarifying the new words (2003:203). The author draws attention to the fact that the computer and the Internet are full of different kinds of accessories, such as online dictionaries, home pages with task examples, places where to develop tasks and others. If the teacher and students use the modern technologies, then the problem questions in the teaching and learning process can be quickly resolved (ibid.).

### **1.2.1 Teaching reading**

Reading provides a good channel for developing students' language skills. The earlier a person begins to read, the greater awareness of what one has read appears and new information is perceived. It is also a great help with learning vocabulary, grammar and common use of language (Harmer, 2007: 99).

There are two types of reading: *extensive* and *intensive*. Extensive reading is 'an approach to pedagogy with no real detractors' (Hedgcock and Ferris, 2009: 210). It means that this is the kind of reading when a student reads away from the classroom, for example, at home, his/her own chosen literature: newspapers, internet sources, novels, poems and others; the key is that there is where and what to choose. Tasks in class can draw students' attention to certain matters; it allows distinguishing the important from the less important. However, intensive reading would not exist without extensive reading, since only the desire to read and do it often develops both reading skills and language as such (Hedgcock and Ferris, 2009: 210).

When the teacher creates tasks in the classroom, one should not forget that going home students often want to move aside the given tasks. Therefore, although readable material choice depends on the students themselves, the teacher's role is to give everyone the same instructions for what to do next with the read text. Usually these are the tasks, such as crossword puzzles or supplementation tasks, other times the tasks can be bond with other language skills such as listening or speaking (ibid). In this type of reading, the emphasis is on this kind of reading being enjoyable and lending creative delight. However, of course, one has to reckon with the fact that not everyone will want to read, but Harmer stresses that the more a person reads the greater advancement is observed in language acquisition (ibid.).

D. E. Rumelhart (1977), who counts it as an interactive model, represents intensive reading as first of reading models (Davies, 1995:63). Intensive reading is reading which takes place in

most of the cases in the classroom. This kind of reading is useful when the lesson is given a specific theme, which students should focus on. In this case, it would be important for the teacher to create specific tasks that guide the students to meet the criteria for reading. However, here also the choice of reading material is of a wide range: Internet resources, short stories, extracts of novels, all relating to the specific topic. Most often intensive reading is supplemented by various kinds of tasks that make students feel a greater sense of reading purposes. They could participate in a discussion; do some written tasks or surveys on what has been read (Harmer, 2007: 99-100). Intensive reading is an opportunity to abandon outdated *bottom-up models* and address to *parallel processing*-contemporary providing information from several different sources (Davies, 1995:63).

This is a laboratory-developed method, which proves that the reader can get the mutual benefit of information from a variety of reading materials (1995:64). In this way the student receiving various types of information, can strengthen a variety of language skills, for example, visual, lexical, syntactic and others (ibid). Rumelhart's has said that 'The process reading begins with flutter of patterns on the retina and ends (when successful) with a definite idea about the author's intended message' (Rumelhart, 1977: 573 quoted in Davies, 1995: 64). This means that at first reading is like pieces of puzzle, which only can be folded together to form a complete picture.

Palmer suggests that intensive reading is 'to take a text, study it line by line, referring at every moment to our dictionary and our grammar, comparing, analysing, translating and retaining every expression that it contains' (Palmer, 1998: 5 quoted in Hedgcock and Ferris, 2009: 161). It is not enough that students are asked to read the text. The teacher should design the lesson program so that the students could get from the text as much information as possible. The kinds of activities are intensive tasks, it is the teacher's option to bring students to a particular matter, and they are both lessons and extra-curricular activities that are linked to the text and its topic (Hedgcock and Ferris, 2009: 161).

To advise on the readable matter for the student, the teacher must be informed of the student's reading level. It is best increasing the difficulty level of reading texts, starting with the texts that are meant for learning the language, but then also resources may be indicated that are designed for general language use, they may constitute authentic texts (ibid). In devising reading tasks, it is very important to decide whether the student will be required to engage in intensive or extensive reading. However, as mentioned above, it has great advantage if such a reading

generates delight, so the teacher must try to ensure that pupils/students are offered the types of texts which they would be interested in. 'This is why lower-level students are encouraged to use simplified or graded readers for extensive reading' (Harmer, 2007: 100). In this way, the students use the language suitable for their level as 'comprehensible input', meeting the language level that is higher than the student's existing knowledge, although manageable (ibid).

Often, it is very difficult for the teacher to understand exactly how to attract children to reading, so that there would be a greater clarity, the author names six principles that could facilitate the attraction of students to reading (2007: 101).

The first principle emphasises that the teacher should promote students to read as much as possible. This means that it is very important that the student would have the interest to read and most probably even extensive reading would have the first hand instead of intensive reading. It is because reading what one wants gives the opportunity to the student to read what gives the pleasure to take a text in one's hand and read it, which exactly leads to the second principle. It says that students must enjoy what they read (ibid).

More or less, it is understandable that in extensive reading, the student will have the pleasure to read, but the teacher also has to be aware that in the classroom, when intensive reading takes place, the good feeling of enjoyment has to be present. That is why the topics have to be interesting and attractive for the students (ibid).

The fourth principle explains that prediction plays an important role in reading. When people read in their own language, in most of the situations they would have the idea of the content of the text just by taking it in the hands and looking on the cover or the title. Therefore, the teacher in intensive reading should also introduce students to the visual appearance of the text, so that they would have the opportunity to predict the content of the text (2007: 101-102).

When creating tasks one should combine them with the topic of the lesson as well as the topic of the text. This is what the fifth principle holds. In the tasks for the reading texts, the teacher should search for interesting, applicable and attracted to the topic tasks. If this is ensured, the students will see the purpose of reading the text and doing the tasks (2007: 102).

Finally, the sixth principle points out that teacher need to go through and analyse the readable text to the full. It makes no sense to give students readable material and then do something else. The teacher should involve the class in interesting tasks, lesson topics, homework, and complement them with class discussions and other activities. Reading material

utilization is very wide; the key is to create awareness in students that the material will be useful and it will be further used (ibid).

Reading is a branch that one can relish inexpressibly, but another book or text can be something that he/she does not want to hold in their hands. The main task for the teacher is to create an interest in reading. In the absence of interest, there will not be students who want to read, and this applies to both extensive and intensive reading. Even though active work takes place in the class, the information for the student either stays in mind or disappears when leaving the class. By the tasks and reading materials, which complement the work done in the lesson, learning process continues and thus creates further interest. It is like a circle in which one element cannot survive without another, and the teacher is the centre who takes care of it, so that the elements would continue to exist and form a whole; particularly, to keep the students' interest to read and the development of their language skills.

### **1.2.2 Teaching writing**

Writing is process that gives the learners the time for reflection. Students are given the task and the time to figure out what he/she will write and then they record it. Harmer (2007: 112) stresses that it is important to distinguish between writing-for-learning and writing-for-writing. Writing-for-writing is a writing tool in which the student is given the task to write something like their main characteristics at the time when the topic is active in the learning process. Tasks like these give the opportunity for the students to continue learning what has previously been studied. This type of task gives the student the opportunity to develop his/her writing skills. However, writing-for-learning occurs when a student writes something in relation to other tasks. In this case, the language itself is that what is trained more (ibid).

There are three issues, which help to distinguish with what to start when preparing tasks for writing skills. The first is 'genre-a type of writing which members of a discourse community would instantly recognise for what it was' (2007: 113). It means that looking on some text a person know what it is and for what purpose it has been created, for instance, an extract in magazine. That is why it is essential to understand what kind of genre of text students will be engaged, so that, as mentioned previously, the learning process would be interesting for them. After that the teacher could show the students text examples from one kind of genre, for example, poems, so that students would have the feeling of how one and the same type of text can look differently (ibid).

The second is 'the writing process', which emphasises five stages in writing: planning, drafting, reviewing, editing and producing the final version. However, the order may be altered. One can change the order of planning, drafting, re-planning and so on. The teacher should support the students to plan, draft and edit, so that the development of the writing process would increase (ibid).

The last is 'building the writing habit'. Many students do not have the confidence to write, and in this case, the majority always try to find some excuse not to write. The teacher should encourage them to believe in themselves, by emphasising the writing development, so producing the writing habit (ibid).

When teaching writing, the teacher should firmly understand what writing could give to a student. The benefit, use and purpose can give the student an explanation why he/she is learning writing and how it could be beneficial in the future. There are various ways to teach writing, but the main matter is interest of the process; developing it in the students, one has the opportunity to build the desire to work and operate. Choosing one or another genre of article the teacher has to understand the profit of it in the teaching/learning process, the compliance with the theme, the students' interests and previous knowledge of vocabulary. However, this is a preparatory section, the real work starts when the teacher explains the stages of writing, which are very important. Pursuant to them, the writing process to the student may seem clearer and easier to do.

### **1.2.3 Teaching speaking**

Jeremy Harmer names three main reasons why teacher should develop an interest in students to speak. The first one is that speaking tasks provide the 'rehearsal' possibility, when the student can speak like in a real-life communication, but in the familiar environment. The second reason is that speaking exercises are used as a part or all of the language they learn to provide feedback for both their classmates and the teacher. The third reason explains that using any language mechanism is being practised, and in such a way, its usage becomes self-evident because it is important that one not only applies the language but also thinks in it (Harmer, 2007:123). Harmer uses Scott Thornbury's invented collocation 'talking classrooms', which means that students should be confident to speak in their learning environment. When speaking in class is common matter, then building communication should not be difficult for the student. (ibid)

In the language learning process, not every word can be understood, pronounced and applied easily. In such cases, the teacher's role is to provide comments, so that speech errors

would not occur in the future. However, the teacher also needs to understand when there is appropriate moment to intervene. If the student is constantly interrupted, then it may cause unpleasant moments, thus unwillingness to speak. The best way to get the desired is to listen to the speaker, write comments on the paper and then when the task is finished, give the comments (2007: 131).

There are also errors, which occur in almost every student's speech, and then there is no need to specify who committed them. The key is to record and to talk over in the manner of discussion, so that the errors would not continue to occur in their speech (ibid).

Speaking in a foreign language is not easy. Sometimes one can notice that the unwillingness to speak appears not because the student does not know what to say, but because of shyness. The teacher should form such background to the class that students feel safe to communicate, to express their opinions and make comments. The teacher should be able to provide feedback for the students so that it would seem self-evident and not intrusive. In this way language development can be achieved faster and be more enjoyable.

#### **1.2.4 Teaching listening**

Listening is one of the active ways of learning a language. Whether it is the voice of a teacher, a story of a foreign friend or a broadcast of a television program, by listening to somebody a person learns. While listening to the English language it is important to pay attention the speaker's pronunciation, tone, stress and intonation, to understand better the particular language speaking manners. The more the student hears, the better he remembers and understands the language (Harmer, 2007: 133).

It is good to hear the teacher's voice in the classroom, but it is important for students to have something to compare. Therefore, it would be best to introduce them to different types of English-speaking voices through the tasks. However, the number of the variations or dialects of English, with which the student will be introduced, depend on the teacher and his/her methods (ibid).

Just like in reading, also in listening two types are distinguished: *intensive* and *extensive*. However, in this case, the difference between intensive and extensive listening is that intensive listening is practised in the class, where the teacher pays particular attention to the language use, pronunciation and its usage. Extensive listening is for pleasure. This is when students are listening at home on television, in a car on the radio and on the Internet in some video materials.

These materials are often full of "wrong" form of language, full of slang and swearwords, but even hearing this kind of speaking the students learn to distinguish between different forms of language (2007: 134).

When the teacher creates the listening tasks, one's aim is to give students an insight into a number of listening genres and registers. However, one should not forget that each level of knowledge should be approached by appropriate listening tasks. Authentic speech, which is a native speaker's speech, will be too difficult for lower level students, but it does not mean that the teacher should after inauthentic listening tasks. They just have to be adapted to the specific level of knowledge, and when the students are able to listen to a native speaker, it is necessary to move forward and give them the chance (ibid).

Several skills should be trained during listening tasks, for example, '*paralinguistic clues* such as intonation in order to understand mood and meaning, *specific information* (times, platform numbers) and *general understanding* (social conversation)' (2007: 135). These skills will help students better understand the language, adapt and to use it (ibid). Harmer also names six principles that should be applied when designing and piloting listening tasks in the classroom. First, the teacher should encourage the students to listen to the English language speakers as much as possible, because the more often they do it, the better they become at this skill. Second, the teacher should aid to listen. This means that before listening task, teacher should carry out preparatory work (ibid). These could be some minor tasks that would guide the students into the topic of the listening task, such as a discussion of a photograph or else. Third, play the audio file for more than one time, because not all students can hear everything one needs in the first time. Sometimes it is even better for them to say that for the first time they should listen to the record not doing anything and only during the second time students could make notes (ibid). Fourth, the teacher should embolden students to act not only to the language as such, but also to the context of the speaker. This is done by emphasizing with questions and comments the main matters that have been said in the text (2007: 136). Fifth, 'different listening stages demand different listening tasks' (ibid). This means that the listening exercises should be designed gradually. After listening to the record for the first or second time, the task needs to be broad-based, so that the students would form a general picture of what one has heard, and then listening to it repeatedly, the teacher can develop task going into details (ibid). Sixth, teacher should exercise the listening task fully. This is, forming other tasks on the listening task basis to develop other skills, such as speaking or writing (ibid).

