PROCEEDINGS

International Seminar

LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT IV

November 18, 2014

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International Seminar
Language Maintenance and Shift IV

November 18, 2014

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EDITORS' NOTE

This international seminar on Language Maintenance and Shift IV (LAMAS IV for short) is a continuation of the previous international seminar with the same theme conducted by the Master Program in Linguistics, Diponegoro University on 18 November 2014.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the seminar committee for putting together the seminar that gave rise to this collection of papers. Thanks also go to the Head and the Secretary of the Master Program in Linguistics Diponegoro University, without whom the seminar would not have been possible.

The table of contents lists all the papers presented at the seminar: The first four papers are those presented by invited keynote speakers. They are Dr. Sugiyono (Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, Jakarta, Indonesia), Dr. Zane Goebel (La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia), Prof. Yudha Thianto, Ph.D. (Trinity Christian College, Illinois, USA), Dr. Deli Nirmala, M.Hum (Diponegoro University, Semarang, Indonesia).

In terms of the topic areas, there are 21 papers in applied linguistics, 20 papers in sociolinguistics, 14 papers in theoretical linguistics, 18 papers in discourse/pragmatics, and 13 papers (miscellaneous).

International Seminar "Language Maintenance and Shift" IV   November 18, 2014

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TABLE OF CONTENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT IV

Researching the Use of Dictionary by Students of English Literature Department at Jenderal Soedirman University

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Abstract

Dictionaries are recommnded as a useful tool when learning EFL because it gives information of the language about many aspects like, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. Nevertheless, EFL practionaires rarely pay attention to the dictionary used by the students. The article focuses on the investigation about types of dictionaries used, the frequency of dictionary use, and the lexical information examined. Respondents were students of English Literature Department, Jenderal Soedirman University. Data were taken from questionnaires. The result showed that students did not have any special instruction on how to make full use of the dictionaries. The respondents favored bilingual dictionaries over monolingual dictionaries. Respondents saw that pronunciation, usage, and examples were considered as a secondary importance.

Keywords : *dictionarary, monolingual dictionary, bilingual dictionary*

Introduction

A mastery of English in non EFL countries is badly needed to function in a globalized world. As a result, learning English becomes necessary that it can be undertaken in formal as well as informal institutions. English teachers are not always available outside the class, so students need to find a learning resource that they can refer to when they encounter problems related to English. In EFL context, target language input is limited, so a dictionary is an invaluable reference to the English language. Learning a foreign language normally involves considerable use of dictionaries. Dictionary can be one of the references because they provide students with linguistic information. They can provide a quick and direct access to the meaning of an unknown word (Oxford, (1990).

Dictionary is a helpful language learning tool to students, especially in EFL contexts (Brown, 2001). It is the fact that dictionary is commonly used by the students when learning EFL. It provides the information about vocabulary, pronunciation, parts of speech, collocation, and structure. However, students are often confused about dictionary consultation. A training of dictionary skills is essential because students may not be able to maximise the use of dictionaries without explicit instruction. Dictionaries provide students with useful linguistic and cultural information, especially outside the class when students have to work independently and they have to be responsible for their own learning.

Students often do not pay attention seriously on the use of the dictionary (Wright, 1998). Seemingly, dictionaries are not used as hoped by the students. They are ignorant of all the advantages that dictionaries offer. Even students who are aware of the usefulness of dictionaries do not always reflect this awareness in their practice. Most university EFL students are not efficient dictionary users. Complaints are often heard about the confusion and frustration brought about by dictionary consultation. Many students who enroll in the tertiary level have problems in dictionary skills. They are not sure of what dictionaries are appropriate to their proficiency levels and purposes. They do not know the functions of the dictionaries that could specially benefit their learning prcess. Besides, students do not know how they should look up a word in a dictionary and which definition gives the accurate meaning in the context of the tasks being performed. Added to that, many ignore the collocations, stylistic and syntactic features of an entry word because students normally focus only on the first explanation of a headword.

There is a distinction of dictionaries, such as monolingual and multilingual dictionaries, generalized and specialized dictionaries, native speakers' and non-native speakers' dictionaries.

Besides, there are distinctions such as encyclopedic and language dictionaries, dictionaries for adults and dictionaries for children.

The paper elaborates whether students of English Literature Department of Jenderal Soedirman University (Unsoed) have any kind of training on dictionary use. It also investigates kind of dictionaries students use and the opinions they have to the different types of dictionaries: bilingual vs. monolingual dictionary. Other queries refer to kind of information students look up in their dictionaries, problems of using dictionaries, and the implications and pedagogical recommendations that can be taken from this research.

Literature Review

Fan (2000) reminds that basically the teaching and learning of English do not only focus on different grammatical studies, but also kinds of dictionaries are used. A good dictionary consists of characteristics like, paper quality, good binding, clear definitions, and having idioms, synonyms, antonyms (Celce – Murcia & McIntosh,1991). However, some experts have different opinions about the use of dictionaries. They believe that dictionaries encourage students to pay too much attention to individual words at the expense of comprehensive understanding of texts (Brown, 2001). Moreover, consulting a dictionary is believed to slow down reading and discourage students from reading as much as possible.

