

Academic Achievements and its Relationship with Dictionary Skills and Dictionary Use

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationships of dictionary use and dictionary skills to academic achievements. There is a plethora of studies that looked into the relationships between dictionary use and abilities to second language learning. Studies that looked into the relationships between language learning and academic achievements can also be considered as common. However the possible connection between dictionary use and dictionary abilities to academic achievements is not well researched. This study aims to look at the possible connections in order to have a better understanding on academic achievements. The instrument used was a set of questionnaire adapted for this study and proof-read by two language experts both in Malay and English language. The pilot research was conducted involving 99 respondents resulted with an acceptable Cronbach Alpha of 0.711. Findings of this study revealed no correlations between dictionary use and dictionary abilities to academic achievements. However the study indicates weak positive correlation as well as a significant regression between dictionary skills tests scores to academic achievements.

Keywords: Academic Achievements, Dictionary Skills, Dictionary Use

1. Introduction

Most textbooks, reference books and researches are written in English; albeit have translations to the Malays language may have started. As stated by Crystal [1], "*English has become a global language, increasingly necessary for international intelligibility and information management especially in business, science, diplomacy, engineering*". What this reinforces is the idea that in order to keep up with the ever improving academic world, many references are written in English hence academicians in Malaysia cannot afford to wait for the translated version. If the academicians, lectures and especially students who still relying on reference and textbooks that are outdated, it may prove disastrous when they are left behind and unable to compete in this globalized economy. One solution that has been carried out is through the constant teaching of the English language. The goal is to well equip the students with the language capacity in order to compete in an English dominated technology and economy. The teaching of English in the institution encompasses not only on oral or written proficiencies, it includes several other skill based on an outlined syllabus, targeted at enriching the language capabilities of the students. One such skill is dictionary ability.

With the appropriate level of ability it is hoped by the educators in the institution that it would in turn facilitate an increase usage of the dictionaries to help the students in their daily lives. According to Normazidah et. al. [2], "*Learners tend to depend heavily on translation and dictionary use to find meanings*". What this means, is that the lessons were meant to aid students especially those who depend on translations not only for language learning but for other subjects as well and even outside the classroom. Students can use the ability they have to enable them to

understand the context of the lessons as described by Hartmann, [3]. With higher level of ability, it is with the perception that the students would be able to use their dictionaries more effectively.

2. Review of literature

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework serves as the backbone of this research. It provides a path of understanding on the cognitive development of second language learning as well as why dictionary ability may play an integral role. According to Vygotsky [4] language plays two critical roles in cognitive development; it is the main means by which adults transmit information to children and language itself becomes a very powerful tool of intellectual adaptation. Jean Piaget [5], provided many central concepts in the field of developmental psychology in relation to the growth of intelligence. Piaget described psychological growth as the ability to more accurately represent the world and perform logical operations on representations of concepts grounded in interactions with the world. The theory concern the emergence and construction of schemata schemes of how one perceives the world in developmental stages, times when children are acquiring new ways of mentally representing information.

This is in linear though not directly associated with what has been described by Nation and Waring [6], where vocabulary knowledge leads to knowledge of the world. It can be related to a structuralism theory of Sussure [7]; the sign, the signified and the signifier. Sussure described words as representation of the world, without understanding the word the construction of the meaning, image and understanding behind the word's concept is unattainable. Hence Piaget's schemata is about making a construct of the world based on information formed mentally, in language development, this schemata can further be developed with vocabulary acquisitions. Another theorist Noam Chomsky [8], proposed the theory that all people have an innate, biological ability to acquire a language. He theorized that people possess a Language Acquisition Device (LAD), a sort of neurological wiring that, regardless of the language to be acquired, allows a child to listen to a language, decipher the rules of that language, and begin creating with the language at a very young age.

