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Dictionary Ownership and Usage among Undergraduate English Major Students at the Jordanian Universities

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This study aimed to identify the dictionary ownership and usage among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities and to reveal any significant differences among students' perceptions of the domains of the dictionary usage attributed to gender, academic level and type of the university. The sample of the study consisted of 471 students chosen randomly from four public and private universities in the academic year 2010/2011. The instrument was a questionnaire developed by the researcher. Results indicated that 30.4% of the sample owned printed monolingual dictionaries; 20.8% owned printed bilingual dictionaries and 43.7% owned electronic dictionaries. Results showed electronic dictionaries are used most and 93% learned how to use the dictionary. The findings showed no significant differences among the respondents' usages attributed to gender and academic level, but there were significant differences attributed to type of the university in four domains at (α = 0.05) semantics, phonetics, syntax and morphology and spelling in favour of Jadara university and public Balqa Applied university in the domain of pronunciation. The study was concluded with some recommendations.

Keywords: Monolingual, bilingual, electronic dictionary, semantics, phonetics, morphology, syntax

Introduction

Dictionaries are considered faithful companions to language learners, especially to second and foreign language learners because they provide a quick and direct access to the meaning of an unknown word. Bogards cited in (Tseng, 2009) states that the supporting role of dictionaries has been emphasized by both teachers and researchers. Nowadays with the easy and wide spread access to the Internet, more and more EFL students use online dictionaries when they encounter unknown words in their learning tasks. It is mainly because online dictionaries like electronic ones, can provide students the information about the looked – up words with easy and speed.

Dictionaries are often seen as a basic tool in the process of foreign language learning. It seems that the conviction of the usefulness of dictionaries is common among lexicographers, as well as language learners themselves.

However, despite the dynamic growth of the research into dictionary use since its inspection, we are still far from getting definitive answers to many important questions regarding dictionary use, including dictionary use by language learners.

It is assumed that dictionaries can indeed offer help to learners. The next question of interest to language learners as well as teachers in which dictionary types and what dictionary features are of greatest benefit to learners.

While the scope of this study is restricted to dictionary use among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities, dictionary use is not in general restricted to learners or students.

Definition of Terms

Printed Monolingual Dictionary: It is a paper dictionary which lists the words within one language and gives the meanings of these lexical items.

Printed Bilingual Dictionary: It is a paper dictionary which deals with two languages by listing the words within one language unexplained along with their equivalents in another language.

Electronic Dictionary: An electronic dictionary is either a small handheld computer with integrated reference materials, or a PDA or a smartphone with a dictionary program. Electronic dictionaries are also programs that can be downloaded from the Internet or purchased on a CD-ROM or DVD and installed on a desktop computer or on a lap top. Other electronic dictionaries can be searched and consulted online on the Internet[*].

Semantics: Semantics is a branch of theoretical linguistics that deals with the meanings of words and sentences.

Phonetics: is a science that studies the sounds of language as to production, transmission and perception.

Etymology: A branch of linguistics that deals with the origin and historical development of a linguistic form or tracing its transmission from one language to another.

Syntax: deals with the sentence structure, i.e, word order within the sentence.

Morphology: Morphology is the branch of linguistics that deals with morphemes. Morphology deals with the word structure, whereas syntax deals with the sentence structure.

Statement of the Problem

Many researchers recommend that further research should be conducted on dictionary usage among EFL learners such as Tseng (2009), Thin san (2001), Al Khub (2001), and Diab and Hamdan (1999). To the knowledge of the researcher, no research has ever been conducted on ownership and usage of dictionaries among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities in the domains of semantics, phonetics, etymology, syntax and morphology. The researcher, as a university instructor, has noticed from experience that there are differences in using dictionaries among students in such domains, but she needs to find out if such differences are statistically significant in terms of the variables: gender, academic level, and type of university. Despite the wide research conducted on dictionary usage among EFL learners at universities, the researcher' have checked all available resources but has not found any study conducted on dictionary usage among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities in the domains mentioned above.

This study is an attempt to answer the following questions:

1) What is the status of dictionary ownership among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities?
2) How and where did the respondents learn to use the dictionary?
3) What kinds of dictionaries are used most and how often?

[*] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electronic_dictionary.

4) What is the status of dictionary usage among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities?
5) Are there significant statistical differences among the respondents' perceptions of the domains of the dictionary usage attributed to gender?
6) Are there significant statistical differences among the respondents' perceptions of the domains of the dictionary usage attributed to the academic level?
7) Are there significant statistical differences among the respondents' perceptions of the domains of the dictionary usage attributed to the university?

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study stems from the topic it deals with, which aims to identify the status of dictionary ownership and usage among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities.

The advent of electronic dictionaries in ESL/EFL learning has made instructors see more electronic dictionaries in the classroom. Dictionaries, are a very important language learning tool. A dictionary is the EFL/ESL student's companion, at home, or away when the instructor is not around.