Concluding, listening is a skill that must be developed gradually. Before piloting a listening task in the classroom, the teacher should carry out exploration work on who is talking in the record, how he/she does it and which English variation one uses there. It is also important that the record would make an interest in the students, and would be binding for the students. However, sometimes the listening task could be supplemented by other tasks of skills, and that could help to combine several lessons together. Developing gradually listening tasks one has the opportunity to evolve students' language and the manner to what they listen to when they are outside the school premises.

### **1.3 The use of textbooks in vocabulary teaching process**

Textbook is a visual teaching material, which helps, in the teaching process. A majority of teachers and professors use it. Ian McGrath (2002) highlights that textbook use in the teaching process is not only advisable, but also valuable. However, it is clear that choosing a textbook one may face with the successes and failures of the choice. For example, "non-compatibility" appears when a new textbook has come out and its content may be distracting for the teacher. Then the best way to focus on the teaching objectives is to evaluate its role in the teaching process. Evaluation can be carried out easily according to the scheme (see Appendix 1, figure 1.1.) (McGrath, 2002: 62). The assessment stages are divided into four groups, which include 'selection, reflection, adding and changing'. The "selection" process is the process of choosing the textbook, which will be based on the teaching/ learning objectives and that will not change over time. "Rejection" includes two more sections: "general" and "partial". The "overall rejection" is when a teacher refuses something entirely, possibly, the style of the lesson. "Partial rejection" means that part of the learning process is changed. The third, "adding", points out that the textbook must be supplemented by other forms of teacher-selected materials. However, the last, "replacement" indicates that there should be a need to change the context, content or form (McGrath, 2002: 59).

It is good to understand where to search the tasks and with what kind of task varieties to continue. Any process, associated with learning and teaching others, is difficult, but solvable. Every teacher should assess students with whom one works, should evaluate the training material. It is understood that some materials should be left to be added or discarded, but the most important matter is to build the teaching process so that students master English vocabulary.

## 1.4 Types of dictionaries for teaching

Dictionary is and has been an excellent material, which can help, in the language learning process, for centuries. Using a number of dictionaries one has the opportunity to expand the range of knowledge and to obtain precise information. Nowadays, the number of dictionaries is being expanded, and in bookshelves appear more and more new dictionaries to those who want to learn a language (Gewehr, 1998: 161). Dictionary is the learning resource that allows learning both individually and in a group. It is a great teaching resource that can be merged and incorporated in the teaching/ learning process; probably that is why many teachers and students, around the world, use the dictionary in every lesson (1998: 162). However, it is also not the greatest resource. Only a combination of a dictionary with an objective view of the content can achieve the desired learning effect (1998: 164).

It is not an easy process to understand which dictionary suits better. The range of available dictionaries is very wide, and often an extensive choice can confuse users. As previously mentioned a person who wants to use a dictionary must be aware of what he/she takes and for what kind of teaching/learning purposes it will be used. Gewehr names four factors that should be taken into account when dealing dictionaries:

1. 'Level of proficiency;
2. Type of activity;
3. Language base and directionality;
4. Category of information' (1998: 165).

Once the above points are observed, then it is important to focus on the types of dictionaries. Here the author mentions three criteria: 'the number of languages involved; macrostructure or general layout; coverage' (ibid.).

From the language aspect point of view, two types of monolingual dictionaries can be distinguished: one that is written in one language, or multilingual, where the number of languages is at least two. The most widespread are the multilingual dictionaries in which the word is given in one language, but explained into another (ibid.).

From the point of view of macrostructure, dictionaries are divided into semasiological and onomasiological. In a semasiological dictionary, words are arranged in alphabetical order, where the dictionary user starts with the lexical item and goes ahead on the meaning of the word. In an onomasiological dictionary, everything is arranged contrariwise. The user has to start with the

word meanings and end with the lexical item. The best examples for such dictionaries are 'Roget's Thesaurus or Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English' (1998: 165-166). However, most of the onomasiological dictionaries have the elements of semasiological dictionaries, for instance, the alphabetic appendices, so that it would be easier to use it; also monolingual dictionaries have the features of onomasiological dictionaries. They provide synonyms, and here the perfect example for such a dictionary is *Collins Cobuild* (ibid).

As a further criterion common for the above named, can be mentioned "coverage", which is divided into two more aspects: 'type of information offered and the number of dictionary entries' (ibid). In the first named, the specification is that it provides only one type of information, for example, pronunciation or collocations. In the second, 'the criteria for the inclusion of entries in a dictionary can be one of frequency of use, or one of morphosyntactic category, like, a dictionary of phrasal verbs'. However, if the dictionary includes all lexical parts, then it will be complete, for example, *Oxford English Dictionary* (ibid).

In today's rush, it is good to have a dictionary that is small, convenient and easy to use. For this purpose, pocket dictionaries have been created, which include a limited number of lexical units. Yet on a serious study, this dictionary may prove to be inappropriate of its short outline of the content (ibid).

Piecing together the above-mentioned criteria, dictionary, for instance, can be assorted as 'monolingual onomasiological unabridged-Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English' (ibid).

The teacher, before selecting a dictionary to work with, from which to draw ideas and advise students to use, must have a certain research work on this topic. The teacher should draw up objectives and desires that one would like to achieve by using one or another dictionary. Gradually assessing which of the dictionaries best meet the objectives the most appropriate one can be found. For example, the above-mentioned sections of the skill levels, types of activities and language classes arrange rated scale in a comprehensible order, so the objectives would be clear. First, it is necessary to examine what level of knowledge the given dictionary is meant for, what activities are included there that could help me as a teacher in the teaching process. Attention also must be paid to the structure of the dictionary. It is important in the case of teachers who are willing to work easily and quickly: using semasiological dictionaries, whose arrangement is alphabetical, an understanding of how their work could facilitate. Nevertheless, sometimes-deeper studies of a new type of dictionary are useful in order to achieve the set objectives.

## 2 Methodology Aspects of the Research

This chapter deals with the methodology used in the present research. It introduces with the concept of a term *summative analysis*, sets out the role of case study in this research and explains the necessity of questionnaire in the end of the research.

This work consists of various aspects, which considers collects and analyses dictionaries, teachers, students, and what can be obtained compiling the above matters together. This nature of the work is that it does not focus on one particular method; research is a set of techniques that complement each other making the total picture. As an *umbrella*, method may be mentioned here summative analysis.

Initially, for this method the 'parent' method/ term was formative assessment, and for the first time this term was mentioned by Michael Scriven from American Educational Research Association in 1967 (Andrate and Cizek, 2010: 5). Later an American educational psychologist Benjamin Samuel Bloom with his up members in 1971 introduced everyone with the *Handbook on Formative and Summative Evaluation of Student Learning* (1971). In this handbook, Bloom explained that

summative evaluation is a term that indicates the type of evaluation used at the end of a term, course, or program for purpose of grading, certification, evaluation of progress, or research on the effectiveness of a curriculum, course of study, or educational plan. (Bloom, Hastings and Madaus, 1971: 117 quoted in Andrate and Cizek, 2010: 5)

Thus observing, recording and analysing students, materials, teachers, or teaching programs, these kinds of data can be the basis for further research or problem solving. This in turn extends the possibility of the future to build thorough and mature teaching resources for lesson works, so that they would become more productive and interesting for those who learn and teach them.

### 2.1 Case Study for the empirical part

Case study is hard to define; Nunan even admits that 'it is easier to say what case study is not than what it is' (Nunan, 1992:74). However, in general, this method allows observing a certain group of people, in some period, gathering on the data and analysing the resulting examples and information. The main matter is to understand how the whole elements come together and form the information so that one could understand how it works in the situation (1992: 75).

Very approximated method for this method is ethnography, which functions similarly, nevertheless, it draws more attention to the culture of the situation and its backgrounds, but case study more focuses on the conditions in general (ibid.).

In the empirical part the participants were sixteen pre-intermediate students and their teacher; the materials were four tasks made on the bases of four language skills and established on Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English and Macmillan English Dictionary for Advance Students. The practical part of the present research was divided into several stages.

- The first stage was the observation of the pre-intermediate students and their teacher;
- The second stage focused on the interview of the teacher;
- The third stage aimed on the design of four language skills tasks based on two learner's dictionaries;
- The fourth stage drew attention on piloting the tasks in the classroom;
- The fifth stage was responsible for the questionnaire for the students in Latvian;
- The sixth stage gathered the instances and the information, compared, analysed it and drew the conclusions.

An interview with the teacher was designed, which allowed getting to know the observational group of students and a questionnaire in Latvian was formed, so that they could manifest responses more freely and widely. This all was made for the purpose of data collection and drawing conclusions.

Both learners' dictionary collation was as one of the key parts of the practical part. For this purpose, were selected the same comparable words (for example, bread and car) that indicated the common and the different ways in which these words are reflected in both dictionaries. In addition, dictionary elements were taken into account-practical explanations of how to use the dictionary and supplementary possibilities offered by each of the dictionaries.

In view of the above, the data were obtained that allowed to understand which of the established tasks are better and more interesting to students. Similarly, in the process of comparing the elements of dictionaries, one of the dictionaries stood out more than the other dictionaries; thus assuming that one of the dictionaries gained a bonus point. However, the above-mentioned data will not enable to name any of the dictionaries a better or worse than the other, because this can be done only by each dictionary user, who also critically evaluates the dictionary features that are important for him/ her.

To summarise, this chapter reflected the methodological basis of the present research. In it was reviewed the methodology-*summative analysis*, which concentrated on the theoretical part. By the method, the literature was collected, and the necessary information was analysed and screened. In addition, attention was paid to the methodology of the empirical part-the *Case study*. Through this approach were made four tasks, each responsible for different language skills, as well as the realization of the tasks in a classroom with the Pre-Intermediate level of knowledge students, and performance of the questionnaire for the students and the interview for the teacher. This was done from the conducted information to make conclusions, and to understand how this data could be used for further studies and how it could help for teachers in their work with students.

As concerns chapter 3, it will be devoted to the study of learner's dictionaries, their common and different characteristics and features, and the practical classroom application of them to validate the learner's dictionaries as teacher's resources. Likewise, in this chapter, the results of the interview with the teacher and the students' questionnaire will be provided and analysed.

### **3 Learner's Dictionaries as Teacher's Resources**

This chapter deals with empirical part of the research paper, which concentrates on the learner's dictionaries as teacher's resources. Particularly, the paper format dictionaries of Longman Learner's Dictionary and Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners are compared; also, the differences between the online and the paper format learner's dictionaries are characterized.

In this chapter are outlined the four tasks, which were designed based on above-mentioned dictionaries. Yet, here the task performance in the classroom with Pre-Intermediate level students is described, their and the teacher's responses to the tasks, the author's reflections and the analysis of the results.

On the 26 February 2016, the author of the present research participated in a teachers' conference and listened to one of the authors of Pearson publishing company, Vaughan Jones. This author pointed out that language lessons should be interesting. In teaching and learning languages, the most important matter is how much the student will be interested in what he/ she does, and the task of the teacher is to attract student's attention (Jones, 2016).

Learner's dictionaries are great resources not only for students, but also for their teachers. These dictionaries can help to find the explanation of some unknown or new word. It could be an inspiration for new tasks, as well as the solution to old and boring teaching method replacement by new interesting ones.

It is important to figure out which learner's dictionary will be the one, which will meet the teacher's and students' needs. It must be analysed and understood. The teacher has to be able to introduce students to these dictionaries, because maybe somebody in the class will find this or another dictionary as their main assistant in the learning process. The teacher should create an interest, it should be clarified that the particular task has been designed based on the learner's dictionary. Then the student sees the real use of the material, not just abstract glorification.

#### **3.1 Comparing the paper formats of Longman Learner's Dictionary and Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners**

In this subchapter two dictionaries-Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English (2005) and Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (2002 will be compared). Both dictionaries are selected from roughly the same years of publication, so that the content would

not differ drastically in terms of uniqueness, because each new publication of the dictionary adds new innovative matters that are included in it. Taking dictionaries with a larger disparity of the publication year, one could meet a problem to compare two different dictionaries that include innovations at different times.

Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English is the publication company's-Pearson Publication Limited Dictionary, which first was published in 1978 (2005). The edition of the year 2005 has been supplemented with a compact disk, which includes the Longman writing assistant, teacher's lesson plans and 88,000 spoken examples. This is a monolingual, semasiological complete dictionary. The introductory part in the dictionary consists of a pronunciation table, short forms and labels, special signs of the dictionary, grammar codes and patterns, contents, a foreword by Randolph Quirk, introduction and the instructions on the use of the dictionary. The main part consists of words with explanations, word classes, pronunciations, examples, related words and phrases, collocations, pictures, word focus and frequencies charts. In the closing of the dictionary, there are maps, examples of how to create, for instance, curriculum vitae, and tables of, for example, numbers, the differences of British and American English; word formations, lists of irregular verbs, geographical names and the Longman defining vocabulary.

The text of Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners is published by Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., but the animations in Macmillan Publishers Limited (2002). This is also the first publication of this dictionary. This book is complemented with a compact disk, which includes information about how to use the dictionary, notes and lists, study aids and the opportunities to print and copy the information. As well as the Longman learner's dictionary, also Macmillan's is a monolingual, semasiological complete dictionary. In this dictionary, the initial part consists of grammar codes, contents, foreword by Chief Adviser Michael Hoey and introduction by Editor-in-chief Michael Rundell, the use of the dictionary and the numbers that are entries. The main part contains words, pronunciations, examples, word classes, differences between British and American English, words that are frequently used with the basic word, prepositions, collocations, related words, metaphors, topical tables connected with the word (see Appendix 16, figure 3.13), black-and-white illustrations and the sections of colourful illustrations. The closure of the dictionary has the defining vocabulary and labels of, for instance, style and attitude.

After comparing the two dictionaries it can be said that visually and in terms of the presentation of information Longman Learner's Dictionary is more positive and attractive for the

user than Macmillan's is. If the teacher really aims to draw inspiration for the development of a new task, the Longman Dictionary inspires more than the Macmillan does, especially if the emphasis is put on the four language skills. Firstly, the explanations of how to use the dictionaries are more understandable; the arrows are pointing more precisely (see Appendix 16; figure 3.10); secondly, the words are presented better, which could be explained by highlighting the word in blue. Thirdly, the dictionary has been updated with a lot more colourful illustrations (see Appendix 16; figure 3.11), which evoke thoughts as to how the task might look and how these or other vocabulary words can be included in the tasks. It is interesting that in the dictionary charts can be found that show the frequencies of the word in spoken and in written language (see Appendix 16; figure 3.14). This feature may help to decide when to use the word better, in a written task or in a spoken task.

The basic illustrations included in Macmillan dictionary are black and white, which are difficult to see and by leafing through the dictionary, one can miss the picture. However, although almost everything in the Longman dictionary leads to the fact that it raises more creativity, among the Macmillan dictionary's pluses can be named the large spreads with illustrations that are divided into sections. For example, if the user observes the book from the side, one would see that there stand out two thin red lines (see Appendix 16; figure 3.12). They are illustrated sections; full-page drawings with vocabulary words. It allows the user easily navigate in the dictionary and to know where such a matter should be sought. Nevertheless, the classification of these pictures is incomprehensible. That is, as it was mentioned above, this is a semasiological dictionary, hence the words are in an alphabetical order, and so the question arises as to why in the section of the letter F there are the photo pages with topics of home, kitchen, clothes and vehicles? This can confuse the user of the dictionary, because the logic or reason is not explained. However, there is one more element that is good for task design - the tables of related topical words. This is a good feature if the teacher concentrates on one vocabulary theme, for example, having a baby (see Appendix 16; figure 3.13), then the given words could help to develop the idea, which words to include.

Concluding, both dictionaries are full of information and data that are very helpful for the teacher in both everyday use and task design, however, it is very hard to tell which dictionary is better, because it very much depends on each teacher's individual needs and goals. For someone the illustrations and the arrangement are more important, but for somebody else the related information to the word is what distinguishes which dictionary fits better. However, if the

emphasis is put on the development of the teacher's creativity, then the Longman Learner's Dictionary looks more creative, it could inspire one to think of interesting and meaningful tasks for writing, reading, speaking and listening.

### **3.2 The differences between the online and the paper format learner's dictionaries**

Nowadays, technology takes a large role in people's lives, and language acquisition is not an exception. Now language can be acquired on the Internet. There is a wide range of tasks and videos that may help to practise the language, as well as dictionaries have become more accessible. It may seem that the online dictionaries are as good as printed, and the other way round, that is why people often fall into three groups: those who prefer only online dictionaries, those who accept only printed, and those that use both types of dictionaries. However, which dictionary is better then? Which dictionary is the one that combines the quality, quantity and saves time, and whether there is any, which one can do that?

Paper format learner's dictionaries are thick books and in most of the cases, these are semasiological dictionaries arranged in an alphabetic sequence.

Initially, this dictionary is not easy to use, because it has quite a lot of abbreviations that is why the user may be a little confused. However, in the beginning of the book there is well laid out information on how to operate the book, what each term means, as well as in the printed version, there is a compact disc in which the information is more widely outlined and complemented (see Appendix 13; figure 3.4).

In the dictionary, each word has the *International Phonetic Alphabet* that shows the pronunciation of the word; there are also explanations of which part of a sentence the vocabulary word comes, they are marked with numbers to express which meaning is more commonly used and which less (see Appendix 13; figure 3.2). Likewise, the word is involved in sentences, so that the user would understand how the word functions in a context. There are given collocations and idioms that are connected with the word, and there are suggested words that relate to the *umbrella* word, to educate the dictionary users for advanced studies. To help the dictionary user to remember words easier, for some vocabulary items there are included illustrations (see Appendix 13; figure 3.3).

Paper-based dictionary offers a wide range of different vocabulary words. The teacher often can use them for supplementing his/her lessons. As one of the resources in these situations can be, illustrated vocabulary pages included in the middle of the dictionary. They are colourful

pictures that are complemented with directions on how to call every word (see Appendix 14; figure 3.5 and 3.6). The following sections are good to use in building tasks; possibly to those students who have a visual memory it can be easier to memorize the names by only looking at them.

The online format dictionary is very similar to paper-format dictionary. It also has pictures for some words (see Appendix 15, figure 3.7); there is additional information about the related words of the "umbrella" word, even the explanation is the same as in the paper format dictionary (see appendix 15, figure 3.8). To the author's mind, the only matter, which differs, is that in the online dictionary there is a search engine, which helps to find a word in a faster way. The user of the dictionary just thinks of a word, he/she writes it in the given place and the system finds it (see Appendix 15, figure 3.9).

In conclusion, the two dictionaries, paper-format and online, are equally good. They are fully equipped with similar information, but each also has features that make it quite distinct from each other. Online dictionary merit is that entering a word in the search box, it will immediately find it, which in turn saves the user's time. In this way, the user can find, in a shorter period, more words that are necessary. By contrast, the positive aspect of paper dictionaries is that words must be looked for, which in turn enhances several human skills, such as searching, vocabulary enrichment; because in the word searching process the person finds another word and memorizes this word as well. Likewise, working with paper-format dictionaries allows identifying the general-use of dictionaries and learning how they are different or similar.

### **3.3 The four tasks which are made on the basis of the Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English and Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners**

Performing research and analysis of Longman Learner's Dictionary and Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners, the decision was made to create four tasks, which would be based on these two dictionaries. In total, four different skill tasks were made, of which two (reading and writing) were based on the Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English and the other two (speaking and listening) on the Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners. Each task, in terms of time, together takes full lesson (40 minutes) (see appendixes 4, 6, 8 and 10).

The first task requires reading skills with the focus on the theme healthy eating. The task is based on the Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English. Looking through and

analysing the food topic, which is offered in the dictionary, it was concluded that the task would be divided into two parts, where the basis is a magazine article, which then can be used as a hint for the crossword puzzle. In the dictionary, this theme has been enhanced with coloured pictures, phrases that are used in terms of food and examples of several life situations that could engage the topic food. While looking at the visual appearance of the task, the students should predict the topic of the article and genre of the text.

The text is a magazine article about healthy eating, what should be on every person's plate at each meal, and the dishes that should be avoided in order to maintain healthy eating habits. The words that are mentioned in the text are included in the crossword puzzle. With ten questions, students are prompted to search for the correct answers in the text. The task is not difficult, but it requires a relatively high concentration in order to have the correct the letter of the word in the box of the crossword.

Like the first task, the second is also based on the Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English. This task requires writing and reading skills with the focus on the topic "Weather". Using the above-mentioned dictionary, an e-mail was created, which supposedly is written by the student friend from France (see Appendix 7). He describes the weather in his country and says that he cannot wait for the trip to Latvia, but before the journey has taken place, he wants to know what the weather is like in Latvia. Once the text has been read, students compose and write a reply letter to their friend, telling about the weather in Latvia. The goal of this task is to encourage students to think about how to write an e-mail, what the writing steps are, as well as the weather vocabulary is tropicalized.

The third task is based on the Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners. It requires reading and speaking skills with the focus on the topic "Professions". In this dictionary, professions are explained and complemented with pictures and examples in the text. Considering this, it was decided that the task would consist of a game "Mafia". Before this task, the teacher prepared game cards (see Appendix 9). On these cards, various members of the professions, their appearance, age and hobbies are described. The cards are distributed to the students, the teacher also tells that the information may be supplement and it had to be told as if the student were that person. Most importantly, in the cards two police officers and two criminals have to be included, who are the characters around which the course of the game moves on.

At the start of the game, the teacher says that it is night and everybody closes his and her eyes. Then she asks the police officers to introduce with themselves by opening their eyes. Once

this is done, they close their eyes. Then the same procedure happens with the criminals. They open their eyes, understand who is who, and then they close them.

Then the teacher says that it is day and everyone opens his or her eyes. Each tells a short story about what they are; only the police officers and the criminals have to lie about their profession, others cannot find out who they are really.

Then again comes night, the teacher asks the criminals to open their eyes. Both glance to each other, but without talking, they decide which participant of the game they will "shoot" (the game will be over for him). Once this is done, they close their eyes. Then the teacher asks the police to open their eyes. They decide which two people could be from the mafia. After that, again, it is day, and everyone opens the eyes and the teacher announces that in the night a "shooting" has taken place in the calm city. Then the teacher announces who, in the police officers' mind, is the criminal and who has been killed that night. If the police have chosen the wrong members of the mafia, then for both the "dead" person and the wrong choice of the police officers the game is over. Next, the whole procedure is repeated until the police capture the true criminal, or until all participants are "shot". This speaking game teaches students to tell about a particular person and profession from their point and make them feel more secure communicating in a group in English.

Finally, the last fourth task is a task that focuses on listening and reading skills. This task is also based on the Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners, particularly, the Macmillan teaching online corpora (Online 1). This task is divided into two parts, the first part is the listening to the recording (Online 3) and the second is the filling in of the necessary information (Online 2). In the recording, an English-speaking person, called Nil, tells about his profession, job and the opportunities of his career. After the students have listened to the recording for three times, they fill in the necessary information in the worksheet. The task asks the information about Nil's description of his job, his life before his current job, the differences between working in Sweden and the United Kingdom and the advice that Nil gives for searching a job. The task requires and teaches a high concentration skill, the ability to hear and the ability to distinguish important information, as well as teaches quickly become familiar with the required task.

In conclusion, it can be said that each of these above-mentioned tasks is different; they teach a variety of language skills. The two tasks of the Longman Dictionary focus on the food and weather topics, but the tasks that are based on the Macmillan Dictionary focus on the

people's professions and job searches. These tasks are quite time-intensive, but through direct observations, it can be said that the students are happy to participate in them (further information on students' participation in the tasks will follow in subchapter 3.4).

Both Longman English Dictionary of Contemporary English and Macmillan Dictionary for Advanced Learners are a good basis for the development of tasks, because they contain a wide range of vocabulary, and they are effectively complemented with pictures and examples, which help the teacher to concentrate on the necessary information for oneself. The tasks were prepared for exactly the pre-intermediate level knowledge students, which also corresponded to the topics that they have taken this school year.

### **3.4 Piloting the four tasks in the classroom with Pre-Intermediate level students**

The practical part of this Bachelor Thesis was implemented in Riga secondary school No. 69, with form 8 students. Their level of knowledge of English is Pre-Intermediate. The total number of the students is 16. The author of this paper spent five lessons with these students, and each lesson lasted 40 minutes. In the lessons, their English teacher also participated; she observed the author's work with the students and their reactions.

The first lesson took place on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2016. In this lesson, the author observed a 40-minute long teacher's practice with the students on the topic "Birthday". First, they talked over the home task; they had to prepare a poem on the topic "Birthday". The teacher in the previous lecture had given them a poem's 'skeleton', in which they had to insert their own ending. Second, they read one by one the teacher-made poem with her own inserted words, and then they translated the new topical vocabulary.

