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The Effect of Using Electronic Dictionary in Learning English Language by Libyan Students (A Case Study of the Students of English Department at Education Faculty-Waddan of Al-Jufra University)

Souad Sanoussi Yosef Jalala

English Department, Education Faculty of Al-Jufra University, Waddan, Libya

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ABSTRA CT

Electronic dictionaries have revolutionized the educational landscape, providing instantaneous access to a wealth of lexical knowledge for students and educators alike. This study aimed to find out the effect of using an Electronic Dictionary in learning English Language by Libyan Students: The English department at the Education Faculty of Al-Jufra University. This study applied descriptive qualitative method. The data in this study were obtained through a document analysis (questionnaire). Thirty-five students of English department participated in the questionnaire that was used in this study. The results of this study report that all students depend on the electronic dictionaries in their studies, but they face some difficulties in using it as a machine. Most students use the multi-language dictionary to get the meaning of the word in Arabic. Even though, more than 50% percent of the students find all words that they need in the e-dictionary. Most students face difficulties in selecting the suitable meaning of the word in the context. Moreover, about 50% of the students face difficulty in finding explanations for grammar tasks in E-dictionaries that they use. They face difficulty in using dictionaries that use English language only. That means they depend on their native language for learning English language. Transitivity of the meaning of the word confuses them in selecting the suitable meaning, some words don't exist in the dictionary, in the translation of phrasal verbs, a translation of abbreviations and some words don't have any translation in Arabic language. On the other hand, electronic dictionary helps them to improve their English vocabularies.

أثر استخدام القاموس الإلكتروني في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية لدى الطلاب الليبيين (عينة الدراسة، طلاب قسم اللغة الانجليزية بكلية التربية-ودان جامعة الجفرة)

سعاد السنوسي يوسف جلاله

قسم اللغة الانجليزية، كلية التربية، جامعة الجفرة، ودان، ليبيا

الكلمات المفتاحية:

الترجمة الفعالية

القاموس الإلكتروني

المفردات

تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية

الملخص

أحدثت القواميس الإلكترونية ثورة في المشهد التعليمي، حيث وفرت إمكانية الوصول الفوري إلى ثروة من المعرفة المعجمية للطلاب والمعلمين على حد سواء. هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة أثر استخدام القاموس الإلكتروني في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية لدى الطلاب الليبيين: قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية جامعة الجفرة. طبقت هذه الدراسة المنهج النوعي الوصفي. تم الحصول على البيانات في هذه الدراسة من خلال تحليل الوثائق (الاستبيان). شارك خمسة وثلاثون طالبًا من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في الاستبيان المستخدم في هذه الدراسة. وتشير نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى أن جميع الطلاب يعتمدون على القاموس الإلكتروني في دراستهم، إلا أنهم يواجهون بعض الصعوبات في استخدامه كآلة. يستخدم معظم الطلاب القاموس متعدد اللغات للحصول على معنى الكلمة باللغة العربية. وعلى الرغم من أن أكثر من 50% من الطلاب يجدون جميع الكلمات التي يحتاجونها في القاموس الإلكتروني، إلا أن معظم الطلاب يواجهون صعوبات في اختيار المعنى المناسب للكلمة في السياق. علاوة على ذلك، يواجه حوالي من الطلاب صعوبة في العثور على شرح للمهام النحوية في القواميس الإلكترونية التي يستخدمونها. وبواجهون صعوبة في استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية فقط. وهذا يعني أنهم يعتمدون على لغهم وبواجهون صعوبة في استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية فقط. وهذا يعني أنهم يعتمدون على لغهم وبواجهون صعوبة في استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية فقط. وهذا يعني أنهم يعتمدون على لغهم

E-mail addresses: Souadly36@gmail.com

^{*}Corresponding author:

الأم لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. تعددية معنى الكلمة تربكهم في اختيار المعنى المناسب، بعض الكلمات غير موجودة في القاموس، في ترجمة الأفعال المركبة، ترجمة الاختصارات وبعض الكلمات ليس لها أي ترجمة في اللغة العربية. ومن ناحية أخرى، يساعدهم القاموس الإلكتروني على تحسين مفرداتهم في اللغة الإنجليزية.

