

**Exploring Students' Perceptions of the Efficiency of
Specialized Economics Dictionaries: A Case Study of
Economics Students at Jordan University**



Belgrimet Souad ¹, Abdelhai Nour El Houda²

¹Abd el Hamid Ibn Badis University (Algeria), souad.belgrimet@univ-mosta.dz

²Algiers 2 University (Algeria), nourelhouda.abdelhai@univ-alger2.dz

Summary:

The assessment of dictionaries has received ample attention in the last couple of decades. Accordingly, the study at hands is concerned with the assessment of a specialized dictionary, namely, an economics dictionary entitled: "A Dictionary of Economics, Business and Finance" by Nabih Ghattas. This dictionary was the most popular and widely used by economics students. In fact, the review of this dictionary was couched within McMillan's framework (Landau, 1989). The latter encompasses three main criteria for dictionary assessment, namely, quantity of information, quality of information and effectiveness of presentation. The aim behind the selection of this framework is the fact that it enables economics students to critically analyze dictionaries from different perspectives. The study similarly attempts to capture the perceptions of Economics students regarding the effectiveness of dictionaries. This was realized by means of a mixed questionnaire including both closed-ended and open-ended questions that was administered to 20 BA students majoring in the field of Economics at Jordan University. The results revealed that the sampled dictionary mainly provides the semantic meaning with neglect of word formation, phonetic transcription and the etymology of the entry. Besides, students' responses to the questionnaire indicated their satisfaction with the language used to account for each entry. The students' perceptions similarly showed that they are not trained on how to make full use of dictionaries. This study ends with a set of pedagogical implications that promote the literacy of using and assessing dictionaries.

Keywords: Critical review, economics BA students, Jordan University, specialized economics dictionary, students' perceptions.

INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

In research spanning over the last couple of decades, growing interest was directed towards the role played by the dictionary as a source for gaining knowledge. In fact, the dictionary is regarded as a supportive instrument that provides learners with a wealth of information in all aspects of language. These include semantic, pragmatic, phonetic and etymological information. Accordingly, dictionaries may be used in a range of disciplines such as: medicine, physics, law and politics to mention but a few (Hartmann, 2001). Such a fact is reflected in the existence of different specialized dictionaries. However, it seems worth pointing out at the level of detail considered here the paucity of research on the dynamics of dictionary consultation.

Upon trying to define what is meant by a dictionary, Hartmann (2001) pinpoints to the list metaphor. The latter refers to the basic tool for structuring information. In fact, the list of entries is subjected either to an alphabetical or thematic ordering. It is noteworthy though that, in dictionaries, it is fundamental for the information conveyed by the dictionary compiler and consulted by the user to be accessible. The latter may only be achieved by means of lists (ibid). The study and analysis of dictionaries falls within the broad, multidisciplinary field of lexicography. Indeed, according to Bergenholtz and Gouws (2012), lexicography is made up of two main components: theoretical lexicography and lexicographic practice. In this regard, the description and assessment of the lexis of a given language and the definitions provided for each entry constitute what is well known as theoretical lexicography. However, the task of compiling and editing a dictionary falls under the heading of practical lexicography.

In a similar vein, the study embodies a critical review of a dictionary of economics. It seems thus important at the outset to cast light on the definition and importance of this process. Indeed, dictionary criticism refers to “description and evaluation of a dictionary or other reference work, usually in comparison with others.” (Hartmann, 2001:172). This is realized on a number of grounds. Relatively, dictionary criticism may be regarded as part of metalexicography. Upon trying to determine the rationale behind the critical reviews conducted with respect to different types of dictionaries, namely, monolingual, bilingual, multilingual, general-purpose and specialized dictionaries, Hartmann and James (1998) pointed out to the notion of dictionary culture. The latter was defined as “the critical awareness of the value and limitations of dictionaries and other reference works in a particular community.” (Hartmann and James, 1998, p. 41). It is noteworthy though that nowadays, dictionary culture is strikingly characterized by the lack of effective and well-informed dictionary criticism. As may be seen, the importance of dictionary criticism derives from the importance of the dictionary as a crucial

learning tool. Indeed, the aim of the compilers is to meet the users' needs through the dictionary text. On the other hand, the user examines the dictionary to satisfy his/her needs. The task of the dictionary critic is thus to take into account the dictionary compiler and user (Hadebe, 2005).