However, the cognitive development required to adopt a second language may differ. Second language acquisition deals with the cognitive strategy of the mind in which it usually involves the identification, retention, storage or retrieval of words, phrases and other elements of the second language [9, 10, 11]. Krashen developed a theory called Monitor Theory based on Chomsky's concept of a LAD. The Monitor Theory is composed of four hypotheses that provide a framework for teaching a second language. In regard to this study however, the pertinent element needed to be considered by Krashen's theory is on the Input hypothesis. The hypothesis LAD as proposed by Chomsky is activated and began to process comprehensible input for second language acquisition. Comprehensible input is language either written or heard, that is understood by the second language learner. Hence to attain a comprehensible input, strategies are needed when learning a second language; namely repeating new vocabulary and through the use of translation.

Vocabulary repentance is achieved when the learners understand the meaning of words through different means, either through learning it from the teachers in class or repeating the vocabulary on their own, for example through actual usage of the words. The second component to the element of Input hypothesis is translation. It is the key concept of making words comprehensible [12]. Krashen's theory can further be supported by the views of Kamil and Hiebert [13], in which they acknowledge that knowledge of words comes from understanding or recognizing a word and words that are used to speak or write. What this means is that Krashen's

theory on comprehensible input is that it plays as the foundation of language learning. In which the first step is to understand to what is being read or listened to and thus the other steps may follow suit in language acquisition.

Basically it is a process out of deriving meaning from words. One key example of translation is through the use of dictionary to derive meanings from unknown words, hence, leading to a comprehensible input; either in reading or listening. Krashen also pointed out that without comprehensible input, the second language learner is left with a group of words that are perceived as incomprehensible noise and cannot be processed through the activation of LAD. What this basically means, is that any words heard by the learners, and if those words do not bring any meaning, it will not activate LAD and thus unable to decipher the language, and in turn use those words to be reproduced either orally or written.

2.2 Research on Dictionary Use and Abilities

When an individual acquires the ability to solve problems in intellectual tasks, where success is determined more by the subject's knowledge than by his or her physical prowess, the individual has acquired a cognitive skill [14]. Dictionary ability is when an individual managed to fulfil the task of defining a word, retrieve its meaning and able to use it in a context through the use of his or her knowledge. It is in which they acknowledged that the words we use come in two forms: oral and print [13]. The knowledge of these words also comes in two forms which are receptive (words we understand or recognize) and expressive (the words or vocabulary used when we speak or write). Expressive language can best be understood as the process of formulating or sending a message; communicating or expressing language through writing, speaking, or gestures such as pointing to words, pointing to pictures, or using sign language . Receptive language, on the other hand, is the process of receiving and understanding a message through language that is spoken or written by others such as through listening and reading. Hence, research on dictionary use and ability are commonly associated with vocabulary acquisition and imminently language attainment.

One example, would be Wai-on's [15] research. She investigated the dictionary use pattern of 107 translation students from five local universities for Chinese to English translation, and the dictionary consultation process of four respondents. Triangulation methods were employed: questionnaire survey, interview, think-aloud protocol, and performance exercise. One of the results of the study was that less than half of the respondents were familiar with the macro-structure of the dictionary, and the micro-structure of an entry, rendering them unable to make full use of the dictionary. With less than half are unable to utilize the dictionary to full use. There may be a reason behind such low numbers, as the same study by Wai-on indicated that two thirds of the respondent (75.3%) had never received any training in dictionary use; both when the respondents were at school or at their respective Universities. 15.1% of the respondents recalled their training and 9.6% were unsure. The clear distinction between Wai-on study and this research is that the target respondents for this study will all have learnt dictionary ability as part of the mandatory AE101 English course. Two-third of Wai-on's respondent never received proper training and resulted in more than half of the total respondents are unable to use a dictionary effectively. It will add to the academia benefits, as it provides a view on what dictionary training may have yield for students. It can be seen through the results of the dictionary ability tested on the respondents as well as a follow up of the use on that knowledge, within the respondents' day-to-day life basis.