A study investigated students' general patterns of dictionary use through a survey was done by Baxter (1980) about a survey on learners' general patterns of dictionary use. Bẻjoint (1981) did a research focussing on learners' use of dictionaries and the relationship of dictionary use with learning outcomes while learners were engaged in a particular task that often involved reading.

Martin (2002) in his study reveals that the majority of the students never receive dictionary use training. Most of students used bilingual dictionaries daily. They seldom consulted monolingual dictionaries. Bilingual dictionaries could discourage the students to use communication strategies such as paraphrasing in oral activities because bilingual dictionaries employed a single lexical item as meaning. Unlike learner' monolingual dictionaries, they used syntactic construction as a definition.

Fan (2000) reports on the use of bilingualized dictionaries by Chinese students, using the information from one section of the vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire, which asked about information provided by bilingualized dictionaries. Fan found that the majority of students (90%) used bilingualized dictionaries and perceived them as useful. Although participants expressed their satisfaction with monolingual dictionaries, the majority preferred to use bilingual dictionaries over monolingual dictionaries.

It implies that most L2 students, including advance learners, depend on dictionaries (East, 2007). Furthermore, even though they most frequently use dictionaries for word meaning, L2 students use dictionaries for other information such as pronunciation, spelling, and syntax (Nation, 2001). Students search the context meaning of words and usually consult the first language equivalents, the grammatical usages, and all meanings of words.

Tall & Hurman (2002) mention that the primarily use of dictionaries is for written tasks. However, students also use dictionaries for oral tasks. They use dictionaries often for oral activities, such as spelling and pronunciation. Students consider that bilingual dictionaries are more satisfactory than monolingual ones.

Moreover, Crystal (2003) says that bilingual dictionaries are used more widely than monolingual dictionaries; eventhough in some cases students consider them to be inferior to monolingual dictionaries. Most students use bilingual dictionaries daily, they seldom consult monolingual dictionaries. It is likely students depended heavily on bilingual dictionaries. They used bilingual dictionaries daily, they seldom consulted monolingual dictionaries.

Nunan (2004) sates that high proficiency learners use monolingual dictionaries more extensively than lower proficiency learners. Students of lower proficiency depend heavily on bilingual dictionaries. It is suspected that bilingual dictionaries discourage the students to use communication strategies, like paraphrasing in oral activities because bilingual dictionaries have a single lexical item as meaning. However, it is not only difficult but also often impractical to force the students to give up the habit of using bilingual dictionaries.

Baxter (1980) mentions that some learners are not skilled enough in dictionary use to make the maximum use of dictionaries. Many students do not make full use of bilingualised dictionaries or are

unaware of the importance of various aspects of word knowledge. Majority of the students indicates that they never receive dictionary use training. However, it seems that some students and teachers believe that reference skills are too simple to be taught.

Methodology
The subjects involved in this study were 82 English Literature Department of the fifth semester at Jenderal Soedirman University. They consisted of 40 males and 42 females. All of the respondents took a subject called 'Research Metodology'. It was likely that students in the fifth semester needed dictionaries much for teaching learning activity, like writing a theses proposal in English. Students required dictionaries of many kinds.

This study used a structured written questionnaire that was used to elicit the students' use of dictionaries. The questions were in an open-ended answers. The questionnaire was administered during class and students were briefed about the purpose of the study. The questionnaire consisted of questions to see an overview of the respondents' interaction with the dictionary; to examine to what extent the respondents consult a dictionary in relation to various language skills; to investigate the respondents' use of the information provided by a dictionary; to know difficulties in using dictionary.

Results and Discussion
The question whether students had ever been trained on the use of a dictionary explicitly gave an overview of the respondents' interaction with the dictionary. It explored the respondents' previous experience with dictionaries. Half of the respondents claimed that they had ever received some form of training in dictionary use, while half others responded that they had not. All the respondents agreed that training was necessary. Most students claimed that they knew how to use the dictionary effectively, few claimed that they could not. Respondents reported a strategy to ask students to have a dictionary. Students perceived that they did not act unless they were forced to do by the teacher.

All students valued the use of dictionary and they believed it was a valuable source to develop their English. Students prefered the bilingual dictionaries to the other types. The biggest problem in the use of monolingual dictionaries was that the students could not easily understand the definitions or target language synonyms. The bilingual dictionary of John M. Echols and Hassan Shadelly published by Gramedia, came to be the most popular. Added to that, this type of dictionary was considered by the respondents as a transitional type which helped students move from the use of the bilingual dictionary to the monolingual dictionary.

