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CONSTRUCTION, VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE STRATEGY INVENTORY FOR DICTIONARY USE (S.I.D.U)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present paper is to examine the construction, validity and reliability of the Strategy Inventory of Dictionary Use (S.I.D.U). S.I.D.U is a 47-item self-report questionnaire which specifies four main areas of interest a) dictionary use awareness skills, b) strategies for dictionary selection and acquaintance with dictionary conventions, c) lemmatization strategies, and finally d) look up strategies. The method of multiple judges was adopted for the control of content validity of the pilot version of S.I.D.U. The test discriminated expert from non expert users in all four categories of strategies ($p < .001$). Internal consistency of the subscales and the overall scale of the S.I.D.U was checked and Cronbach alpha was found .97.

1. Introduction

Research in pedagogical lexicography has been disadvantaged by the lack of a standardized instrument to objectively assess the strategies employed by dictionary users while choosing and using a dictionary. The *Strategy Inventory for Dictionary Use* (S.I.D.U) is a 47-item self report instrument for assessing the reference skills needed for an effective dictionary look-up. The design, construction and content validity of S.I.D.U are presented here. Discriminatory validity between effective and non effective dictionary users was significant. The four subscales of dictionary use awareness, dictionary selection and acquaintance, lemmatization and dictionary search are shown to have good reliability and validity.

2. Construction

2.1 Test specification

The development of the test specification raised the question of how to define the effective dictionary user in order to construct the instruments' items. A functional approach might be to consult all previous literature in detail and try to make a list of the reference skills of the successful dictionary user. This was the method adopted for the construction of S.I.D.U. Fortunately, there is a substantial body of research on the characteristics of good dictionary users or the strategies required for an effective dictionary look-up. Two different kinds of research have been consulted: theoretical or empirical papers presenting detailed descriptions or taxonomies of the reference skills (or strategies) that dictionary users should demonstrate for a successful dictionary search (e.g Béjoint 1981; Scholfield 1999; Scholfield 1982; Bogaards 1994; Roberts 1997; Hartmann 1999; Nesi 1999; Nation 2001; Hartmann and James 2002; Thornbury 2002; Lew and Galas 2008; Prichard 2008) and empirical papers investigating the reference skills, misuse and errors of dictionary users during dictionary look up (Béjoint and Moulin 1987; Maingay and Rundell 1987; Neubach and Cohen 1988; Nuccorini 1992; Nuccorini 1994; Nesi and Meara 1994; Christianson 1997; Harvey and Yuill 1997; Wingate 2004; Elola, Rodríguez-García and Winfrey 2008; Petrylaitė, Vėžytė and Vaškeliėnė 2008; Gavriilidou 2010, 2011).

Starting with the first category of papers, Bejoint (1981) mainly investigated the reasons for using dictionaries reported by French students and discussed the way in which these students actually used dictionaries. He claimed that two are the basic reference skills during dictionary search: users have to be able to find the lexeme they are looking for, by finding either the right entry or the right subdivision

of an entry. Then they must be able to retrieve the specific piece of information they need (spelling, pronunciation, meaning, etc.).

Scholfield (1982) suggested that effective dictionary use requires a number of steps to be performed correctly, an amount of prior knowledge, e.g. rules of English, dictionary conventions, etc., a constant testing of hypotheses and finally inferencing. According to the author the steps required during looking up a word in a dictionary are seven:

- 1) Locating the unknown word or phrase in a text
- 2) Finding the citation form in case of inflected words
- 3) Searching the unknown word in the alphabetic list
- 4) Searching compound words or idioms by looking up each main element of them and derived forms by looking up the stem entry
- 5) Reducing multiple senses of polysemous words by elimination
- 6) Understanding the definition of the unknown word by integrating it in context
- 7) In case that the desired meaning of the unknown word doesn't exist in the dictionary, inferring of the appropriate meaning based on the list of meanings provided in the entry.