The present study is expected to enrich the literature on lexicography. It is directed to fill the existing gap on what an effective specialized dictionary should include with an eye towards users' perspective. Further, it is prevalent in developing students' critical thinking and lexical awareness to different dictionary typologies. In fact, the study at hands provides implications and pedagogical recommendations that enhance ESP practice. That is, it informs teachers about students' preferences with regard to what a specialized dictionary should include and improve the ways through which they train learners in dictionary skills and develop search strategies. Finally, it informs dictionary compilers about students' needs and preferences in relation to dictionary components and design.

As far as the aims of the present study are concerned, it seeks first to conduct a critical review of the bilingual English-Arabic dictionary of economics entitled: "*A Dictionary of Economics, Business and Finance*" by Nabih Ghattas. The review is couched within McMillan's framework. The second aim of the study is to capture insights about the perceptions of the students majoring in the field of economic and financial studies. On these grounds, the students' responses will be used as a validity tool to either confirm or reject the results obtained in the critical review of the dictionary under scrutiny. In addition, the students' responses will constitute the basis for deriving a set of pedagogical implications for dictionary compilers as to what criteria should be taken into consideration when compiling a dictionary to facilitate the task of learning on the part of the learners. In order to reach the gist of the present study, the following research questions are devised:

- 1- To what extent is the dictionary put under investigation a comprehensive and effective tool for the students of economics?
- 2- What are the students' perceptions regarding the usefulness of this dictionary?
- 3- What pedagogical implications does this study bring to the lexicographic scene?

On the basis of the aforementioned research questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

- 1- The dictionary entitled: "*A Dictionary of Economics, Business and Finance*" by Nabih Ghattas can be helpful for economics' students as it provides comprehensive entries and definitions for them.
- 2- The students might have positive attitudes towards the dictionary and might perceive it as being useful and effective.

3- Students can be trained on how to effectively use a dictionary by familiarizing them with the required guidelines useful for dictionary use and analysis.

2. Literature review

Over the past twenty years, a growing body of research was conducted to investigate the dynamics of dictionary use by different categories of users. Similarly, a number of studies undertook a critical stance when reviewing the effectiveness of some dictionaries based on a number of criteria.

2.1. Previous Studies on Dictionary Use

In this line of thought, Hamouda (2013) undertook a study in which he sought to investigate the most frequently used types of dictionaries in addition to the frequency of their use. In addition, light was shed on the type of information the students usually look for when using the dictionary. To this end, two main data collection tools were used, namely, a questionnaire and interviews with EFL students at Quassim University in Saudi Arabia. The yielded results indicated that the students show a preference for using e-dictionaries, more specifically bilingual dictionaries when looking for the meaning of new, unknown words. In addition, as far as the type of information they usually look for, the findings indicated that the students are more interested in finding the semantic meaning of a word while neglecting information about the pragmatic meaning, word formation knowledge, pronunciation and examples about word usage. The researcher finally reached the conclusion that EFL students at Quassim University lack sufficient training on how to take full advantage of dictionaries and this usually results in the inappropriate use of dictionaries.

In a similar standpoint, Ding (2015) conducted a study with English majors in a Chinese University, namely, Fudan University to explore their dictionary consultation habits and behavior. In essence, the study attempted to cast light on how Chinese students as learners of English make use of dictionaries under natural conditions. The study similarly sought to explore the different problems that face this category of learners when using dictionaries. To reach these objectives, the students were set a dictionary consultation assignment based on Nesi and Haill's study on the dictionary using habits of international students at a British University. The findings indicated that the participants mainly used digital dictionaries. Upon trying to explore their consultation habits, the yielded results indicated that the population under investigation shows a preference for examining L1 translations instead of looking for L2 definitions. However, the researcher highlighted the unrealistic expectations for L1 translations found in some dictionaries which, at times, resulted in some difficulties in understanding the contextual meaning of a given entry. Similarly, the researcher concluded that the Chinese students exhibit some critical opinions regarding the usefulness and effectiveness of dictionaries

despite their limited exposure to lexicographic instruction which is believed to provide the learners with the necessary guidelines and principles of dictionary use and criticism.

Al Sayed and Siddiek (2015) investigated the myriad aspects of the attitudes and perceptions of monolingual pedagogical English dictionaries by Sudanese English majors. The results revealed that an overwhelming majority of the sampled students believed that monolingual English dictionaries are the best and customary choice. Further, the study exhibited that students ignored ancillary dictionary aspects (abbreviations, appendices, introductions, and the defining vocabulary) and the connotative meaning, level of use and pronunciation techniques. Interestingly, the study suggested the inclusion of lexicography as an integral part of the English language syllabus in the Sudanese universities and the use of 'task-based' activities in General English lessons in order to equip learners with the means to handle the facets of monolingual dictionaries such as definitions, pronunciation and collocations.

