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Author Shu-Fen Lai
Author's Email Address No Public.
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Abstract Abstract
In the EFL learning environment with deficient authentic target language input, dictionaries as one of the essential learning aids play a crucial role in Taiwanese EFL learners' different stages of English learning. Also under the profound influence of the grammar translation method, EFL learners in Taiwan rely on dictionaries for translation aid and learning of English vocabulary. Despite some reports of negative effects of dictionary use on EFL reading (e.g. Chern, 1987, Huang, 1997), our understanding as to how learners use dictionaries in different learning tasks and why and in what contexts they use dictionaries is fairly insufficient. This study thus attempts to investigate Taiwanese EFL learners' dictionary use in English reading tasks; particularly how they interact with the dictionary and the text during the process of reading English.

Dictionary use being a highly individualized activity, a qualitative research approach was employed to understand students' dictionary use in reading tasks. Three students of different majors from a university of southern Taiwan participated in the study. As the primary instrument, the interviews were conducted with three participants to understand their lookup procedures and dictionary strategies while reading English. Document analysis and observations, in addition, are conducted as the secondary instruments to garner additional information and further triangulate the interview data collected over a six-week period of formal study following the pilot study.

The results of the study suggested that (1) English dictionaries are frequently used regardless of students' English proficiency levels; (2) English-Chinese bilingual dictionaries are used most frequently for the aid of Chinese translation; (3) multi-word units and polysemous words would exacerbate problems with dictionary use; (4) sense selection from a dictionary entry is the most likely occasion when errors arise. When it comes to dictionary strategy use in English reading, the study also showed that less proficient learners tended to use memory strategies more often, and are less able to monitor their dictionary use, than proficient learners, and as a result do not seem to benefit from dictionary consultation as expected.

The findings of this study imply the need of proper embedding into the English curriculum of dictionary instruction essentially embracing dictionary skills and appropriate dictionary strategies used in various learning tasks. English pedagogy, moreover, should be more concentrated on improving students' linguistic knowledge with a view to facilitating effective dictionary use and

eventually decreasing their reliance on dictionaries.
Advisory Committee Dr. Da-Fu Huang - advisor

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