The Difference Effects of Paper Dictionaries vs. Online Dictionaries

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Abstract

The dictionary helps to learn foreign languages more easily and, with the invention of the online dictionary, users are now better supported and more effectively. Therefore, many studies have been conducted to show the influence of paper dictionaries and online dictionaries on users and problems in using the two types of dictionaries. The present study was based on 300 junior students from Van Lang University in Ho Chi Minh City. The results illustrated that students had a strong preference for online dictionaries. The survey also found that most students use the dictionary regularly as an effective tool to improve their language levels when it comes to boosting the vocabulary bank. Finally, most students at Van Lang University tended to choose online dictionaries for learning new vocabularies, although some of them still do not deny the value of paper dictionaries.

Keywords: paper, online, dictionaries, students, University, differences, benefit, advantages, effect.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Today, with the integration of cultures worldwide, language acts as a bridge between different regions of different countries in this modern era. According to D'Astoli (2016), if seen in any aspect, the ability to communicate in a foreign language makes people able to be able to get a better understanding of each other. So people believe that a foreign language is essential to life and try to improve their knowledge about foreign language. However, many people have problems understanding the meaning, intonation, and usage in the learning process. Therefore, the dictionary becomes an indispensable tool for those who are having problems learning foreign languages.

1.2 Statement of the problem

For these reasons, print dictionaries were born and became an effective tool for the student to find new words' meanings. It has been recognized over time by the undeniable upsides that it brings. Kipfer (2013) claimed that print dictionaries are more detailed when it comes to explanation and pronunciation and are a good brain exercise that pushes learners' critical thinking and spellings during the searching process. What is more, our fast-growing digital society has led to the popularity of online dictionaries worldwide. According to Shamar (2020), online dictionaries seem to be beneficial in terms of illustrating foreign terms through audio and visual methods. Thus, both online and paper dictionaries are equally appreciated by learners for their own benefits.

1.3 The purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to clarify the value of using a dictionary in learning foreign languages. Learners have the chance to recognize the validity of dictionaries when it comes to facing new words. Besides, the research focuses on emphasizing each type of dictionary's strengths and weaknesses so that learners could make the right decision about which one to choose in the long run. McKeown (1993) mentioned that different dictionaries suit different kinds of users as many of them require English learners of high level to grasp new words completely. What is more, the conducted research provides learners the chance to enhance their English levels by deeply understanding how to use a dictionary correctly. According to Ridley (2016), being able to make use of a dictionary in the right way enables students to enhance communication and upgrade their academic achievements at school. Thus, English teaching quality is significantly improved.

1.4 The significance of the study

This study's implication stems from the improper use of self-electricity by learners of a foreign language, even laziness to use a dictionary. From there, the reference will cause awareness for the readers as an opportunity to reaffirm the indispensable role of the dictionary in human life, and this method will encourage learners to be more interested in using appropriate dictionaries for themselves in the 4.0 era today for its benefits because Underhill (qt. in Ilson, 2012) mentioned that there are advantages when using dictionaries to learn a new language.

2.　Literature Review

Many recent studies have focused on the problem of contrast between the helpfulness of online dictionaries and print dictionaries to English learners. Rundell (2014) reported that since the dictionary began to change its form from the printed to the digital, people have discussed the negative sides of a paper dictionary, the positive sides of an electronic dictionary, and the potential usefulness of an electronic dictionary. Based on the specific advantages that the computer dictionary, for example, the producer can easily upgrade the dictionary's quality, users can access and search large amounts of information quickly. People tend to favor online dictionaries over paper dictionaries. The online dictionary provides a special consultation service for users; for instance, the users do not need to look up each page to determine the word they need in alphabetic of a traditional dictionary (Kim, 2003, p.5). The human tendency towards convenience has prompted students to Many recent studies have focused on the problem of contrast use e-dictionaries more than ever and leads to electronic dictionaries' mass production (Zarei & Gujjar, 2012, p.631). Li Lan's (2006) survey shows that more than 70% of students use online dictionaries more often than traditional dictionaries, and she confirmed that the era of paper dictionaries is coming to an end (qt. in Zarei & Gujjar, 2012).

