مجلة جامعة الشارقة للعلوم الإنسانية والاجتماعية

اسم المقال: العلاقة بين مهارات استخدام القاموس والأداء الاكاديمي
اسم الكاتب: سعاد راجي المجالي
رابط ثابت: https://political-encyclopedia.org/index.php/library/8842
تاريخ الاسترداد: 2026/11/01 23:20 +03

الموسوعة السياسيّة هي مبادرة أكاديمية غير هادفة للربح، تساعد الباحثين والطلاب على الوصول واستخدام وبناء مجموعات أوسع من المحتوى العلمي العربي في مجال علم السياسة واستخدامها في الأرشيف الرقمي الموثوق به لإغناء المحتوى العربي على الإنترنت.
لمزيد من المعلومات حول الموسوعة السياسيّة - Encyclopedia Political، يرجى التواصل على info@political-encyclopedia.org

استخدامكم لأرشيف مكتبة الموسوعة السياسيّة - Encyclopedia Political يعني موافقتك على شروط وأحكام الاستخدام المتاحة على الموقع https://political-encyclopedia.org/terms-of-use

تم الحصول على هذا المقال من موقع مجلة جامعة الشارقة للعلوم الإنسانية والاجتماعية ورفده في مكتبة الموسوعة السياسيّة مستوفياً شروط حقوق الملكية الفكريّة ومتطلبات رخصة المشاع الإبداعي التي ينضوي المقال تحتها.

UNIVERSITY OF SHARJAH
where civilizations meet

University of Sharjah Journal

International Refereed Periodical

of

Humanities & Social Sciences



Vol. **10**, No. **2**
safar 1435 H. / December 2013 AD.

ISSN: 1996-2339

Effective Dictionary Use & Academic Performance

Suad R. Al Majali

Department of English Language & Translation - Al Buraimi University College

Al Buraimi - Oman

Received on : 06-10-2011 **Accepted on : 12-06-2013**

Abstract

The dictionary is an indispensable tool in both learning a foreign language and in translation. It helps learners be autonomous and master the foreign language being learned. The present study investigates English language and translation students' habits and knowledge regarding dictionary use. Ninety five translation students at Sohar University answered a questionnaire about dictionary use. The data reveals that there is a direct relationship between effective dictionary use and good academic performance. It also shows that most respondents are not effective dictionary users and they lack proper knowledge about the layout and the content of different parts of the dictionary. Given the results of this research, it is imperative that teaching dictionary skills be integrated in most foundation level courses at university. To achieve the sought results, teachers should be oriented and even trained on how to develop students' dictionary skills.

Key words: effective dictionary use, academic performance, dictionary layout, dictionary's user guide, dictionary's appendices, dictionary use skills, dictionary use habits, dictionary entries

Introduction

It is generally assumed that the dictionary is a book of the words of a language and their definitions. Clearly, the importance of the other kinds of information provided in the dictionary such as pronunciation and syllability, grammatical information, example sentences and phrases demonstrating the usage, different derivations (run-ons) of the words, the history of words and other kinds is usually ignored. In addition to the information provided in word entries in the main body of the dictionary, the front matter and the appendices are rich in information that is often needed by dictionary users. Such information can be of a great help to the second language learner and the trainee translator and may have an immediate effect on the way dictionaries are used.

Although dictionaries available for language learners have been revised and developed to meet their needs, the most recent studies still report that average language learners are not equipped with effective dictionary-use skills (e.g., Chan, 2011). Many studies that aimed to describe dictionary users' behavior reported failed look-ups in dictionary consultation (e.g., Chan, 2011; Laufer, 2010; Nesi, 2002; Nesi & Meara, 1994). Interestingly, there were calls from many researchers (e.g. Atkins & Varantola 1998) to include training on dictionary use in curricula. Yet, there were different opinions among language teachers on whether or not dictionaries aid learning (Carduner, 2003).

This research is vital to address issues regarding dictionary knowledge possessed by Arab students majoring in translation at Sohar University in Oman and to investigate the relationship between this knowledge and their academic performance.

Methodology

To answer the research question a seventeen item questionnaire with different purposes was developed on the basis of the literature review. It was distributed to ninety five third year students from Sohar University/ Translation Department to collect feedback on students' dictionary skills. The

questionnaire explored students' familiarity with the dictionary, the purpose of use, knowledge of different information included in the dictionary and difficulties dictionary users face such as understanding the abbreviations and the definitions. Then the statistical program SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used to perform quantitative analysis of the questionnaire data.

Group interviews about using the dictionary were conducted. They focused on what kind of training on dictionary use the respondents had received, the types of dictionaries used and the problems that respondents faced while using dictionaries.

Literature review

It has been claimed (McCreary, 1998) that foreign language students do not like using dictionaries and that their teachers do not know much about dictionary skills instructions or about the most recent developments in modern learners' dictionaries. Thus L2 learners have trouble using dictionaries because they do not know how to use them. However, teachers should know that efficient dictionary use, although quite complex, can be taught and that vocabulary skills can be improved with efficient dictionary use.

Concerning explicit training or instruction in how to use a dictionary Ramos (2005) found that 45.9% of students of Spanish who participated in her study had not been taught how to use dictionaries, and among those answering "yes" only 2% had received exhaustive instruction.

Ryu (2006) found out that 41.4% of the respondents received some instructions, 58.6% had not and 41.5% reported that they had poor or no skills in dictionary use. According to Li (1998) 70% of the respondents didn't receive any training on dictionary use and 60% of the respondents in Atkins and Varantola (1997) didn't receive training on dictionary use.

But the main reason that dictionaries are not used effectively seems to be that the teaching of dictionary use is simply not widespread. In their survey

of more than 1100 students in seven different countries, Atkins and Knowles (1990) found that 60.4% had never been taught how to use a dictionary, and only 12.9% had received precise and systematic instruction in dictionary skills.

Atkins and Varantola (1998) pointed out there are two direct routes to more effective dictionary use: improving the dictionaries, and improving the users.

Although it seems that most theoretical efforts have been directed at improving the dictionaries, it is in fact pointless to work at improving dictionaries if you do not train the users sufficiently to take advantage of those improvements.