Shedding light on such topic may help university instructors emphasize the use of all types of dictionaries whether printed or electronic in learning English as a foreign language. It is hoped that this study might contribute valuable knowledge to the field of dictionary usage among students at the Jordanian universities. This research should provide input to researchers about dictionary usage and contribute unavailable data to the field about dictionary ownership and usage among students at the Jordanian universities.

Review of Related Literature

Diab and Hamdan (1999) investigated how 50 Jordanian Arab university students of English interacted with words and dictionaries while reading a specialized text in linguistics. The results showed that most of the look – ups were for 'general' words. Meaning and pronunciation were the prime purposes of dictionary use. The study also showed that monolingual dictionaries were used more frequently than bilingual ones; they were also found more useful.

Al- Khub (2001) investigated the types of information EFL learners at Yarmouk university look up in their dictionaries. It also tried to find out the type of dictionary EFL learners use. It also attempted to identify the problems EFL learners face when they consult dictionaries. The sample of the study consisted of 212 English major students, 124 English and 88 field teacher students. The findings indicated that the most frequent usage for dictionaries was looking up meanings of words and phrases and the least frequent usage was looking up the etymology of a certain word. The majority of the students used both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries. The frequency and level of skill of using both types were almost the same. Students encountered three main difficulties when they consult their dictionaries. The first difficulty related to the spelling of words. The second difficulty related to the confusion caused by the information given in the dictionary. The third difficulty resulted from the inadequacy of the illustrations and examples given in the dictionary.

Chan (2005) investigated the general use of dictionaries by university English majors in Hong Kong. Results indicated that students' dictionary skills were often not adequate enough for them to cope with their learning demand. 71.7% of the respondents used a monolingual dictionary in their study and work, and 85% of them used a bilingual dictionary. 46.7% were taught dictionary skills only in their primary schools. 42.5% of the respondents ranked translation as the top priority; 34% ranked written comprehension and written composition as the top priority. 88.7% of them sought the meanings of words, most frequently. Synonyms and an antonyms were the least frequently looked up.

Collocation and spelling ranked very low in their priority list. Translation purposes ranked first by respondents. 60.4% of them regarded the definition of a word as the most useful kind of information.

Hayati and Fattahzadeh (2006) studied the effect of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries on vocabulary recall and retention of EFL learners. the sample consisted of 100 Iranian university students learning English as a foreign language. The results indicated that the students learned quite The same number of words while reading, whether they used a bilingual or a monolingual dictionary. The dictionary types have no significant effect on learners' vocabulary recall and retention.

Ryu (2006) investigated dictionary use by Korean EFL college students. The findings indicated that 60% of the students had never been taught how to use an English dictionary. Most students had at least one English dictionary. English – Korean dictionaries were the most common. 38.6% of the students owned pocket electronic dictionaries. Students favored bilingual dictionaries over monolingual dictionaries to find out the meanings of unfamiliar words.

Bower and Mcmillan (2006) surveyed 1076 students of English at Kanda University of International studies in Japan. The study revealed that 96% of the students owned electronic dictionaries, and 90% of them were very active electronic dictionary users on reading and writing tasks (writing 53% and reading 37%).

Miller (2006) conducted a study in which four groups of university ESL students participated in a session to improve their use of English article system. Two groups used English learners' dictionaries and two did not. The results of the study indicated that the students who had used the dictionaries achieved a slightly higher number of correct answers in the given article exercise, and expressed a higher level of satisfaction with the session than those who had not.

Chen (2007) studied dictionary use in English vocabulary learning of Renmin University of China and found that the important of the dictionary and the access to the dictionary are established among the college freshmen, but they lack the basic knowledge of the dictionary and the dictionary instruction. 85% of the subjects never received formal dictionary training and 46% never recommended a dictionary by teachers. The subjects owned 2,66 copies of dictionary per person. 81% of the subjects use the dictionary to get relevant information, meaning and pronunciation. One of the major findings is that the electronic dictionary is replacing the printed dictionary (51% of the subjects) as the major source tool in vocabulary learning.

Kobayashi (2008) conducted a study, the sample of which consisted of 97 English major students in Japan. The results indicated 82% of the students owned an electronic dictionary. 88% of the ED owners used an ED primarily and 90% of them used ED more than (PD) printed dictionaries. 90% of the students in this study cited portability as the perceived strength of ED. The most perceived disadvantages of ED are the unavailability of diverse examples, the lack of detailed grammatical information and lack of usage information. Students perceived ED offered advantages over PD in such areas as search speed, portability, the jumb idiom search, example search and memory functions. Students perceived PD to be superior to ED in areas such as the ability to make notations, the quality and quantity of information, the ease of use and the availability of illustrations.

Perry (2003) (as cited in Kobayashi, 2008) studied the use of electronic dictionaries by Japanese university learners of English. He found out that 83% of them reported using their electronic dictionaries more than the printed dictionaries. Students perceived that the electronic dictionaries were easier to use, easier to carry, and were better for checking spelling, meaning and pronunciation. In contrast, they thought that printed dictionaries were cheaper and contained more words, and had more accurate information.

Tang (1997) (as cited in Kobayashi, 2008) investigated the use of bilingual electronic dictionaries by 254 Chinese students of English. She found that 87% of the students owned an electronic dictionary. Students valued their electronic dictionaries highly for their portability, search speed, the availability sound and explanation in their LI.