Amirian and Heshmatifar (2013) reported that through an experiment, the students who use an online dictionary determine the definition and the meaning of new words more quickly and exactly than those who use a paper dictionary. It is believed that an online dictionary is a useful tool in learning a foreign language. Li and Xu (2015) conducted that the bulky and outdated paper dictionary gradually replaces the online dictionary because of fast retrieval and less time-consuming. The foreign language learners have had an awareness of online dictionaries' weaknesses and strengths; they often use many online dictionaries to overcome every online dictionary's blemish (Jin & Deifell, 2013). Word Reference reported that online dictionary is the most regularly visited since learners can share and look for helpfulness with the proper usage of phrases and sentences in a social context and particular culture in online forums. This instance showed that foreign language learners knew how to use reference sources flexibly to get the best effect (qt. in Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). In general, paper and online dictionary has its advantages and disadvantages and chooses which type depends on learners' needs and habits (Hulstijn & Atkins, 2015).

According to Filer (2017), today, technology information develops rapidly, many people have the advanced means of service to understand the new word or use. Chen and Dziemianko (2010) claimed that many people use online dictionaries and print dictionaries to understand the meaning of a new vocabulary. And this is arguably really important from the author's point of view. In addition, the author also affirms the essential role of dictionaries in three fields, such as form, meaning, and use. However, there is no denying that electronic dictionaries are also limited to screen size than paper dictionaries (Koren, 1997). However, Tang (1997) found that people still like to choose electronic dictionaries over paper dictionaries because of some of their positive features. For example, learners can easily carry it anywhere. Besides, they can hear sample pronunciation from this modern medium. Especially at the same time, looking up words with large volumes will be faster and more convenient. (Dziemianko, 2010). Furthermore, Stirling (2003) mentioned that this method would help learners study earlier and more positively while discovering new vocabularies through the voice function of personal electronic dictionaries (qt. in Filer, 2017).

Like the purpose of the current studies, Kim (2003) researched the influence of computer dictionaries and print dictionaries on learners' L2 learning. This study was done by dividing 37 college students in Korea into two groups. Both groups will read and understand a short text; they will use a dictionary to look up and memorize the 14 required words. Collecting data after studying the searching and learning words through the dictionary of 37 Korean students, the results showed that when reading a short text, L2 learners tended to look up the computer dictionary higher than the paper dictionary. Research also shows that computer dictionaries help absorb new vocabulary better than a paper dictionary by guiding and attracting learners' attention to new vocabulary. Besides, we still can that the vocabulary retention rate of words that are looked up in a computer dictionary is not too different from those found in a paper dictionary.

Tulgar (2017) believes that using dictionaries is a particularly delicate problem for students of the Faculty of Foreign Language as it is generally expected that students here will truly be proficient in the language so they can hear, speak, read, and write. Therefore, technology development has influenced the students to use the dictionary to apply in learning. This study aims to clarify that university students of the Faculty of Foreign Language in

Turkey use their dictionaries and learn their favorite dictionaries. Twelve students used the dictionary, were invited to participate in the interview studies at the end of the term. Interviewing these participants was conducted individually and lasted about 20 minutes to ask them about their benefits, preferences, how often they viewed the dictionary, and what dictionaries they came to information (word meaning, pronunciation, grammar, etc.). The general results given after the study are that although most of the participants often use an online dictionary because it provides fast access in a short time, they also appreciate the benefits of a paper dictionary as it contains more information than an electronic dictionary.

Similar to this survey, Yuzhen (2012) tried to analyze the habit of dictionary use in learning L2 vocabulary of a learner's reading context. It pertains to learners using English-Chinese bilingual dictionaries to complete their difficulties with the new words. This study also involves the random acquisition of vocabulary from English-major students at Chinese universities. The survey participants were asked to read a passage in English. They completed the task with one of three supports: a paper dictionary, an online dictionary, or no access to any dictionaries. After they finished, they were asked to take a surprise memorization test of any reading passages' vocabulary. After a week, the experiments were repeated. Research shows that using a dictionary facilitates good vocabulary understanding for learners and increases the ability to absorb random words. There are not too many differences between paper dictionaries and online dictionaries, but online dictionaries show an advantage in retaining vocabulary.