From another perspective, Chi (2016) conducted a review of Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (6th edition) for advanced learners (LDOCE6). The review evaluated the degree to which the dictionary satisfies the needs and expectations of the users and if it rightly pitches at the level of their English proficiency and reference skills for ease of use and acquiring linguistic knowledge. The findings displayed that the ten words under search in LDOCE6 are found to meet the needs of the subject users in terms of clearness of definitions, features indicating academic status and frequency of use. Such highlighted features surely add value to an already high-quality lexicographical publication

As may be seen, the aforementioned studies highlighted the importance of dictionary criticism and user perspective for improving the quality and effectiveness of dictionaries. Such studies shed light on the positive effect of integrating dictionaries as a supportive tool on the teaching/learning process.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

There seems to be a general agreement in the literature regarding the underdevelopment of dictionary criticism around the globe. In fact, dictionary criticism is regarded as a field that is still in its infancy (Hadebe, 2005). Relatively, it is worth pointing out that dictionary criticism varies according to a set of parameters such as the languages used, the country and the users to which the dictionary is directed (ibid).

Upon trying to conduct a critical review of a given dictionary, the critic is believed to have the relevant expertise (Hadebe, 2005). This is often related to the awareness and knowledge the critic should possess with regard to the major principles and criteria governing the task of dictionary review and criticism. In this regard, Hartmann (2001) states that "anyone who has ever read (or written) a review of a particular dictionary will know that generally agreed criteria and

standards for the assessment of quality and performance are still rare if they can be said to exist at all" (p. 49). In the same line of thought, Osselton (1989) indicated that there is a lack of knowledge with regard to the general principles and guidelines on the part of the critics as to what they should look for and why they should do so when embarking in the process of dictionary criticism.

One attempt to organize such guidelines was initiated by McMillan (Landau, 1989) who devised a set of criteria which fall under three main headings, namely, quantity of information, quality of information and effectiveness of presentation (Landau, 1989: 306). First, quantity of information alludes to the number of entries found in a given dictionary, the number of definitions and newly introduced terms, the provision of synonyms, antonyms, and etymologies. Furthermore, quantity of information similarly includes the number of occurrences of subject-field terms. It is noteworthy though that when tackling such issues, it is fundamental to take into account the type of the dictionary to be analysed, its aims, and the users to which the dictionary is directed (their speciality and their academic level).

Second, quality of information revolves around "accuracy, completeness, clearness, simplicity and modernity" (Landau, 1989: 306). These parameters appear to be fundamental for each critical review conducted on dictionaries.

Finally, the effectiveness of presentation is regarded as a crucial component that critics should carefully pay attention to. It consists of analysing and evaluating how information is presented to the reader. Such analysis is often realized with an eye towards the ordering of entries (whether it is alphabetical or thematic), how the definitions are ordered, the provision of the phonetic transcription and etymology (where the etymology of the word is placed within the definition of the entry) (ibid).

As may be seen, McMillan's framework (Landau, 1989) seems to be the most adequate guide for dictionary criticism due to its flexibility in meeting the needs of those who undertake such a process. Such flexibility led the researchers of the present study to adopt this framework under the assumption that it is the most adequate and useful framework which provides a thorough description of the dictionary put under investigation. Accordingly, all aspects of dictionary criticism will be covered.

3. Methodology

The following section presents the sample, the data collection tools and the procedure undertaken to answer the study's research questions and test its formulated hypotheses. As previously stated, the present study attempts to assess the dictionary entitled: "*A Dictionary of Economics, Business and Finance*" by Nabih Ghattas. It similarly tries to explore the students' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the sampled dictionary in order to come up with pedagogical implications on how to help students use and analyze dictionaries effectively.

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

In an attempt to answer the aforementioned research questions, two main data collection tools were used. Accordingly, in order to answer the first research question, a dictionary of economics was selected and put under investigation. The dictionary is entitled: "*A Dictionary of Economics, Business and Finance*" written by Nabih Ghattas in 1985 and published by *Librairie du Liban (Library of Lebanon)*. Relatively, the sampled dictionary is a bilingual one in which the entry is provided in English while the equivalent and set of definitions are provided in Arabic. It is worth pointing out that the rationale behind the selection of an English-Arabic bilingual dictionary is the fact that some entries were given to BA students of Economics who are not familiar with the basic terms of the field in English since their linguistic background is Arabic. Thus, it is believed that providing the students with definitions in Arabic will help the students in gaining a better understanding. It is noteworthy that the students put under investigation are not experienced in the field of economics as they are BA students.

