IMPACT OF DICTIONARY TYPE AND USAGE TO ENHANCE TURKISH VOCABULARY IN TEACHING TURKISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary learning is one of the major challenges for many learners as it is an essential part of foreign language learning. Words are important linguistic parts to convey meanings and even to eliminate misunderstandings in communication. Currently, a new attitude on vocabulary learning is that it is not memorizing words in the contexts of serial lists (Fallahchai, 2011) and vocabulary instruction must be redefined to include more than just memorizing the meanings of words; therefore, some suggestion about learning vocabulary is utilizing dictionaries since they play a vital role to empower users to find appropriate usage of words and to continue communication as well. The purpose of this study is to determine to what extent dictionaries satisfy needs of foreign learners of Turkish, what type of dictionary is more beneficial, the role of dictionary type in the retention of meaning, whether the type of dictionary used will influence learners' Turkish learning attitudes and improve their learning outcomes, and finally to evaluate the effects of implementing dictionary skills instruction. The participants are 42 Erasmus students majoring at different faculties at Çukurova University, Adana, Turkey and also learning Turkish as a foreign language. The results indicated learning new Turkish word is complicated but it can be overcome by using appropriate dictionaries (bilingual, multilingual and electronic dictionaries etc.).

Anahtar Kelimeler: Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language, dictionary usage and skills, types of dictionaries, Erasmus students.

YABANCI DİL TÜRKÇE ÖĞRETİMİNDE SÖZLÜK TÜRLERİ VE KULLANIMLARININ TÜRKÇE SÖZVARLIĞINI GELİŞTİRMEYE ETKİSİ

ÖZET

Sözvarlığı öğrenimi dil öğrenmenin en önemli parçası ve aynı zamanda da birçok öğrenci için en temel zorluklardan birisidir. Sözcükler manaları aktaran hatta iletişimde yanlış anlaşılmaları ortadan kaldıran canlı ve önemli dil parçalarıdır. Sözvarlığı ile ilgili yapılmış olan birçok çalışma olmasına rağmen son zamanlarda sözvarlığının öğrenilmesi ve iletişimde kullanılmasıyla ilgili yeni bir eğilim ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu eğilim, dil öğretiminde sözcüklerin listeler halinde metindeki şekliyle ezberletilmesi değil ama sözcük öğretiminin

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ezberlenmeden öğrenilmesini sağlayacak şekilde yeniden tanımlanmasıdır (Fallahchai, 2011). Bu yüzden, mesajı iletmede sözvarlığının uygun kullanımını bulmak, sözcüklerin biçimbirimlerini ayırt edebilmek ya da uygulayabilmek ve iletişimi devam ettirebilmek için kullanıcıların dilsel gücünü artırmada önemli rol oynayan sözlük kullanımı önerilmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı da sözlüklerin ne dereceye kadar öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarını karşıladıklarını, yabancı dil öğrenenler için ne tür sözlüklerin daha yararlı olduğunu, sözlük türlerinin sözcüklerin manasını hatırlamadaki rolünü, kullanılan sözlüğün Türkçe öğrenen öğrencileri etkileyip etkilemediğini ve sonuç olarak da sözlük kullanımı becerilerinin öğrencilerin dil edinimlerine ne tür etki yaptığını değerlendirmektir. Bu çalışmanın katılımcıları farklı fakültelerde eğitimlerine belirli bir süre Çukurova Üniversitesi'nde devam eden ve bu sürede Türkçeyi de yabancı dil olarak öğrenen 42 Erasmus öğrencisidir. Çalışmanın sonucunda, Türkçe sözcük öğrenmenin öğrenciler için zor olduğu ancak amaca uygun sözlük (ikidilli, çokdilli ve elektronik sözlük vb.) kullanımıyla bu zorluğun üstesinden gelinebileceği bulunmuştur.

Key Words: Türkçenin yabancı dil olarak öğretimi, sözcük kullanımı ve becerileri, sözlük türleri, Erasmus öğrencileri.