1.0 Introduction

In today's digital age, the use of electronic devices has become an integral part of our daily life. From smartphones to tablets, these devices offer a wide range of functions and capabilities that make our lives easier and more convenient. One such device that has gained popularity is the electronic dictionary. With its compact size and extensive database, an electronic dictionary provides instant access to a wealth of information at our fingertips.

An electronic dictionary defined in (Wikipidia 2023) Is a dictionary whose data exists in digital form and can be accessed through a number of different media. Electronic dictionaries can be found in several forms, including software installed on tablet or desktop computers, mobile apps, web applications, and as a built-in function of E-readers. They may be free or require payment.

Recently, several dictionaries are published with composed features that are related to several types of wordbooks and have done some tasks of encyclopedias, pedagogic grammars and teaching materials. This is exactly corresponding on electronic dictionaries which without organizational rules for a hardcopy dictionary. They can recovery and combine data based on the user needs (Nesi 2000).

The main core of learning any foreign language is building vocabularies and uses them to master the four skills of the language (reading, writing, listening and speaking). Zheng & Wang (2016) stated that learners and teachers of foreign language participate and involve in the digital world, they need to use technology to face their educational and personal challenges. Recently, electronic dictionary started to exist in University English, foreign language classrooms.

Also, Al-Jarf (2001), cited that some studies such as (Gray, 1986; Heather and Rossiter, 1988; Spring, 1995; Subirats-Ruggeberg, 1994; Eleuterio et al, 1995; Sharpe, 1995, Ford, 1996; McDermott, 1996) mentioned that the improvement of electronic dictionaries in the last decade made them available for all the learners around the world.

Wulandari (2018), mention that "With recent developments in digital technology, some learners now prefer different types of electronic dictionaries because they are easy to carry and, in many cases, they can be downloaded free of charge from the internet". These features encourage the students to build a positive attitude forward E-dictionary and depend on it in their studying any foreign language. Teachers also started to use an electronic dictionary as a basic resource in the contemporary classroom.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Mastering English language is a big challenge for all the students of English department in Education College to be good teachers after graduation. To achieve this stage, they need lots of English vocabulary, grammatical rules and the capacity for understanding the texts.

Ayed. Z (2019) cited that Chen (2009: 95) pointed out, "Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". Lack of vocabularies makes students depending on electronic dictionary in their study. To learn English as a foreign language, the students need to learn new vocabularies with their meaning daily. The last experience (at primary, preparatory and secondary stages) of the students has got a big responsibility toward the gap that between memorizing the word and its meaning. Some teachers at primary, preparatory and secondary stages use Arabic language in teaching English language. In this case, the aim of the students will be focused on knowing the meaning of the word in native language more than using it in real learning situations in the class and outside of the class.

Modern electronic dictionaries provide the meaning of the word with more details about the word itself, such as, various meanings, pronunciation, examples with grammatical structure, equivalent in other languages, pictures...... etc. All these features made an electronic dictionary play a big role in learning any foreign

language. Most students use the dictionary with English VS. Arabic as the easiest way to hold the meaning of the word that they want to know its meaning only. From the other side, most students have got confused with the dictionary which uses only the English language. At some points, such as, getting the suitable meaning of the word which they need to use, it will be so difficult. Some students became less confident when they could not cover all the language skills in a good proficiency.

Wulandari (2018), inserted that dictionary use as a Language learning strategy. In fifty years ago, many studies researched in language learning strategies and this research have determined and documented a large body of strategies. "Dictionary use is one of these strategies and dictionaries have become essential tools for university EFL learners who consult them to understand texts and other materials used in their English courses".

1.2 Research questions

- Would the using electronic dictionaries improve EFL students' vocabularies learning?
- 2. Do the students have the capacity to use electronic dictionary with only one language?
- 3. Does the electronic play an effective role in mastering the skills of the English language? Such as listening and reading by getting a good pronunciation.
- 4. Does the teacher have a role in this issue?