Many studies investigated which dictionary is more satisfactory or advisable in learning a foreign language. Bejoint (1981) found that 96% of respondents owned monolingual dictionaries and only 17% preferred bilingual dictionaries. He also found that 87% of the respondents use dictionary for meaning.

Rek-Harrop (2009) stated that monolingual dictionaries for learners are indispensable tools in foreign language acquisition. They are based on the supposition that students must move from a bilingual dictionary to a monolingual dictionary as they progress in their study of the chosen language.

Hartmann (1993) said a translation equivalent may be good because it will reinforce one's understanding of an L2 lexical item and provide assurance that the correct meaning has been grasped. Moreover, it will dispel the frustration formed by a psychological need to know the translation in the mother tongue.

Nakamoto (1995) noticed that it is often said that while teachers usually recommend monolingual dictionaries, students tend to rely on bilingual ones. He likes Atkins' analogy (1985) that monolinguals are good like whole meal bread and green vegetables; bilinguals like sugar and fatty foods are not, though they may be liked better. He suspects there are many teachers

who prefer fatty foods to green vegetables.

Prichard (2008) found out that Some L2 instructors urge students to use their dictionary as much as possible while others encourage them not to use a dictionary at all. However, though the issue needs to be examined more carefully, research suggests that encouraging selective dictionary use may more efficiently improve L2 learners' reading comprehension and vocabulary.

Ahmed (1989), in a large survey of vocabulary learning strategies by learners of English in Khartoum, identified two kinds of unsuccessful learners. The characteristic of the lower level group of learners hardly used any learning strategies at all, including never using any sort of dictionary.

Summers (1988) found out that L2 English learners using a dictionary scored significantly better on both post-reading comprehension and vocabulary tests. Pulido (2007) research indicates that there is a significant correlation between comprehension and the gain and retention of new lexical items.

Xu (2010) says that since the consultation of dictionary has a positive impact on vocabulary learning and reading development, learners should be encouraged to use dictionary in a consistent and appropriate manner. Paper dictionary is better than electronic dictionary. In the process of meaning inference or dictionary consultation, meaning can be elaborated more deeply and be easier to be remembered.

Knight (1994) discovered that while incidental vocabulary learning through contextual guessing did take place, those who used a dictionary as well as guessed through context not only learned more words immediately after reading but also remembered more after two weeks. She also found that low verbal ability participants benefited more from the dictionary than high verbal ability participants who, in turn, benefited more from contextual guessing. Another interesting thing Knight found was that high verbal ability students would look up a word even if they had successfully guessed its meaning.

Although it is very important for the second language learner to be familiar

with the format of the dictionary, many studies revealed that learners are not accustomed to using dictionaries and lack necessary dictionary knowledge.

Ramos (2005) found that students hardly take advantage of dictionary usage guides, which is not a very encouraging result if we take into account that they provide some useful information (organization of information, pronunciation guide, etc.). Familiarity with usage guides could produce an immediate effect in both understanding and time reduction of the looking-up process.

As far as the use of dictionary appendices is concerned, two groups of respondents (Slovak and Polish university students) were investigated by Hrehovčík and Osuchowska (1989) and they found that the percentage of Slovak students who most frequently consulted the list of irregular verbs was (77 %) and the list of abbreviations (63 %); for the Polish students, the latter seem to be more targeted (69 %) as well as looking up proper names (62 %).

Analysis of the results

The number of all respondents was ninety five, eight of which were males and eighty seven females. This distribution was normal with regard to the population of Sohar University in general and to the Translation Department in particular. All respondents were in their third year and were majoring in translation.

Grade point average (GPA) was used as an indicator of good academic performance and students were divided into 4 groups according to their GPA[1]: 2 – 2.49, 2.5 – 2.99, 3 – 3.49 and 3.5 – 4.

The mean of GPA was calculated for each sub variable of each item of the questionnaire to find out which sub item linked with better academic performance.

In general, the statistical analysis of the present study revealed a direct

1 The lowest GPA was 2 because students could not progress from year 2 to year3 unless they got a GPA of 2 or more.

relationship between effective dictionary use and good academic performance for most items of the questionnaire.

When the respondents were asked about the frequency of dictionary use, 17.9% said they used it every day, 47.4% said they used it more than twice a week, 15.8% said they used it once a week and 18.9% said they used it rarely. The highest mean of the GPA was for those who used it every day as shown in Figure 1 and this result shows that there is a direct relationship between the frequency of using the dictionary and academic achievement.

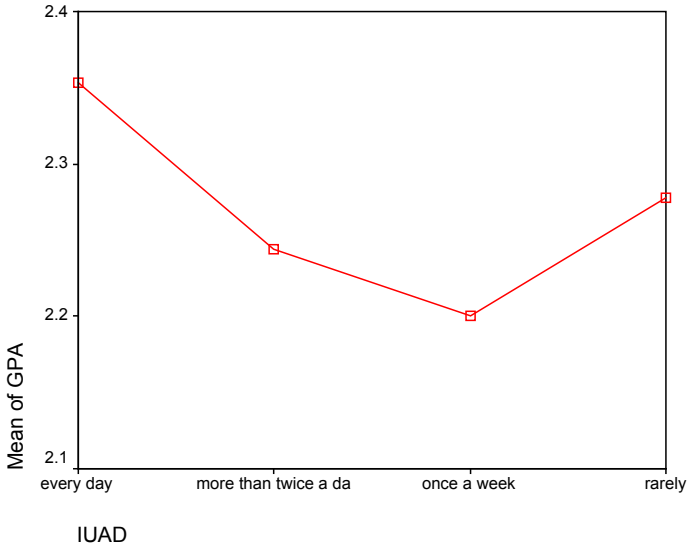


Figure 1: The relationship between academic performance and the frequency of dictionary use.

Figure 2 shows what respondents considered when they bought dictionaries as follows: 27.4% looked at the information provided in word entries, 9.5% looked at the information provided in the front matter and in the appendices, 49.5% considered all sections of the dictionary and 13.7% did

not consider any of the above. The lowest mean of GPA was for those who only considered the information provided in word entries only and the mean of GPA for those who considered the information in the front matter, who considered the appendices and who considered all sections of the dictionary was much higher.