Koyama and Takeuch: (2003) (as cited in Kobayashi, 2008) examined the effects of type of dictionary (electronic dictionary or printed dictionary) on word retention. No significant differences

were found in either number of word looked group of college students: They found out, that although the same amount of information, students believed that the electronic dictionary did not provide as much information as the printed dictionary.

Jian, et al. (2009) studied the role of electronic pocket dictionaries as an English learning tool among 192 university Chinese students. They found out that 79.3% of them owned an electronic procket dictionary. The study revealed that students with weaker language skills were more dependent on the electronic pocket dictionary. The results show that speed of access was the preferred benefit of the pocket e-dictionary.

Xu (2010) studied the effect of dictionary use on second language incidental vocabulary acquisition. The subjects were 60 freshmen who had been learning English as a second language in a Japanese university. He divided the students into two groups. Group I used the paper dictionary; group 2 used the electronic dictionary. The findings indicated that dictionary use has positive effect on incidental vocabulary acquisition in immediate gain of new words and in the retention of new words. Students who used the electronic dictionary tend to forget more of the words than the group with the paper dictionary.

Chen (2010) studied dictionary use and EFL learning. It was a contrastive study of pocket electronic dictionaries (PED). The 61 participants of the study were junior English majors in a Chinese university. The findings indicated that PED'S are used much more frequently than PEDs. PEDs are used often for English exercises about vocabulary, grammar, collocation, English paraphrasing, blank filling and error correction. In evaluating the role of the dictionary for developing basic language skills, 60.4% of the respondents and 20.9% that they are most useful for speaking, and 4.7% regard PEDs as most useful for translating. In the case of PDs, 58.1% of the respondents are most useful for translating, 37.2% for writing of 4.7% for reading. No one considers PDs as useful for listening or speaking. It is found that the students were more satisfied with PDs than with PEDs. The majority of the students think that PDs provide richer and better information concerning semantics, grammar, usage, collocation and examples.

Most of students think that PDs are more trustworthy than PEDs because they provide more detailed and accurate information. All students agree that PDs are disadvantageous because they are too bulky to carry around and also time – consuming for consultation. PEDs are small in size and light in weight, and it takes less time than PDs to consult. PEDs can provide voice; PDs can't. Most students regard PDs are more useful than PEDs for vocabulary acquisition. PDs and PEDs do not produce significantly different effects on students' retention of consulted words.

The literature review shows that the previous studies either dealt:

a) with the ownership and usage of electronic and printed dictionaries and compared between the advantages of both types of dictionaries as indicated by (Tang, 1997; Perry, 2003; Koyama and Takeuchi, 2003
(as cited in Kobayashi, 2008); Jan et al., 2009; and Xu, 2010).
b) or with the comparison between the effect of using bilingual and monolingual dictionaries by EFL college students as indicated by (Diab and Hamdan, 1999; Chan, 2005; Hayati and Fattahzadeh, 2006; and Chen, 2007).
c) or with the general use of the dictionaries without comparing electronic and printed dictionaries or comparing bilingual and monolingual dictionaries as indicated by (Al-Khub, 2001; and Miller, 2006).

What distinguishes this study from the previous studies is that it is the first study conducted in Jordan which investigates the use of the dictionaries among undergraduate English major students at four public and private Jordanian universities in five domains of the dictionary usage which includes: semantics, phonetics, etymology and spelling.

To the best knowledge of the researcher, this study also investigates the undergraduate English major students usage of the dictionary in two domains spelling, syntax and morphology that have never been dealt with in previous studies.

Methodology

The sample of the study: The sample of the study consisted of 471 students chosen randomly from four public and private universities in the academic year 2010/2011. Distribution of the sample according to university, gender, and academic level is shown in tables 1-4.

Table 1: The Sample of the Study Distributed According to Gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	124	26.3
Female	347	73.7
Total	**471**	**100**

Table 2: The Sample of the Study Distributed According to the Type of the University.

Type of University	Frequency	Percent
Public Universities	281	40.3
Private Universities	190	59.7

Table 3: The Sample of the Study Distributed According to the Participating Universities.

Name of the University	Frequency	Percent
Al al-Bayt University	146	31
Balqa Applied University	135	28.6
Jadara University	94	20.
Applied Sciences University	96	20.4

Table 4: The Sample of the Study Distributed According to the Academic Level.

Academic level	Frequency	Percent
1st Year	31	6.6
2nd Year	134	28.5
3rd Year	211	44.8
4th Year	95	20.2
Total	**471**	**100.0**

Instrument

A questionnaire was developed by the researchers to identify dictionary ownership and usage among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part asks respondents to provide personal data, and to provide information about the kind of the dictionary they have, the dictionary they use most, whether each respondent had learned how to use the dictionary, where they were taught to use the dictionary, and how often each respondent uses his/her dictionary in his/her study.

The second part aims to identify the respondents usage of the dictionary in the following domains: Semantics (meanings), phonetics (pronunciation), etymology; syntax and morphology, and spelling.