Aust, Kelley & Roby (1993), in a similar survey, invited 80 university language learners to participate in a survey which compares the use of paper dictionaries and one of the online dictionaries based on frequency participation, learning time, the effectiveness of the dictionary, and the ability of users to understand. The result is that online dictionary users are more likely to understand more definitions than regular dictionary users. Also, the advisory rate for online dictionary users is higher than for paper dictionaries. Also, Zarei & Gujjar (2012) also conducted a study investigating the ability to support EFL learners to learn the vocabulary of both kinds of dictionaries. Four groups of men and women were selected for the survey by vocabulary test when they use a dictionary. After that, the groups were evenly divided into two groups of one female and one male just using the online dictionary, while other groups (female and male) used only the paper dictionary. The results showed that the participant's gender did not affect the learners' use, but the online dictionary's contribution to vocabulary learning was considerably tremendous than that of the paper dictionary.

In a similar recent study, M. Mohamad, Rashid & W. Mohamad (2017) create that learners in foreign language classes often use the dictionary as a learning aid. Today, although there are many different types of dictionaries, online dictionaries are the most widely used. This study aims to find out the benefits of online dictionaries for ESL learners and the difficulties they encounter each time using them. Ten TESL tertiary students from a Malaysian public research university volunteered to become participants. During the focused interviews, the questionnaires, and the emails used for the research, results have shown that although the e-dictionary offers some benefits in terms of vocabulary enhancement for learners, ESL learners complete experience difficulties. This study shows that online dictionaries provide learners with the convenience of learning vocabulary. They can study at whatever place or the time they want, for example. Also, an online dictionary helps learners learn the correct pronunciation of words, vocabulary instructions, determine the origin of the words, and more clearly than paper dictionaries. The main difficulties of the commonly listed online dictionaries are restricted internet access, the definition of the vocabulary is incomplete, lack of examples, the website is not reputable enough, etc. This study directly impacts next to language teaching and learning when today's students use online dictionaries in their study a lot.

Many studies have investigated the attitudes of English teachers or students when they're using electronic dictionaries. Dashtestani (2013) studied both teachers' and students' views about using online dictionaries to learn English. The survey participants were asked to answer the questionnaires of 73 EFL teachers and 126 EFL students. In which, 66 teachers and 81 students participated in the next interview. The study's results showed that both EFL students and teachers have positive attitudes towards using online dictionaries. Besides, they also said that there are some limitations (a good example is that students will lose focus on learning due to electronic dictionaries on phones in class). This analysis shows that most Iranian EFL students prefer using online dictionaries on their mobile phones rather than using paper dictionaries.

As mentioned above, the former studies gained different results about using online dictionaries versus paper dictionaries. The combination of traditional and digital dictionaries greatly benefits learners when it comes to bringing about high effectiveness in checking the words' definitions (Daisy Zou et al., 2017). She also argued that although they have their characteristics, they share equally important value on English usage. According to Truong (2012), the most obvious difference between online and print dictionaries is represented. While paper dictionary only provides learners with fixed definitions, the online dictionary also gives suggestions on relating words to expand their vocabulary with the uploaded audio. The visual clues also have a crucial role in boosting learners' motivation and enhancing study quality.

2.1 Research Gap

It is clear that there are a large number of researches have been carried out to clarify the specific features of using online dictionaries versus using a print dictionary. However, there are still many gaps that have not been filled yet. One obvious matter we have to argue is which kind of dictionary suits English learners' levels. Different types of dictionaries are all designed to check the words' meanings; however, the presentation styles have significant differences in the various levels of English learners. Another crucial thing we need to do is find out how to fully take advantage of using each type of dictionary based on their owner's distinctive beneficial features. Although these dictionaries bring about equally important value to learners, using them correctly seems to benefit them greatly.

2.2 Research Questions

The study was conducted to validate the influence of paper dictionaries and online dictionaries on users. This study is designed to explore to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What are the people's perceptions of paper or online dictionaries using?
2. Is there any difference between using an online dictionary and paper dictionaries?

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research context & Sample

3.1.1 Research context

This survey was conducted at Van Lang University campus 1, where it specializes in training majors such as Law, Architecture, Foreign Languages, and Construction. To catch up with the era that is to integrate with the world, the school realizes the importance of learning foreign languages. So learning a foreign language and passing exams is one of the mandatory requirements to ensure the output for students. Depending on the student's major, each person is required to learn a foreign language in their curriculum with the professional subjects. Foreign language students study books edited by the Faculty's teachers, while other major students study the "Jetstream" textbooks of Jane Revell and Mary Tomalin, published in 2016. The goal of the curriculum is to ensure output for students and equip students with background knowledge of foreign languages so they can confidently go to work.