Another research was conducted by Pousi [16], in which the study was carried out at a secondary school in South-eastern Finland. Two 9th grade classes were chosen for the study on the basis of teacher recommendation. At the time of the study, the participants had studied English as a foreign language at school for approximately six years with two to three 45- minute

lessons per week. One of the classes was randomly assigned to participate in a 45-minute training session on the use of a bilingual dictionary. After the training, their dictionary ability was tested. The other class functioned as a control group; these pupils did not receive training but took the same test as the training group. The test conducted was on the successful rate of the dictionary searches of the respondents. This is a basic test of finding the meaning of a word through a dictionary. 30 of the training group's dictionary look ups were successful, yielding a 78.9% successful rate. The control group recorded 38 successful dictionary searches, with a 64.3% successful rate. The interesting aspect of the result on Pousi's study is that, when compared to those who received training and those who weren't was not such a big gap; with only a difference of 12.6%. A stark difference between what was found on the research conducted by wai-on [15]. However, the fact that the training of dictionary ability was only conducted once before the respondents were tested plays a huge variable when compared to this study. This study will test students after an average of 3 weeks of dictionary ability lessons with an average of 4 hours per week. Basically the amount of training received may be an influential factor in this study.

2.3 Cognitive Development in Second Language Learning

Second language acquisition deals with the cognitive strategy of the mind in which it usually involves the identification, retention, storage or retrieval of words, phrases and other elements of the second language [9]. The language learning process is a naturally occurring cognitive process. Another research indicates that children who are exposed to a foreign language at a young age achieve higher levels of cognitive development at an earlier age [17]. However for students who are young adults aged between 17 to 22 years old on average, a different take on language learning can be viewed, "*The learning experiences of a child determine which [neural] connections are developed and which no longer function. That means what is easy and natural for a child – learning a language – can become hard work for an older learner.*" [17]. Meaning that learning a second or foreign language for students may prove to be a challenge, even though they have been exposed to the language as early as seven years old. Usually, language acquisition has been viewed as generally, a skill to be learned in order to fulfil an educational institution requirements, learning about culture of others and to aid students in their professional careers [18]. Hence second language acquisition is also often studied within the realm of challenges towards the learners and thus, a plethora of research has been conducted on student's perceptions towards second language acquisition. One example would be a research conducted by Jafre et.al [19], where it looked into attitude in relations with emotional, attitude and cognitive aspects.

However, the focus of this study is to look into language learning, and how it may facilitates cognitive development, especially the case of the target population. This study does not focus on language learning itself, rather, other benefits that is brought along with it; specifically cognitive development. Some researches do indicate towards that notion. As stated by Hakuta, [20, 21], "*language learners show greater cognitive flexibility, better problem solving and higher order thinking ability*". Another research discovered that "*people who are competent in more than one language consistently outscore monolinguals on tests of verbal and nonverbal intelligence.*" It is further reinforced by another study which state that, "*Foreign language learners have better listening ability and sharper memories than their monolingual peers*" [22].

2.4 Second Language Students Score Higher on Standardized Tests

To indicate whether cognitive development is attained through language learning, the focus on academic achievements is chosen. As defined by Cohen, [9], "*Second language acquisition*

deals with the cognitive strategy of the mind in which it usually involves the identification, retention, storage or retrieval of words, phrases and other elements of the second language". These cognitive strategies used by students in language learning may perhaps, enforces their learning in other studies and finally in turn score higher in a standardized test resulting in better academic achievements. Trow [23], defined academic achievement as "knowledge attaining ability or degree of competence in school tasks usually measured by standardized tests and expressed in a grade or units based on pupils' performance". What this means is that this "degree of competence" will be viewed as a measure of cognitive development that can be measured by this study.