The poem included the grammar theme "double negative", and the teacher explained that after *do not* one cannot use *something*, they have to use *anything*. When this was done, the students got a paper with a text on the theme "Birthday" (see Appendix 12; Figure 3.1). They read it one by one, each taking one sentence to read. After that, the teacher told them which words were important and should be written in their notebooks. Their notebooks consist of tables, where they write the new topical vocabulary, the pronunciation and translation in Latvian. In this vocabulary process, the teacher explained that they would have to write their own descriptions of a perfect birthday at home, including the words that are underlined in the text (see Appendix 12; figure 3.1). The length of the homework is 130 words.

In the end of the class, they went through the new vocabulary. The teacher asked the word in Latvian and they had to remember it in English.

To conclude, the students were very much interested in the topic. They got engaged in the discussion of the text and they answered the teacher's questions on how they prepare for celebrations. However, a few persons tried to avoid answering the questions or any talk about the topic. It was evident that students were waiting for the teacher to call on them, which is why the discussion on the topic cannot be called 'heated'.

### **3.4.1 Piloting the reading task**

Since the author was already familiar with the students and the work environment did not seem so unfamiliar, students felt already open; however, the signs of shyness did not disappear completely. Before the start of the lesson, the author of the current research wrote on the blackboard the new topical vocabulary, which took nearly five minutes.

To introduce the students with the lesson, the author clarified to the students that this was an individual reading task. In this task, they would need to predict what it was about and then would have to read it and fill in the crossword. This part of the lecture took about six minutes.

When the lesson started, in about ten minutes, the author explained the written words on the blackboard with other words in English and translated into Latvian. Students became acquainted with them and, as they admitted, three words, as *additives*, *habits* and *fatty*, were new to them.

After the introductory and presentation parts, the students got a magazine article about healthy eating. After that, they were required, without reading the text, to predict and tell what kind of text it is and what its theme is. Students' reactions were varied. At first, all were silent, then one boy spoke up that this text was about food, but when for a long time there was silence in the class, their teacher encouraged them to open up, and then a more active discussion began in which all questions were answered. However, this practice part took only two minutes, which can be explained with the fact that the author felt that because this was the first lecture with these students, they are shy and maybe they felt not free to talk to an unfamiliar person in English. That is why the author decided to wait no longer and put up with the answers that were given.

For the production part, the students were given about fifteen minutes, in which they read the article, re-read it, tried to understand it and filled in the crossword. During this period, the author observed that many students really utilized the words written on the blackboard. It was

evident that students during reading and writing with their heads lowered, from time to time raised them and tried to find the unknown word on the board. Of course, students had previously been told that if there was any word that was not included in the vocabulary, or the student had any other question, they can raise their hands and the author would come up to them and explain the incomprehensible place.

From the class two students, who were not confident of the spelling of the word, as well as the line-up of the crossword puzzle's section, used the above-mentioned privilege.

After the work was done, the students gave back the filled crosswords with the articles to the author. After this, the author thanked the students for their work and urged them to think about the good and the bad food products that they eat outside the school.

To conclude, this lecture was like a prelude to the cooperation of the author of this research and the students. Both the author and the students still felt quite unsafe creating a contact, but because of the wide smile and kind attitude that came from the author, as well as their teacher's encouragement, the students started to open up and feel safer to participate in the lesson.

It can be concluded that while exploring the students' written crossword puzzles, the students were divided into two parts. The first part included those students who had understood the task completely and completed the crossword puzzle correctly, but the other half comprised those who had made some error. This second part was divided into three further sections, the first of which were students who were confused about one crossword box, in which most of the students replaced the word *full* with *fill*. As this number of students was quite big, seven, it seems that someone of the class had figured out the wrong version and passed the information to other classmates, which led to a shared mistake.

The second section was a group of students who did not take the task seriously, and it can be seen that they had written nonsense that did not apply to the task. There were two such students in this class. Finally, the third subdivision group students were those who do not understand the English language. These people made three and more errors that point to the fact that they really did not comprehend the task or the words written there and their meanings.

### **3.4.2 Piloting the writing task**

The writing exercise that focuses on the theme of the weather was designed to train both reading and writing skills. This task largely focuses on the weather vocabulary, which was asked the students to use it while writing the e-mail to a friend. As the base material, they received an e-

mail written by a friend. This friend, in his e-mail, talks about the weather in France and, in preparation for a ride on a visit to Latvia, he also wants to find out about the weather there.

In carrying out the task, students were first introduced to it. The author of the work explained what kind of task it would be, how it would be carried out, and it was also mentioned that it as an individual work. Before they received the e-mails, the author told or reminded the students about the writing steps. They were written on the board, and then explained. It was also mentioned that the steps can be used in a random order, but basically they are such as they are. (See Appendix 6; section presentation) For the introduction and presentation, they needed approximately 9 minutes.

When this was done, the students received their e-mails, they read them for about 10 minutes and then the production of their own e-mails started. While the students wrote their e-mails, the author was able to observe that they were thoughtful, but really concentrated on writing. In the writing process, they also were allowed to use the Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English, if the spelling of a word was forgotten, or maybe they needed some inspiration to write. From all 16 students only three used the dictionary, which may be explained by the fact that most of them relied on their own knowledge or were too lazy to open the dictionary.

Once the task was accomplished, the students handed in their written e-mails. The teacher recommended thinking over them at home, which writing steps for them were more necessary and which were less necessary.

To conclude, this task took the whole class (40 minutes). The students looked very engaged in thinking and writing the e-mail. They recalled the weather vocabulary, writing steps and tried to use it in their writing. When correcting their works it was concluded that the most common errors in the texts appeared in spelling, word order and use of articles. The author drew their attention by writing the right word order with an example, the right article and spelling. For those whose principal mistake was word order, the author wrote the correct sequence with an example, so maybe it will remain in their memory for further writing tasks. There were also a couple of works where lack of knowledge was felt, so the e-mails contained short sentences and quite a lot of mistakes. However, there was also a group of people who had paid very serious attention to the writing process. They had followed an e-mail writing structure (greeting, introduction, discussion, conclusion and adieu), used a variety of weather vocabulary words, and supplemented additional information, so that the e-mail would look complete.

It is expected that this task was a good workout for the upcoming study year because, as the author's personal observations show, a similar task to the above-mentioned is included in the state examinations for Form 9.

### **3.4.3 Piloting the speaking task**

The speaking task with an emphasis on the vocabulary for professions aroused the most pleasant emotions in the students. From the very beginning of the task, the students were asked to put chairs in a circle form. In carrying out this activity it seemed that a team effort among them formed in which a leader was telling how things should look like, but the rest were performers who saw a similar vision and, therefore, complied with the instructions. The task took the whole class (40 minutes), but by this time, the game was played, according to the students' desires, three times. At first everybody looked a little frightened, because the author told them that this would be a speaking task, but when they heard that each of them would receive a card (see Appendix 9), with a hint text, the students emotionally calmed down.

Before the game "Mafia" started, they were introduced to the game process. If there was a need, the students could also use the Macmillan Learner's Dictionary for Advanced Students if someone did not know a word from the card. The words, which were of the new topical vocabulary, were written on the blackboard. The words were explained in the English language and translated into Latvian. Students were also advised that the card information can be and needed to be supplemented, and it was written from the perspective of the second person singular, but it had to be transformed to the first person singular. After the introduction part, which took approximately 13 minutes, the game started. Everyone got his/her game cards with the descriptions and further the procedure happened as described in chapter 3.3.

After the first round only 14 out of the 16 students participated, as one due to illness was not present, and one felt very unsafe to participate, so the author decided to allow this student to watch the game. When the first round of the speaking game was over, the author noticed both the frightened student's smile and willingness to participate in this task, so the author repeatedly invited him to participate. The student responded positively and started to take part in the speaking task.

In conclusion, it can be said that in this task the students really actively trained their speaking skills. Although in the first round of the game most of the students kept to what was written on the cards, then in the second and third rounds new stories were made with new

developments of the situations and new characters. This task trained not only speaking but also reading ability, , and the skill to speak spontaneously and concise, because each is given about 1 minute to tell about themselves the key information, so that everybody could make a decision on who the killer was and who was the policeman.

The author herself was incredibly pleased with the lesson, task and student involvement, as in the process one was able to make not only serious observations and judgments, but also it seemed that the students had fun in what they were doing, which in turn made them train their speaking skills in English.

If the drawbacks of the task are mentioned, then it is the author's inability to correct errors in the speaking process by the students. It is because although the theoretical sources and professors had taught that the teachers should draw students' attention to the speaking mistakes so that they should not reoccur; then in real life, the teacher is unwilling to stop the speaker if he/she tells the story with so much enthusiasm. It seems that if the teacher stops the student, then one will be afraid to continue speaking.

#### **3.4.4 Piloting the listening task**

This was the last task given to the students by the author. It took almost the whole class, taking into account that at the end of it the students got their questionnaires in Latvian to express their thoughts on all four tasks. This task was taken from an online source (see references; online source 1, 2, 3), which is Macmillan official website that suggests different listening tasks for language learners with different levels of knowledge. This particular task was for the pre-intermediate students on the topic "Business/ Professions". In the recording an English man called Nil talked; he has worked not only in the United Kingdom, but also in Sweden. He compared the two countries on the level of positive and negative aspects in terms of work, as well as he told the story of how he started his career. The recording is 2.18 minutes long and is of good quality.

In the beginning of the lesson, the author wrote on the blackboard the order in which the listening task takes place. The author explained that the recording would be played three times and that the speaker would be an English-speaking person. This introductory part all together took about ten minutes, considering the fact that during this period the students first saw the task sheet. The decision that the voice would be played three times was taken because the author felt that during the first time of the listening the students would only get used to this voice, during the

second time they would begin to perceive information, but during the third listening they would be able to write it down. After the preparation section, they were asked to familiarize themselves with the tasks, so that they would know what kind of information they should pay more attention. This took again ten minutes. Then they went through the worksheet, listened to the recording three times and had time to fill in the necessary information. This part of the task occupied about fifteen minutes. In order to play the recording, the player was connected to the author's cell phone, so the sound was of good quality, but probably quieter than it should be. The author also asked the students if the volume as good enough, to which they replied that the sound as fine, but sometimes, when someone started writing, the sound could be louder. During the task, the author observed that the students were concentrated on the task. They really used the given 10 minutes to go through the worksheet and, when the recording was played, they seemed even more focused on it.

As it was mentioned above, after the task the students got their questionnaires on all four tasks; the filling process for the students took about three minutes. After it, the author recommended the students to think over what they could wish to become after finishing secondary school.

After the class, the author went over the students' completed worksheets, and it could be concluded that the most of the correct answers were in those tasks where the answer had to be recycled, in places where the information had to be provided by students themselves, in most cases, answers were incomplete or incorrect.

In view of the overall progress of the class, it can be said that the task was pretty tough, but not impossible to do, and it was recognized also by the students. This task required a great deal of concentration and the ability to take it seriously. The voice in the recording was clear, and although there were words that the students did not understand fully, the overall context was generally comprehensible. After playing the recording for the second time, the author asked the students whether any words confused them; and one word was mentioned: the *Master's degree*. Accordingly, the word was explained in English and translated into Latvian.

### **3.5 Interview of the teacher**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2016, an interview with an English teacher took place in Riga Secondary School No 69 (see Appendix 2). This interview was conducted after the first class, at which the author participated and observed the students. The interview consisted of four questions

connected with the vocabulary topics, which had been taken in this school year, the students' level of knowledge, the most frequent vocabulary words used in the lessons and the personal experience of the teacher with the learner's dictionaries. The length of the interview was about fifteen minutes, which means that the teacher's answers were of medium length, but succinct.

To the first question about the average level of knowledge of the students who participated in the research, the teacher answered that most of the students are of the Pre-Intermediate level. They can express themselves in English relatively freely, write, read and do the listening tasks. However, their vocabulary is simple, with a few student exceptions. To the second question about the topics in this school year, the answer was that this school year topics have been taken according to the textbook order, and they are Holidays, Sports, Healthy Lifestyle (food and living) and Superstitions (more about culture). To the third question about the most frequent words that are used in the classes, the teacher answered that these are the words that are connected with the topic of the lesson and the grammar rules (verbs, adjectives, nouns et cetera). The teacher also added that, having learned new topical vocabulary, students try to use it as much as possible in further lectures.

Finally, to the fourth question about the use of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English and Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners the teacher admitted that unfortunately in this school year no high school class was formed, which automatically excludes the possibility of students with intermediate and upper-intermediate level of knowledge. This in turn means that there is no need for special additional tasks, because for the students of other lower levels, textbook tasks are enough for classroom and homework. However, there are times when, for example, the Longman Learner's Dictionary as an aid is used in the classes, when students want to learn more. As one of such cases, the teacher described a class with the ninth-grade students. This lesson unfolded a heated discussion on what is English for 'trash bag' (miskastes maiss); and whether there are potentially a number of variants for this word. To find it out, the teacher relied on the Learner's Dictionary and cleared the question up.