Introduction

Although vocabulary learning is one of the major challenges and essential components of mastering a foreign language, vocabulary instruction is often either neglected or eliminated in curriculums, or taught on limited bases (Akbarian 2010, Fallahchai 2011, Willingham & Price 2009). Even though researchers constantly state that vocabulary plays a crucial role in learning, it is rarely practiced systematically in classrooms since learners are left to learn vocabulary on their own. How vocabulary instruction should be implemented in a curriculum and how sufficient vocabulary learning is achieved are still unclear and debated. One of the reasons for the argument might be that researchers have carried out several studies merely on vocabulary size and depth, incidental vocabulary learning, vocabulary expansion, vocabulary attrition, and most articles focus on direct and indirect vocabulary instruction through extensive reading (Akbarian 2010, DeRidder 2002, Tekman & Daloğlu 2006); moreover, their argument is still based on not only which instructional approach should be chosen to implement (Willingham and Price 2009), but also why vocabulary activities are often inadequate, leaving learners with struggle in comprehension (Alexander-Shea 2011). Additionally, finding solution to let learners utilize dictionaries, what type of dictionaries will influence them dramatically, and to what extend to enhance word size by utilizing dictionary are neglected, which are the main focuses of this study.

Atkins and Rundell (2008) define a dictionary as a description of the vocabulary used by members of a speech community, and the starting point for this description is evidence of what members of the speech community do when they communicate with one another (p. 2). In education, dictionaries facilitate learning in different ways: 1) dictionaries give clear definitions and small word lists, 2) present spelling and pronunciation of terms, 3) give the main inflectional forms of terms, 4) introduce meaning of terms with examples or illustrations, 4) give cultural connotations, and even idiomatic colloquialisms that users are likely to see representations of contemporary culture through target language. In fact, dictionaries are very important tools not only to empower users to be self-sufficient in finding the appropriate usage of words to convey message but also to encourage them to become responsible for their own independent learning.

Hence, dictionary use might enhance vocabulary acquisition and comprehension as well. According to Kaalep and Mikk (2008), dictionaries have to suit the needs of users regarding their types such as monolingual, bilingual or multilingual ones. In order to use dictionaries efficiently, learners should become aware of two important items: *types of dictionaries* and *dictionary use skills*. According to Poole and Wools, (2009) there are approximately seven types of dictionaries: 1) Monolingual (L1-L1) Dictionaries, 2) Bilingual (L1-L2) Dictionaries, 3) Learner Dictionaries, 4) Picture Dictionaries, 5) Electronic/Multimedia Dictionaries, 6) Production Dictionaries, and 7) Pocket Dictionaries. There are also multilingual dictionaries and glossaries; and additionally, other types are also given as idiom dictionaries, collocation dictionaries, synonym dictionaries, and netspeak dictionaries (Chen 2010), which are not the scope of this study. For dictionary use skills, Poole and Wools (2009) consider four categories: 1) acquaintance and familiarity with the alphabet and the order of letters in different languages (e.g., letter *c* is the third letter in English alphabet whereas it is the nineteenth one in Russian alphabet); 2) what a dictionary involves, its functions, and relative terminology; 3) proper use of dictionary; and 4) opportunities (both independently and collaboratively) to practice the dictionary skills.

Upon consideration the types of dictionaries, the needs and satisfactions of users are taken into account to access specific information. It should be remembered that the function of each dictionary should have relation between the profile of its users, their need for any specific information, and the type of situation triggering the consultation; in other words, it should have to be extremely fine-tuned (Ptaszynski 2010, 423). Thus, it is assumed that types of dictionaries serve their users with a wide point of view to solve problems arising in communication as follows:

1)   Monolingual (L1-L1) Dictionaries: They are designed to use the same language for the words and their definitions so that they could meet the reference needs of users learning a foreign language. These dictionaries are considered to facilitate the development of more strategies for learning a foreign language (Hsien-jen 2001, cited in Kaalep and Mikk 2008, 371). The usage of monolingual dictionaries is categorized in two cases: when users have some limited knowledge of unfamiliar words (i.e., they consult for spelling, grammar, and other types of information independently); and when users have no knowledge or are unfamiliar with words (i.e., they correlate an approximate L2 word). In other words, the monolingual dictionaries provide the functions of cross references to find words with related meanings (Schofield 1997). However, it is also discussed that monolingual dictionaries for native speakers will not be the same as in bilingual dictionaries for learners (Ptaszynski 2010). For instance, the monolingual dictionaries provide multiple meanings of individual words that confuse foreign language learners. Thus, many researchers are concerned that foreign language learners with insufficient vocabulary will fail to find the accurate meanings, forms, or phrases in monolingual dictionaries (Pei Chi 2008).

2)   Bilingual (L1-L2) Dictionaries: They include both native and target language, and translations are given in both languages since the goal is to help the user understand the meaning. It is observed to have increased users' motivation in foreign language learning, reduced their learning anxiety and established more self-confidence. (Pei Cei 2008). Nevertheless, for foreign language learners at advanced level, the use of bilingual dictionaries has been found to have no effect on vocabulary acquisition (De Ridder 2002, cited in Kaalep and Mikk 2008, 386).