1.3 Aims of the study

This study aims to:

- Investigate the extent of using the electronic dictionary by the students of the English department at the Education Faculty of Al-Jufra University.
- 2. Finding out whether or not the students have the ability to use an electronic dictionary.
- 3. To know the types of difficulties which face the students in using electronic dictionary?
- Investigate the role of electronic dictionary in learning the English language.

2.0 Literature Review

Previous studies on the effectiveness of electronic dictionary in learning English and other related literature are reviewed in this study.

2.1 Electronic Dictionary

Electronic dictionary has been defined in many aspects. Nesi (2000) defined the term of Electronic dictionary "ED can be used to refer to any reference material stored in electronic form that gives information about the spelling, meaning, or use of words". The spell checker is a device that scans and translates printed words. The system of electronic dictionary designed for storage and recall. Based on this system, electronic dictionary caused a revolution of an experience in consultation compared with a hard copy dictionary.

2.2 Building Vocabulary and E-Dictionary:

According to Ayed. Z (2019), having vocabulary has a great important role in learning foreign language. If the teachers and the learners do not have enough vocabulary, they will be confused with different issues of language such as reading and listening. (Luppescu, 1993:263) inserted that by using the dictionary, students for sure will be more excited and eager to learn new, unknown and strange vocabulary by themselves, though they need for certain trainings in the way of using dictionaries.

Moreover, Pham, T. A., Nguyen, L. T. D., Pham, V. T. T. (2022) pointed to Arono & Nadrah (2019) supported that "most students have faced difficulties in the translation process due to the lack of vocabulary". Most English vocabularies have multi meaning, so the express about the meaning of the word cannot be perfect without a particular context. Therefore, the user dictionary most be realized of the meaning of the vocabulary based on the suitable situation (Larson, 1998).

2.3 Translation of grammatical sentences

According to Shamsan at el, (2021), Oxford (2017 p. 243) "grammatical competence is needed, along with competence in using vocabulary, for optimal communication". Also, Boonnoon (2019 p: 902) stated, "To master the language, learners need to pay utmost attention to all details pertaining to the language knowledge including grammatical structure, vocabulary, and register". In order to become proficient in the language, students must devote maximum attention to every aspect of language comprehension, such as grammar patterns, word choice, and tone.

Prószéky (2015) illustrated that there is a difference between translating the text and comprehend it linguistically. Also, it is not clear that there are various methods to conduct computational tools to help the user with the assignment. "A translator (either human or computational) has to analyse and transform every bit of the source text (and make her/his/its way through the ambiguities and unclear syntactic structures)". Users attempting to read any text that is exhibited on a computer screen—need only hints about it, but they call for it as rapidly as possible, and without being stirred up, or even mislead, by ambiguities and other cases of non-relevant data.

2.4 Electronic Dictionary and reading comprehension

Hamdi (2015) stated that L2 learners use the dictionary primarily in reading skill rather than the other language skills, Bejoint, (1981), Chon (2008). Several studies examined the using of dictionary by learners in reading comprehension as special matter, appearing based on arises of needs, Nesi, (2002). Many teachers of language don't encourage their students to use dictionary because they think it doesn't help the students to understand the vocabulary in the text. Also, the teachers think that the overuse of the dictionary by students doesn't improve their self-confidence and their ability to recognize the word from the context, Bensoussan, Sim & Weiss, (1984). As well, the teachers think that vocabulary learning may produce from over use of bilingual dictionaries, or from the view of the students about the corresponding between their native language and English language, Stein, (1990).

On the other hand, Hamdi 2015 stated that recent research has illustrated that using dictionary can be helpful and benefit for learners. Hamdi inserted that based on Anderson & Freebody, (1981)"Those who are in favor of using the dictionary in L2 learning suggest that dictionaries can be helpful to learners because, after all, their main use is for lexical information, which is of the utmost importance in L2 learning". Bensoussan, (1983, p. 341) stated that consulting a dictionary during reading is "an integral part of the reading process". Consulting a dictionary helps the learner to catch the meaning of vocabulary based on the text and get other meanings of the same vocabulary with a variety of constructions.