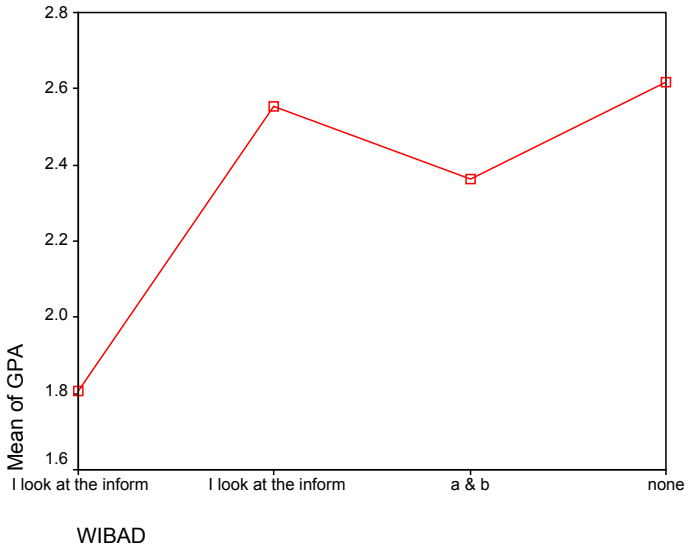


Figure 2: The relationship between academic performance and what students consider when they buy dictionaries.

As for which dictionary the respondents most commonly used, 2.1% of them used monolingual dictionaries (E-E), 56.8% used English-Arabic, 5.3% used Arabic – English, and 35.8% used both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries as demonstrated in Figure 3. The mean of GPA for those who used monolingual dictionaries was not only the highest but sharply higher than those who used bilingual dictionaries. This result supports the assumption that foreign language learners using monolingual dictionaries become more proficient in the target language. As mentioned in Lew (2004), bilingual dictionaries have some deficiencies such as reinforcing

the learners' tendency to translate from native language and by encouraging translation they discourage learners from thinking directly in the foreign language.

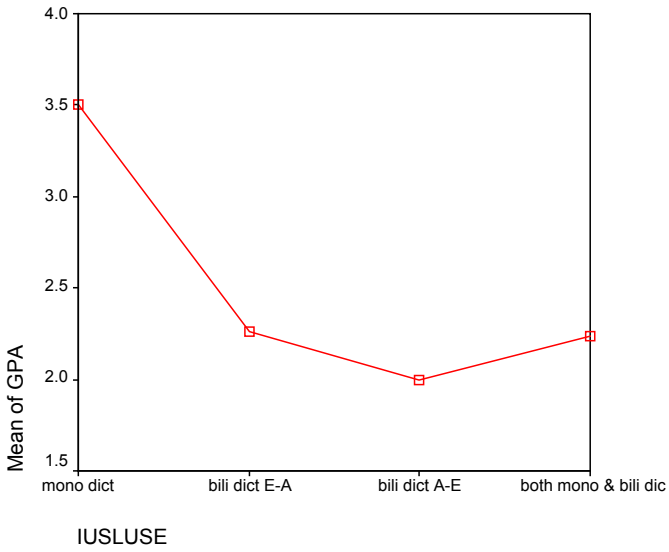


Figure 3: The relationship between academic performance and the type of dictionary the students commonly use.

Figure 4 shows that 56.8% of the respondents owned learner's dictionaries, 31.6% owned advanced learner's dictionaries, 7.4% owned desk dictionaries and 4.2% owned none. The respondents who owned desk dictionaries have the highest mean of GPA, followed by those who owned advanced learner's dictionaries, and those who don't own dictionaries have the lowest GPA. The problem with the learner's dictionary is that word entries are shorter than those in advanced learner's dictionaries and include less information. They are aimed at school children who deal with simpler language. At university level students should own advanced learner's dictionaries or desk dictionaries.

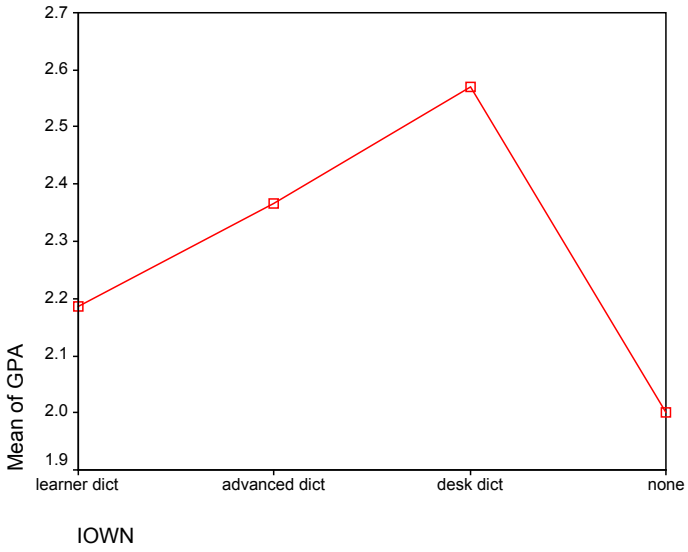


Figure 4: The relationship between academic performance and the type of dictionary the students own.

When the respondents were asked what they thought of themselves as dictionary users, 8.4% admitted that they were not familiar with the dictionary, 9.5% didn't know how to use the dictionary efficiently. 38.9% thought they used it fairly well and 43.2% thought they were very good at using dictionaries. The mean of GPA was sharply higher for those who thought they were very good at using dictionaries as demonstrated in Figure 5.