3)   Learner Dictionaries: They are written by language specialists specifically for foreign language learners. Hence, they contain simple definitions, relatively small word lists,

notes regarding cultural connotations, and information about whether words are formal or dated (Poole and Woods 2009).

4)   Picture Dictionaries: They illustrate the meaning of words for beginners. The visual memory is specifically underlined and it is claimed that words should be remembered better if associated with images (Underwood, 1989, cited in Lew and Doroszewska 2009, 241). The facilitative effect of line-drawing images accompanying dictionary entries is demonstrated on lexical retention (Gumkowska 2008). However, significantly higher lexical recall for a combination of text and static picture over text alone was also concerned without an effect for a combination of text and images (Lew and Doroszewska 2009).

5)   Electronic/Multimedia Dictionaries: They differ from paper dictionaries in factors such as use, presentation, search capabilities, technical aspects, and nature of contents in several ways (Pastor and Alcina 2010). Electronic dictionaries may be much larger, without the user noticing any associated negative effect (like increased search time) by providing multiple external links and advanced search opportunities (Kaalep and Mikk 2008). However, incorporate different search types and much time can also be wasted on searching in an electronic dictionary without obtaining a satisfactory result. Scholars claim that the short time needed to retrieve information with the help of electronic dictionaries may not enhance the retention of the information for language learning purposes (Sharpe 1995, cited in Dziemianko 2010, 258).

6)   Production Dictionaries: They put words of the same topic or words with similar meanings in close vicinity so that they could be easily compared and help students discover new words more easily (Poole and Woods 2009).

7)   Pocket Dictionaries: They are very common ones with more accessible size and format of various dictionaries (i.e. bilingual, monolingual, learner, etc.) (Poole and Woods 2009).

8)   Multilingual dictionaries: They let foreign language learners stand for the presentation of more than one language including any foreign language they learned before (Kaalep and Mikk 2008).

9)   Glossaries: A list of words or phrases used in a particular field with their definitions. Glossaries are often found at the back of a specialist or academic book as an appendix to the text.

In order to encourage foreign language learners to use any type of dictionaries listed above, foreign language teachers use independent word-learning strategies such as using dictionaries, identifying and using contextual clues, and using word part information, or they also use self-learning strategies including dictionary usage, morphology, and mnemonics because these techniques might be introduced to learners to figure out the meanings of unknown words on their own (Mokhtar, Rawian & Yahaya et all. 2010, 77). By utilizing these types of dictionaries, learners gain acquaintance and familiarity with the symbols in the alphabet of their target language, what the dictionary entails, its functions in context, and also opportunities to practice their dictionary skills during their learning process.

Addition to the dictionary types, the second item, namely, dictionary skills, which are considered natural-born skills and necessary items of a learning strategy, are also taken for granted as learners' responsibility to improve their vocabulary acquisition and comprehension. Unfortunately, teachers seem to have ignored the efficiency of dictionary for years, and considered

this learning behavior a distraction. Hence, it should be a requirement for language teachers to let learners use dictionaries and get benefit from all their functions (Pei Chi 2008).

Besides the strategies mentioned, as also explained by Willingham and Price (2009), teachers use indirect or direct instruction of vocabulary that is viewed as incidental in nature as well. Indirect instruction, for instance, is utilized as a way of several components including extensive reading, background knowledge, and word saliency to increase vocabulary (subconscious attempt to use dictionaries). Hence, extensive reading helps learners deepen their knowledge of different meanings in various contents; background knowledge helps them make inferences while reading; and word salience helps them consider important ones or ignore those unimportant or primarily elementary ones. When considered direct instruction, there are many debates about using it directly; nevertheless, many studies emphasize that it has a place in vocabulary expansion, especially for weak readers (p. 98). In this respect, direct instruction could be emphasized as making learners to become aware of using various dictionaries and dictionary use skills.

In addition to indirect and direct instructions, teachers should assist their learners use dictionaries and also dictionary skills in order to realize morphology instruction as this instruction focuses on roots, suffixes, and prefixes of words presented in some dictionaries; in other words, learners might raise awareness on putting any unfamiliar word into smaller parts, realize the principles of formula, and combine them again. This attitude gives unlimited variety for learners to activate their learning and to produce words by utilizing dictionaries as well. For active learning, Nixon and Fishback (2009) draw attention to critical-thinking strategy that involves learners in groups who discuss words given by teachers, and they also mention about 'word-sort strategy' including three stages 1) sorting words into various categories, 2) discovering the meanings of words, and finally 3) resorting the words after reading (p.19). This strategy requires learners to take some time sorting out words utilizing dictionaries and ponder what they learn in the classroom.