A number of skills such as awareness of dictionary lay-out, alphabetic sequencing or grammatical knowledge are connected with each one of the above mentioned steps. The steps described in Scholfield 1982 are also adopted in Bogaards (1993).

Roberts (1997) claims that efficient dictionary use implies obtaining the expected results, on the one hand, and accomplishing this in the shortest period of time possible. For him, the effective user has to be aware of the various categories of information that can be found in dictionaries, the overall ordering of these categories, dictionary types, and the specific categories of information found in different dictionary types.

Hartmann (1999) formulates recommendations with regard to the reference needs and reference skills of university students of foreign languages and the availability of dictionaries and other kinds of reference works, particularly for the European languages and argues that not much is known about dictionary reference skills themselves.

In her 1999 study, Nesi asserts that 97% of students entering English higher education have no dictionary skills at all and proposes a six-stage taxonomy of reference skills (before the study, before dictionary consultation, locating entry information, interpreting entry information, recording entry information, understanding lexicographical issues). Her detailed taxonomy includes among others reference skills such as knowing what types of dictionary exist, and choosing which dictionary/ies to consult and/or buy, deciding whether dictionary consultation is necessary, deciding on the appropriate form of the look-up item, understanding the structure of the dictionary, finding multi-word units, distinguishing relevant from irrelevant information, knowing lexicographical terminology, knowing of alphabetical sequencing, awareness of dictionary features and lay out, ability to select the correct meaning, etc.

Nation (2001) distinguishes between the steps involved in a successful dictionary search and the personal skills required by effective dictionary users. More precisely he proposes four distinct steps during both receptive and productive use of dictionaries. The receptive use involves a) analysing the context of the unknown word, b) finding the correct entry, c) choosing the right sub-entry, and d) applying the meaning to the original context in order to decide if the search was successful while the productive use includes: a) finding the wanted word form, b) checking the constraints on the use of the word c) finding out about its grammar and d) appropriately treat collocations. The individual skills required include recognising word classes and inflected forms, alphabetising, and understanding the symbols and lay-out conventions of the dictionary.

Thornbury (2002) also presents a list of skills needed for successful dictionary use, which includes recognising features of dictionary layout, understanding the coding and abbreviations used in the entries, discriminating between the different meanings of a word, cross-checking translation equivalents given in bilingual dictionaries, using synonyms, antonyms and other information to find the best word for the intended meaning and finally inferring the spelling of an unfamiliar word after hearing it.

Hartmann and James in their *Dictionary of Lexicography* (2002) suggested that, in order to use dictionaries, users need a) certain skills defined as “the abilities required for finding the information being sought” – and b) specific training. According to them, the most basic skill for using a dictionary is alphabetical sequencing.

Finally, Lew and Gallas (2008) adopt a detailed taxonomy of the dictionary strategies. They classify the reference skills in four classes a) REFERENCE, which includes knowledge of alphabetical

ordering; the ability to use a dictionary for equivalents, definitions, spelling, pronunciation and obtaining grammatical information; locating words using initial letters, b) INFERENCE which includes the ability to establish and interpret parts of speech; the ability to correctly interpret meanings; finding and handling meanings; grammatical awareness, c) UNDERSTANDING DICTIONARY CONVENTIONS which consists of the awareness of dictionary features and layout knowledge of phonetic symbols; knowledge of parts of speech; word formation; derivatives; past forms; countable and uncountable nouns; awareness of idiomatic expressions; awareness of phrasal verbs; pronouns and d) ACQUIRING EXTRA INFORMATION the ability to obtain socio-cultural information.