To conclude, generally both the teacher and the students stick to the textbook material. This fully satisfies the objectives of the teacher, so there is no need to supplement the lessons with the tasks of the learner's dictionaries. However, the teacher also admitted that she occasionally offers students the tasks that are developed by her based on her knowledge or any additional materials, such as online sources (see Appendix 12). It can be assumed that the lack of time is what prevents teachers from intensifying tasks with emphasis on vocabulary. The program and the final

examinations require good knowledge of English grammar, and that is why this, is more practiced in the classroom. Overall, the interview went smoothly, the teacher replied succinctly to all the questions, which facilitated the author's work to formulate the answers fully.

### 3.6 Questionnaire of the students in Latvian

The questionnaire as administered in Riga Secondary School No 69 with thirteen pre-intermediate level students on February 18, 2016. These were the students, who participated in the author's research. They participated in four classes, where the author offered the tasks designed for the four language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Implementation of the tasks in the class was in the above-mentioned order. After three lessons, in the fourth one, after the listening task the students received a questionnaire in Latvian. The choice fell on the Latvian language, because the author decided that the students would feel more comfortable, they would give more extensive and more precise answers in their mother tongue.

Almost all the students participated in all four tasks except one, who was not present in the speaking task, and which in turn affected the results of the questionnaire. So the outcome of the questionnaire was that almost everyone except one person as the favourite task of all four chose

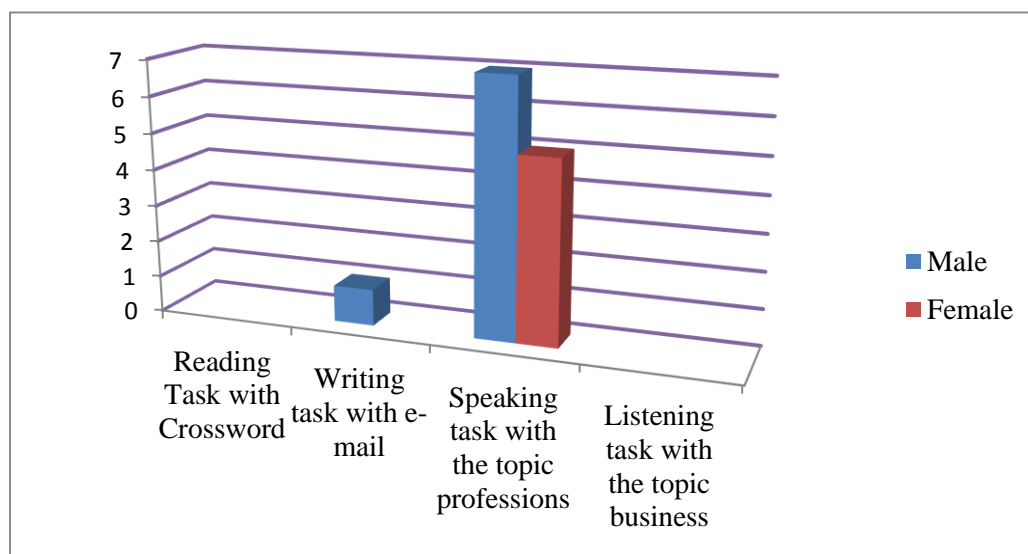


Figure 3.1. The results of the students' questionnaire

the speaking task; these were seven male and five female respondents. Some of the students admitted that this task seemed the most interesting and they liked it. The students added that this task gave quite a wide range of possibilities to speak in English, but at the same time they were not afraid to speak loudly, because had the cards which were as the guideline to understand with

what to start. Some of the respondents admitted that, to their mind, out of all four tasks this speaking task was the one, which really taught them to act, to speak, to do, to think and to train their vocabulary that will be remembered.

Only one female respondent answered that her favourite task was the writing task, and as an explanation for that, she wrote that this task was engaging, she liked the topic (weather) and she understood that this kind of task taught them to write an e-mail in their final English examination at the end of form 9. However, as was indicated above, this person did not participate in the speaking task, because she was not at the class that is why it can be assumed that if the student had participated in all four tasks, then her answer might be different.

In conclusion, it can be stated that out of all four tasks for the students the most successful was the speaking task, which seemed engaging, interesting and more educative. They liked to participate and they were pleased that there were cards that helped them to think of how to start speaking and how to change the singular personal pronoun *you* and singular possessive pronoun *your* to singular personal pronoun *I* and possessive pronoun *mine*. This task was also very interesting, because the teacher does not give often this kind of task. The other three tasks were very similar to those that were included in their textbook *New Opportunities Pre-intermediate* and to those that were given by the teacher.

The one person who chose the writing task in preference to the listening and the reading tasks, showed that the students were aware of what they were expected in the examinations. The teachers inform the students well in advance and give them tasks that most closely resemble the examination tasks. This also proves the fact that the theme *weather* is interesting for students of this level of knowledge; and it is likely that in the classes the teacher would pay extra attention to this topic. Similarly, they should be reminded more often of the basic writing rules, so that they would sink in their memory and, when necessary, they would be able to use this knowledge. However, as has been mentioned above, if the student had participated in all four tasks, then the answer may have been different.

### **3.7 The author's reflections and the analysis of the empirical study results**

This research of Bachelor Thesis is the result of work of nine months. In the process of this work, theoretical materials have been collected and analysed; research work on two learners' dictionaries – the Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English and Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners has been carried out, they have been studied, analysed

and compared. In addition, four tasks of four language skills have been developed, based on these dictionaries; the pre-intermediate level of knowledge students have been observed, their work with the teacher and the progression of the classes in general. The English teacher was interviewed to find out information about the students and the subject matters and topics covered in their English classes. The above-mentioned data collection procedures were implemented in the classroom, where sixteen students were engaged in specially designed tasks and filled in the questionnaires to evaluate the tasks according to their preferences and the usefulness in the questionnaire, which was in Latvian.

The work overall fared well. In the interview with the teacher, there was a foreboding that the topics, which students learn, are those that are covered most on a daily basis - food, outlook and superstition. Already then, it revealed that the teacher mostly used the textbook, so an additional task created and given for the students might seem interesting and compelling for them. In the observation process, the author could see that the class work was smooth, but when urged to talk and answer the teacher's questions, always the same students did the work. Already at that time, it was decided that the speaking task would be formed so that everyone has to talk.

Nevertheless, as the first task to pilot in the class the reading task was chosen, where the students needed to read a text on the topic "Food" and complete the crossword. Observations showed that from the very first minutes of cooperation with students there was joy on their part; they waited what the supervisor would require of them.

As previously mentioned, the marking of the tasks it could be identified that most of the students had completed all four tasks carefully, so there were no errors. However, there were also those who had carried out the tasks lightly, or indeed their poor knowledge of English did not let them fill the tasks correctly, so in the tasks there were many mistakes (seven to eight out of ten).

Working with students is not an easy job; the teacher should feel them, understand their desires and interests that could be involved in the learning process. One situation is when a new teacher comes and teaches the students a couple of lessons, but it is different when one teacher each class makes students do uninteresting grammar tasks that are still important for the final examinations. The teacher should rate the textbook, try to supplement it with tasks that attract students, or are at least different from those presented in the textbooks. Generally, precisely this is the biggest problem, because teachers complain that due to time constraints, they do not change the textbooks, tasks and even the tests for ten or more years. The author saw that the same tasks, which were given to the students eight years back, are still given to this generation.

It is a little sad because language learning should be interesting and attractive, then the students' progress is better achieved. It is understood that not all people will use physics or mathematics in their lives, but language is something that no matter where a person lives, what he/she does for a living or what one is interested in, will be a valid requisite.

What can be done in this context is that in spite of everything this kind of job comes from the heart, and students are living persons, who need to be involved in the process. The teacher should create in them the desire to work. Therefore, one should find the time to supplement lessons with exercises, which make sense, which develop students' thinking and lead them to enjoy themselves on their progress. This research indicates not only on how good is one or another learner's dictionary for task design and as the teacher's resource, but it also points out the weak links in the whole teaching/ learning process. While taking only learner's dictionary, it provides countless opportunities and ideas on how to supplement the work in the class, so that not only students would develop interest, but also for the teacher, the work would be engaging. There are illustrations, oral and written facts about words, explanations and tables in learners' dictionaries. All this can be included in the task creation and realization, given that one is willing to think and work.

## Conclusions

In accordance with Jones (2016), 'teaching and learning a language is a mystery', which itself pulls the learner in and sometimes even urges go out of the usual frames to form the link between the teacher, students and language. 'Students learn in their own way. Sometimes they even learn that what has not been taught by the teacher' (Jones, 2016). Therefore, the teacher and training programs, as well as the used materials should be modern and flexible. The materials should address different language skills, not forgetting the grammar, and the combination of them. Using learner's dictionaries and presenting them to schoolchildren, the teacher can make the students want to get to know the language closer by adapting different types of materials. However, it must be done so that the tasks should be purposeful and meaningful.

The present Bachelor Thesis was divided into three chapters. The first chapter dealt with the theoretical background, where the information on teaching materials, four language skills and the types of dictionaries was gathered. The second chapter concentrated on the methodology of the research, where for the theoretical part Summative Analysis was adopted, but for the practical part Case Study approach was used. The third chapter reflected the empirical part of the research, divided into two sections. In the first section, the focus was put on the comparison of the online and the paper-format learner's dictionaries, as well as the comparison of the two paper-format dictionaries: the Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English and Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners. The second section gave the information on the task design and their piloting with the pre-intermediate students, covering the four language skills. These tasks were based on the two above-mentioned learner's dictionaries.

Accordingly, **the goal** of this research was to explore selected learner's dictionaries as a resource for designing tasks for developing the English language learners' four language skills. For this purpose two learner's dictionaries, Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English and Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners were selected. In view of this, **the hypothesis** was put forward for the empirical part, which stated that the Longman Learner's Dictionary offers more suggestive material for the teacher's creativity in task design for their learners than the Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners does. Following from the above, the **research question** arose: Can the learner's dictionaries serve as a resource for designing tasks for developing the English language learners' four language skills?

The study shows that the goal of the research has been achieved, as during the research process four tasks have been created, each responsible for a different language skill. Two tasks have been developed based on the Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English and two more tasks on the Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners. Considering the research question, the answer is that learner's dictionaries can serve as the basic material for designing tasks for developing the English language learners' four language skills. The proof is the developed tasks and students' responses in the questionnaire. In addition, the hypothesis has been confirmed that the Longman Dictionary can provide a wider range of materials than the Macmillan for teacher's creativity does, because it has been updated with more illustrations that are colourful and more explanations of entries, and this information may be included in creating tasks.

In conclusion, the research goal has been achieved, the hypothesis has been proved, predefined objectives have been realized and the research question has been answered.

During the development of the research, the author has not encountered major difficulties, but to mention two of them: lack of availability of the Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners and the brevity of the students' classes (40 minutes). When starting the lesson, it seems that there is much time, but when performing the tasks, time passes unnoticed.

The work contains of 64 pages with 18'507 words. Seventeen pages are appendices with nine pictures, one figure, one interview, one questionnaire, four lesson plans and four tasks. For further research, one may suggest to choose, to analyse and to compare more than two learner's dictionaries, To develop tasks that not only focus on the four language skills, but which would pay more attention to grammar issues.

## Thesis

1. According to Thornbury (2002), there have to be precise tasks and strategies to teach vocabulary.
2. According to Mcgrath (2002), there have to be set goals to which the teacher and the teaching program want to aim in the teaching process, which would make work easier only for the teacher, but also for the students.
3. According to Harmer (2007), when teaching any of the four language skills, the main principle is to create tasks so that they would not only teach the subject matter, but also be interesting and attractive for students.
4. Before choosing a textbook for the teaching process, the teacher should analyse it and assess the positive and negative traits, as well as consider what should be added or changed in this textbook.
5. According to Gewehr (1998), there are certain factors that have to be taken into account when choosing a dictionary that mostly focuses on the points that are important for every user of the dictionary individually.
6. Often, before the adoption of a dictionary, it is necessary to carry out its in-depth research and analysis as it can facilitate the achievement of the objectives in the utilization process.
7. The main difference between the Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English and the Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners is that the Longman Dictionary offers more colour pictures with word explanations, collocations and teaching advice than the Macmillan Dictionary.
8. The main advantage for the online learner's dictionary is that it saves time for the word search, but the paper-format dictionary teaches more about the use of dictionaries and the richness of vocabulary.
9. Out of all four tasks, students liked the speaking task most, because it was more active, it trained their speaking in real life situations and it had the hint cards that helped the students to feel more comfortable to speak.
10. The **goal** of the research to explore selected learner's dictionaries as a resource for designing tasks for developing the English language learners' four language skills has been achieved. Four tasks, each concentrating on a specific language skill, were designed based on the above-mentioned learners' dictionaries and piloted in the classroom with pre-intermediate students.