3.1.2 Population and sampling methods

In terms of finding subjects to serve for research, we focus on research subjects who are junior students of Van Lang University because they are the most convenient research subjects. Most researchers sampled based on accessibility, intimacy, as well as convenience at a given time or the willingness to join a certain group of people (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016, p.2). We selected the junior students because they are the same age, so they also have the same Research Methods subject as us, so they are easy to access, and they will be ready to participate in the survey. In addition, junior students have also entered the major, so it will be easy to differentiate their goals in using the dictionary. Three hundred junior students of Van Lang University are drawn from 600 students in the first semester to serve for research. They are junior students studying a language other than their native language (English, French, Chinese, Japanese, and so on), aged 20 to 25. At the time this study took place, they are or have learned another language. They have also read paper dictionaries or used online dictionaries to look up to their needs.

3.2 Research design

Type of research: We are going to conduct some surveys about using dictionaries to learn English among Van Lang University's students. The print questionnaires and some interview questions are used to get the learners' opinions or ideas about what kind of dictionary they usually use. The questionnaires are handed out to around 300 students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages. The survey is conducted within the university campus, and the collected data can be in both written form and recorded form.

Reviews of the research design or used theories: The research is followed by a range of questions from questionnaires to interview questions to collect more information. The research would be more objective and accurate. The research is designed following the form of a direct survey on a large number of students.

The reason that research design is the best: We need a lot of personal ideas to identify the trend towards using dictionaries in learning English. The more answers we get, the more accurate the survey is. By using the surveys, questionnaires, or quizzes, we can get information from many sources, but we can still save time because it does

not take much time to fill in the forms or answer the interview questions. Doing such a survey is also simple because of its flexibility when it comes to getting to know people's points of view about a specific topic. According to DeFranzo (2015), surveys can be performed in many forms, which enable conductors to gain information from various sources and enrich the paper.

Type of data used to answer the research questions: Recorded ideas or opinions, as well as written information from handed out forms, are used as ingredients in the research. All collected da ta is used and analyzed carefully before being put in the research.

* Instruments

The crawl is based on the Google form tool. It has a built-in tool that calculates the results based on a pie chart and outputs each response percentage. There are a total of 21 questionnaires and are divided into two sections to clarify each research question. More specifically, questions 1-3 confirm whether the subject's information is relevant to the study. Questions 4-6 determine the subjects' perception of online and paper dictionaries generally. Question 7 identifies the specific reasons people buy and use that type of dictionaries. Questions 8-9 investigate object perceptions of research subjects regarding dictionary use in the university environment. Question 10 asks about the subject's view of the paper dictionary exclusion. Questions 11-12 ask about how often users use dictionaries and what types of dictionaries are often used by users. Questions 13-19 seek out users' opinions about specific aspects of the two dictionaries. Questions 20-21 explore the frequency of time that users spend using a dictionary.
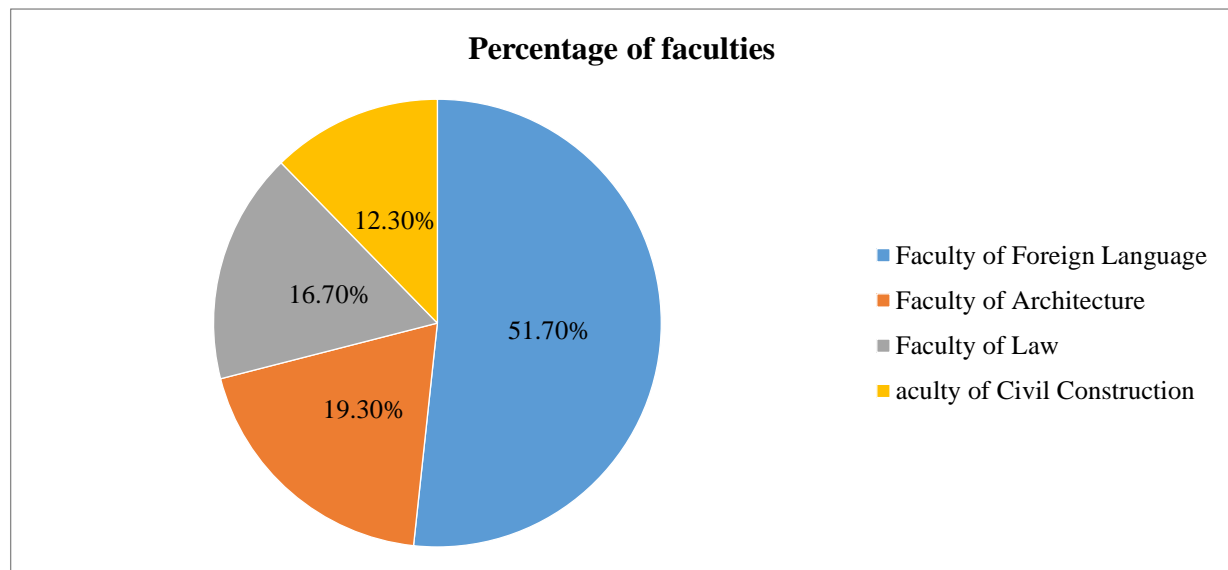
3.3 The procedure of the study