In light of studies and types of dictionaries mentioned above, it is observed that learners neglect learning unfamiliar vocabulary during their learning foreign language process; their background knowledge is rarely activated; and their attention to morphology is blocked to realize communication. This issue is worse for foreign learners of Turkish during their learning process as Turkish is linguistically different than the other languages learners are familiar with. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine to what extent dictionaries satisfy the needs of the learners of Turkish; what type of dictionary is more beneficial for learners; the role of dictionary type in the retention of meaning and collocations; whether the type of dictionary used will influence learners' Turkish learning attitudes and improve their learning outcomes; and finally to evaluate the effects of implementing dictionary skills instruction.

Method

Participants

The participants are 42 (25 Females and 17 Males) Erasmus students coming from different language background (Belgian, Czech, German, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, and Spanish) and majoring in various faculties at Çukurova University, Adana, Turkey. During their education, these participants, whose ages range from 18 to 25, and who know two or three foreign languages, take Turkish courses (Beginners and intermediate level) 3 hours per week for one academic term or one academic year.

Procedure and Instrumentations

In order to gather information about the point of Erasmus students' views based on their dictionary use and skills, their awareness towards types of dictionary, and the role of dictionary in

learning Turkish, both a questionnaire and an interview are carried out as data collection tools. According to Seliger and Shohamy (cited in Arıkan, 2008), a questionnaire is very reliable to be applied to large groups of people; thus, in this study, a questionnaire with seventeen items regarding the views of the participants on Turkish vocabulary learning- is given and results including their comments and ideas are discussed below. The other instrument is an interview, which is defined by Cannel and Kahn (cited in Arıkan, 2008) as "a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, and focused on research objectives regarding systematic description, prediction or explanation." (Cohen & Manion, cited in Ghazal, 2007). Therefore, what are analyzed in this study are a) a questionnaire with seventeen items based on dictionary types and reasons for using specific types, and b) interviews including six questions: 1) how they learn Turkish vocabulary; 2) to what extent dictionaries satisfy their needs; 3) what type(s) of dictionaries they use while learning Turkish words; 3) what type of dictionaries is more helpful for them to learn Turkish words; 4) the role of dictionary type in the retention of meaning and collocations; 5) whether the type of dictionary used will influence their learning attitudes and improve their learning outcomes; and 6) the effects of implementing dictionary skills instruction.

Data Collection and Procedure

Data were collected via a questionnaire given at the beginning and an interview at the end of the study. For interview, each participant was informed about the purpose of the study and their permission was taken for note-taking and voice recording. All the participants were asked the same set of questions individually, and in order to analyze the data content analysis was carried out.

Results

Findings of the Questionnaire

A seventeen-itemed questionnaire was applied to the participants in class period to seek their opinions about learning Turkish words using specific types of dictionaries and their reasons for using those dictionaries as follows:

To examine participants' views on dictionary types and reasons for using specific types, the first item "*I learn Turkish words by using monolingual dictionary*" indicates that most of them (99,0%) state that they never use monolingual dictionaries. They also state that they have no prediction to make a link between Turkish words with the ones in the meanings; therefore, monolingual dictionary is hard for them to use. But, only one participant states that using monolingual dictionary is also a way to learn Turkish in another dimension to see examples and meanings of words in variation (1,0%). The results of the first item indicate that participants never attempt to use monolingual dictionaries to learn unknown words in Turkish as also proven in the study by Pei Chi (2008).

The second item, *"I learn Turkish words by using bilingual dictionaries"* investigates to what extend the participants get benefit to learn Turkish. Almost half of the participants (45,5%) state that at the initial stages it is the safest way to become familiar with unknown word formation via bilingual dictionaries since they give opportunity for them to translate the unknown words into their own language. Also, this type of dictionary makes it easy and fast to learn unfamiliar words. They also state that they directly reach the meaning of words and can remember easily (30,8%). Upon consideration of these results, it could be concluded that learners might activate their vocabulary learning. Two participants state that they can make comparison between their mother tongue and Turkish when there is similarity at alterations (locative case suffix in Turkish is –de, -da, -te, or –ta and in Polish it appears as in the phrase *v* İzmir*e*, which means in İzmir and in Turkish it is used as İzmir'*de*).