Validity: six faculty members of the participating universities reviewed the questionnaire and offered suggestions. As a result, a few items were added, a few items were deleted and some items were modified.

Reliability: Alpha coefficients of the semantics, phonetics, etymology, syntax and morphology, and spelling domains were found to be (0.90). In general, reliability coefficient is quite satisfactory for the purpose of the study.

Procedures

The questionnaire was reviewed by six judges. Based on their feedback, some items were dropped; some were reworded where necessary and some were added. The judges validated the modified questionnaire before it was administered to the respondents by the researcher, who helped them fill out the forms and answer any questions.

The data were collected in the first semester of October 2010. Descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were used. The T-test and one way analysis, Anova were also used to answer the questions of the study.

Variables of the study: The independent variables were: gender, the university, and the academic level (1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year and 4th year).

Data Analysis

In answering the first question, which aims at identifying the status of dictionary ownership among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities, percentages were calculated.

To answer the second question which aims to identify the status of dictionary usage among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities, percentages were used.

To answer the third question, which aims to reveal if there are significant statistical differences among the respondents' perceptions of the domains of the dictionary usage attributed to gender, t-test was used.

To answer the fourth question, which aims to reveal if there are significant statistical differences among the respondents' perceptions of the domains of the dictionary usage attributed to the academic level, means, standard deviation and anova analysis were used.

To answer the fifth question, which aims to reveal if there are significant statistical differences among the respondents' perceptions of the domains of the dictionary usage attributed to the university, means, standard deviation and anova analysis were used.

Results and Discussions

Results of the first question, (what is the status of dictionary ownership among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities?) are shown in table 5.

Type of Dictionary	Frequency	Percent
Printed Monolingual Dictionary	143	30.4
Electronic Dictionary	206	43.7
Printed Bilingual Dictionary	98	20.8
Non-dictionary Owners	24	5.1
Total	**471**	**100**

Table (5) indicates that 30.4% of the respondents own printed monolingual dictionaries; 20.8% of them own printed bilingual dictionaries, and 43.7% of them own electronic dictionaries. This finding is inconsistent with the findings of the study conducted by Bower and McMillan (2006) which indicated that 96% of the college students at Kanda university in Janpan owned electronic dictionaries. It is also inconsistent with the findings of the study conducted by chen (2007) which indicated that each student owned 2.66 copies of dictionary at Renmin University of China. It is also inconsistent with the findings of the study by Kobayashi (2008) who found out that 82% of the English major students in Japan owned an electronic dictionary. It is also inconsistent with Tang (1997) (as cited in Kobayashi (2008) who found out that 87% of the Chinese students of English owned an electronic dictionary. It is also inconsistent with Jian et al. (2009) who found out that 79.3% of the university Chinese students of English owned an electronic pocket dictionary.

This finding is almost consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Ryu (2006) who found out that 38.6% of the Korean EFL college students owned electronic dictionaries. In other words, 51.2% of the respondents own either printed monolingual or bilingual dictionaries. It also indicates that 5.1% of the respondents do not own dictionaries at all which could be attributed to the easy access either to electronic or printed dictionaries available at the university libraries. It could also be attributed to the fact that some respondents lack the basic knowledge of the dictionary and the dictionary instruction, or they were never recommended a dictionary by their instructors. Nevertheless, 94.9% of the respondents own either printed or electronic dictionaries.

Results of the second question, (How and where did the respondents learn to use the dictionary?) are shown in tables 6 and 7.

Result of the third question, (what kind of dictionaries are used most by respondents and how often?) are shown in tables 8 and 9.

Table 8: Most Used Dictionaries among Respondents According to the Type of the Dictionary.

Type of Dictionary	Frequency	Percent
Electronic Dictionary	251	53.3
Printed Bilingual Dictionary	115	24.4
Printed Monolingual Dictionary	105	22.3

This is consistent with Chen's study findings which include that 51% of the college students deal with the electronic dictionary as the major source tool in vocabulary learning. It is also consistent with the study conducted by Kobayashi (2008) which indicates that 90% of the English major students in Janpan use electronic dictionary more than the printed dictionary. It is also consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Chen (2010) which indicated that junior English majors in a Chinese university used electronic dictionaries more than printed dictionaries. It is also consistent with findings of the study conducted by Perry (2003) (as cited in Kobayashi, 2008) which indicated that 83% of the Japanese university learners of English used electronic dictionaries more than printed dictionaries.

Table (8) indicates that respondents use the electronic dictionary more than both printed bilingual and monolingual dictionaries together, although their electronic dictionary ownership is less than both as indicated by table (5).

Table 6: Respondents Distributed According to Whether they Learned to Use the Dictionary.

Learning to use Dictionary	Frequency	Percent
Respondents who learned how to use the Dictionary	438	93.
Respondents who did not learn how to use the dictionary.	33	7.

Table (6) indicates that 93% of the respondents learned how to use the dictionary. Only 7% of then did not learn how to use the dictionary.