One such study showed a clear example, "students of foreign languages tend to score higher on standardized tests". Results from the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) show that students who had studied a foreign language for 4 or more years outscored other students on the verbal and math portions of the test". It was also found that, "students who completed at least four years of foreign-language study scored more than 100 points higher on each section of the SAT than students who took a half year or less" [24]. Similar results can be seen throughout a multitude of studies, as can be seen through another example, "students who studied four or five years of a foreign language scored higher on the verbal section of the 2004 SAT than students who had studied any other subject for the same number of years" [25].

Other studies correlated bilingual proficiency with higher scores on standardized tests and tests of both verbal and nonverbal intelligence [26]. Next, foreign language learners consistently outperform control groups in core subject areas on standardized tests often significantly [27, 28, 29, 30]. People who are competent in more than one language consistently outscore monolinguals on tests of verbal and nonverbal intelligence, [20, 21, 31]. Third-graders who had received 15 minutes of conversational French lessons daily for a year had statistically higher Stanford Achievement Test scores than their peers who had not received French instruction, [32]. Another study conducted [33], found that "academic ability and vocabulary knowledge are good predictors of overall academic performance". They also found that the weaker the student's vocabulary knowledge the poorer their overall academic performance.

With all these research, it is clearly easy to see the similarities. People who undertake second or foreign language lessons outperform those who do not; specifically in standardized tests. It is important to be reminded that these standardized tests do not only include English tests. Standardized tests are particularly important as all the questions, format, instructions, scoring and reporting of scores are the same for all takers. This is significant as it can provide a distinct differentiation between language learners and non-language learners. When the language learners are shown to have better achievements in other subjects compared to those who do not, this may entail cognitive development enforced or improved by language learning.

3. Statement of the Problem

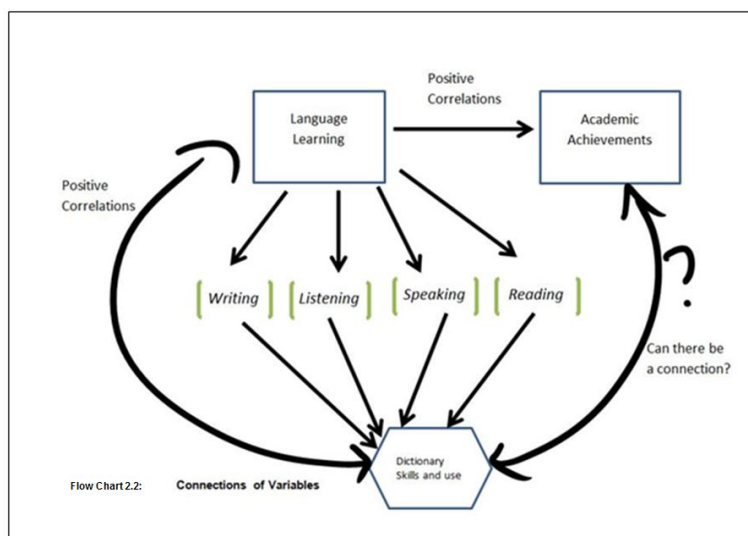


Figure 1: Connections of variables

Looking at flow chart 1.0, Based on language acquisition theories and previous research it can be summarized with clear evidences that supports two views: use of dictionaries leads to improved second language learning and second language learning leads to better academic achievements. The missing link is the connection between dictionary ability and use to academic achievements. Theories suggest that second language learning depends on understanding words and that process can, though not necessarily, be achieved through the use of dictionaries. Added to that, there is a plethora of studies that found positive correlations between language learning and academic achievements. Hence, it is logical to come to an assumption that when the condition of the Input Hypothesis has been met it will inevitably results in positive correlation to academic achievements.

However it still remains as an assumption; as it is the assumption that dictionary use will lead to language comprehension and hence entail a positive academic achievement. It has yet to be fully explored by researches and remains as a gap of knowledge in need to be examined. The question is why has past researches over-looked such an obvious possible connection? Hence, this study aims to shed some light and see whether the notion has any merits.