The selected dictionary was first analysed by the researchers who selected six entries from the sampled dictionary for analysis. In fact, the researchers first consulted a group of economics' students and asked them about the most basic and recurrent concepts in the field due to the fact that researchers are not experienced in this area. Accordingly, the selected entries were the following: demand, supply, business cycle, market, Gross National Product, inflation. The researchers relied mainly on McMillan's framework to conduct a critical analysis of the dictionary. The review of the dictionary thus goes in line with the three criteria of quality, quantity of information and the effectiveness of presentation, each encompassing a set of sub-criteria.

In order to answer the second research question, a mixed questionnaire was administered to 20 BA students majoring in the field of economics. The questionnaire is divided into three parts. In the first part, information about students' gender and age were gathered. In the second part, the students were provided with six entries extracted from the dictionary put under investigation. Under each entry, the students were asked to provide their comments regarding their satisfaction with the number of definitions, clarity of language, appropriateness of the equivalent and the definition provided in Arabic and the need for phonetic information. The students' responses are believed to either refute or confirm the criticism initiated by the researchers on the dictionary to answer the first research question. Furthermore, their answers are expected to mirror their perceptions with regard to the usefulness of the dictionary put under scrutiny. The third part of the questionnaire revolves around the students' recommendation with regard to how this type of specialized dictionaries, namely, dictionary of economics may be improved to promote successful learning on the part of the participants.

3.2. Participants' Profiles

The participants taking part in the present study were twenty BA students, fourteen males and six females majoring in the field of economics at the University of Jordan. Their age ranges between 19 and 22 years.

3.3. Method of Data Analysis

In order to analyse the data obtained, a mixed method was undertaken. In fact, in an attempt to analyse and review the dictionary put under scrutiny, the researchers adopted McMillan's approach of dictionary criticism in which three main criteria are considered, namely, quantity of information, quality of information and effectiveness of presentation. Each criterion includes a set of sub-criteria.

Subsequently, a questionnaire was administered to 20 first year BA students majoring in the field of economics. Their responses were analysed by conducting descriptive statistics in which frequencies and percentages were computed and tabulated. Besides, content analysis was adopted in which themes and categories were derived. These are said to reflect the students' evaluation of the entries and their perceptions regarding the usefulness and effectiveness of the sampled dictionary. Similarly, the researchers undertook content analysis to identify the students' suggestions with regard to the best ways of compiling a dictionary and the elements that should be included from the users' perspective.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

This section revolves around the presentation and interpretation of the results obtained in the study. In fact, this section provides the analysis and assessment of the sampled dictionary in line with McMillan's framework (Landau, 1989). It additionally summarizes the students' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the dictionary. The section ends up with a set of recommendations for lexicographers, educators and students.

4.1. Dictionary Criticism

In an attempt to answer the first research question, McMillan's framework was adopted (Landau, 1989). The latter includes three main elements, namely, quantity of information, quality of information, and effectiveness of presentation. In order to critically analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of the dictionary, six entries were extracted from the dictionary and were subjected to a scrutinized analysis that is in line with McMillan's framework. The selected entries are: demand, supply, business cycle, market, Gross National Product, inflation. These will be analysed separately. Additionally, their Arabic translations and phonetic transcriptions are provided. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the phonetic transcription is realised in line with the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

Before analysing the six sampled entries, some remarks are worth considering. In fact, as far as the ordering of entries is concerned (whether alphabetical or thematic), it appears that the selected dictionary follows an alphabetical ordering in the presentation of entries. However, it is noteworthy that specification of the

number of entries found in the dictionary is missing. Such specification is usually found in the preface of the dictionary. Nonetheless, the dictionary compiler provided some additional information in the appendices. These include tables including: عملات مختلف بلدان العالم /ʕuml3:t mukhtælef bulden ʔel ʕɑ:lem/ translated as: currencies of different countries of the world and بمقاييس المساحة والسعة والطول /ʔadwel bɪ mæqɑ:ɟɪ:s ʔel misɑ:ha wæ siʕæ wæ ettu:l wel hæʕm wel wæzn/ translated as: table of length, volume, and weight with measures of area and capacity.

Regarding the weight and size of the dictionary, it seems that they do not meet the criterion of practicality as users may struggle in carrying such a dictionary.