2.5 Electronic dictionary and the culture of language

Pham et al (2022) cited that "Culture is considered difficult for translators, so to overcome linguistic barriers when they translate a text, they need to deal with cultural barriers" Komissarov, (1991). In some other edition of Larson (1998), a word or phrase that receives a constructive connotation in one culture may have a destructive implication in some other. The difference between the cultures of languages can be a great matter in learning any foreign language and its translation.

Due to Nida (1991), the processes of translating can be illustrated from different perspectives: "stylistics, author's intent, diversity of languages, differences of corresponding cultures, problems of interpersonal communication, changes in literary

fashion, distinct kinds of content". Circumstances in which translations are to be used should take into the account also.

Kuo Ming-Mu (2006) indicated that Language and culture are deeply connected, with each having an impact on the other. There exists a profound and symbolic relationship between language and culture. "Language stands for the whole culture because language represents culture in the minds of its speakers. Conversely, culture also symbolizes language and is summed in the economic, religions, and philosophical systems of a country".

In addition, Kuo Ming-Mu (2006), According to the National Standards for

Foreign Language Education project (1996), "students cannot truly master the new language until they have mastered the cultural context in which the new language occurs. This means that understanding a new culture is an important element in achieving the success in second language acquisition". In other words, Students will only achieve true mastery of a new language when they have also achieved mastery of the cultural context in which the new language is used. This indicates that having an understanding of a new culture is a crucial aspect of succeeding in acquiring a second language.

3.0 Methodology

This section is dedicated to view the methodology that is followed to conduct this study.

3.1 Participants

The sample of the study was conducted in Education Faculty in Al-Jufra University by participating 35 students in the English department. This study examines the effectiveness of electronic dictionary for learning English language and the difficulties that are faced by Libyan students in their English language learning process.

3.2 Instruments and Data collection

A quantitative method with the employment questionnaires was conducted to gather the desired data. The researcher distributed a questionnaire on the effectiveness of electronic dictionary for learning the English language to the students of the English department. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section included the demographic data (Age & Gender) while the second section was about the types of difficulties which supposed to face the students. The second section was divided into two parts (A & B). The part (A) was about difficulties related to electronic dictionaries and the part (B) was about difficulties related to the language.

3.3 Data Analysis methods

Thirty five students participated in the questionnaire that used to collect the data in this study. (IBM) SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 20 software was used to analyze the frequencies and percentages of the effectiveness of electronic dictionary for learning the English language.

4.0 Results

This study aimed to investigate the extent of effectiveness of electronic dictionary in learning English language by thirty-five students of the English Department of Education Faculty at Al-Jufra University.

Section 'A'

This section is demographic data. Thirty-five students participated in the questionnaire. Their ages were between 19-30. They were five males and thirty females.

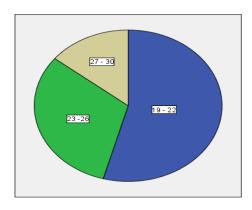


Figure 1 Age

male

Figure 2 Gender

Section B

This section is about using electronic dictionaries for translation. It was divided into two parts (A & B).

A) - The first part was about the difficulties that related to the electronic dictionary as a machine. The following frequency table shows the students' responses to their using of electronic dictionary

in their studying. All responses support using electronic dictionary. Based on what the researcher found, the students were giving positive attitude to use the electronic dictionary. In contrast, there are some difficulties that the students face such as dealing with dictionaries with English language only, lack in grammar and definitions.