4. Objective of the study

The study aims to analyse the possible relationship between dictionary ability and dictionary use to academic achievements. This leads to the formulation of the objectives of the study, which are:

1. What are the academic achievements of the students?
2. What is the ability acquired by the students in dictionary ability?
3. To what degree are dictionaries being used inside and outside the classroom?
4. To what degree is the relationship between students' dictionary ability and academic achievements?
5. To what degree can dictionary use have a relation towards academic achievements?

5. Methodology

5.1 Design

In this study, Pearson correlational design was used. The objective of a correlational design is to determine if there is a relationship between two or more variables, such that a change in one relationship between variables [34]. This study seeks to describe the nature of the perceived relationship between three variables, namely, overall academic achievements, dictionary use and dictionary ability level. Survey research includes the collection of information from the chosen sample consisting of a number of people. As a result, information gathered from the survey will enable inferences regarding the nature of the correlations between the variables to be made.

5.2 Sample and Data Collection Procedure

The data was collected from 250 semester two students out of total population of 900. The first part of the data is taken from the results of dictionary testing conducted from June 2012 session. Six out of 9 classes; one class from each of the four departments, were taken as it constitutes almost half of the entire target population. For the second part of the data collection, a

questionnaire survey was conducted. Verbal permissions were asked from all four respective department's head to conduct the survey.

5.3 Instrument

One measure will be included in the questionnaire completed by the respondents. The Dictionary use questionnaire, each respondent will indicate their perception of dictionary usage, ability as well as indicating their overall Grade Point Average (GPA) for semester one. This will help the study to determine the data and information on the three variables between the respondents. Ultimately, only the overall academic achievements, dictionary use and ability will be examined, as age and gender were considered beyond the scope of the current study.

5.3.1 The Dictionary Ability Test

One of the variables used in this study is the results of a dictionary ability test taken by the students as a part of their continuous assessment. The test was not developed for this study but a simultaneous test taken by all of the students after they have finished learning the dictionary syllabus when they were in semester one. The dictionary ability test was measured by the chosen polytechnic staffs using Kuder Richardson's 20 reliability testing and resulted with a Cronbach Alpha of 0.605. Even though it is only considered as acceptable on reliability scaling [35], as an educational testing it is still acceptable as a valid test as it is a low stake test – internal testing and only accounts to 10% of the overall 100%.

5.3.2 The Survey

The survey is adapted from a research conducted by a research conducted by Raheem's and Hudaa's 2008 case study [36]. In which the study was on University of Kufa tertiary students use on dictionary use, frequency of use and their preferences of dictionaries. A total of 300 questionnaires were managed to be collected and analyzed. The issue of reliability and validity conducted by Raheem's and Hudaa's was no presented as the research only used descriptive analysis on the answers obtained as the main method to analyze their findings.

5.3.3 The Adaptation of the Survey

The instrument used by Raheem and Hudaa's was comprised of primarily multiple choice questions with a total of 21 items. As the research was descriptive in nature, to get a better understanding on the sample's view of their dictionary ability and use, the items were adapted and changed into likert scale format. The likert forms is essential as it allows the research to quantify the opinion of the respondents into scales. The 5 point Likert Scales are in two different forms depending on the questions asked; opinion on dictionary abilities and frequency on dictionary use. As shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Likert Scale

Abilities	Usage
Never	Totally Disagree
Rarely	Disagree
Sometimes	Neutral
Quite Often	Agree
Always	Totally Agree

A pilot test was conducted to analyze reliability of the questionnaire. A total of 120 questionnaires were given out and only 99 were usable as the rest were deemed as unusable;

students only answered 20 to 35 of the 50 questions asked in the questionnaire. The sampling for the pilot test was conducted among semester two classes; and they were excluded in the real study later on. The reliability results with a Cronbach Alpha of 0.711. According to Brown [35], the questionnaire conducted is considered as acceptable. The questionnaires were also provided in two languages. According to Lew [37], "*The questionnaires need to be written in the subject's native language*". As this study looks at ability of students to use dictionaries to understand other languages, there exists the possibility of students who are weak in English, thus unable to understand the questions thoroughly. The two languages provided were Malay and English language. It also important to note that out of 240 questionnaires disseminated 192 of them answered in Malay. It leads to a conclusion that the respondents were more comfortable in answering in Malay than English.