Questionnaires will be shared out on Tuesday, 03.11.2020, for 200 students at Van Lang University, and we will also interview 15 students on Thursday, 05.11. 2020.

Questionnaires were collected on Friday 06.11.2020 and interviewed on 05.11.2020. Fifteen students will be interviewed in Vietnamese, and this recorded by a mobile phone. Then, it will be translated into English.

4.   Findings and Discussion

4.1 The demographic data of the participants

Participants were junior students of Van Lang University at the first campus 1. 300 students were selected randomly from a total of junior students of campus 1. There are four faculties: Faculty of Law, Faculty of Architecture, Faculty of Construction are three faculties according to the common English curriculum of the whole school, and the Faculty of the foreign language department, students are divided into many different foreign language majors. In year 3 of the curriculum, most students have begun to have access to specialized knowledge.

Percentage of faculties

- 12.30%
- 16.70%
- 51.70%
- 19.30%

- ■ Faculty of Foreign Language
- ■ Faculty of Architecture
- ■ Faculty of Law
- ■ aculty of Civil Construction

Based on the data obtained from the survey, 51.7% of them belong to the Faculty of Foreign language, 19.3% were students of the Faculty of Architecture, 12.3% belong to the Faculty of Civil Construction, and 16.7% were students of the Faculty of Law. The difference is because the amount of foreign language students is more than the other.

4.2 Research Questions 1: What types of dictionaries do university students prefer?

Table 1: The users' general perception about the usefulness.

	Online dictionary	Paper dictionary
Usefulness (on the scale 1-5)	4.58	3.6

Table number 1 shows the respondents' perceptions about the helpfulness of the online dictionary (OD) and the paper dictionary (PD). According to the table, the usefulness of an online dictionary (4.58) seems to overwhelm a paper dictionary (3.6).

Table 2: The perception of the student about the dictionary at VLU.

	OD		PD	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Popular in VLU	282	94%	18	6%
Supported to maintain	287	95.7%	13	4.3%

The table also shows that a large number of students support maintaining online dictionaries on the university campus (94%), while the number of students supporting paper dictionaries in the same environment only accounts for a small number (6%). When asked about the popularity of two types of dictionaries, the online dictionary seems to be more common with 287 responses (95.7%), while only 13 people (4.3%) vote for the popularity of paper dictionaries. As we can see from the table above, the online dictionary receives bigger support and popularity than the online dictionary when it comes to research at Van Lang University.