For the third item, *"I learn Turkish words by using multilingual dictionaries"* the participants (39,4%) seem to have explored unfamiliar words by utilizing this type of dictionary. They state that it is sometimes difficult to find bilingual dictionaries in hand and because they know other foreign languages, it would become easier for them to recall the newly learned words by utilizing this dictionary. Some participants especially emphasize that studying another foreign language and seeing the words in that language accelerates to recall Turkish words (*basen* in Czech means pool; *bazen* in Turkish means sometimes). Some other participants (27,5%) state that using multilingual dictionary improves their knowledge of foreign languages and raises their awareness to the linguistic features between and among the other languages. One participant states that it is easier and more useful than to monolingual dictionaries as she improves to keep the other foreign language in mind (1,0%). Two participants state that they can be sure about the meaning of word (4,0%). On the other hand, one student confirms that using multilingual dictionary can be confusing during hre learning process of another language (1,0%).

The fourth item *"I learn Turkish words by using picture dictionaries"* indicates that when using visual aids, the Turkish words are learnt easily. For instance, the participants (25,6%) state that they recognize the unfamiliar words more easily. One participant states that she remembers unknown words and retention with their pictures (1,0%).

The fifth and sixth items *"I learn Turkish words by using electronic or free-online dictionaries"* seeks out the opinions of the participants. Most of the participants (80%) state that these dictionaries are the fastest and the most useful ones since they give different variations of unknown words in different fields. They also emphasize the quantity of examples and/or sentences offered when they use online dictionaries. Some participants assert that they usually use this type of dictionary while they work on other issues on the computer and this dictionary provides them to fulfill different things at the same time (30,7%). From the results it is observed that the most favorite dictionary while learning Turkish is electronic ones.

The sixth and the seventh item, *"I learn Turkish words by using pocket (paperback model and handheld devices) dictionaries"* measure if they use this type of dictionaries and get any benefit during their learning period. Some participants (45,5%) use paperback dictionaries whereas some (30,7%) use handheld devices. They all state that they prefer using these dictionaries as they are easy to carry with them and to use during the communication with local people.

The results derived from the analysis of questionnaire indicate that the participants use different types of dictionaries to learn and use new words. It is also observed that these participants generally use two or more dictionaries (book and software dictionaries) at the same time. The results indicate that they are satisfied at learning Turkish vocabulary by using different types of dictionaries, they think several dictionaries are helpful for them to learn Turkish words, to recall collocations and improve their learning outcomes.

Findings of Interviews

In order to obtain further data about using dictionaries, the role of dictionary types on learning Turkish words permanently, and implementing dictionary skills in Turkish learning, interviews were conducted individually with 32 participants as the other ten participants either left some items in the questionnaire unreplied or could not respond the questions fully in the interview. The questions asked and recorded during the interview are: 1) How do you learn Turkish vocabulary?; 2) To what extent do dictionaries satisfy your needs?; 3) What type(s) of dictionaries do you use while learning Turkish words?; 4) What type of dictionaries is more helpful for you to

learn Turkish words?; and finally, 5) What is the role of dictionary type in the retention of meaning and collocations?.

Considering the data gathered from the first question in the interview, *how they learn Turkish vocabulary*, it is observed that foreign learners find Turkish vocabulary extremely difficult to learn at the initial stages because of its unfamiliarity, not only word formation and in spelling but also pronunciation (87,4%). This fact prevents them from making a link between their own language and Turkish. In other words, even though they try finding similarities with the other languages they know, they are insufficient to use the appropriate form of words considering different situations. They generally complain about phonetics, and the new symbols/sounds such as "ı, ö, ü, ğ" in Turkish language. Unless they find equivalence of these sounds in both languages, it is rather difficult for them to produce appropriately. In order to cope with these difficulties, the participants state that they develop basic strategies such as independent word-learning, cognitive, and word-sort strategies to identify and use clues, and they also develop basic techniques such as practicing the newly learned words in real situations with local people and listening or reading more authentic materials. They also reinforce their learning by watching commercials on TV, reading Turkish stories, and learning Turkish songs, which would be considered incidental learning of phonology and spelling. Even though participants might know the words, they are unlikely to know how to pronounce because they fail to do recognition of phonetics on their own. However, if pronunciation of unknown words is introduced in dictionaries, it may result in participants' gain for knowledge of pronunciation. Thus, they can determine easily for appropriate pronunciation since the number of encounters of words they met in dictionaries give them enough times to acquire. The results also indicate that number of encounters is more important than the quality of encounters to learn pronunciation and spelling effectively.