6. Findings

A reliability analysis of 41 questions (question 8 to 49), was conducted and resulted with Cronbach Alpha of 0.774. According to Brown [35], the questionnaire conducted is considered as acceptable.

6.1 Demographic analysis

The demographic data were collected to ensure the accuracy of this research as it depends on the students having taken the dictionary ability test during their first semester as well as ensuring that the students are from year one or year two. This also ensures that the data collected are more precise. The highest group is female respondents consisting of 46.7% of the sample population. The second highest group is male respondents, consisting of 41.5% of the sample population. This means that the samples taken were equal in terms of gender.

Next is the number of respondents according to year of study; year one to year 4. The highest group is the first year students consisting of 88.2% of the sample population. The second highest group is second year respondents, consisting of 9.2% of the sample population. The lowest group is the third year respondents consisting of 1.5%. This means that the goal of sampling students from semester two is achieved. Finally the respondents are also well dispersed according to departments which are commerce and engineering field. The highest group is the Engineering department which consisting of 67.2% of the sample population. The second highest group is the commerce department, consisting of 32.8% of the sample population.

7.0 Discussions and Conclusions

7.1 Student's GPA result

The GPA obtained is a cumulative scoring of mental tests taken by students at the end of semester one. The tests taken by the samples ranged from mathematical tests, memorization tests, language and others. The findings were categorized based on polytechnic's distinction system where those who obtained a GPA below 2.00 is low, 2.00 to 3.49 is considered as average and those who obtained 3.5 and higher is considered as high achievers. The results of this study found that of the 199 respondents, the highest achievers consisted of 13.33% of the sample population. The average group consisted of 82.56% of the sample population. Finally the lowest achievers consisted of 4.11% of the population. The findings lead to the understanding that the samples serve as good representation on overall cognitive achievement. As pointed out by Coyle [38] "*A construct central to intelligence is general intelligence, reflected by positive correlations among mental tests. It has been found to contribute strongly to a test's predictive validity at school and work*". The tests predictive validity taken by the samples only comes into

question when majority of the samples scores low or high GPA. However, since the majority scored average GPA, it can provide a good representation of the target population as a whole.

7.2 Student's Dictionary Ability Test Scores

The findings were categorized based on polytechnic's marking system where scoring below 50% is considered as failing the test, between 50% to 79% is considered as average and any scores above 80% is considered as excellent score. Of the total samples, those who scored high consisted 61% of the sample population. The average group consisted 36.9% of the sample population. Finally the lowest achievers consisted of 2.1% of the population. Meaning, majority of the sample population should have no problem using dictionaries as they have high dictionary abilities. There is a similarity with a research conducted by Pousi [16], in which the research resulted with a 78.9% success rate in dictionary ability testing. The research also provided comprehensive dictionary lesson's before the samples were tested. Hence, what this implies is that once dictionary ability has been learnt appropriately and with ample time to study those skills, the probability of them having good dictionary abilities is quite high.

However, the dictionary test taken by this study's samples is still classified as a norm-referenced test; where the respondent's scores are compared to the scores of the whole group in the target sample. According to Schaeffer [39], norm-referenced tests "*NRTs are constructed so that half the populations below the mid-point or average score*". In this study, with 61% scoring high, it results in the data of dictionary scores curved to the right. It means that the test scores violated the typical results of what a norm-referenced test should be. With such a skewed test result, the reliability of the test may be put into question. Hence another type of data was collected which is on the target sample's perception of their dictionary ability. When the data are compared to each other, only then a clearer picture on student's dictionary ability can be established.