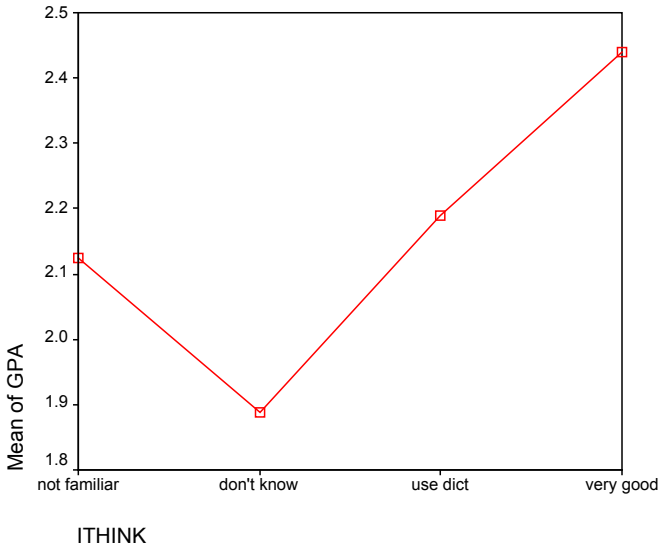


Figure 5: The relationship between academic performance and what do students think about themselves as dictionary users.

Figure 6 shows the most common purpose of dictionary use. 29.5% used it to look up the meaning of words, 1.1% used it to check spelling and 69.5% used it to check all information provided in word entries. Nobody used the dictionary to check the pronunciation. The highest mean of GPA was scored by those who used it to check spelling, followed by those who checked all information in word entries. In his book Words and their Meaning, Howard Jackson included the results of a detailed questionnaire by Professor Randolph Quirk which showed that looking up meanings and spelling predominate looking up other kinds of information. More and above, there are spelling dictionaries that native students use often. Ironically, only 1.1% of this study respondents used the dictionary to look up spelling.

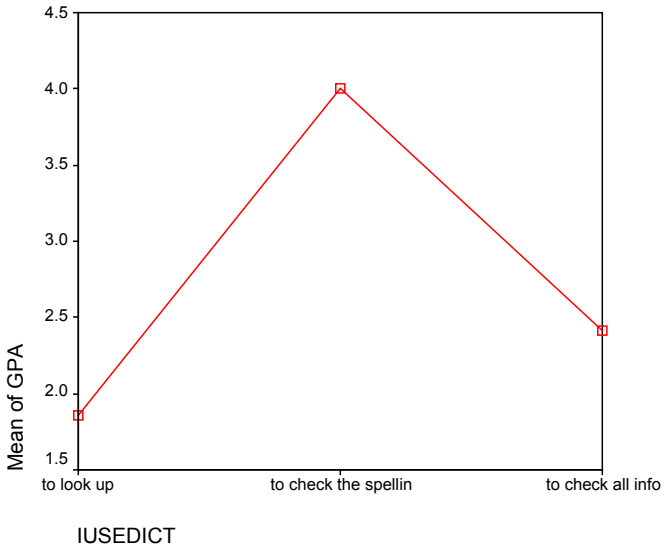


Figure 6: The relationship between academic performance and the kind of information sought in the dictionary.

Figure 7 shows the respondents' answers about the most common purpose of dictionary use. 15.8% of the respondents used dictionaries for study purposes only. 14.7% said they used dictionaries to look up difficult words they came across when they read stories, magazines and newspapers. 2.1% used them to look up difficult words they heard while watching TV English programmes and 67.4% used their dictionaries for all situations mentioned above. The highest mean of GPA was for those who used the dictionary when they watched English programmes on TV.

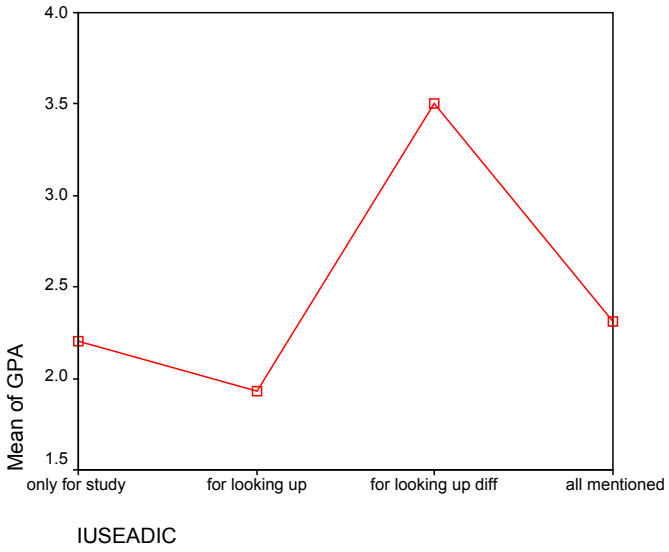


Figure 7: The relationship between academic performance and the purpose of dictionary use.

Concerning students' knowledge of the information included in word entries, 44.2% said that the head word was followed by the pronunciation of the word, 16.8% said that it was followed by grammatical information, 28.4% said it was followed by the meanings of the word and 10.5% did not know. The highest mean of GPA was for those who said the head word was immediately followed by its pronunciation as displayed in Figure 8.

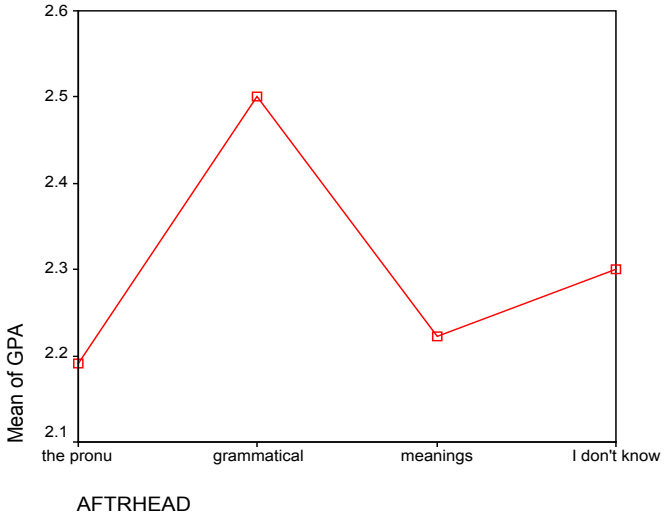


Figure 8: The relationship between academic performance and students' knowledge about the information included in word entries.

When students were asked about the appendices section, 27.4% said they usually used this section, 40% had never used this section, 9.5% did not know if the dictionary had appendices, 23.2% did not know what appendices meant. The highest mean of GPA was for those who usually use the appendices section and this is displayed in Figure 9.