4.3 Research Questions 2: Is there any difference between using an online dictionary and a paper dictionary?
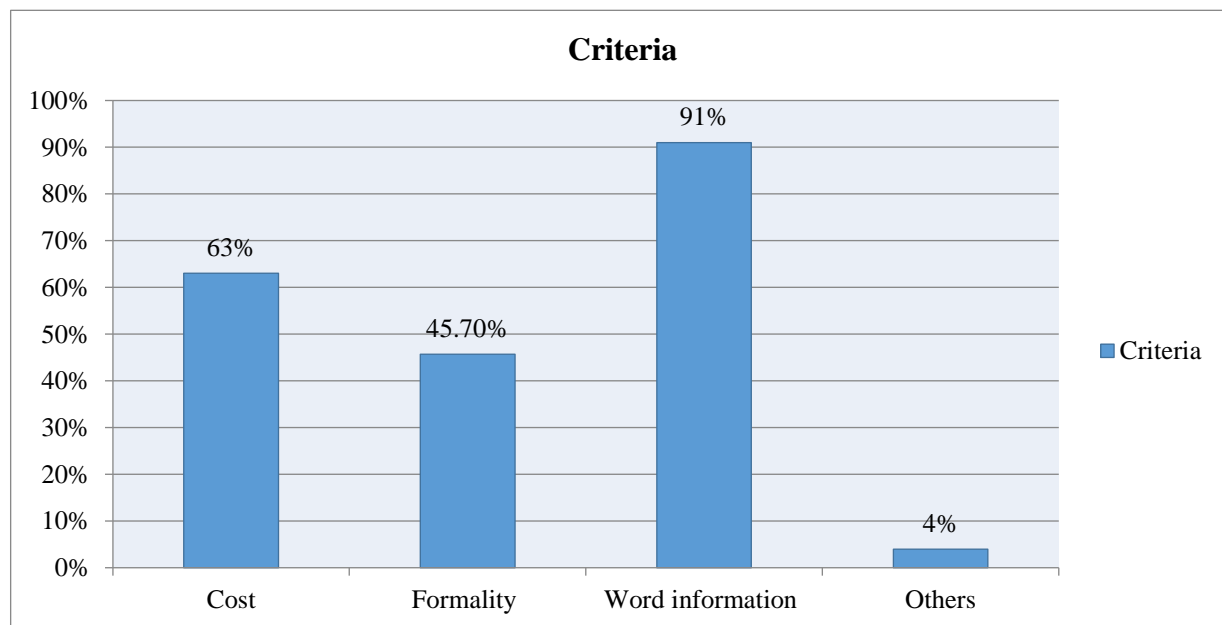

Chart 1: Criteria

The chart above shows the factors that users consider when it comes to using a dictionary. Besides cost, formality, and word information, other factors influence people's decisions on choosing a dictionary.   It can be seen clearly from the chart that word information has the biggest influence on people's decisions when they pick a dictionary (91%) and it is perhaps the most important thing when it comes to deciding which one to buy. Cost is the second thing people considering as another key thing to buy a dictionary (63%). The differences between prices of dictionary can have a big impact on people's buying decisions because they want to buy something useful at reasonable prices. Another factor that students really care about when they decide to use a dictionary is formality

(45.7%). People also have many other choices about which factor influences their decisions on buying dictionaries, but it only accounts for a small proportion (4%).

Table 3: The users' perception about the importance of dictionaries.

	Yes		No	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Important	292	97.3%	8	2.7%

The table above shows the results concerning people's opinions about the importance of the two types of dictionaries and whether we should eliminate the paper dictionary. The collected data reflects that many students recognize the importance of dictionaries in their lives (97.3%) while others (2.7%) refute it.

Table 4: The users' perception about eliminating paper dictionaries.

	Yes		No	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Eliminating PD	144	48%	156	52%

A number of users agree on eliminating paper dictionaries for their own reasons (144). At the same time, a few more students disagree with the idea of removing paper dictionaries from the education environment. It can be seen that respondents' opinions vary significantly; however, no one can indeed deny the role of the dictionary, and the paper dictionary is still strongly supported to thrive.

Table 5: Users' review of the aspects of a dictionary.

	OD		PD	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Preference	284	94.7%	16	5.3%
Check	283	94.3%	17	5.7%
Time-saving	289	96.3%	11	3.7%
Economical element	289	96.3%	11	3.7%
Presentation style	274	91.3%	26	8.7%
Portability	290	96.7%	10	3.3%
Pronunciation improvement	289	96.3%	11	3.7%
Effect	288	96%	12	4%

The table above shows the feedback about two types of dictionaries on some specific areas, namely: preference, check, time-saving, economic element, presentation style, portability, pronunciation improvement, and effect. First, many respondents prefer online dictionaries (94.7%) to paper dictionaries (5.3%) because the online dictionary is more common and easier to use. Next, when being asked about which type of students usually use to check new words' meanings, the online dictionary also gets more responses (94.3%) than the paper dictionary (5.7%). What is more, time-saving is another area that being noticed about the characteristics of these two types of dictionaries. The online dictionary appears to be more time-saving (96.3%) compared to the paper dictionary (3.7%). Besides,

the online dictionary also has a reputation for being more economical (96.3%) because people do not have to pay any fees to use the service while using paper dictionaries charges users a lot more money.

