

# ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ ДВУЯЗЫЧНЫХ СЛОВАРЕЙ И КОММЕНТАРИЕВ ПРЕПОДАВАТЕЛЕЙ В ПЕРЕВОДНЫХ ЗАДАНИЯХ В ЦЕЛЯХ РАЗВИТИЯ СЛОВАРНОГО ЗАПАСА АНГЛИЙСКОГО КАК ВТОРОГО ЯЗЫКА

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*Основная задача работы – получить ответ на вопрос: какой объём нового словарного запаса студенты могут выучить и запомнить в своих заданиях на перевод. В настоящей работе был использован экспериментальный метод. Для проведения исследования студенты, изучающие английский язык как иностранный (EFL) на Филологическом факультете, были разделены на экспериментальную и контрольную группы. Цель авторов статьи – исследовать эффект использования двуязычного словаря и получения комментариев преподавателей в заданиях на перевод, предназначенных для развития словарного запаса EFL. Выводы данного исследования: использование двуязычного словаря, а также комментариев преподавателей дают положительные результаты относительно запоминания ранее незнакомой, либо частично знакомой лексики.*

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**Ключевые слова:** двуязычный словарь, получение комментариев преподавателя, развитие словарного запаса, задания на перевод, корректировка.

## **Introduction**

In the process of learning a second language (L2), all learners need to possess a wide range of word knowledge, good lexical competence and extensive knowledge of L2 vocabulary. A well-developed knowledge of L2 vocabulary assists learners to comprehend, communicate and be successful in language acquisition.

“Words are the basis of language, and thus the basis of communication. Without words, it is possible to know everything about the grammatical structure of a language, but yet to be unable to make a single utterance” [3]. Knowing the use of a word means not just knowing how it is defined in the dictionary, but how it relates to all the other words in the language, and how and when it may be used in sentences. The language users “rely on a large stock of words when they communicate” [7]. McCarthy observed that “vocabulary forms the biggest part of the meaning of any language, and vocabulary is the biggest problem for most learners” in terms of learning and active language use [7].

Furthermore, earlier research on lexical acquisition indicated that vocabulary learning is “the first step in the acquisition process and continues throughout the lifespan” and that the acquisition of syntax and grammatical rules comes, consequently, at a later stage, to be acquired by approximately at the age of puberty or thereabouts [5].

## **Dictionary Use in L2 learning**

Dictionary is an important source of information which does not only have the words of the source language (L1) and their meaning, but the information about the specific field of interest. A vast number of dictionaries and some other source of information are enormous and the students are to possess certain skills in order to choose an adequate dictionary.

Dictionaries are the most accessible, the most used and the cheapest source of information and knowledge [23]. They are the primary source of lexical information for the largest number of students and they have their multiple use: decoding the meaning for the purpose of understanding (while reading or listening), decoding the meaning for the purpose of writing and translation and for the purpose of deliberate acquisition of the new vocabulary [19, p. 185-194].

When learners come upon an unknown word that they cannot infer from the context, they can either ignore the word or consult a dictionary. While it is often stated that the learners tend to depend on dictionary use excessively, research shows that learners' strategy use varies, depending on a number of variables [11, p. 139–147].

Dictionaries provide learners with useful linguistic and cultural information, especially when teachers are unavailable and learners are responsible for their own learning [22, p. 79-94].

Furthermore, dictionaries often supply information about the language not found elsewhere. They deal with grammar, usage, status, synonym discrimination, application of derivative affixes, and distinction between spoken and written or generally treated in textbooks, even in a rudimentary fashion [2, p. 262-275].

At present, the majority of the research studies related to dictionary use have focused on its relationship to L2 reading, such as the use of bilingual or monolingual dictionaries, dictionary use versus glossaries, and the impact of dictionary use on the learners' reading process. Within the realm of L2 translation, this article explores issues of dictionary use in relation to translation from L2 into L1.

### **Studies of Dictionary Use**

A number of studies have been conducted in regard to the use of dictionaries in EFL language teaching. Several researchers have included dictionary use as an important learning strategy [16]. Schmitt considers dictionary use as a cognitive strategy that occurs in conjunction with guessing and note-taking strategies [18]. Similarly, Nation's division of strategies describes dictionary use as a source strategy that provides information about a specific item.