11. The **hypothesis** of this research has been proved; Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English offers more suggestive material for the teacher's creativity in task design for their learners than Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners, because it has more colour pictures and illustrations with word explanations that can be exploited in the task design.

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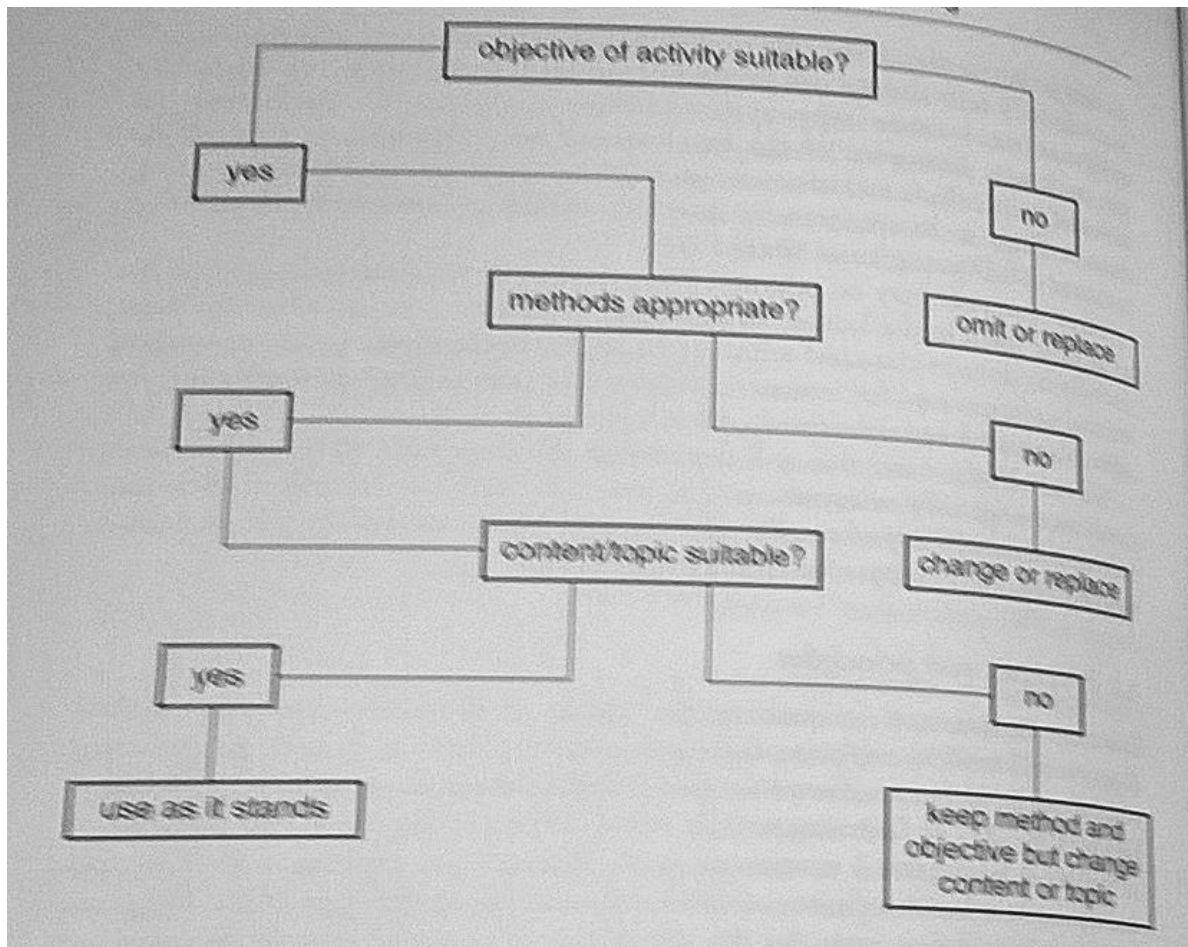
### **Online Sources**

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## **Appendices**

## Appendix 1

### Evaluation of Lesson Activities



**Figure 1.1. Evaluation of lessons**

Taken from McGrath, I. (2002) *Material Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching* (pp. 62). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd.

## Appendix 2

### Interview for the Teacher

1. What is the average level of the class knowledge?

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2. What training topics have been taken in this school year?

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3. What kind of vocabulary words are most often used by the students during the lessons?

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4. Have you ever used one of these (Longman or Macmillan) Learner's Dictionary for preparation for the lessons or even for the task design?

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**Thank you for your answers!**

## Appendix 3

### Questionnaire about the Tasks for the Students and the Teacher in Latvian

Sveicināti!

Es esmu Latvijas Universitātes Humanitāro zinātņu fakultātes Angļu filoloģijas 4. kursa studente, un es Bakalaura darbu par tēmu 'Learner's Dictionaries as Teacher's Resources' jeb „Mācību vārdnīca kā skolotāja darba resursi”.

Lūdzu, aizpildiet šo aptauju par četriem uzdevumiem, ko pildījāt iepriekš.

Apvelc izvēlēto burtu, bet tukšajās līnijās ieraksti prasītos komentārus.

Dzimums:

Sieviete

Vīrietis

1. Kurš no četriem uzdevumiem Jums patika vislabāk?
  - A) Lasīšanas uzdevums ar krustvārdu mīklu;
  - B) E-pasta rakstīšanas uzdevums;
  - C) Runāšanas uzdevums ar profesiju kartītēm (spēle "Mafija")
  - D) Klausīšanās uzdevums par darbu un profesijām.

2. Kāpēc tieši šis uzdevums Jums likās pievilcīgāks par pārējiem?

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---

---

Paldies par sadarbību!



## Appendix 4

### Lesson Plan for the Reading task

**Subject:** English

**Level of Knowledge:** Pre-Intermediate

**Topic:** Food

**Skills:** Reading with the focus on the topic food

**Content:** Reading a magazine article about food

	<b>Time (minutes)</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Goals</b>		Students will be able to orientate in the text about food.
<b>Materials</b>		A magazine article about food prepared from Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English
<b>Introduction</b>	6	Before receiving the task, students are told what kind of task it will be. Then they will be told what they will have to do with it and finally it will be explained that it is an individual work.
<b>Presentation</b>	10	Before students receive their magazine article, they are introduced to the vocabulary that is present in the text. Vocabulary is written on the blackboard, where the words are explained in other words, as well as translated into Latvian.
<b>Practise</b>	2	When students receive text and visually acquaint themselves with it, they give short preliminary comments on what about the text will be.
<b>Production</b>	15	The students read the article, if necessary re-read the article one more time. Then they receive a task with crossword with the words from the article. They fill in the gaps. After the work has been finished, they give the articles and tasks back to the teacher.
<b>Conclusion</b>		After all four tasks students receive a questionnaire, where they share thoughts on which task they liked the most and why.
<b>Closure</b>	2	The teacher gives a recommendation to think over what are the bad things and the good things that they eat at home.

## Appendix 5

### Reading task based on Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English



Fabrikam, Inc.

## “THE FOOD THAT WE EAT”

Based on Longman English Dictionary of Contemporary English

In today's hurry it is difficult to find the time to prepare a full meal. Food, consisting of



additives, meat and salad is required for growing organisms. But fast-food restaurants selling fatty and fat-rich dishes change our eating habits. Have you thought about what you eat and how healthy it is!

Vegetables and fruits play a great role in human health. They improve many functions performed by the human body, and the more you use them on a daily basis,

the better the chances that you will feel more awake, smarter and healthier.



## CROSSWORD ON THE ARTICLE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

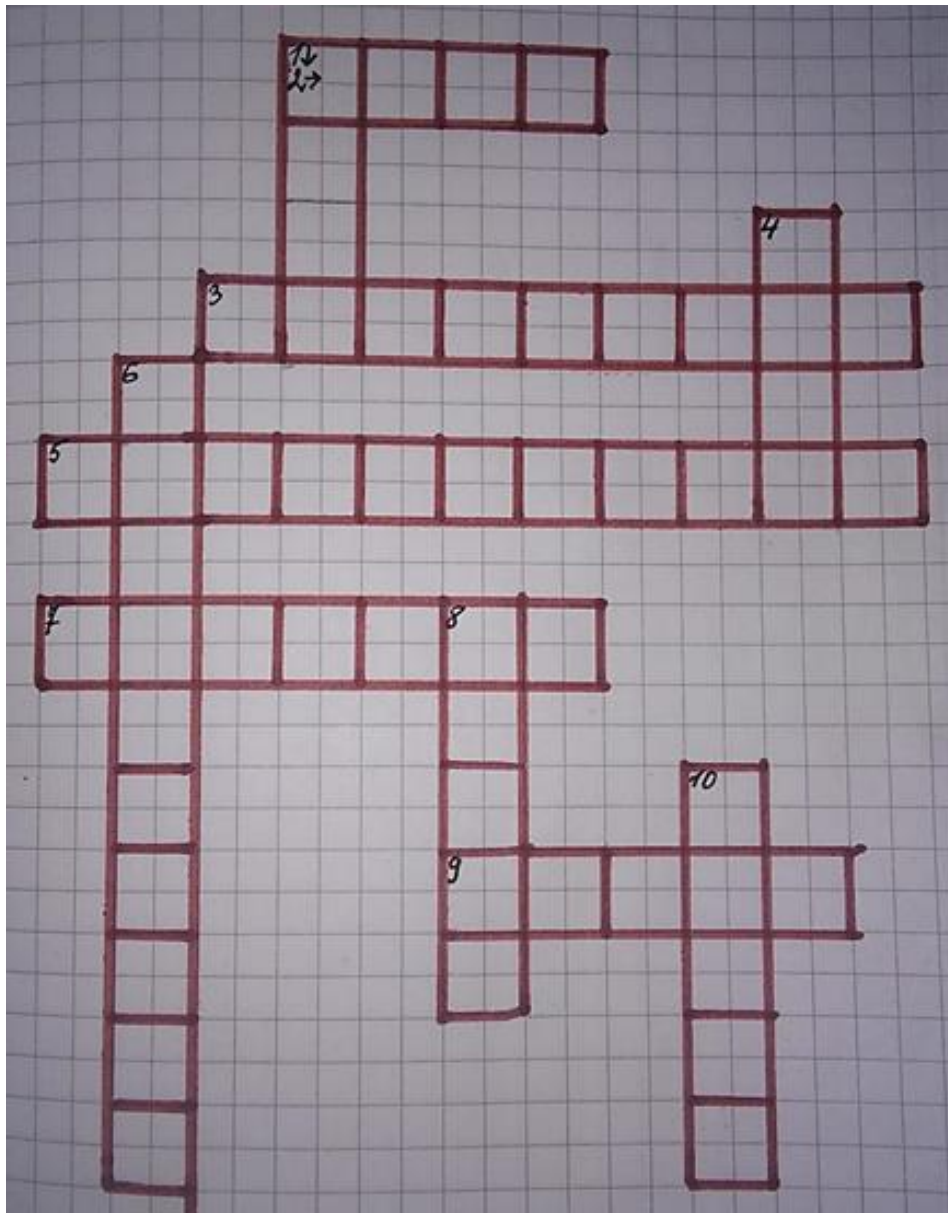
Form \_\_\_\_\_

### Vertical ⬇

1. The theme of the article.
3. Something that is added to the food to form a full meal.
6. A plant for eating. (In the plural form.)
8. A member of primates/ A person.
10. Adjective for a word denoting that food is rich in fat.