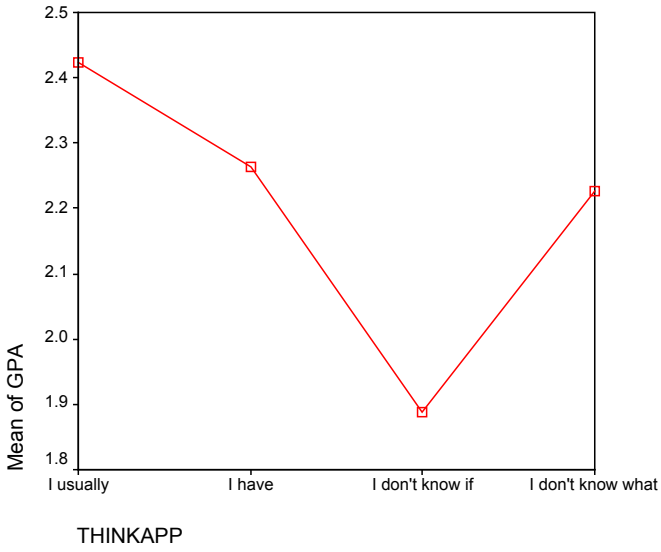


Figure 9: The relationship between academic performance and students' knowledge about the information included in dictionary appendices.

Understanding the abbreviations is vital to using the dictionary effectively and this is supported by the result demonstrated in Figure 10. 26.3% of the respondents understood the abbreviations in word entries, 34.7% often looked up the unfamiliar abbreviations in the instructions section, 22.1% did not bother about abbreviations, and 16.8% did not understand the abbreviations and did not know how to find what they meant. The highest mean of GPA was for those who understood the abbreviations in word entries.

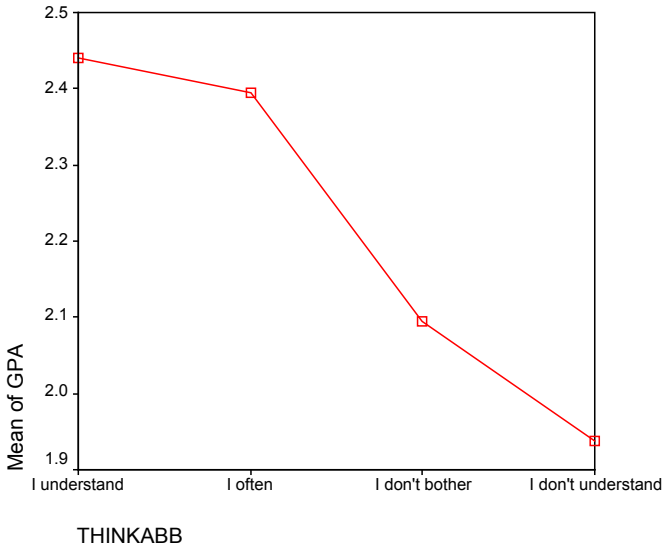


Figure 10: The relationship between academic performance and students' knowledge of the abbreviations in word entries.

3.2% of the respondents found definitions extremely difficult to understand, 44.2% sometimes found it difficult to understand the definitions, 30.5% rarely found it difficult to understand the definitions, and 22.1% always understood the definitions. The highest mean of GPA was for those who rarely found it difficult to understand the definitions and the lowest was for those who found it extremely difficult to understand the definitions and this is demonstrated in Figure 11.

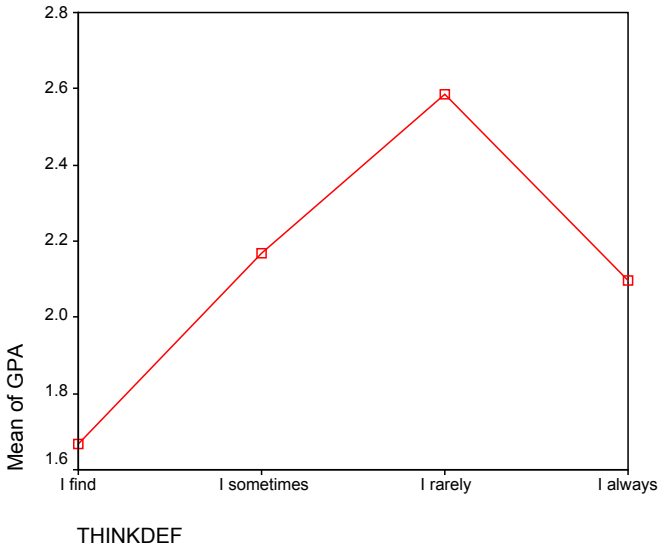


Figure 11: The relationship between academic performance and what students think of dictionary definitions.

Figure 12 shows that 8.4% of the respondents only looked at the first meaning of the word, 4.2% checked the pronunciation and the first meaning, 33.7% checked all the given meanings, 53.7% checked all the information given in word entries. The lowest Mean of GPA was for those who only looked at the first meaning.

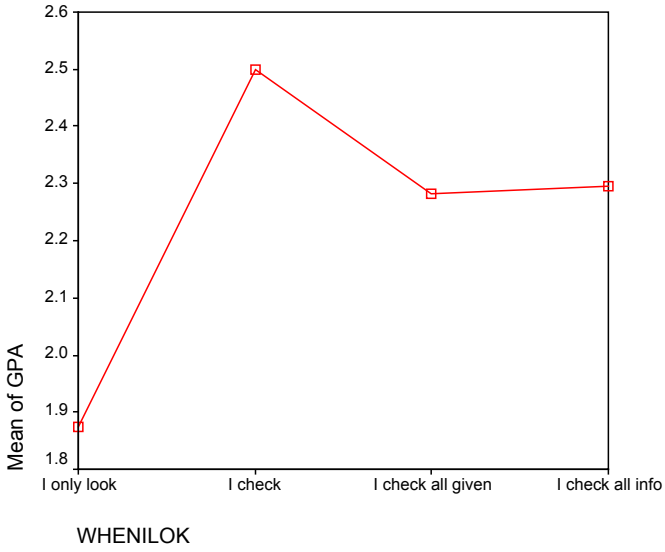


Figure 12: The relationship between academic performance and the type of information students usually look up in word entries.