4.1.1. The Notion of Demand

- **Quantity of Information**

In an attempt to define the above entry, the dictionary compiler suggested three definitions to the term in Arabic. That is, he provided three definitions of this term in three domains namely الاقتصاد, في القانون, وفي الشؤون المالية, transcribed as: /fɪ ʔɪqtɪsɑ:d/, /fɪ lqɑ:nu:n/, and /fɪ ʃuʔu:n ʔel m3:lɟɑ/ respectively.

translated as: In economics, in law, in financial affairs. This diversity seems to help in accounting for the above lexical entry in a comprehensive way and assist learners to better understand the term. Further, the English equivalents of the types of demand were provided in Arabic such as: (elastic) /mæɪn/ مرن, (inelastic) /ʕair mæɪn/ غير مرن.

However, no examples appeared in each definition for a better illustration of the term. Likewise, the etymological information was absent in the explanation. In short, the way the word 'demand' is defined seems acceptable but lacking some aspects of supportive examples and etymological details.

- **Quality of Information**

Regarding the quality of information in treating the above entry, it appears clear and simple at the linguistic level. That is, the dictionary compiler used an intelligible, simple language in accounting for the word demand. Moreover, the description of this term from different perspectives including economics, law and finance ensures completeness and comprehensiveness in explaining this entry.

- **Effectiveness of Presentation**

In this regard, one can notice that the above entry lacks etymological information and phonetic transcription. Indeed, these details could be helpful for dictionary users.

4.1.2. The Notion of Supply

- **Quantity of Information**

This basic term is defined from a general point view using the word (عموما) transcribed as /ʕumu:men/ and a more specific stand point using the word (بصورة) (أخص) /bi su:ra ækhes/. That is, the overall meaning of this word is given. Further, it

explained it from an economics perspective to mean البضائع الصناعية أو التجارية /ʔel bæðɑ:iʃ ʔessɪnɑ:ʃɪjæ əʊ ʔettɪzæɪjæ/ translated as: Industrial or commercial goods. The dictionary maker did not support this definition with possible equivalents or translations of key words for a better description of the term. It is worth mentioning that some examples were supplied to enhance the definition of this key term as in (مثال على ذلك: مواد التنظيف و القرطاسية) /mɪə:l ʃæla: ðɑ:lɪk mæwəd ʔættənðɪ:f wel qurtasɪjɑ/ translated as: Examples include cleaning supplies and stationery.

- **Quality of Information**

The above entry is explained through a simple language that meets the needs of unexperienced students who are to specialize in this field. Moreover, the criterion of completeness might be covered via the explanation of the word 'supply' in general and then more specifically with reference to what products can be included in this term.

- **Effectiveness of Presentation**

A closer look at the presentation of this entry displays the lack of etymological and phonetic information that could have a helpful positive effect on the dictionary user.

4.1.3. The Notion of Business Cycle

- **Quantity of information**

This economic key term is defined in relation to economy as mentioned (في الاقتصاد) /fɪ: ʔel ɪqtɪsɑ:d/ . The explanation encompasses only one definition. Interestingly, it includes the use of English translation of focal words in the definition such as **expansion** for (التوسع) /ʔettæwæssuʃ/, **peak** for (الذروة) /ʔeððurwæ/ and **prosperity** for (الرخاء) /ʔerrækha:ʔ/. However, no illustrative examples are provided in this concern.

- **Quality of Information**

The meaning of this entry is communicated via a clear and explicit language through which the dictionary compiler explained the meaning of business cycle from a theoretical perspective.

- **Effectiveness of Presentation**

Similar to the previously analyzed data, this entry lacks information about its origin (etymological details) that might be beneficial to students of economy. Likewise, phonetic reference is not provided to brief the dictionary users about the word's pronunciation.

4.1.4. The Notion of Market

- **Quantity of Information**

In an attempt to define the word market, Ghattas (1985) provided four different Arabic equivalents, namely: /tæleb muhtæmel/ طلب محتمل /jusewiq/

بورصة.يسوق /bu:rsæ/. /su:q/. سوق. These appear to serve different categories of users ranging from the most to the least familiar to the users. It is noteworthy that the inclusion of different equivalents appear to provide the dictionary users with more opportunities to understand the entry into question. As far as the number of definitions provided is concerned, the dictionary compiler presented the users with six different definitions. These appear to reflect the different contexts in which the word "market" appears. For instance, in the first definition, "market" refers to a place مكانا عاما معدا لاجراء عمليات بيع و شراء البضائع و الخدمات (/mækænen ʃæmen muʃæden lɪ ɪʒrɑ:ʔ ʃæmælijet baɪʃ wæ ʃɪrɑ:ʔ ʔel bæðɑɪʃ wel khædæmet/ translated as: A public place prepared for conducting transactions of buying and selling goods and services. However, in the second definition, it referred to الطلب المحتمل على سلعة الطلب المحتمل على سلعة /hezm ʔettæleb ʔel muhtamel ʃælæ sɪlʃa əʊ bɪðɑzæ/ translated as: The potential demand for a commodity or goods.