Furthermore, many more people (91.3%) have voted for online dictionary presentations because it is easy to study and enables users to check meanings easily. On the contrary, only a small number of students vote for the paper dictionary's presentation style (8.7%). Moreover, the collected data shows that an online dictionary is more portable (96.7%) thanks to the advanced apps, whereas only ten people (3.3%) believe that a paper dictionary is portable. When it comes to improving pronunciation, an online dictionary seems to be more advantageous (96.3%) because learners can enhance their pronunciations through audio. Finally, it is undeniable that using an online dictionary is more effective than a paper dictionary for all the reasons mentioned above.

The below chart shows the frequency of dictionary use among respondents at Van Lang University. Of all the students questioned, 41 people (13.7%) reported that they use dictionaries almost every day for checking and learning new words' meanings. Another 22 (7.3%) said that they use a dictionary sometimes. Many students (79%) admitted that they only use a dictionary when they are in need, such as to prepare for exams, homework, or when they're in special situations. So we can see that using a dictionary regularly has not been a study habit among VLU students yet.
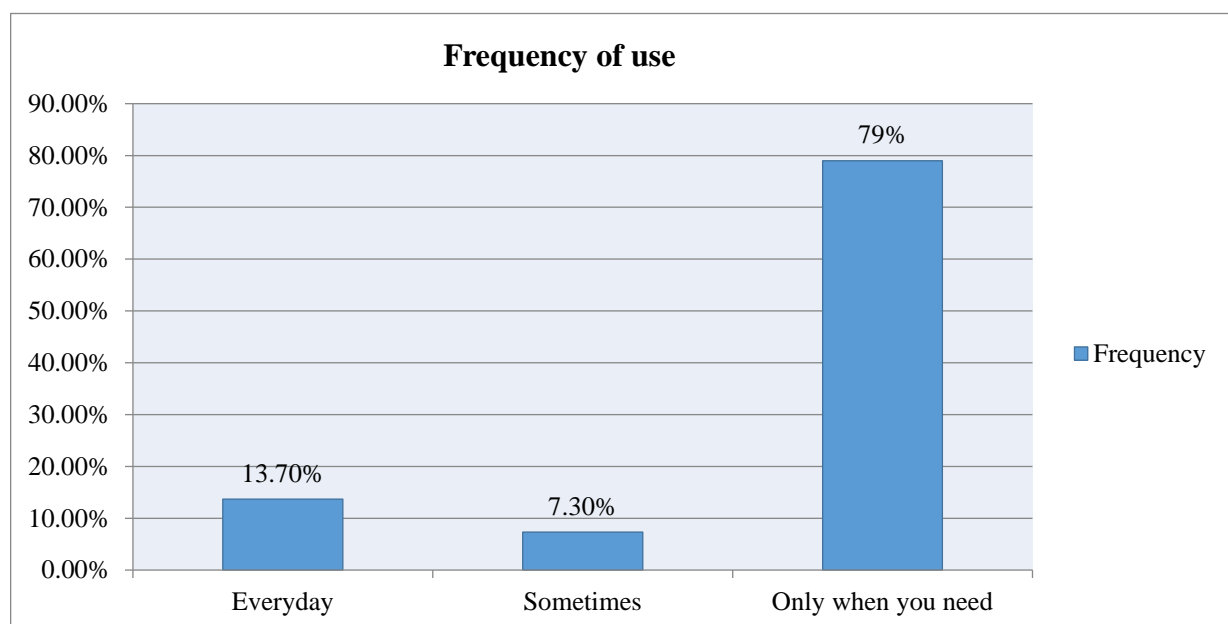