This result is inconsistent with the findings of the study conducted by Chan (2007) which indicated that 85% of the freshmen of Renmin University in China never received formal training in dictionary use in English. It is also inconsistent with the findings of the study conducted by Ryu (2006) which indicated that 60% of the Korean EFL college students had never been taught how to use an English dictionary.

Table 7: Respondents Distributed According to the Place where they Learned how to Use the Dictionary.

Place where the respondents learned how to use the dictionary	Frequency	Percent
At home	194	41,2
At school	193	41,0
At university	84	17,8
Total	**471**	**100,0**

Table (7) indicates that 41.2 of the respondents were taught how to use the dictionary at home; 41% at school. This result is partially consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Chan (2005) which indicated that 46.7% of the university English majors in Hong Kong were taught dictionary skills in their primary schools.

Table 9: Respondents distributed according to how often they use their dictionaries in their study.

How often the dictionary used	Frequency	Percent
More than once a day	194	47.8
3-5 times a week	151	32.1
3-5 times a month	41	8.7
Rarely	54	11.4

Table (9) indicates that 47.8% (about half the respondents use the dictionary more than once a day, and 32.1% of them use it 3-5 times a week. This result is expected since the learners are foreigners to the English language. Besides teachers and university instructors encourage students to use the dictionary for a lot of reasons either to check the meaning of a word or to find out how a word is pronounced, or for translation purposes.

Results of the fourth question, (what is the status of dictionary usage among undergraduate English major students at the Jordanian universities?), are shown in tables (10-15).

Table 10: Dictionary Usage to Find out the Semantics as Perceived by Respondents Ordered by Rank according to their Means and Standard Deviation from Highest to Lowest.

Rank	Item Number	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	1	I use the dictionary to find out the meanings of unfamiliar words.	4.36	.844
2	2	I use the dictionary to check the meanings of phrasal verbs	3.54	1.144
3	5	I use the dictionary to find out the meanings of compound words such as (nightmare; nitrate, etc.).	3.42	1.180
4	3	I use the dictionary to find out the meanings of idioms.	3.38	1.147
5	12	I use the dictionary to find out the synonyms of a certain word.	3.34	1.156
6	13	I use the dictionary to find out the antonyms of a certain word.	3.30	1.119
7	11	I use the dictionary to check the meanings of technical terms.	3.22	1.139
8	10	I use the dictionary to find out the meanings of proverbs.	3.20	1.062
9	14	I use the dictionary to check how a certain word collocates with other words.	3.30	1.119
10	9	I use the dictionary to check what a given abbreviation stands for.	3.14	1.192
11	6	I use the dictionary to find out the meanings of some prefixes such as (re-, un-, dis-).	2.90	1.302
12	7	I use the dictionary to find out the meanings of some suffixes (such as (-ing, -er, etc).	2.72	1.219
13	4	I use the dictionary to find out the meanings of a word through illustration. (pictures).	2.72	1.219
14	8	I use the dictionary to check the meanings of Latin root words.	2.67	1.290

Table (10) indicates that the item, "I use the dictionary to find out the meanings of unfamiliar words" with a mean of 4.36 ranked first on this domain. This finding is attributed to the fact that the dictionary is mainly used to find out the meanings of unfamiliar words which encounter a learner of English as a foreign language. This finding is consistent with Chen (2007), Ryu (2006), Chan (2005), Al-Khub (2001), and Diab and Hamdan (1999).

Table (10) indicates that the item which says, "I use the dictionary to check the meanings of Latin root words". Occupies the lowest rank on this domain with a mean of 2.67. The researcher attributes this finding to the fact learners of English language rarely encounter Latin root words in their English texts and they are usually explained and illustrated if they are available in the texts.

Table 11: Dictionary Usage to Check the Pronunciation (Phonetics) as Perceived by Respondents Ordered by Rank according to their Means and Standard Deviation from Highest to Lowest.

Rank	Item Number	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	15	I use the dictionary to check the correct pronunciation of certain words.	3.89	1.193
2	19	I use the dictionary to help me read the phonetic transcription of a certain word.	3.49	1.306
3	16	I use the dictionary to check the correct stressed syllable in a multi-syllabic word.	3.36	1.242
4	17	I use the dictionary to check whether the word belongs to American English or British English.	2.86	1.322
5	18	I use the dictionary to find out the stylistic value of a word (i.e. colloquial, standard, slang, etc).	2.82	1.193

Table (11) indicates that the item, "I use the dictionary to check the correct pronunciation of certain words", with a mean of 3.89 ranked first on this domain. The researcher attributes this finding to the fact that learners of English as a foreign language are mainly concerned about the right pronunciation of words more than about phonetic transcription or stressed syllables or the stylistic value of words. Pronunciation is related to speech and attached to it. Electronic dictionaries can provide voice. This funding is consistent with Chen (2007), Chen (2010), Diab and Hamdan (1999) Perry (2003) (as cited in Kobayashi, 2008); Tang (1997) as cited in (Kobayashi, 2008).

Table (11) indicates that the items, "I use the dictionary to find out the stylistic value of a word (i.e. colloquial, standard, slang), occupies the lowest rank on this domain with a mean of 2.82. The researcher thinks that EFL learners rarely worry about the stylistic value of words. They usually worry about their pronunciation.