The second item in the interview *to what extent dictionaries satisfy their needs* indicates that most of the participants (72,7%) get benefit from utilizing several dictionaries and glossaries. They state they often use them to understand word's basic root, which helps them realize the word's meaning easily. They state that dictionaries including examples and subdivisional meanings help them understand formulation of unfamiliar words.

The third item, *what type(s) of dictionaries they use while learning Turkish words,* indicates that participants generally utilize at least two dictionaries, bilingual/multilingual and electronic dictionaries (44.2% and 47.5%), and multilingual and electronic dictionaries (36.2% and 56.9%). The participants state their problem with unfamiliar morphemes attached to words can be solved, especially, when they use electronic dictionaries. Additionally, they state that the more they use dictionaries, the more they become familiar with word parts. Therefore, they might redo formula for new unknown words on their own. The critical thinking strategy also helps them activate their background knowledge in using linguistic items. When considering foreign learners' own or other foreign languages, several strategies such as metacognitive, cognitive, and activation strategies used in Turkish lessons appear to facilitate their active learning faster besides utilizing dictionaries.

The fourth item, *what type of dictionaries is more helpful to learn Turkish words*, is consulted in order to find out how satisfied they are with their bilingual and multilingual dictionaries, multilingual and electronic dictionaries. The participants (77,4%) state their satisfaction for bilingual and multilingual dictionaries, and 63.7% for the multilingual and electronic dictionaries. In the study, some of the participants also emphasize that they get benefit from the glossaries at the end of their books (68,4%). majority of the participants dramatically underline the utilizing electronic dictionaries is faster and easier to reach the unfamiliar words when compared to the paper dictionaries, and also state that they provide them richer and better

information. Some other participants (35,5%) state that they use learners or pocket dictionaries and regard that these dictionaries are sometimes insufficient presenting cultural facts and variety of unknown words. In general it is observed that the participants use pocket dictionaries or glossaries in the lessons.

The last item in the interview investigates *the role of dictionary type in the retention of meaning and collocations.* The results reveal that more than half of the participants (52,7%) use bilingual and electronic dictionaries and they recall meaning of words and their associations. A majority of the participants (69,2%) regard utilizing dictionaries important or very important in vocabulary acquisition and communication. 23,8% of the participants emphasize that bilingual and multilingual dictionaries are also useful for them. The rest (7,0%) claim that some collocations are uncovered in the dictionaries and that they merely appear in the examples in the texts. Thus, the problem the participants face is the shortage of resources while they are studying and their unawareness or unfamiliarity to the collocations that are not bolded in the sentences. However, in general, the results of the interview on retention indicate that the consultation of the electronic dictionary is more beneficial to remembering both the meaning of the words and their collocations than traditional paper dictionaries.

As a result of the questionnaire and the interview, it appears that bilingual and/or multilingual dictionaries are beneficial learning tools to acquire foreign language vocabulary; nevertheless, electronic dictionaries are more beneficial tools since they are fast at introducing multiplicity of information in terms of several factors such as number of encounters to learn pronunciation and spelling effectively; examples and subdivisional meanings to raise awareness to unknown words in richer and better information in semantic usage; presentations of cultural facts in variation; and finally, recollection to define unknown words and their collocations in linguistic patterns.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study elaborated how foreign language learners struggled to learn Turkish words and what types of dictionary they used during their learning process. The results indicated that learning new vocabulary is dispensable for students who have very limited vocabulary and often struggle to grasp meaning or full comprehension. However, it can be overcome by using appropriate dictionary types. According to the results of this study, there are no significant differences between bilingual or multilingual, and electronic dictionaries in comprehension, production, and retention of vocabulary although the speed of the former is significantly slower than the latter. For instance, as also found in the study by Pei-Chi (2008), participants in beginner levels preferred bilingual dictionaries for fast consultation and mother-language translation since they felt more safe and comfortable. Nevertheless, it is also observed that participants apparently get more benefit to utilize electronic dictionaries than traditional paper dictionaries. Therefore, teachers should encourage their learners to choose themselves appropriate dictionaries for their different language tasks and use them properly and efficiently, and they should raise awareness at equipping their learners with necessary strategies to expand their vocabulary knowledge rather than teaching specific words. This aim is reached by the dictionary skills and usage. The last but not the least, the necessity of dictionary use in learning Turkish as an important learning tool should be supported to be expanded. What's more, interactive dictionaries or word studies at the institution should be encouraged, supported, and increased to help learners access easily.

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