7.3 Student's Perception Dictionary Abilities.

This data is on student's perception on their dictionary ability. The difference between this data and test scores is that this data used a likert scale format as the basis of measurement. With the median at 28.57, total number of respondents who perceives themselves with a low ability in dictionary use at a mean lower than 24 is 12.3% Those who view themselves as having moderate ability at mean between 24 to 29 is at 44.1% and finally 43.6% perceives themselves as having high dictionary ability. This implies there is a difference between the perceptions of dictionary abilities to the test scores obtained by the target samples. Test scores showed that 61% having high dictionary ability, however that number dropped by 20% when comparing to the sample's perception. In short having good perception in the ability to use dictionaries does not necessarily translate to high test scores in dictionary ability. How can two data that were supposed to measure the same variable – dictionary ability- can be different?

Thus, to better understand the phenomenon of this difference between these two data, a correlation calculation was conducted to find out if they had significant relationship between one another. The correlations found that there is no statistically significant correlation between Dictionary ability and Dictionary Ability Test Scores. This means that the two data are not the same; hence they should be calculated independently from one another when correlating against other variables. What this implies is that it violated this research early assumption when the research was first carried out. Research data and theories pointed out that vocabulary learning and acquisitions yield positive correlations with academic achievements; hence the activity of using dictionaries to acquire word comprehension was thought to deliver the same outcome. It did not.

7.4 Student's Perception on Dictionary Use

A study conducted by Hammilton[40], second language learners use dictionaries and it appears to provide support to acquire new vocabularies for the users. Given that the target samples for this study are students, reading may be a major element in their educational activity and with the policy of polytechnic to teach in both Malay and English it may influence the use of dictionaries in classrooms. Hence, the probability of notes, references and other reading materials to be written in both English and Malay is quite high even though the national language for Malaysian is Bahasa Melayu. This probability may be reflected through the response obtained in this study. In this study it was found that for dictionary use, the mean is at 35.892 with a standard deviation of 6.22762. With a median of 36, 13.8% of the respondents had low dictionary use, 69.8% viewed themselves as using dictionaries moderately and 16.4% viewed themselves as high users of dictionaries.

If the majority responded in viewing themselves as having low or high use of dictionaries, it is more likely that one language is favored to be used in a classroom over the other. However that is not the case as it clear that the majority responded as having moderate use of the dictionary. This result showed that the majority of the students viewed themselves as using the dictionary moderately. It is appropriate given the nature of bilingual educational approach taken by polytechnic. This is further reinforced when the results showed that respondents are more likely to use a dictionary when they are in class with the highest mean of 3.27 compared to other situations. Which means the activities in the classroom is prompting them to use a dictionary.

7.5 Relationship between GPA and Dictionary Ability (Dictionary Test Scores and Dictionary Ability)

Dictionary test scores and dictionary abilities are both to be used as separate data representing the same variable; dictionary ability. Furthermore, analysis also showed that the two data has no or negligible correlations between one another. When one sample views themselves as having high dictionary ability, as there is no correlation it does not mean that the sample would have high score in dictionary test and vice versa. Hence it comes to a conclusion means is that the two data cannot interchangeably represent one another as they are found to be different. Dictionary test scores showed that there is a positive correlation however the correlations is weak, with only 4.24% of the variance in Semester one GPA can be associated with the variance in Dictionary ability test result. However, when looking at the perception of the respondents in their dictionary ability it resulted in no or negligible correlations between GPA. The result is that 1.02% of the variance in Semester one GPA can be associated with the variance in Dictionary ability. Even though the two data are supposed to represent the variable of dictionary ability it resulted in two different findings, with one having a positive correlations and the other does not. This makes sense as mentioned earlier, the two data are found to have no relation to one another.

Given that dictionary test scores still have positive correlations, to have better understanding of the results, a regression analysis was carried out. It reveals that the weak positive correlations also reflect on the predictive ability of test scores on GPA. The regression analysis resulted with test scores as a statistically significant predictor GPA. However, test scores only explained 4.2% of the variance semester one GPA.