Table 12: Dictionary Usage to Check the Etymology of Words as Perceived by Respondents Ordered by Rank according to their Means and Standard Deviation

Rank	Item Number	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	21	I use the dictionary to find out the origin of a certain word.	2.83	1.208
2	20	I use the dictionary to check the etymology (history) of a certain word.	2.63	1.330

Table (12) indicated that the item, "I use the dictionary to find out the origin of a certain word", with a mean of (2.83) ranked first on this domain. This domain includes only two items. It is logical and very reasonable for the EFL learner to use the dictionary to find out the origin of a certain word more than to find out about its history, since the origin of the word may help him/her in the process of learning the English language more than its history.

Table 13: Dictionary Usage to Check the Syntax and Morphology of Words as Perceived by Respondents Ordered by Rank according to their Means and Standard Deviation.

Rank	Item Number	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	22	I use the dictionary to find out what part of speech a certain word is.	3.46	1.235
2	30	I use the dictionary to find out the correct use o prepositions	3.28	1.247
3	25	I use the dictionary to find out the past participle of irregular verbs.	3.22	1.274
4	26	I use the dictionary to find out the plural of some irregular nouns.	3.16	1.245
5	24	I use the dictionary to find out the past tense of irregular verbs.	3.14	1.272
6	29	I use the dictionary to find out nouns that are plural in form but singular in meaning (e.g. news, robotics, etc.).	3.09	1.246
7	23	I use the dictionary to check whether a verb is transitive or intransitive	3.06	1.182

Table 13: Dictionary Usage to Check the Syntax and Morphology of Words as Perceived by Respondents Ordered by Rank according to their Means and Standard Deviation. (continued)

Rank	Item Number	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
8	27	I use the dictionary to find out the comparative and superlative form of adjectives.	2.96	1.239
9	28	I use the dictionary to find out the comparative and superlative forms of adverbs.	2.88	1.235

Table (13) indicates that the item, "I use the dictionary to find out what part of speech a certain word is", with a mean of 3.46 ranked first on this domain. The researcher attributes this finding to the fact that 'the part of speech a certain word is' is usually illustrated beside the word itself and its transcription in the dictionary. (e.g. control [control] (vt.; n.) controllable (adj).

Table (13) also indicates that the item, "I use the dictionary to find out the comparative and superlative forms of adverbs', occupies the lowest rank on this domain with a mean of 2.88.

Table 14: Dictionary Usage to Check the Correct Spelling of Words as Perceived by Respondents.

Rank	Item Number	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	31	I use the dictionary to find out the correct spelling of words.	4.06	.619

Table (14) indicates that this domain includes one item only, "I use the dictionary to find out the correct spelling of words", with a mean of 4.06. Form the researcher's experience as a university English instructor, the researcher thinks the mean of this item is high because EFL leaners are always concerned about the correct spelling of words in writing. They face a lot of difficulty in giving or writing the correct spelling of words, especially in words that contain silent letters.

Table 15: The Domains of Dictionary Usage as Perceived by Respondents Ordered by Rank according to their Means and Standard Deviations.

Domain	Mean	Standard Deviation
Spelling	4.06	10163
Phonetics (Pronunciation)	3.29	.882
Semantics (Meanings)	3.23	.614
Syntax and Morphology	3.14	.908
Etymology	2.73	1.129
Q all	3.21	.219

Table (15) shows that the domain of spelling with a mean of 4.06 and standard deviation 1.0163 ranked first on this domain. This finding is inconsistent with the finding of the study conducted by Chan (2005) which indicated that spelling ranked very low in the university English majors in Hong Kong.

Table (15) shows that the domain of spelling with a mean of (4.06) ranked first. This finding is attributed to the fact that EFL learners of English face difficulty in spelling words, especially those words which include silent letters or diphthongs or sometimes the same letter is pronounced in different ways as in the letter 'C' in words such as 'Car', 'Center'. And 'Cancer', or words from Italian origin such as 'Pizza' or words from French origin such as, "gourmand" or words from Latin origin such as, 'et cetera' abbreviated as 'etc'. This finding is inconsistent with Chan's study findings (2005) in which spelling ranked very low in dictionary usage among university English majors in Hong Kong.

Table (15) also indicates that the domain of phonetics (pronunciation) occupies the second rank among the dictionary usage domains with a mean of (3.29). This result is rational and logical because EFL learners of English are usually concerned and worried about the other features of language. Pronunciation is the natural companion of the speaking skill of the language. This finding is consistent with Tang (1997) as cited in (Kobayashi, 2008), Diab and Hamdan (1999), Perry (2003) as cited in (Kobayashi, 2008), Chen (2007), and Chen (2010).

Table (15) also indicates that the domain of etymology with a mean of 2.73 occupies the lowest rank among all the domains of the dictionary usage. This is consistent with Al-Khub (2001) who found out that the least frequent usage was looking up the etymology of a certain word.