Frequency of use

Chart 2: Frequency of use

The chart below indicates the amount of time that users usually spend on a dictionary. It is clear that people usually spend around 15 minutes to more than an hour using the internet (from 6.3% to 7.7%). A large number of others admitted that the amount of time they spend using a dictionary depends on the number of words that they need to check (79%). From all the data above, it is clear that people's opinions about using dictionaries vary on their purposes and circumstances.
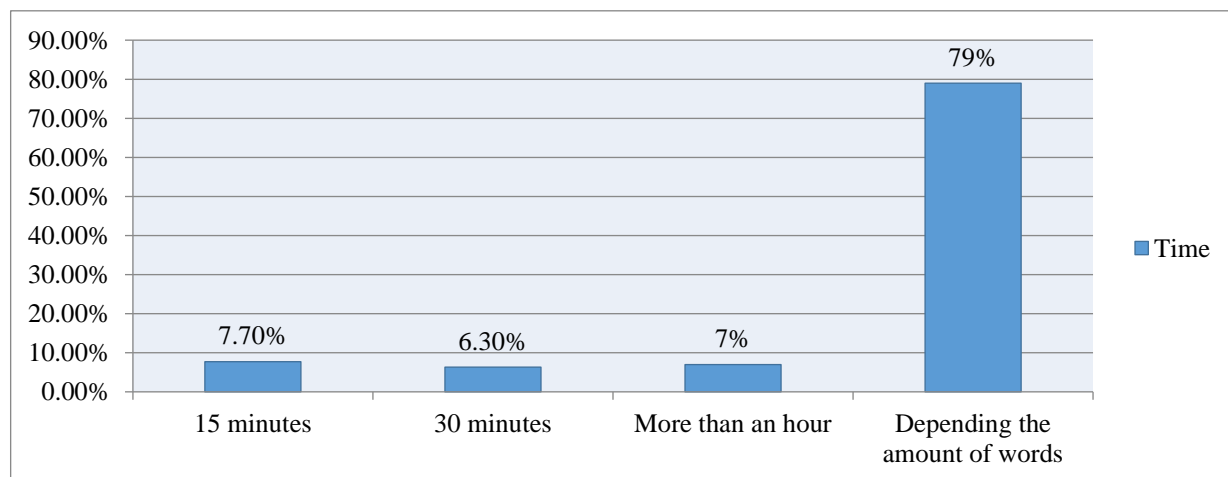

Chart 3: Time of use.

4.4 Discussion

This study had the same results as previous research results of Rundell (2014) when it showed that both types of dictionaries have different pros and cons in understanding, receiving, and storing vocabulary. Besides, the capacity of the online dictionary is more effective than one of the paper dictionaries. More importantly, this study shows that online dictionaries provide learners with the convenience of learning vocabulary, such as studying wherever or whenever they want. Simultaneously, the online dictionary helps learners learn the correct pronunciation of words, vocabulary guidance, determine the origin of vocabulary, and so on, which more clearly than the paper dictionary. Since then, it shows that using the dictionary facilitates the learners' understanding of the vocabulary and increases the ability to absorb random words. There are not too many differences between paper dictionaries and online dictionaries, but online dictionaries show the advantage in terms of vocabulary retention. According to Tulgar (2017), after the study, most participants often use online dictionaries because it can determine all information they need in a short time; moreover, they recognize the usefulness of paper dictionaries. According to Yuzhen (2012), the main difficulty of the commonly listed: online dictionaries is restricted internet access, incomplete word definition, lack of examples, insufficiency of website reputation, etc. (a good example would be a student distracting from learning due to the use of electronic dictionaries on the phone in class). This research directly influences the teaching and learning of languages as students nowadays use online dictionaries to study a lot.

5. Conclusion

This study aims to show the advantages of online dictionaries and paper dictionaries in the current era through assessment of consumers, particularly students K.24 of year 3 in the Faculties of Law, Construction, Architecture and Foreign Languages from Van Lang University in Ho Chi Minh City. The researcher test to recognize which type of dictionaries will be chosen while the user wants to look up its meaning. Would students like to choose electronic dictionaries or paper dictionaries for their learning purpose? The survey revealed that although electronic dictionaries and print dictionaries are beneficial to students, most of them like to easily select electronic dictionaries as a modern tool to look up new vocabularies. Many students felt that it is convenient and useful when applying online dictionaries, which can create a new application for learners' pronunciation. This is not available on paper.

However, paper dictionaries' important role is not still denied because some students believe that paper dictionaries help explain exactly the word's meaning. Besides, because most students like to choose online dictionaries, this study encourages learners to equip with several modern tools. It can be a tablet or a smartphone to serve in maximizing the effectiveness of learning new words through the online dictionary. This will definitely help Van Lang students improve their pronunciation skills shown in that when students check the meaning of a word, they also understand their correct pronunciation. This is a different point with print dictionaries. This encourages many students to prefer electronic dictionaries to paper dictionaries for their learning in foreign languages. In the future, we hope that we can expand the participants and scope of research with a larger number in all different faculties at Van Lang University. This will give the study paper exact results and show how to choose a suitable form for students while using dictionaries for a foreign language in the 4.0 era today.

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