Furthermore, studies on the use of vocabulary strategies have revealed that active strategy users are more successful vocabulary learners than those learners with a poor knowledge of strategy use, emphasizing the need to provide learners with conscious strategies [8]. Moreover, most studies conducted on the use of dictionaries as a vocabulary learning strategy conclude that dictionary use has a positive influence on the learner's acquisition process [11, p. 139–147].

One limitation in the use of dictionary stems from the learners' inability to separate lexical and semantic meaning. From a psychological perspective, as Vygotsky noted, the mind is related to the social context, and since language is related to the mind, language consequently depends on the social context [21]. Some studies indicate that semantic development is a slow process in which L2 learners learn a word at the lexical level and then at the semantic level. Hence, L2 learners need to have an idea of the form and meaning of the word in their L1 in order to find its equivalent in L2 in a dictionary. Thus, a learner's specific stage of development influences the types of strategies used when looking up words: at a lower level of development, a learner will only be able to apply a lexical strategy, whereas at a more advanced level, a learner will engage in semantic look-up strategies [12, p. 20–34]. Different stages of development also make certain grammatical categories more difficult to acquire [9, p. 264-270].

Apart from L2 proficiency limitations, certain learners are unable to perform a successful search due to their inability to use the dictionary correctly. Dictionary users may benefit from using efficient dictionary strategies [10], attending to all the information in an entry before making conclusions about the meaning of the word [12, p.189-196], working with activities in which vocabulary is practiced in various contexts [18], and from being instructed not to take the first word that appears in the entry in the dictionary, so as to reduce the notion of a one-to-one equivalency between their L1 and L2 [1, p. 66-75].

One study that has directly tackled the issue of the dictionary use in the context of EFL writing is Christianson (1997), whose focus was on unsuccessful dictionary use: "to better understand what happens when for one reason or another "communication conflicts" occur despite dictionary use" [6, p. 23-43]. His analysis included the identification and classification of words that had been looked up in a dictionary and subsequently used in writing. Christianson (1997) found that some of the errors his participants committed after a dictionary use were due to the dictionary (e.g. lack of collocation information or example sentences) and some were caused by lack of reference skills or the ability of the dictionary user to find the information being sought.

### **Method of Study**

This research is aimed at examining the effects of bilingual dictionary use and teacher feedback in translation tasks on EFL vocabulary development.

The research was conducted among the third year undergraduate students in the winter semester, the school year 2011/2012 at Faculty of Philology, Slobomir, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The total number of students was 70 (59 girls or 84.29% and 11 men or 15.71%). The language proficiency of the participants was obtained using Cambridge Placement Test. Their translation competence was tested, too.

For the purpose of research, the participants were divided into two groups: the experimental, consisting of 36 or 51.47% (30 girls or 83.33% and 6 men or 16.67%) and the control group, consisting of 34 students or 48.57% (29 girls or 85.29% and 5 men or 14.71%).

The number of female and male students could never be equal due to the fact that a smaller group of male students tends to study foreign languages.

Having completed the placement test, both groups had 10 students at C1 or advanced level (27.77% of total number of students in the experimental and 29.41% in the control group), 10 students being at B2 or upper-intermediate level in both groups (27.77% in the experimental and 29.41% in the control group), 12 students at B1/B2 or intermediate level (33.33% in the experimental) and 9 students (26.47% in control group), and 4 students at A2/B1 or pre-intermediate level (11.11% in the experimental and 11.76% in the control group).

The main difference between the experimental and control group was the lack of the intensive grammar instructions in the control group and the teacher did not explain the mistakes the students made in their translation tasks.

On the other hand, the experimental group had some additional explicit grammar lessons where they explicitly did the following: word classes, noun phrase, verbal phrase, adverbial phrase, the word order, sequence of tenses and sentence types.

During the test, there were three different phases. In the initial phase of testing translation competence, both groups got a blank sheet of paper and they had to do translation from English into

Serbian. The text consisted of 256 words. The students were told to use the dictionary where necessary. There were no marks for this test. However, the points were given to the students. The students were also to underline the unknown words in the text whose meaning they had to look up in the dictionary. They were given 45 minutes to finish the translation.

During the intermediate phase, all the students got the task to correct their mistakes on the very piece of paper and to rewrite it. The students had their second testing. All the students used the dictionaries and got a blank sheet of paper. The experimental group was requested to recall their previous translation and its corrected version. The following step was to rewrite the translation, using the dictionary where necessary. The control group was requested to do the translation with the help of the dictionary, without their previous translation. They got their translations before, with no teacher's explanations or corrections. The maximum time was still 45 minutes. Nevertheless, the students needed less time.