Table (15) indicates that the domain of semantics with a mean of 3.23 occupies the third rank among the five domains of the dictionary usage. This finding is inconsistent with Diab and Hamdan (1999), Al-Khub (2001), Chan (2005), Ryu (2006), and Chen (2007), who found out the domain of semantics occupied the top priority on the list of the dictionary usage as perceived by EFL learners of English.

To answer the fifth question, are there significant statistical differences among the respondents' perceptions of the domains of the dictionary usage attributed to gender?), the researcher used t-test.

Table 16: Respondent's Perceptions of the Five Domains of the Dictionary Usage Attributed to Gender

Domain	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Semantics (Meanings)	Male	124	3.25	.614
	Female	347	3.22	.615
Phonetics (Pronunciation)	Male	124	3.28	.897
	Female	347	3.29	.877
Etymology	Male	124	2.88	1.097
	Female	347	2.68	1.137
Syntax and Morphology	Male	124	3.18	.878
	Female	347	3.12	.920
Spelling	Male	124	3.98	1.213
	Female	347	4.09	1.145
Q all	Male	124	3.23	.645
	Female	347	3.19	.610

Table 17: Significance of Respondent's Perceptions of the Five Domains of the Dictionary Usage Attributed to Gender.

Domanin		t-test for Equality of Means		
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Semantics (Meanings)	Equal variances assumed	.511	469	.609
	Equal variances not assumed	.512	217.144	.000
Phonetics (Pronunciation)	Equal variances assumed	-.047	469	.963
	Equal variances not assumed	.046	212.628	.963
Etymology	Equal variances assumed	1.758	469	.079
	Equal variances not assumed	1.788	223.806	.075
Syntax and Morphology	Equal variances assumed	.590	469	.555
	Equal variances not assumed	.603	226.015	.547
Spelling	Equal variances assumed	-.909	469	.364
	Equal variances not assumed	-.885	206.345	.377
Q all	Equal variances assumed	.621	469	.535
	Equal variances not assumed	.605	206.532	.546

Studying the effect of gender on each of the five domains of the dictionary usage in tables (16) and (17) the findings reveal that there are no significant statistical difference among the respondents' perceptions of the five domains of the dictionary usage attributed to gender.

To answer the sixth question, are there significant statistical differences among the respondents' perceptions of the domains of the dictionary usage attributed to the academic level?), tests of between – subjects effects were used.

Table 18: Respondents Perceptions of the Five Domains of the Dictionary Usage Attributed to Academic Level

Domain	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Semantics (Meanings)			
1 year	31	2.94	.598
2 year	134	3.26	.640
3 year	211	3.23	.588
4 year	95	3.27	.626
Total	**471**	**3.23**	**.614**
Phonetics (pronunciation)			
1 year	31	3.15	.929
2 year	134	3.38	.865
3 year	211	3.28	.896
4 year	95	3.21	.856
Total	**471**	**3.29**	**.882**
Etymology			
1 year	31	2.71	1.094
2 year	134	2.70	1.183
3 year	211	2.75	1.133
4 year	95	2.73	1.069
Total	**471**	**2.73**	**1.129**
Syntax and Morphology			
1 year	31	2.89	.929
2 year	134	3.17	.869
3 year	211	3.15	.961
4 year	95	3.16	.834
Total	**471**	**3.14**	**.908**
Spelling			
1 year	31	3.68	1.275
2 year	134	4.01	1.186
3 year	211	4.17	1.104
4 year	95	4.00	1.203
Total	**471**	**4.06**	**1.163**
Q all			
1 year	31	2.97	.629
2 year	134	3.24	.634
3 year	211	3.21	.626
4 year	95	3.21	.571
Total	**471**	**3.21**	**.619**

Table 19: Significance of Respondents' Perceptions of the Five Domains of the Dictionary Usage Attributed to the Academic Level

Domain	Sum of Squares	F	Sig.
Semantics (Meanings)			
Between Groups	2.756	2.460	.062
Within Groups	174.432		
Total	**177.189**		
Phonetics (Pronunciation)			
Between Groups	2.389	1.025	.381
Within Groups	362.882		
Total	**365.271**		

Table 19: Significance of Respondents' Perceptions of the Five Domains of the Dictionary Usage Attributed to the Academic Level - continued

Etymology			
Between Groups	.240	.062	.980
Within Groups	599.016		
Total	**599.256**		
Syntax and Morphology			
Between Groups	2.051	.828	.479
Within Groups	385.652		
Total	**387.703**		
Spelling			
Between Groups	7.828	1.941	.122
Within Groups	627.625		
Total	**635.452**		
Q all			
Between Groups	1.891	1.652	.177
Within Groups	178.177		
Total	**180.068**		

Table (19) shows that there are no significant statistical differences among respondents' perceptions of the domains of the dictionary usage attributed to the academic level (1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year, 4th year) at (α=0.05). The researcher attributes this finding to the fact that EFL learners of English at universities and English majors consider the dictionary as a necessary tool at all academic levels.English major students can not dispense with the use of the dictionary in their study and in their learning process of the English as a foreign language. EFL and English major students use the dictionary in reading, writing, language structures speaking, pronunciation, translation, etc.