When the respondents searched their dictionaries for words' meaning, 11.6% always found the meaning of words, 48.4% found the meaning of most words, 36.8% did not find the meaning of some words, 3.2% did not find the meaning of most words. The highest mean of GPA was for those who always found the meaning of words as displayed in Figure 13. This agrees with the results of Many studies that aimed to describe dictionary users' behavior and reported failed look-ups in dictionary consultation (e.g., Chan, 2011; Laufer, 2010).

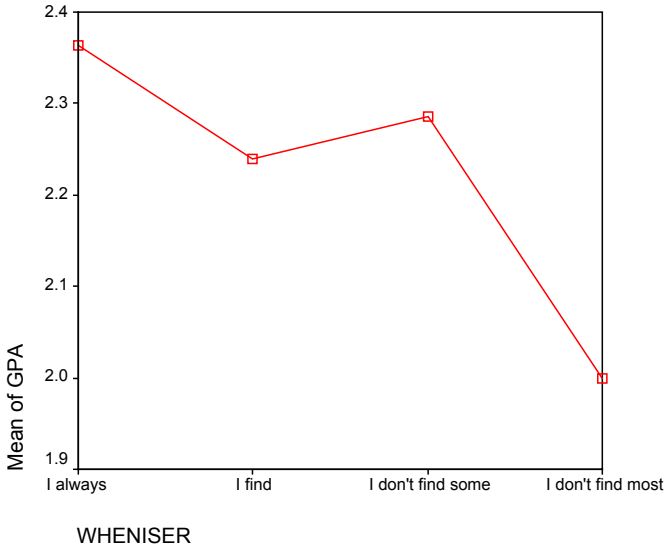


Figure 13: The relationship between academic performance and difficulties students face when they use their dictionaries.

Figure 14 shows what happened when the respondents did not find a word in the dictionary. 32.6% of them consulted another dictionary, 21.1% looked up the word in an online dictionary, 30.5% consulted people they knew and 15.8% ignored the word. The highest mean of GPA was for two groups those who consulted another dictionary and those who ignored the word.

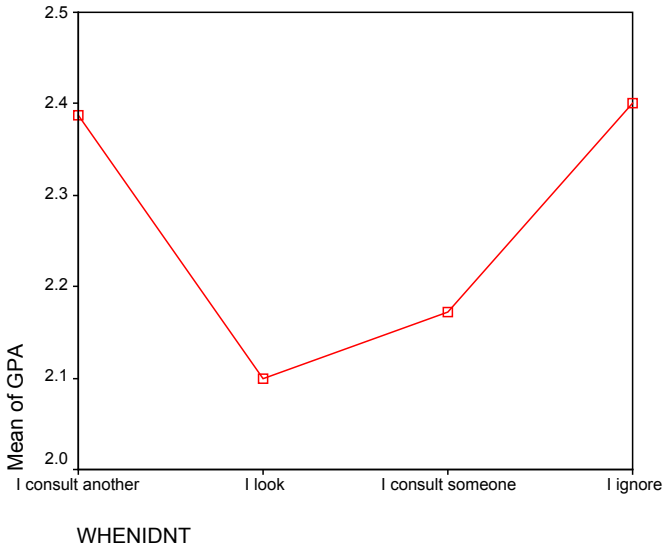


Figure 14: The relationship between academic performance and difficulties students face when they use their dictionaries.

The second part of this study is an attempt to draw a profile for the respondents as dictionary users. The following table contains a list of the indicators of effective dictionary use highlighted in the questionnaire and their respective percentages.

No.	Content of the item	Indicator of effective dictionary use	Percentage of indicator
4.	What is considered when buying a dictionary	Information provided in word entries, information in the front matter and in the appendices.	49.5%
5.	Kind of dictionary used (monolingual or bilingual)	Both monolingual and bilingual	35.8%
6.	Dictionaries students own	Advanced learners' dictionary	31.6%

7.	What they think of themselves as dictionary users	Very good dictionary user	43.2%
8.	Purpose of use	Checking all kinds of information provided in word entries	69.5%
9.	Purpose of use	study, free reading, while watching English TV Programmes	67.4%
10	Dictionary format (word entry) what comes immediately after the head word	The pronunciation of the word	44.2%
11.	Instructions	Read and understand them	26.3%
12.	Appendices	Usually use the appendices	26%
13	Abbreviation in word entries	Understand the abbreviations	26.3%
14.	Definitions	Always understand the definitions	22.1%
15	What information they look up in word entries	All information included in word entries	53.7%
16	Difficulties	Always find the meanings of words	11.6%
17	Strategies	Consult another dictionary	32.6%
			Average= 38.5%

Table 1: Indicators of effective dictionary use and their percentages

Roberts (1992) says there is no doubt that the single most important resource students have for learning English is their dictionary. Given the fact that most Sohar University translation students do not possess adequate knowledge about their dictionaries which leads to ineffective dictionary use , action should be seriously taken to get students understand the dictionary is an indispensable tool in learning English. Although many teachers understand the need to teach dictionary skills, they pay little or no attention

to have a plan to teach dictionary skills such as checking the spelling, the pronunciation, distinguishing the different senses of the word and others. Teachers should be oriented and even trained on how to develop students' dictionary skills.

56.8% of the respondents use learners' dictionaries which are not at all suitable for this level as they are written for foreign language learners at elementary level and they contain shorter word lists with very simple definitions.

As for the issue which dictionary is better, the monolingual or bilingual, Roberts (1992) says the short answer is neither, and both, Bilingual and Learner Dictionaries should not be seen as competitors, but as complementary to each other. Both types of dictionary have their place in the larger picture of language learning.

Conclusion

Building on the results of many previous studies, the writings of many experts in the field of dictionary and learning a foreign language and translation, it is crystal clear that there is a big gap between the improvements in modern dictionaries and students' dictionary use skills. It is noticed that the respondents of the current study lack proper knowledge of the lay out and the content of different parts of the dictionary. Most of the respondents mainly use the dictionary to look up words' meaning and they are not aware of the other usages and different kinds of information included in the different parts of the dictionary which are very vital in learning mastering a foreign language.