### Horizontal ➡

2. To say complete in other words.
4. An edible thing from the animal world.
5. A place where people go out to eat. (In the plural form.)
7. Having a good health.
9. Completely conscious, not in a state of sleep



## Appendix 6

### Lesson Plan for the Writing Task

**Subject:** English

**Level of Knowledge:** Pre-Intermediate

**Topic:** Weather

**Skills:** Reading and writing skills with the subject weather.

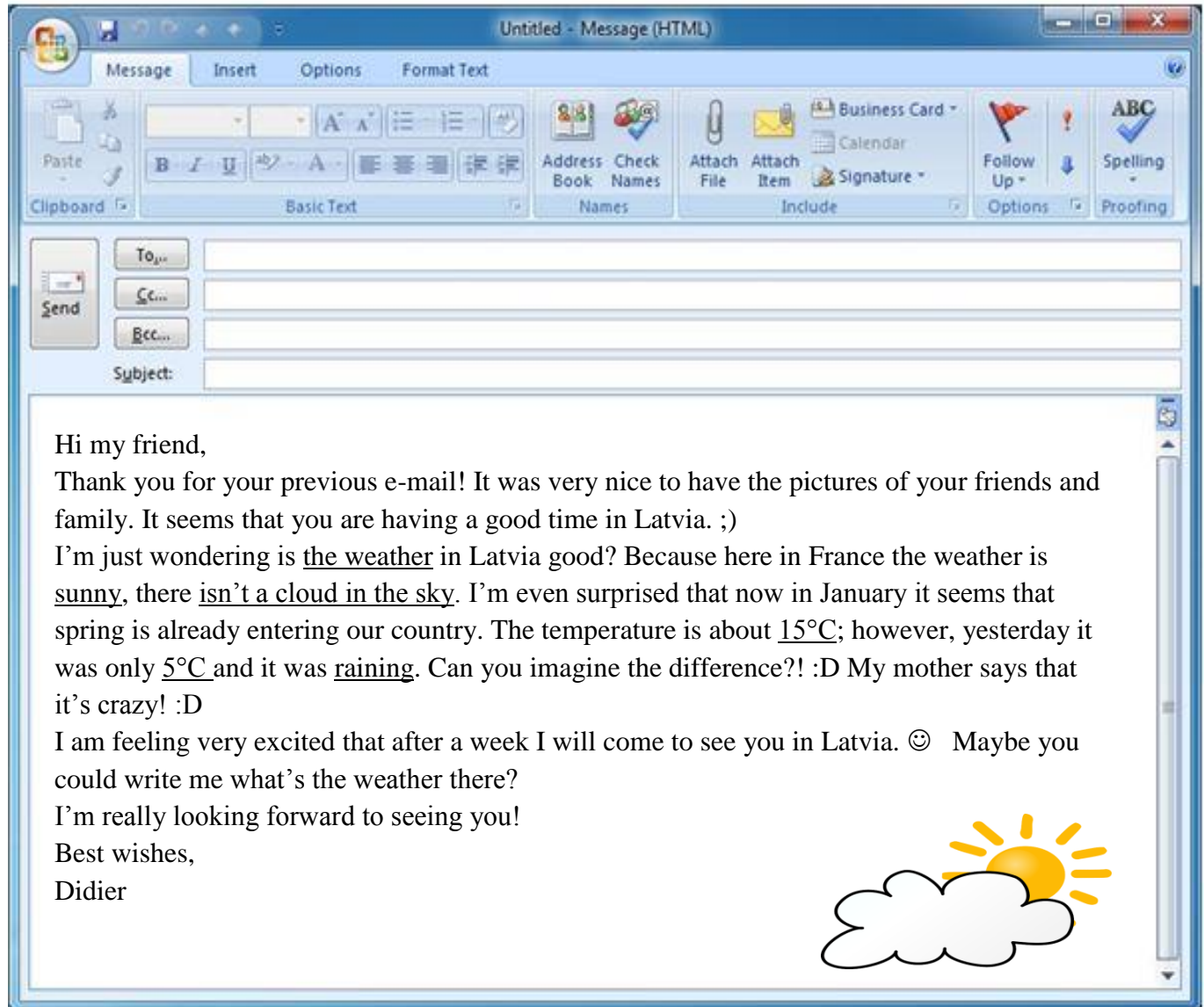
**Content:** Writing a feedback to the friend's e-mail about the weather from given weather picture

	<b>Time (minutes)</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Goals</b>		Students will be able to write about the weather in their country.
<b>Materials</b>		An e-mail from a friend about the weather in France based on Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English.
<b>Introduction</b>	2	Before receiving the task first, students are told what kind of task it will be. Second, they will be told what they will have to do with it, and finally it will be explained that it is an individual work.
<b>Presentation</b>	7	Before students receive their e-mails from a friend, the teacher tells or recalls the steps of the writing process. (Planning, drafting, reviewing, editing and producing the final version.)
<b>Practise</b>	10	When students receive texts, they read them.
<b>Production</b>	18	The students receive a blank page, where they write a response e-mail to the friend about the weather in Latvia. After the work has been finished, they give the e-mails and their response e-mails back to the teacher.
<b>Conclusion</b>		After all four tasks students receive a questionnaire, where they share thoughts on which task they liked the most and why.
<b>Closure</b>	2	Teacher recommends to think over which of the writing process steps are more necessary for the students and which can be skipped.

## Appendix 7

### Writing Task Based on Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English

Based on Longman Learner's Dictionary of Contemporary English.



## Appendix 8

### Lesson Plan of the Speaking Task

**Subject:** English

**Level of Knowledge:** Pre-Intermediate

**Topic:** Professions

**Skills:** Reading and speaking with the focus on the topic professions.

**Content:** Reading a description of oneself and telling it to others.

	<b>Time (minutes)</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Goals</b>		Students will be able to describe a profession and personal appearance.
<b>Materials</b>		Cards with descriptions of particular professions based on Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners.
<b>Introduction</b>	7	First, they will be given a brief description of what the speaking game is about.
<b>Presentation</b>	5	Before students receive their description cards, they are introduced to the new topical vocabulary. The vocabulary will be written on the blackboard, where the words are explained in other words, as well as translated into Latvian.
<b>Practise</b>	2	Students receive the cards with the descriptions.
<b>Production</b>	24	The students read the short descriptions. Then they wait for the "day" in the game and start to tell the false stories about themselves.
<b>Conclusion</b>		After all four tasks students receive a questionnaire, where they share thoughts on which task they liked the most and why.
<b>Closure</b>	2	The teacher recommends thinking over, which professions were not included in the game.

## Appendix 9

### Speaking Task-Game Mafia

Based on Macmillan English Dictionary for Advance

#### *Priest*

You are a priest in the local church.  
You are 80 years old and you have  
a wife and three children.

In the "big night" you heard how  
your dog Bingo barked. But then  
you thought that it is because of the  
Moon that shined.



#### *Artist*

You are a very talented  
**artist**. You are 45 years  
old. The best thing that you  
like to paint are animals.  
At the time of the firing,  
you paint your dog, so did  
not hear anything.



#### *Housewife*

You are a housewife and you  
are 32 years old. You have  
two children (a boy and a  
girl) and a wonderfully  
loving husband.

In the night of shooting your  
baby boy cried that is why  
this is the only thing you  
heard



#### *Teacher*

You are a local 53 years old  
teacher. You teach 8 form  
students. You like long walks and  
rock music.

In the night of shooting you were  
at the cafe and you heard how the  
singer threatened to her boss.  
However, you did not hear the  
reason

## Appendix 10

### Lesson Plan for Listening Task

**Subject:** English

**Level of Knowledge:** Pre-Intermediate

**Topic:** The Business/ Professions

**Skills:** Listening and writing with the focus on the topic business/professions.

**Content:** Listening to a man called Nil about his jobs and its growth.

	<b>Time (minutes)</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Goals</b>		Students will be able to listening to an English speaking person and write down the necessary information.
<b>Materials</b>		Macmillan worksheet and record. Taken from Online 1 Available from <a href="http://www.businessenglishonline.net/resources/podcasts/">http://www.businessenglishonline.net/resources/podcasts/</a> [Accessed on 16 February 2016]
<b>Introduction</b>	7	First they will be given a brief description what kind of task this is, what is the topic and who will be the speaker.
<b>Presentation</b>	3	The teacher shows to the students the task and says where it comes from.
<b>Practise</b>	10	When the students get their tasks they go through it and ask questions to the teacher if something is not understandable.
<b>Production</b>	15	The students listen to the record for three times and during the listening or after it they circle, fill in the information and answer the questions.
<b>Conclusion</b>	3	After the all four tasks, students receive a questionnaire, where they share thoughts on which task they liked the most and why.
<b>Closure</b>	2	Recommendations to think over the futures plan after graduating school.

## Appendix 11

### Speaking Task

#### The Podcast – Nils

Listen to an interview with Nils, a Swedish professional working in the UK.

1 Which of the following best describes Nils' job?

- a) He does research for a government agency.
- b) He works in customer support.
- c) He's a computer programmer for a software company.

Listen again and answer the following questions.

1) What did Nils do before his current job? How did he get his current job?

---

2) Nils says there are two differences between working in Sweden and working in the UK. What are they?

---

3) Complete the table with things Nils says in the interview about his job. Add one more thing to each column.

Things Nils enjoys	Skills needed
He meets many different customers .....	Making a good impression .....

- 4) What advice does Nil give to anyone who wants to get a job like his?
- a) Just apply for similar things.
  - b) Simply walk through the door.
  - c) Come to England on a Sunday.

## Appendix 12

### Teacher's Text on the Topic "Birthday"

My birthday is on the 25th of April. Long before this day I start preparing for it. First of all I think over the list of guests to my birthday party and invite them beforehand *(Must be written in English)*. I make up a plan what I'll do to entertain my guests: I look for some interesting games, some music.

Just before that day I give a thorough cleaning to our flat, and arrange everything so that everybody can feel at ease at my party. Early in the morning on the day I expect my guests, I start preparing a festive meal. When everything is ready, I start laying the table. We usually have our meal by the candlelight. It is so nice to sit among your parents, friends, relatives when everybody wishes you something very pleasant. As a rule everybody enjoys parties and is sorry when time comes to say good-bye and go away.

Sometimes I invite my guests on Saturday night so that we have no time limit and talk, play and dance far into the night or ~~the morning~~ <sup>when</sup> ~~dawns~~ <sup>to</sup> fresh and clear.

I also receive letters and post-cards where my friends and acquaintances send their best wishes to me. It's great to be among your classmates. I like all the presents and tokens given to me on that day, but especially I do like flowers. It is the time when first spring flowers appear and they look so nice in the vase.

Of course, I have to wash up and tidy the rooms when my guests have left. Sometimes my bosom-friend helps me with it.

Figure 3.1. Teacher's text on the topic "Birthday"

## Appendix 13

### Paper Format Dictionary

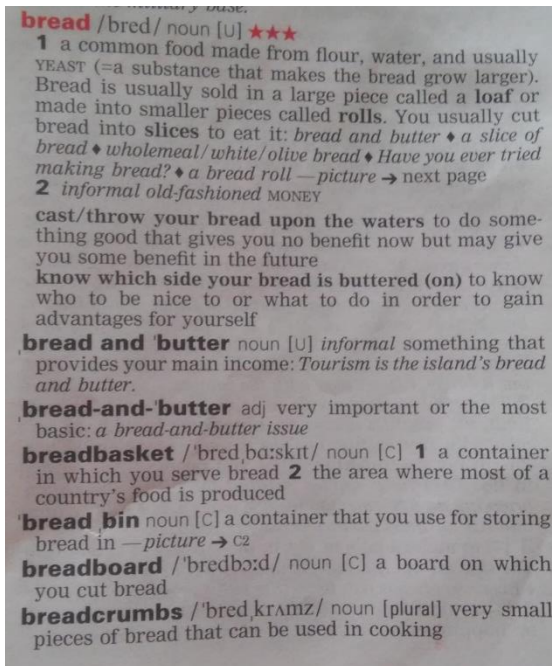


Figure 3.2. The outline of a word in paper format dictionary

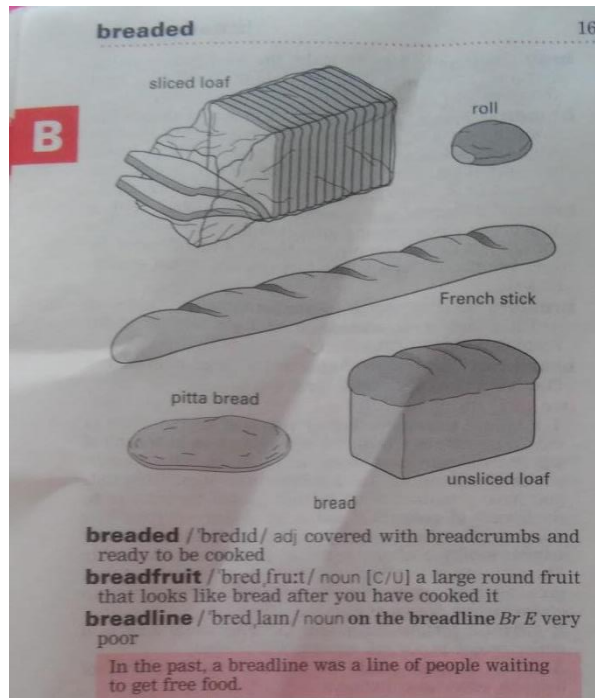


Figure 3.3. The illustration of a word in paper format dictionary

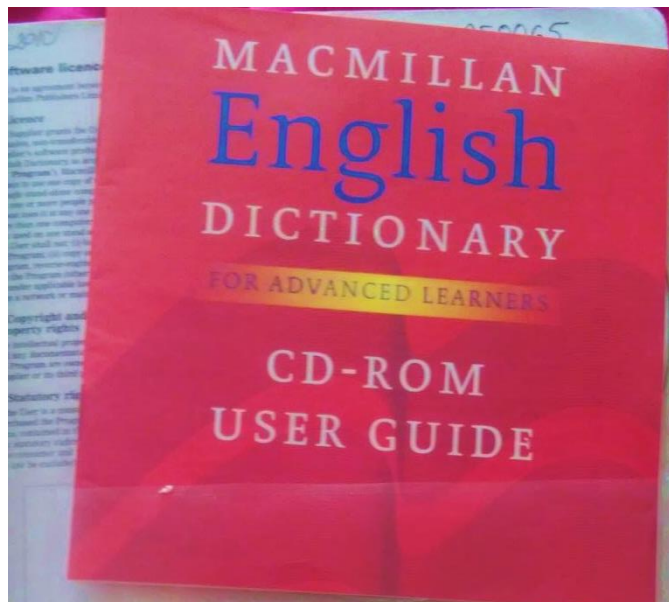


Figure 3.4. The compact disk in paper format dictionary

## Appendix 14

### Illustrations Section in Paper format Dictionary



Figure 3.5. Illustration page in paper format dictionary (plants)