To answer the seventh question, (Are there significant statistical differences among the respondents' perceptions of the domains of the dictionary usage attributed to the university), tests of between – subjects effects were used.

Table 20: Respondents' Perceptions of the Five Domains of the Dictionary Usage Attributed to the Type of University (Public or Private).

Domain	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Semantics (Meanings)			
Al al-Bayt University	146	3.29	.564
Balqa Applied University	135	3.18	.623
Jadara University	94	3.33	.616
Applied Sciences University	96	3.08	.647
Total	**471**	**3.23**	**.614**
Phonetics (pronunciation)			
Al al-Bayt University	146	3.28	.854
Balqa Applied University	135	3.41	.796
Jadara University	94	3.41	.838
Applied Sciences University	96	2.99	1.011
Total	**471**	**3.29**	**.882**
Etymology			
Al al-Bayt University	146	2.57	1.156
Balqa Applied University	135	2.79	1.074
Jadara University	94	2.93	1.099
Applied Sciences University	96	2.69	1.171
Total	**471**	**2.73**	**1.129**
Syntax and Morphology			
Al al-Bayt University	146	3.22	.892
Balqa Applied University	135	3.13	.912
Jadara University	94	3.29	.863
Applied Sciences University	96	2.89	.932
Total	**471**	**3.14**	**.908**

Table 20: Respondents' Perceptions of the Five Domains of the Dictionary Usage Attributed to the Type of University (Public or Private). - continued

Spelling			
Al al-Bayt University	146	4.16	1.180
Balqa Applied University	135	4.10	1.135
Jadara University	94	4.01	1.187
Applied Sciences University	96	3.88	1.145
Total	**471**	**4.06**	**1.163**
Q all			
Al al-Bayt University	146	3.25	.562
Balqa Applied University	135	3.21	.603
Jadara University	94	3.33	.621
Applied Sciences University	96	3.01	.683
Total	**471**	**3.21**	**.619**

Table 21: Significance of the respondents' perceptions of the five domains of the dictionary usage attributed to the type of the university (public or private).

Domain	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Semantics (Meanings)					
Between Groups	4.034	3	1.345	3.626	.013
Within Groups	173.155	467	.371		
Total	**177.189**	**470**			
Phonetics (pronunciation)					
Between Groups	12.238	3	4.079	5.396	.001
Within Groups	353.033	467	.756		
Total	**365.271**	**470**			
Etymology					
Between Groups	8.263	3	2.754	2.176	.090
Within Groups	590.993	467	1.266		
Total	**599.256**	**470**			
Syntax and Morphology					
Between Groups	9.142	3	3.047	3.759	.011
Within Groups	378.561	467	.811		
Total	**387.703**	**470**			
Spelling					
Between Groups	5.360	3	1.787	1.324	.266
Within Groups	630.092	467	1.349		
Total	**635.452**	**470**			
Q all					
Between Groups	5.403	3	1.801	4.815	.003
Within Groups	174.665	467	.374		
Total	**180.068**	**470**			

Table (21) shows that there are significant statistical differences among respondents' perceptions attributed to the type of university in four domains, at (α=0.05), semantics, phonetics, syntax and morphology, and spelling in favor of Jadara university (a private university) in the domain of semantics. Table (21) also shows that there is a significant statistical difference in the domain of phonetics (pronunciation) in favor of Balqa Applied University (a public university).

The researcher attributes this finding to the fact that the students who joined Jadara university originally got lower grades than students who joined public universities. The researcher thinks that weaker students in English major tend to use the dictionary more than the stronger students in this major. Some one may object to this interpretation by saying that Jadara is a private university and Applied sciences is a private university, too. So why are there significant statistical differences among respondents' perceptions of the dictionary usage at both private universities? The researcher thinks that the students who join Applied Sciences University come from higher social and economical

background. Consequently, their cultural and social background especially international and gulf countries students guaranteed more English practice than the other students in Jadara university who com from rather poor local areas.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings of the study, the researcher concludes this research paper with the following recommendations:

1) It is recommended that in order to promote learner autonomy, teachers should raise students, awareness of the usefulness of the dictionary, and help them develop dictionary skills.
2) University instructors should advise EFL students to use electronic dictionaries and printed dictionaries wisely according to their purposes. For example if the purpose of dictionary consultation is understanding the textual message, students should use an electronic dictionary, whose superior search speed minimizes interference with comprehension process. On the other hand, if the goal is learning words rather than just understanding the textual message, students could use a printed dictionary, which allows them to create a notation, browse surrounding words, and look at illustrations.
3) University instructors should not assume that EFL and English major students know how to use a dictionary; therefore exercises to familiarize the students with the dictionary should be used, because the task of finding the meaning of a word in a dictionary, for in stance, is a complex process. This process may include looking for a suitable headword, comprehending the entry, locating the appropriate part of the definition, connecting the right sense to the context and putting the word within the context.
4) University instructors of English major students should devote more time to instruction in dictionary use since review of literature confirms that EFL and English major students of English as a foreign language suffer from lack of dictionary skills and reluctance to use a dictionary.

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