Question	strongly agree	agree	neutral	Disagree	strongly disagree	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation
1- I use electronic dictionary in my study.	19	11	5			4.00	1.7143	.92582
2-I use the dictionary that uses only English language.	5	7	7	9	7	4.00	3.1714	1.36092
3- I prefer dictionary that uses Arabic and English.	12	11	8	1	3	4.00	2.2000	1.20782
4-I don't know how to use an electronic dictionary.	2	2	2	11	18	4.00	4.1714	1.15008
5-I don't find all words that I need in E-dictionary.	2	6	6	12	9	4.00	3.5714	1.21959
6-I face difficulty with a dictionary that uses only English language.	3	5	8	10	9	4.00	3.4857	1.26889
7-E-dictionary doesn't offer to me the definitions for some idioms.	5	11	4	8	7	4.00	3.0286	1.40348
8-I don't find explanations for grammar tasks in E- dictionary.	5	10	7	7	1	4.00	2.9714	1.33913

B) - The following table shows the responses of the students for the difficulties that related to the language itself in using electronic dictionary. Although the students prefer using electronic dictionary

which use English-Arabic language, they face some difficulties such as, selecting the suitable meaning of the word, abbreviations, and phrasal verbs.

dictionary. Atthough the students prefer using electronic dictionary			and pi	masai veros.				
Question	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree	range	mean	Std. Deviation
1 I face difficulty in selecting the suitable meaning for the context.	9	12	3	8	3	4.00	2.5429	1.33599
2 Transitivity of the meaning of the word confuses me in selecting the suitable meaning.	8	12	4	9	2	4.00	2.5714	1.26690
3- I prefer the context translation rather than word translation.	11	6	6	8	4	4.00	2.6571	1.43369
4 I depend on translation into Arabic language in my studying.	9	6	7	8	5	4.00	2.8286	1.42428
5- My teacher use Arabic language in his/her teaching, so I don't need to use the dictionary.	4	4	6	11	10	4.00	3.5429	1.33599
6-E-dictionary helps me in the translation of the words only.	8	8	7	8	4	4.00	2.7714	1.35225
7-Some words, I don't find them in the dictionary	7	6	8	11	3	4.00	2.9143	1.29186
8-I face difficulty in the translation of phrasal verbs.	6	9	14	4	2	4.00	2.6286	1.08697
9- I don't find a translation of abbreviations	6	16	4	6	3	4.00	2.5429	1.22097
10- Some words don't have any translation in Arabic language	7	9	6	5	8	4.00	2.9429	1.47415
11- E-dictionary helps me to learn new vocabularies.	22	9	1	2	1	4.00	1.6000	1.00587

To get an obvious result about the extent of effecting electronic dictionary for learning English language, and to investigate the relationship between the independent variable (learning the English language) and dependent variable (electronic dictionary), we need to measure and analyze the correlation level by using Pearson measurement in SSPS programme. The next figure reveals that there

is a strong positive correlation between learning English and using the ED. Question one which was about using ED and the question 19 was about the effectiveness of electronic dictionary in improving and learning vocabularies. This result reflects the importance of using ED in learning English language with some problems which can be solved by a good training on using ED by the teacher in the class.

Correlations

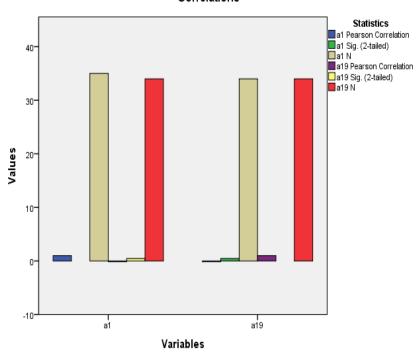


Figure 3

Additionally, at the end of the questionnaire, the researcher requested of the students to write any other difficulties that they faced, (Please write any difficulties that you face while using Edictionary on English Language Learning). Most of these feedbacks were focusing on the multi meaning of vocabularies and confusing in selecting the suitable meaning. Some vocabularies haven't equivalent meaning in Arabic language. They face difficulty in getting the correct pronunciation of vocabularies very well. Although, the electronic dictionary helps them, but it can't solve all their problems in learning the English language.