What this means is that even though the findings lead to dictionary scores being a positive predictor, it can be argued that it is too small to have any meaningful impact. The early assumption of this research is that students are equipped with good dictionary abilities can aid them in their studies of other subjects and thus attain better academic achievements. However, it has been proven false as the findings leads to the conclusion that even when a sample has high or even low abilities it provides little to no impact towards their academic achievements.

7.6 Relationship between GPA and Dictionary Use

In this study's literature review, strong evidence showed that time spent on foreign language study strongly reinforces the core subject areas of reading [27, 28, 29, 30, 41]. Even when comparing to studies that emphasized on vocabulary acquisition [33], they found that "*academic ability and vocabulary knowledge are good predictors of overall academic performance*". They also found that the weaker the student's vocabulary knowledge the poorer their overall academic performance. Vocabulary acquisition has been proven to improve academic achievements. The use of a dictionary acts as tool for vocabulary acquisition thus the use of dictionaries should likely results in a positive correlation with GPA.

However this study found the opposite to what have been the typical results in other study. This study found that there was no or negligible positive correlation between Semester one GPA and Dictionary use result. Only 0.152% of the variance in Semester one GPA can be associated with the variance in dictionary use. It leads to the conclusion that aside from the benefits it brings to language learning, words acquisitions derived from dictionary use has little effect to academic achievements. It is important to note, however, that this study is not a replication of other studies. It tries to look at the gap of knowledge barely touched by other studies; the correlations between dictionary use and abilities with academic achievements.

8.0 Implication of the Study

Countless studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between language leaning and cognitive development and there are also a plethora of studies that also noted positive correlations between dictionary use and language learning, however there are not enough studies that tries to look at the correlations between dictionary use and ability with cognitive development. According to Krashen's theory [11], dictionary use and abilities among the target samples should correspond with their GPA. Krashen [11] pointed out that with vocabulary knowledge and acquisition it would allow comprehensible input, hence playing a role as the foundation of language learning. This theory is further supported by Cohen [9], which Second language acquisition deals with the cognitive strategy of the mind in which it usually involves the identification, retention, storage or retrieval of words, phrases and other elements of the second language. Finally the use of dictionaries should also allow the students to attain better academic achievements as it helps them to understand the content of their lessons better. As stated, "*the second component to the element of Input hypothesis is translation. It is the key concept of making words comprehensible*"[12].

However, the findings of this study resulted in no correlations between dictionary use and GPA and the same results when comparing Dictionary Abilities with GPA. Even when a positive correlation was found between Dictionary Test scores and GPA, the relationships and the predictability of the variables is too small and can be argued to be negligible. The question to be answered now; does the results of this study violates the theories proposed by Krashen and others. The answer is no. The result of this study tried to look at the gap of research that has been looked over by past researches. This study focused on dictionary use and abilities and their relationship with academic achievements. Even if there is no correlation it only means that dictionaries do not have an effect on GPA. It is important to keep in mind activity for vocabulary acquisition can be accomplished in a plethora of ways other than the use of dictionaries; contextualized guessing, communicative activities, writing activities and a lot more can contribute to vocabulary acquisition. Hence the implications of this study can only be used in relations of dictionary use and abilities towards academic achievements. It should not be used as a reference to determine language acquisition with academic achievements.

8.0 Recommendations for future research

This study was done based on the assumptions and results of other researches and theories; in that there is a positive correlation between language learning with dictionary use and language learning with academic achievements. Hence this study did not take into considerations target samples relationships between dictionary use and ability with language abilities as this type of research has been conducted many times. With that in mind, further research into the target sample's language abilities as well as their learning activities may provide a better picture on the results of this study. As stated before dictionaries is only one tool out many; in ways the target samples use and acquire second language vocabularies. Speaking, listening, contextualized guessing, role plays and many more may provide better positive correlations with language learning and maybe results into strong positive correlations with academic achievements.

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