In the final phase, both groups got the same translation for the third time, with no prior notification. The students could not use the dictionary this time.

## **Results**

Considering the student's acquisition and comprehension of the English language knowledge, the findings in this study suggest few aspects. First of all, there was a great number of marked words the students looked up in the initial phase of translation.

Secondly, in the intermediate phase, the number of the previously underlined words in translations was now smaller and evidently, there was less use of dictionary. On the average, the students made a conscious, huge attempt to utilize the new words and expressions when doing the same translation. In other words, many students with passive vocabulary knowledge used the dictionary to increase their coverage, while many of the students with active vocabulary knowledge utilized the dictionary link not so often.

In the final phase, the use of the dictionary was forbidden.

Considering the acquisition of the new vocabulary while doing the translation, the research findings showed that the experimental group had an enormous improvement compared to the control group. Even though the number of the underlined words in both

groups was almost equal after the final phase, the experimental groups had more success in acquiring and comprehending new words and had a smaller number of mistakes in comparison to the control group. The experimental group was more precise, accurate and had more self-confidence in translation tasks than the control group.

Summarizing the results of the quantitative aspects of this study, it can be concluded that the experimental group undoubtedly made some progress. In the initial phase, it was slightly better than the control group by 1.26 %. In the intermediate phase, the difference was somewhat bigger by 7.88%, whereas in the final phase, the experimental group was substantially better than the control group by 17.14%.

In conclusion, it can be said that both experimental and control groups are becoming more skillful and efficient in the process of vocabulary acquisition. Nevertheless, the difference between these two is obvious.

Apparently, it takes time to utilize the newly acquired vocabulary. Only after a certain number of extensive grammar lessons, vocabulary practice, teacher feedback and constant repetition, the receptive vocabulary becomes productive. Therefore, it can be successfully used. The lack of understanding and the ability to utilize new vocabulary in the control group could be the answer to a bit worse research results.

The feedback treatment group or the experimental group learned effectively from teacher corrective feedback in identifying types of errors and appropriately reacted by incorporating teacher feedback in subsequent revised drafts and by applying rules they learned from it, including explicit corrective comments on grammatical or linguistic rules, in translating.

The results of this study provide empirical evidence that vocabulary acquisition and the reduction of errors in students' translation was in fact a result of learning from teacher feedback that they received and they applied in their revision activities. Therefore, the findings of this study are in support of teacher corrective feedback, confirming that corrective feedback can be effective in improving students' translation accuracy in EFL context, not only in revising subsequent drafts, but also in new translation tasks.

## Conclusion

This research is aimed at showing that both bilingual dictionary use and teacher feedback do produce positive results in terms of retention of previously unknown or partially known vocabulary.

The results of this study showed that dictionary plays an important role in vocabulary acquisition in EFL translations. On the whole, the role of dictionary in EFL learning as sources of words and information about words is irreplaceable and unequal. They are effective tools in the hands of EFL learner to take control of their learning and to better acquire and produce new language.

As the results of this study revealed, teacher corrective feedback together with written corrective feedback with explicit corrective comments is beneficial for students' learning, vocabulary acquisition and very effective in reducing students' errors.

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### **THE EFFECTS OF BILINGUAL DICTIONARY USE AND TEACHER FEEDBACK IN TRANSLATION TASKS ON ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT**

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**Abstract:** *This study attempts to answer the question how much new vocabulary students can learn and retain from their translation tasks. In this study, EFL students at Faculty of Philology are divided into the experimental and control group. At the initial translation phase, the experimental group will be given a translation task on their own with bilingual dictionary support. In the second phase, the same group will be given their corrected translation. Then they will be asked to rewrite the initial translation with corrections, using the dictionary and they will be given feedback from their teacher. In the third phase, they will be asked to translate it again, but this time with no dictionary use. There will be no feedback from the teacher either. The control group will do the same translation tasks three times but without any teacher feedback.*

*The aim of this paper is to examine the effects of bilingual dictionary use and teacher feedback in translation tasks on EFL vocabulary development. The experimental method will be used in this study. The expected results of this study will show that both bilingual dictionary use and teacher feedback do produce positive results in terms of retention of previously unknown or partially known vocabulary.*

**Key Words:** bilingual dictionary, teacher feedback, vocabulary development, translation task, correction

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