4.2 The Findings

The description of the data that are collected, illustrates that there is a positive and strong correlated between learning English language and using E-dictionary. Some results were positive such as, a) all the students use the electronic dictionary in their learning language process, b) it helps them to cover the text and building new vocabularies. From the other side, they face several difficulties with the types of the dictionary and their needs of the language. a) Obviously, all students depend on electronic dictionary in their study, but they face some difficulties in using it as a machine. b) Most students use the multi-language dictionary to get the meaning of the word in Arabic. c) Even though, more than 50% percent of the students finds all words that they need in E-dictionary, most of the students face difficulties in selecting the suitable meaning of the word in the context, moreover, d) about 50% of the students face difficulty in finding explanations for grammar tasks in E-dictionary, e) They face difficulty in using dictionaries that use English language only. That means they depend on their native language for learning the English language. Also, f) transitivity of the meaning of the word confuses them in selecting the suitable meaning, g) some words don't exist in the dictionary, h) there is difficulty in the translation of phrasal verbs, i) a translation of abbreviations and j) some words don't have any translation in Arabic language.

All these difficulties disturbed the students of English department in Education Faculty. They can overcome on these difficulties if they get good training on using electronic dictionary.

The difference between the cultures of the languages plays an important role in difficulty of selecting the suitable meaning of the word based on the text. The teachers should help their students to use electronic dictionary which uses only English language as that's possible. The teachers also should help their students to use the English language in the class and train them how to build a good conversation with them and with each other in the class and outside of it.

4.3 Conclusion

The use of electronic dictionaries has become increasingly prevalent in today's society. With the advancement of technology, these tools provide convenient access to definitions, synonyms, and grammar structures. Additionally, they offer language learners an efficient way to improve their language skills.

The use of technology in education has greatly impacted the way students learn, and one area that has seen significant changes is language learning. With the advent of electronic dictionaries, students now have a powerful tool at their disposal to enhance their vocabulary and grammar skills. These electronic dictionaries not only provide quick and easy access to get definitions, they also provide examples of word usage, pronunciation guides, and even interactive exercises. As a result, students are able to actively engage with the language, reinforcing their understanding and retention of new words and grammar structures.

This research concludes that the use of electronic dictionaries has an effective role in learning the English language. Electronic dictionary is available for all the students of English department in the Education Faculty at Al-Jufra University. They use it continuously, but there is a lack in using it perfectly. The last experience of the students (primary, preparatory and secondary stages) has a great effect on the lack of vocabularies and comprehension the texts. Better care for the basic stages should take into account of all the administrators (teachers, inspectors, syllabus designers) of the learning process.

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Appendix

	Questionnaire for students					
	Demographic Data					
1- Gender	Male □ Female □					
2- Age						
	Questionnaire about using electronic dictionaries for translation					
	ct the suitable answer for your response. ly agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = disagree 5 = Strongly disagree					
	ties related to electronic dictionaries					
NUM	ties related to electronic dictionalities	1	2	3	4	5
11011		_	_		7	3
1	I use electronic dictionary in my study.					
2	I use the dictionary that uses only English language.					
3	I prefer dictionary that uses Arabic and English.					
4	I don't know how to use an electronic dictionary.					
5	I don't find all words that I need in E-dictionary.					
6	I face difficulty with a dictionary that uses only English language.					
7	E-dictionary doesn't offer to me the definitions for some idioms.					
8	I don't find explanations for grammar tasks in E-dictionary.					
B) Difficul	ties related to the language	l		l		
NUM		1	2	3	4	5
1	I face difficulty in selecting the suitable meaning for the context.					
2	Transitivity of the meaning of the word confuses me in selecting the suitable meaning.					
3	I prefer the context translation rather than word translation.					
4	I depend on translation into Arabic language in my studying.					
5	My teacher use Arabic language in his/her teaching, so I don't need to use the dictionary.					
6	E-dictionary helps me in the translation of the words only.					
7	Some words, I don't find them in the dictionary.					

8	I face difficulty in the translation of phrasal verbs.						
9	I don't find the translation of abbreviations.						
10	Some words don't have any translation in Arabic language.						
11	E-dictionary helps me to learn new vocabularies.						
Please write any difficulties that you face while using E-dictionary on English Language Learning.							

Thanks for your help and cooperation