Figure 3.6. Illustration page in paper format dictionary (Houses)

## Appendix 15

### The Outline of the Online Dictionary

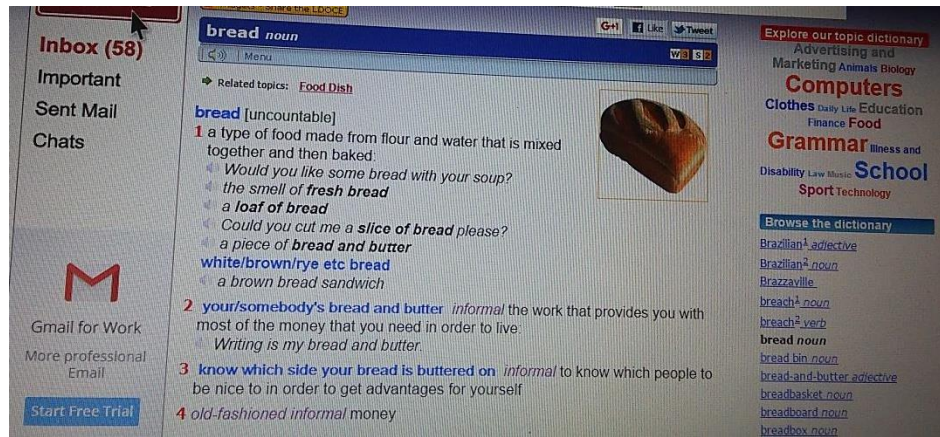


Figure 3.7. The outline of the Longman Learner's Online Dictionary

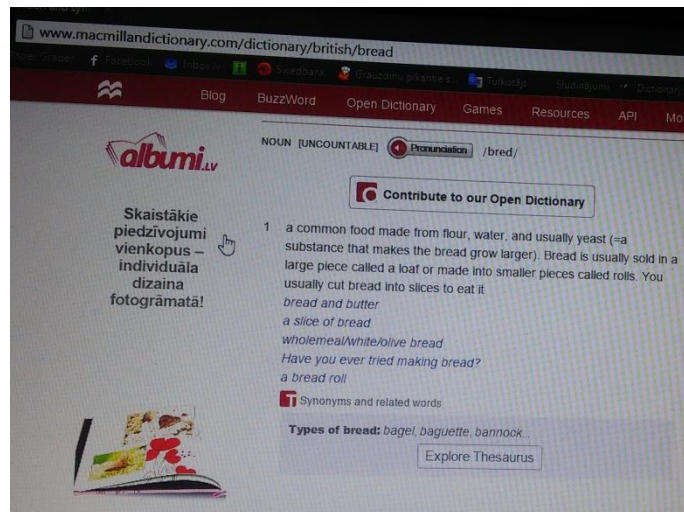


Figure 3.8. The outline of a word in Macmillan Learner's Online Dictionary

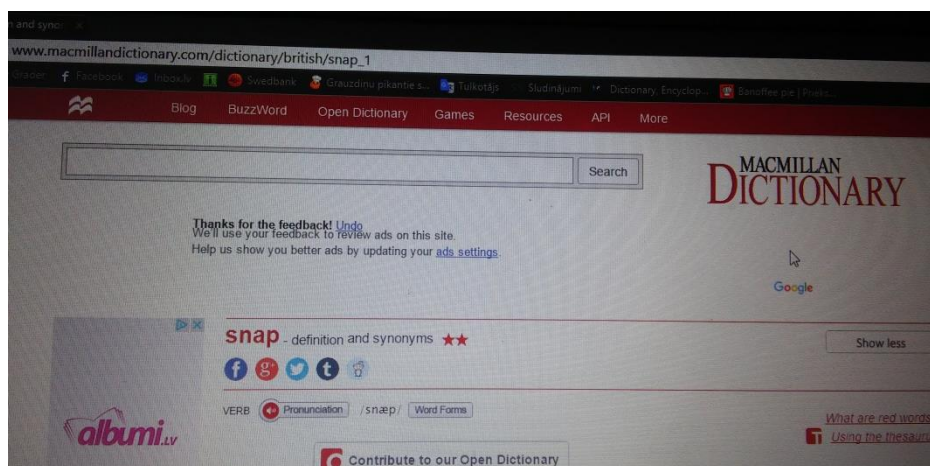


Figure 3.9. The search engine in Macmillan Learner's Online Dictionary

## Appendix 16

### Comparing Both Paper-Format Dictionaries

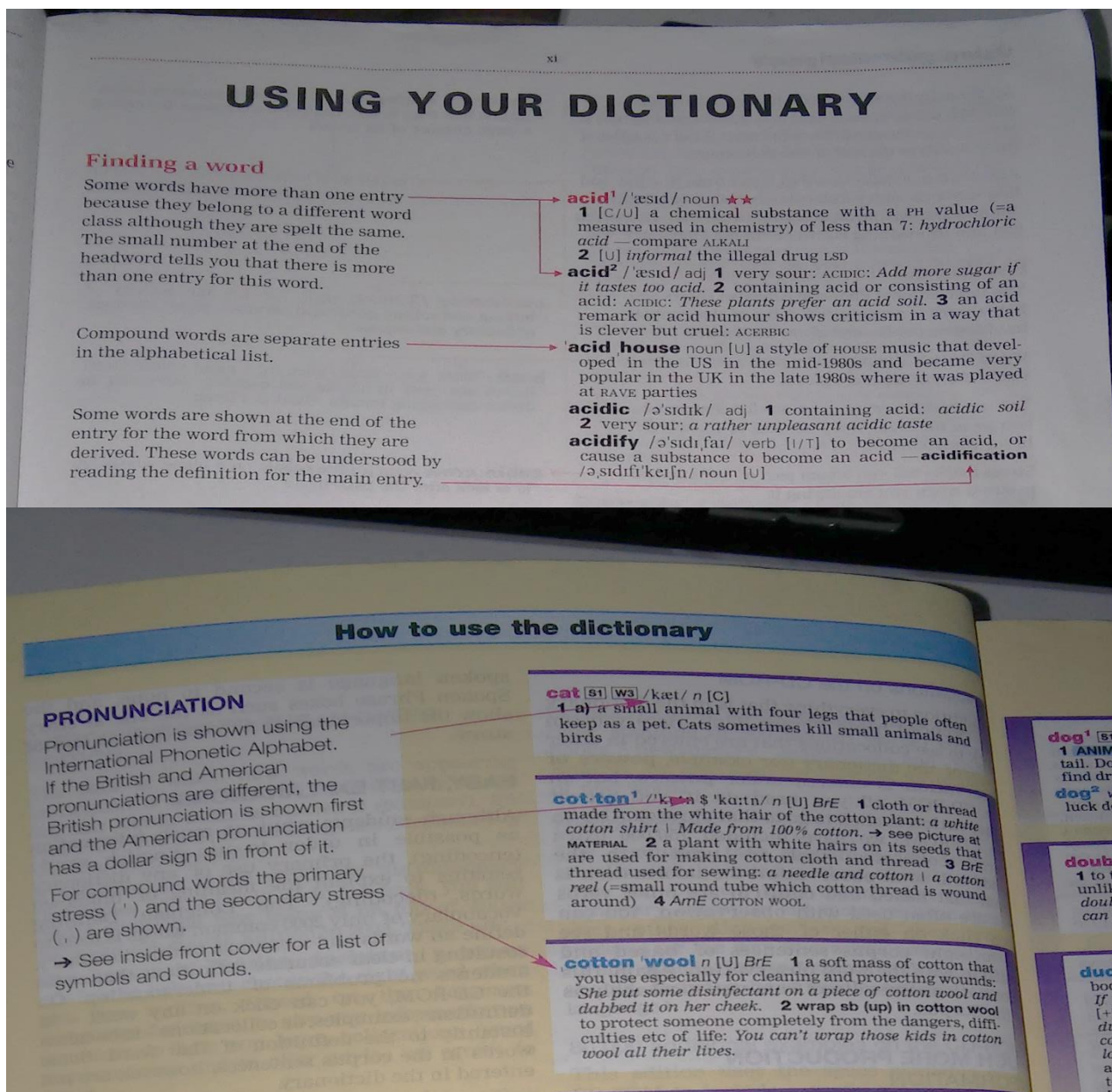


Figure 3.10. The appearance of the pages of the use of both dictionaries



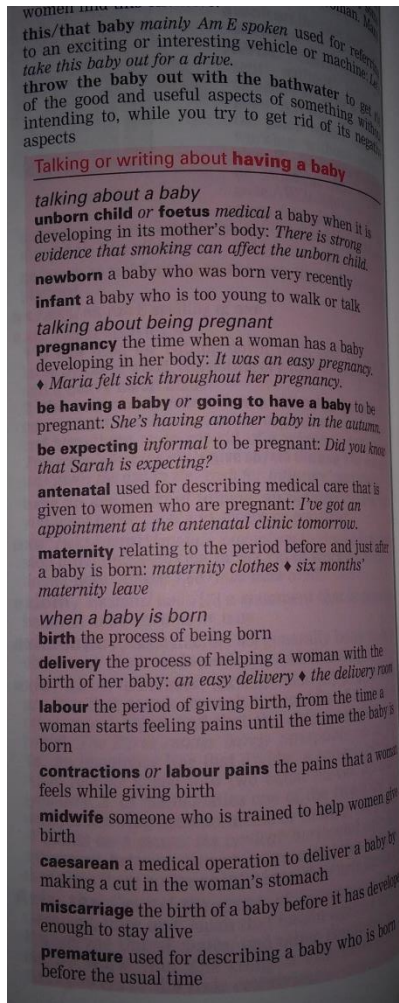


Figure 3.12. The topical list of words in Macmillan Learner's Dictionary

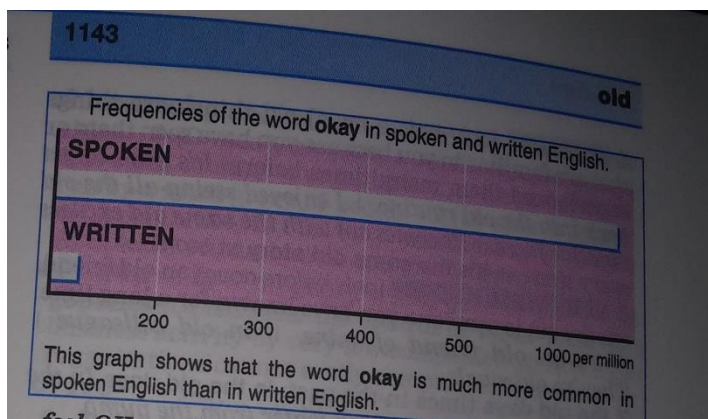


Figure 3.14. The chart of word frequencies in spoken and written language (Longman)

## Attestation Page (Dokumentārā lapa)

Bakalaura darbs „Learner’s Dictionaries ar Teacher’s Resources” (Mācību vārdnīcas kā skolotāja darba resursi) izstrādāts LU Humanitāro zinātņu fakultātē.

Ar savu parakstu apliecinu, ka pētījums veikts patstāvīgi, izmantoti tikai tajā norādītie informācijas avoti un iesniegtā darba elektroniskā kopija atbilst izdrukai.

Autors: Rita Bautre \_\_\_\_\_

Rekomendēju/nerekomendēju darbu aizstāvēšanai

Vadītāja: \_\_\_\_\_

Recenzents: \_\_\_\_\_

Studiju metodiķe: \_\_\_\_\_

Darbs iesniegts Anglistikas/Sastatāmās valodniecības un tulkošanas nodaļā

Darbu pieņēma: \_\_\_\_\_

Darbs aizstāvēts bakalaura gala pārbaudījuma komisijas sēdē

2016. gada..... jūnijā, prot. Nr. ...., vērtējums .....

Komisijas sekretāre: \_\_\_\_\_