As may be seen, the two definitions reflect two different uses of the entry "market". The same applies for the four last definitions. It is noteworthy though that one example was provided in the second definition to facilitate understanding on the part of the dictionary user. In fact, providing the dictionary users with concrete and vivid examples from real life situations is said to facilitate and enhance the understanding of a given entry.

However, it is worth pointing out at the level of detail considered here that while the dictionary compiler provided different Arabic equivalents of the word "market" and different definitions, one may notice the total absence of synonyms and antonyms. Similarly, no indication to the etymology and grammatical information such as the plural, the adjective and the adverb of the word may be found. Indeed, elements such as: synonyms, antonyms and the etymology of the word into question are considered as key criteria when dealing with the amount of information provided. Accordingly, it seems tempting to assume that the information provided for the entry "market" is acceptable but limited. Providing the dictionary users with more information such as the synonyms, antonyms and etymology of the word would have undoubtedly consolidated the users' understanding of the word.

- **Quality of Information**

Quality of information refers to correctness, clearness, simplicity and modernity. In this respect, the analysis of the language used is worth pointing out. In fact, the language used in the entry's definitions is simple, clear and quite comprehensive. Accordingly, beginners in the field of economics will not encounter problems when trying to understand a given entry. With regard to modernity, it is noteworthy to mention that the dictionary compiler did not relate this lexical entry with the central economic notion of "economy market".

- **Effectiveness of Presentation**

In an attempt to analyze how information related to the entry “market” was presented, it seems worth pointing out that the phonetic information about the pronunciation of the word “market” is missing. In a similar vein, the etymology of the word which usually precedes the definition is similarly not found. As may be seen, the entry lacks some information which seem to contribute to a better understanding on the part of the dictionary user. Similarly, the phonetic transcription of the word seems to play a role in the acquisition of the word “market”.

4.1.5. The Notion of Gross National Product

- **Quantity of information**

When exploring the amount of information provided, it appears that only one Arabic equivalent is provided, namely, الانتاج القومي الاجمالي /ʔel inteʒ ʔel qəʔmɪ: ʔel ʔɜmɑ:lɪ:/ translated as: Gross National Product. Moreover, only one definition is provided with no illustrative examples. In a similar vein, the definition provides no grammatical information such as the word category, the plural of the word, its adjective and adverb in addition to the non-presence of synonyms and antonyms. Similarly, the etymology of the word is not found. As may be seen, poor information is presented to the dictionary users.

- **Quality of Information**

In an attempt to analyze the quality of information presented to the dictionary users, it seems worth pointing out the simplicity and conciseness of the information provided. Accordingly, the language used in the definition is comprehensive. However, the absence of illustrations might be an issue as it makes it more difficult to the readers to comprehend the concept into question.

- **Effectiveness of Presentation**

The ordering of the information presented seems to be appropriate as the English word and its Arabic equivalent are immediately followed by the definition. As is the case with the previous entries, the phonetic information about the pronunciation of the word in English is lacking together with the etymology of the word which usually precedes the definition.

However, the dictionary put under scrutiny seems to lack the inclusion of central terms in the field of economics. Among these terms are the two major constructs of microeconomics and macroeconomics. Indeed, when asked about the most recurrent concepts that the students encounter in their learning process, a number of students pointed out to the centrality of these two terms. However, when consulting the dictionary, it was noticed that it did not include these two fundamental concepts in the field of Economics. On these grounds, the absence of some key concepts may be due to the fact that the dictionary was compiled in 1985 and consequently is not current. As a result, it does not include recently coined terms in economics, business and finance.

4.1.6. The Notion of Inflation

- **Quantity of Information**

A glance at the definition provided for the word “inflation” indicates that only one Arabic equivalent was provided, namely, تضخم مالي /tæðakhum ma:lɪ:/ translated as: financial/economic inflation. Similarly, only one definition was provided. In this definition only one example was provided to enrich the definition:

كما يحدث عادة في ايام الحرب /kæmæ jahduəu ʔædæten fɪ: ʔæjem ʔel harb/ translated as: As usually happens during days of war. However, no other information was provided with regard to the synonyms, antonyms, or etymology of the word “inflation”. Furthermore, it seems clear that no grammatical information about the word is presented. That is, the plural, adjective and adverb of the word are not provided. Consequently, it seems tempting to assume that the definition provided lacks a lot of information which would have otherwise contributed to the enhancement of understanding on the part of the dictionary users. In fact, providing them with additional information about the word synonyms and antonyms in addition to the origin of the word would have undoubtedly helped the users get an overall and general understanding of the entry. Similarly, providing only one definition for the word may be regarded as a weakness. In this respect, if different definitions were presented, this would have provided the users with more opportunities to understand the entry. Besides, the provision of different definitions would have helped them in considering the different contexts in which the word is usually used.