Recommendations

In general, the current study reveals that there is a direct relationship between effective dictionary use and good academic performance. It can also be concluded that 61.5% of Sohar University Translation students are not effective dictionary users. They didn't receive proper training on

dictionary use. Therefore, teaching dictionary skills should be integrated in most courses at foundation level. It is not enough to only verbally encourage students to use their dictionaries, rather teachers should be dutiful towards raising awareness about different kinds of information included in the dictionaries. If teachers expect their students to do dictionary practice voluntarily, it is likely they won't. Teachers should give assignments that require advanced dictionary consultation and discuss students' findings in class.

The analysis of the results in this paper suggests the following recommendations for future work:

First: Teachers should be oriented and even trained on how to develop students' dictionary skills.

Second: Following on from what Roberts (1992) suggests in her 'Translation pedagogy: strategies for improving dictionary use', teachers of English language and translation should give due weight to teach or make sure their students are familiar with the following:

- Recognizing features of dictionary layout, such as use of alphabetical order, headwords, grammar and pronunciation information, definitions, etc.
- Understanding the way dictionary entries are coded – particularly the use of abbreviations such as adj (adjective), sth (something), Scot E (Scottish English), etc.
- Discriminating between the different meanings of a word, especially a word with many polysemes) such as course or fair, or words that are homonyms such as bill, bat and shed or homographs such as windy, live and lead.
- Cross -checking (when using a bilingual dictionary) that the translation equivalent that is offered is the best choice for the meaning that is required.
- Using synonyms, antonyms and other information to narrow the choice

of best word for the meaning intended. For example, a learner wanting to convey the meaning of carefree but knowing only careless could use this as the starting point in a dictionary search. Similarly, the learner who wants to correct the sentence 'They told everyone their engaged' will find both the noun engagement and the correct verb announced under the entries alongside engaged in any good learners' dictionary.

- Inferring the spelling of an unfamiliar word from only having heard it, in order to check its meaning in the dictionary

Third: Roberts (1992) also stresses the fact that ways of training learners in the above skills include direct attention to the dictionary's layout information, as displayed in a typical entry. She states that bad use of a dictionary can lead to confusion and mistakes. This means that students must have strategies that help them use dictionaries effectively. Example entries can usually be found in the introductory matter at the front of the dictionary. She suggests that a wall chart or overhead transparency that displays this information could be prepared. Then a quiz that learners can answer in groups using their dictionaries could be also prepared.

Fourth: All foreign languages teachers should include dictionary use in their courses and encourage students to use it as an essential tool to learn the language. They should not rush the students with their dictionaries and they should make them know their points of weakness in using it.

Author biography: Suad Rajee Al-Majali. Lecturer / Department of English language and Translation/ Al Buraimi University College/ Al Buraimi/ Oman. Publications: Translation of two books from English into Arabic, Introduction to Career Counseling for the 21st Century and Crisis Management.

E.mail: suadrj@yahoo.com

References

Ahmed, M. (1989). Vocabulary Learning Strategies. Unpub. PhD thesis, University of Wales, Bangor.

Atkins, B. S. (June 2000). Using Dictionaries: Studies of Dictionary use by Language Learners and Translators. International Journal of Applied Linguistics, Volume 10, Issue 1, pages 152 – 158.

Atkins, B.T. and Knowles, F.E. (1990). Interim report on the EURALEX/AILA research project into dictionary use. In: BudaLEX '88 Proceedings, eds. T. Magay and J. Zigany. Akademiai Kiado, Budapest. pp. 381-392.

Atkins, B.T.S. and Varantola, K. (1998). "Language learners using dictionaries: The final report on the EURALEX/AILA Research Project on Dictionary Use."

Atkins, B. T. S. and Varantola, K. (1997). Monitoring Dictionary Use. International Journal of Lexicography, v. 10, n. 1. Oxford: OUP.

Bejoint, H. (1981). The foreign student's use of monolingual English dictionaries: A study of language needs and reference skills. Applied Linguistics, 2, 3: 207-221.

Chan, A. Y. W. (2011). The use of a monolingual dictionary for meaning determination by advanced Cantonese ESL learners in Hong Kong. Applied Linguistics, 33, 1-27.

Carduner, J. (2003). Productive dictionary skills training: What do language learners find useful? The Language Learning Journal, 28, 70-76.

Hartmann, R. R. K. (1993). Dictionaries across Cultures: Monolingual or Interlingual? Paper read at the International Conference of Applied Linguistics held at Granada.

Hrehovčík.T. Osuchowska. D. (1989). On Dictionary Use by Slovak and Polish Teacher Trainees. International Journal of Lexicography, vol. 10(1), pp. 1-45.

Jackson, H. (1988). Words and Their Meanings. London and New York: Longman. Page 196.

Knight, S. (1994). Dictionary use while reading: The effects on comprehension and vocabulary acquisition for students of different verbal abilities. The Modern Language Journal, 78, 285-299.

Laufer, B. (2010). The contribution of dictionary use to the production and retention of collocations in a second language, International Journal of Lexicography, 24, 29-49.

Lew, R. (2004). Which dictionary for whom? Receptive use of bilingual, monolingual and semi-bilingual dictionaries by Polish learners of English. Pozan: Motivex.

Li, L. (1998). Dictionaries and their users at Chinese universities: with special reference to ESP learners. Lexicography in Asia, Password Publisher, 61-79.

Nakamoto, K. (1995). Monolingual or Bilingual, that is not the Question: the 'Bilingualised' Dictionary. Kernerman Dictionary News • Number 2 •

Nesi, H. (2002). A study of dictionary use by international students at a British university,

International Journal of Lexicography, 15, 277-305.

Nesi, H., & Meara, P. (1994). Patterns of misinterpretation in the productive use of EFL

dictionary definitions, System, 22, 1- 15.

Prichard, C. (2008). Evaluating L2 readers' vocabulary strategies and dictionary use. Reading in a Foreign Language, Volume 20, No. 2

Pulido, D. (2007). The relationship between text comprehension and second language incidental vocabulary acquisition: A matter of topic familiarity? Language Learning, 57, 155–199.

