

Abstract. The aim of the paper is twofold: 1) to investigate studies on dictionary use and 2) to compare the results of two surveys relating to students' preferences and habits of dictionary use conducted in 2007 and 2012.

An overview of studies on dictionaries comprises literature on dictionary types (both electronic and printed) and the comparison of dictionaries in the way they influence users' activities, revealing the significance of the dictionary as a source of information, suggesting some benefits and drawbacks of different types of dictionaries. Moreover, recent studies on the development of dictionaries as information tools discuss a different approach applied in devising internet dictionaries. Users' needs tend to be an underlying binding common feature in recent studies on online lexicography. More research is needed to better understand the user needs and demands when the online tool is going to become fully customisable, enabling the user to create and change his/her profile.

The paper is based on the analysis and comparison of two surveys, the findings of which demonstrate the students' preference for electronic reference sources in order to efficiently comprehend specialised texts and accomplish related tasks.