- **Quality of Information**

From a qualitative perspective, it may be claimed that the language used is fairly simple, accurate and comprehensive. As far as the Arabic equivalent is concerned, Ghattas (1985) provided the word تضخم /tæðækhum/inflation and added the word مالي /mɜ:lɪ:/ translated as: financial. By doing so, he specified that the definition provided for the word “inflation” is used for the economic context only.

- **Effectiveness of Presentation**

A look at the presentation of the information indicates that like the previous entry, the phonetic information about how the word “inflation” is pronounced is missing. This appears to have a significant impact on the acquisition of the word. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the information is presented in a fairly ordered and clear way as the English word “inflation” is situated in parallel with its Arabic equivalent and followed by the definition.

4.2. Students' Perceptions Regarding the Usefulness and Effectiveness of the Dictionary

Table (1) below exhibits economics students' responses to the administered questionnaire to measure their evaluation of the different types of

information in the suggested lexical entries. In fact, it is noteworthy that the table below presents students' evaluations of six selected dictionary entries. Each entry was assessed based on five criteria: sufficiency of definitions, clarity of language, appropriateness of the equivalent, adequacy of the Arabic translation, and the need for phonetic information. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were used to illustrate students' levels of satisfaction and perceptions of the dictionary overall usefulness.

Table 1. Students' Perceptions Regarding the Usefulness of the Dictionary

Type of information	Frequency		Percentage	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Definitions sufficiency	98	27	78.4%	21.6%
Use of antonyms	101	15	87.06%	12.93%
Simplicity of language	107	13	89.16%	10.83%
Language appropriateness	102	22	82.25%	17.74%
Phonetic information	45	74	37.81%	62.18%

A closer look at table (1) indicates how Jordanian economics students perceive the types of information provided in Ghattas (1985) English-Arabic "*Dictionary of Economics, Business and Finance*". The analysis revealed that (78.4%) of students were satisfied with the number of definitions that accompanied each lexical entry. Further (87.06%) agreed that the provision of antonyms would have served them to grasp the meaning of the proposed basic economics terms.

Regarding the simplicity and clearness of language, a number of (107) responses accounting for (89.16%) of all instances viewed the language used in this dictionary as simple and clear. Surprisingly, the majority of students (62.18%) did not show interest in having the phonetic information about the pronunciation of the word in English. Indeed, such a fact may be due to their non-interest in learning about the phonetic information of the sampled lexical entries. Rather, they seem to be mainly concerned with the semantic meaning (definitions) of the economics concepts.

4.3. Students' Recommendations for Improving Dictionaries

Throughout the analysis, the findings revealed a multiplicity of suggestions and propositions (user-perspective) regarding the design of a comprehensive and effective dictionary. Table (2) below shows different viewpoints regarding the development and refinement of an economics dictionary:

Table 2. Students' Recommendations for Improving Dictionaries

	Frequency		Percentage	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Have you ever used a dictionary specialized in economics when facing a problem in understanding a given economic concept?	7	13	35%	65%
Do you think the use of graphs and pictures would have consolidated the provided definitions?	20	--	100%	--
Do you think the inclusion of examples will help you in understanding a given word?	20	--	100%	--
Are you interested in learning how to use a dictionary?	17	3	85%	15%

As noted in table (2), the majority of BA economics students' responses (65%) reported the scarce use of specialized economics dictionaries when facing difficulties in understanding a given concept. This may be related to their undeveloped lexical awareness that is supposed to direct their attention towards the existence of different dictionary typologies such as: economics, business and finance. Interestingly, all participants (100%) have shown preference to the inclusion of multimodal sources like: graphs and pictures to consolidate the provided definitions. In a similar vein, the total population (100%) pointed to the necessity of including supportive examples that appear contribute to a better understanding on the part of the students. Finally, a great number of students' responses (85%) indicated their interest and motivation to learn about dictionary use. This may imply the need to include lexicographic courses in which students will

benefit from the principles and guidelines of the efficient ways of using and approaching dictionaries.