Ramos, M. S. (2005). Research on Dictionary Use by Trainee Translators. Translation Journal, Volume 9, No. 2.

Rek-Harrop, J. A. (2009). Comparative Review of Two Monolingual Dictionaries of the English Language. Translation Journal, Volume 13, No. 4 .

Roberts, R. P. (1992). "Translation pedagogy: strategies for improving dictionary use". TTR : traduction, terminologie, rédaction, vol. 5, n° 1, Page 50.

Ryu, J. (2006). Dictionary Use by Korean EFL College Students. Language & Information Society, 7, 83-114

Summers, D. (1988). The role of dictionaries in language learning. In R. Carter & M. McCarthy (Eds.). Vocabulary and language teaching (pp. 111 – 125). London: Longman.

Xu, X. (2010). Study on the Effect of Dictionary Use on Second Language Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition— An Empirical Study of College English Vocabulary Learning Strategy. Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol 1, No 4 , pp.519-523.

Appendix 1

Sohar University

Faculty oh Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of English Language and Translation

Level: ……..

Gender: ……..

Student's GPA: …….

Dear Student:

This questionnaire was developed to draw the profile of translation students at Sohar University as dictionary users, and to find out if there is a relationship between effective use of "the dictionary" and good academic performance.

Please circle the letters of the answers that best describe you.

1. I began using a dictionary
   a. at elementary school level
   b. at preparatory level
   c. at secondary level
   d. at university

2. I use a dictionary
   a. every day
   b. more than twice a week
   c. once a week
   d. rarely

3. I have
   a. received very good training on dictionary use
   b. not received good training on dictionary use
   c. not received any training on dictionary use
   d. received good training but I didn't practice using the dictionary

4. When I buy a dictionary
   a. I look at the information provided in word entries
   b. I look at the information provided in the front matter and in the appendices
   c. a & b
   d. None of the above

5. I usually use
   a. a monolingual dictionary (English-English)
   b. a bilingual dictionary (English-Arabic)

c. bilingual dictionary (Arabic English)

d. both monolingual and bilingual dictionary

6. I own

a. a learner's dictionary

b. an advanced learner's dictionary

c. a desk dictionary

d. none

7. I think that

a. I am not familiar with dictionaries

b. I don't know how to use a dictionary efficiently

c. I use dictionaries fairly well

d. I am very good at using dictionaries

8. I use dictionaries

a. to look up the meaning of words

b. to check the pronunciation

c. to check spelling

d. All mentioned above

9. I use dictionaries

   a. only for study purposes

   b. for looking up difficult words I come across when I read stories, magazines, newspaper,… etc.

   c. for looking up difficult words I hear when I watch English television programmes

   d. All mentioned above

10. After the head word (the word printed in bold type) in dictionary entries we find

   a. the pronunciation of the head word

   b. grammatical information

   c. meanings of the head word

   d. I don't know

11. Think about the instructions at the beginning of dictionaries. Which statement is true for you?

   a. I read and understood the section of my dictionary that includes usage instructions

   b. I refer to the instructions section when I find difficulty in understanding some abbreviations and symbols in word entries

   c. I saw the instruction section but I didn't understand it

   d. don't know if there are usage instructions at the beginning of my dictionary

12. Think about the appendices at the end of dictionaries. Which statement is true for you?

    a. I usually use the appendices section in my dictionary

    b. have never used the appendices section in my dictionary

    c. don't know if my dictionary has an appendices section

    d. don't know what appendices section mean

13. Think about the abbreviations in word entries. Which statement is true for you?

    a. I understand the abbreviations in word entries

    b. I often look up unfamiliar abbreviations in the instructions section

    c. I don't bother about the abbreviations

    d. I don't understand the abbreviations and I don't know how to find what do they mean

14. Think about the definitions provided in dictionaries. Which statement is true for you?

    a. I find it extremely difficult to understand the definitions

    b. I sometimes find it difficult to understand the definitions

    c. I rarely find it difficult to understand the definitions

    d. I always understand the definitions very well

15. When I look up a word in a dictionary
    a. I only look at the first meaning
    b. I check the pronunciation and the first meaning
    c. I check all given meanings
    d. I check all the information given in the word's entry

16. When I search my dictionary for words
    a. I always find the meaning of all words
    b. I find the meaning of most words
    c. I don't find the meaning of some words
    d. I don't find the meaning of most words

17. When I don't find a word in my dictionary
    a. I consult another dictionary
    b. I look up the word in an online dictionary
    c. I consult someone I know
    d. I ignore that word

Thank you for your participation.

العلاقة بين مهارات استخدام القاموس والأداء الاكاديمي

سعاد راجي المجالي
قسم اللغة الانجليزية والترجمة – كلية البريمي الجامعية
البريمي - سلطنة عمان

ملخص الدراسة

يُعتبر القاموس أداة هامة في تعلّم اللغة الاجنبية والترجمة ولا يمكن الاستغناء عنه حيث يُنمّي الاعتماد على النفس لدى المتعلم ويساعده على إتقان اللغة التي يتعلمها. وتسعى الدراسة الحالية الى التعّرف على عادات استخدام القاموس لدى الطلبة ومدى معرفتهم بمحتوياته. تتكون عينة الدراسة من خمس وتسعين طالب وطالبة في السنة الثالثة في قسم اللغة الانجليزية والترجمة في جامعة صحار. وقد أشارت نتيجة الدراسة الى وجود علاقة طردية بين الاستخدام الفعّال للقاموس والتحصيل الاكاديمي وأن معظم المستفتين لا يستخدمون القاموس بفعالية وليست لديهم معرفة بترتيب المعلومات في القاموس وكذلك محتوى اقسام القاموس المختلفة. بناءً على هذه النتائج لا بد من تدريس مهارات إستخدام القاموس ودمج ذلك في مساقات المرحلة التأسيسة في الدراسة الجامعية. ولضمان تحقيق النتائج المرجوة يجب تثقيف المدرسين حول آخر المستجدات في المعاجم وربما تدريبهم على تدريس مهارات إستخدام القاموس.