Respondents aggred that the monolingual dictionary was essential for their study because it enriched the vocabularies. Nevertheless, this finding was not in line with that view because the bilingual dictionary remained the predominant one chosen by the students. All students said that bilingual dictionaries were required for their study. Students were positive about all language types of dictionary. Some respondents liked to use the electronic dictionary (e-dictionary)*,* namely *Google Translation)*, whereas others liked to use the paper dictionary. Students also mentioned about the use of a calculator-shaped dictionary, called *Alfalink*, that was also a choice of the e-dictionaries. This type was quite popular among the students. Students liked *Google Translation* e-dictionary because it could be accessed through their mobile phones. Students seemed to consider the ease of use and portability as the most desirable feature of an English dictionary. Therefore, it was not surprising if respondents were in favour of the use e-dictionary that could easily be found when they needed.

The next question was about how far respondents consulted their dictionaries on the four basic language skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The survey results showed that the students used their dictionaries mainly while working on a translation exercise (reading skill), or on a written assignment (writing skill). Students did not maximise the use of dictionaries for other skills such as listening and speaking. In fact. dictionary could be used for those skills, such as how to pronounce words, to write phonetic symbols, and to stress words

Types of information that the respondents checked in the dictionary were meaning, spelling, pronunciation, usage, example, synonym, antonym, grammar, collocation, derivation, and etymology. Checking the grammatical function or structure of a vocabulary item did not seem to be very popular. Students considered it unnecessary to check these forms in the dictionary as they had already acquired them from other sources, like grammar books.

Students mentioned difficulties that they encountered when using dictionaries. They said they failed to identify the right word-meaning within an entry. They just simply picked up the words from a dictionary without checking whether they were appropriate or not to the contexts. Moreover, students reported that unclear definition of word was to be the difficulty students faced when using dictionaries. In addition, students failed to understand information about pronunciation.

Students saw that dictionary was an essential resource for language learners. The teachers needed to provide their students with information about dictionaries. This finding was in accordance to the opinion of Nation (2001). The teachers had to guide their students to the dictionary that would meet students' need. They had to explain their students the advantages and disadvantages of different dictionaries. This could be taken into account when suggesting the most suitable type of dictionary for particular purposes. Wright (1998) reminded that bilingual dictionaries might not be as rich in content as the monolingual dictionary, even though students with lower vocabulary knowledge would benefit most from using bilingual dictionaries.

The teachers have to introduce their students to the various types of dictionaries (Bejoint, 1981). Respondents stated that the choice of dictionary should be one that the students liked and enjoyed using; one that provided them with the functions they found most adequate to meet their study needs. It must be remembered that no current dictionary will precisely meet the needs of any one student as quoted by Martin (2002). Hence, students expected that it was not enough just to recommend dictionaries to students, but students also needed help to explore the benefits of good dictionaries and needed to be taught explicitly how to use them. In fact, a skill in dictionary use was an area that required further exploitation as mentioned by Fan (2000). Teachers should work closely together with students to find out ways to use dictionaries more efficiently for specific purposes.

East (2007) reminded that the teachers had to inform the importance of word knowledge to the students. The Students needed to recognize that understanding a word not only involved knowing its L1 equivalents, but other information related to the word. Respondents hoped that the teachers could assist students in this pursuit by instructing students to comprehend in the various aspects of word knowledge provided by the dictionary. Furthermore, respondents also thought that the teachers explained to the students about the importance of collocations, and pronunciation.

Lastly, respondents thought that the teachers had to put dictionary training into lesson sequences, so the students would see how to use a number of internet based dictionaries and what the benefits of such use were. The teachers put the dictionary use strategies into practice and they should provide easy access to good dictionary to the students. The teachers motivated and trained the students to use monolingual dictionary because most online bilingual dictionaries used a controlled defining vocabulary. This finding was similiar to the one found by Tall, & Hurman (2002). In fact, students would have no difficulty in understanding the definitions in monolingual dictionary.

Conclusion

This paper attempts to identify the dictionary use patterns of students at Jenderal Soedirman University. The aim is to investigate not only the lexical information participants seek from dictionaries but what medium of dictionary is the most frequently used. It has been revealed that the majority of students reported using bilingual dictionaries more frequently than any other types of dictionary reported in the study. Most of them paid attention only to the definition or meaning of a word. They neglected the pragmatic aspects of the word, collocations as well as word formation knowledge.

In addition, it was found that in terms of medium of dictionary, the e-dictionary was reported to be popular amongst students, like *Google Translation* via mobile phone and calculator-shaped dictionary called *Alfalink*. With regard to attitude, sudents were generally positive about all language types of dictionary. Data also suggest that looking up the meaning of words was the prime purpose of dictionary use.

As one of the main functions of dictionaries was to provide word meaning, it was understandable that students consulted dictionaries most frequently for this purpose. The final conclusion reached reported some difficulties that the students faced when they used dictionaries. The results suggested that failure to locate the right entry was a common problem among students.

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