The results were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. As far as the qualitative analysis is concerned, the researchers adhered to content analysis in order to generate a set of effective implications to the teaching and learning context. These can be summarized under three main headings:

- **Integration of Multimodal Sources in Dictionary Entries**

The first major recommendation emphasizes the inclusion of visual elements such as graphs, charts, and pictures to accompany dictionary entries. This multimodal approach would enhance learners' comprehension by linking linguistic definitions with visual representations. The findings reveal that a significant number of students highlighted the need for visual reinforcement, asserting that such aids facilitate a deeper grasp of abstract or complex economic concepts. For instance, illustrating terms like *inflation*, *supply and demand*, or *economic equilibrium* with simple graphs or infographics can bridge the gap between theoretical definition and conceptual understanding. The researchers strongly recommend that future economics dictionaries adopt a multimodal design to make learning more engaging, concrete, and cognitively accessible.

- **Reinforcement of Dictionary Entries with Examples, Grammatical, and Etymological Information**

A second key recommendation is to enrich dictionary entries with illustrative examples and comprehensive linguistic details. Many participants expressed the need for real-life examples that contextualize economic terminology. For example, explaining *budget deficit* through actual case studies or practical scenarios could make learning more meaningful. In addition, the researcher highlights the importance of including grammatical information (such as plural forms, adjectives, adverbs, antonyms, and common collocations) to strengthen learners' lexical competence. The provision of etymological and phonetic information is also advised, as it helps students understand the historical roots of terms and pronounce them accurately (an essential component of language mastery). Ultimately, these enhancements are not only relevant for dictionary compilers but should also be integrated into language learning syllabi, ensuring that dictionary use contributes directly to broader linguistic development.

- **Training Students to Promote Effective Dictionary Use**

The third major recommendation concerns pedagogical training in dictionary use. The researcher underscores that instructors must explicitly teach students how to consult, interpret, and analyze dictionaries effectively. Beyond simple reference use, students should be guided to develop lexical awareness. That is, students should understand what information a dictionary offers and how to

extract it efficiently. Teachers are therefore encouraged to incorporate dictionary literacy activities into their teaching practices, enabling learners to navigate definitions, examples, phonetic symbols, and grammatical notes with confidence. Such training would not only enhance students' vocabulary acquisition but also foster their autonomy as independent learners.

5. CONCLUSION

The present study follows a critical stance to cast light on the effectiveness of the English- Arabic dictionary: "*A Dictionary of Economics, Business and Finance*" by Ghattas (1985). It similarly attempts to capture insights from BA Jordanian economics students at the University of Jordan. This was realized based on McMillan's framework of dictionary criticism. The yielded results indicated that the six sampled lexical entries satisfied students in terms of the number of definitions. However, the dictionary under investigation appears to lack grammatical information such as: antonyms, collocations, the plural form, its adjective and adverb. Further, students seem to positively perceive the simple and clear language of this dictionary. Indeed, the study at hand is hoped to enrich to the existing literature on dictionary criticism and evaluation with reference to user perspective. The findings of this study pave the way for the application of multimodal approaches for a refined, developed and comprehensive design of specialized dictionaries. In a similar vein, it must be borne in mind that further research will undoubtedly constitute a fruitful path of inquiry as it is hoped to lend further support and enrichment to the present study.

6. Bibliography List

- Al Sayad, N and Siddiek, A (2015). Investigating Students' Attitudes towards Pedagogical Dictionaries: A Study of Sudanese English Majors, *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, USA, 2(1), 91-107.
- Chi, A (2016). a Review of Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (6th edition), *Lexicography ASIALEX*, Toronto, 2(2), 179- 186.
- Ding, J (2015). a study of English Majors in a Chinese University as Dictionary Users, *Lexicography*, 2, 5-34.
- Hadebe, S (2005). Improving Dictionary Criticism in Ndebele, *Journal of African Lexicography*, Zimbabwe, 18, 1-18.
- Hamouda, A (2013). A Study of Dictionary Use by Saudi EFL Students at Qassim University, *Studies in English Language Teaching*, Los Angeles, 1 (1), 227-257.
- Hartmann, R.K. and James, G (1998). *Dictionary of Lexicography*, Routledge, United Kingdom.
- Hartmann, R. K (2001). *Teaching and Researching Lexicography*, Routledge, United Kingdom.

Landau, S. L (1989). *Dictionaries: The Art and Craft of Lexicography*, Scribner, USA.

Osselton, N.E (1989). The History of Academic Dictionary Criticism with Reference to Major Dictionaries, part 1, 225-230, doi: 10.1515/9783110095852.1.3.225.