However, not all dictionary users demonstrate reference skills such the ones described above. Empirical research suggests that even experienced language learners or pupils use the dictionaries ineffectively. For example, Bejoint & Moulin (1987) provided a list of positive and negative strategies and claimed that strategy use depends on the performed task and the learners' profile. Maingay and Rundell (1987) forwarded a detailed classification of students' errors in encoding activities. Neubach and Cohen (1988) reported a series of problems faced by six subjects of different proficiency levels during a dictionary-use-based task in comprehension. The reported problems were the following: 1) reading only the first definition in the monolingual dictionary, 2) encountering a problem with vocabulary in a definition in the monolingual dictionary, 3) encountering a problem with terminology in the monolingual dictionary, 4) encountering problems in alphabetic sequencing – especially internal to the word being sought, 5) not finding the unknown word. These problems clearly demonstrate users' lack of reference skills. Nuccorini (1992) found that her sample, which consisted of students and teachers were able to locate successfully the research items. She notices however that they had problems with the dictionary microstructure. In her 1994 paper, she found that students committed erroneous searches when they had to look up polysemous and homonymic items, derivatives, compounds, idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs. Nesi & Meara (1994) examined the errors of adult learners who were asked to construct phrases with unknown words that they had looked up and found that users perform superficial searches and tend to pick out familiar elements of the entry which are however irrelevant. Christianson (1997) found that proficiency does not seem to play a role in the sophistication of strategy use. He suggests that successfulness of strategy depends on other factors such as the writing context and the given word or phrase been looked up. A recurrent source of problem was that the subjects did not pay attention to the example sentences. Also a cause of problems was lack of understanding of the grammar information coded in the dictionaries. Harvey & Yuill (1997) studied the use of monolingual pedagogical dictionaries during writing. They found that the majority of dictionary searches were successful. Their sample wasn't acquainted with the dictionary abbreviations, especially the ones indicating grammatical information and faced problems when the entry had many sections, or when the unknown word was a compound or idiom. Wingate's (2004) data revealed "superficial and partial reading of dictionary entries" behaviour which accounted for unsuccessful dictionary look-ups. Elola, Rodríguez-García & Winfrey (2008) studied dictionary use and vocabulary choices during L2 writing and found that her sample face problems with the look up of abstract and domain-specific words, collocations and fixed expressions, lexical items of multiple grammatical categories and discourse markers. Petrylaitė, Vaškeliėnė, Vėžytė (2008) highlighted the respondents' lack of awareness of the advantages of proper dictionary consultation skills, as well as their overconfidence in some cases in their dictionary skills. Gavriilidou (2010) found that her sample adopts positive look up strategies or strategies for appropriate dictionary selection, but faces problems with lemmatization strategies. Finally, Gavriilidou (2011) studied the receptive dictionary use of Greek university students and reported problems with metaphoric meanings of words, idioms and compounds.

After consulting the relevant literature thoroughly, an exhaustive list including all reference skills cited in the literature was prepared. The reference skills of the total list were then classified in the following four categories: a) dictionary use awareness skills, in other words skills referring to the acquaintance with the situations in which a dictionary can be used, b) strategies for dictionary selection and acquaintance with dictionary conventions. This category includes strategies either for selecting the appropriate dictionary or for using effectively the dictionary conventions as a guidance during dictionary look up, c) lemmatization strategies, in other words strategies for selecting in which entry to look up the information needed, and finally d) look up strategies, for instance strategies employed for selecting effectively the relevant information. Thus S.I.D.U specified four main areas of interest.

2.2 The Pilot Version

The pilot version of the S.I.D.U was a self-report five Likert-scale questionnaire of 52 items. More precisely, 18 questions were assessing the dictionary use awareness, 14 questions were tracing the

strategies for dictionary selection and acquaintance with dictionary conventions, 5 questions were measuring the lemmatization strategies, and finally 15 questions were assessing the look up strategies. The pilot version was checked for its content and discriminatory validity as well as for its reliability. The results are presented in the following part.

3. Content Validity

Content validity is the degree to which elements of an assessment instrument are relevant to and representative of the targeted construct for a particular assessment purpose (Haynes, Richard and Kubany 1995). A widely used and recommended by psychometricians method of measuring content validity is the use of multiple judges (Lawshe 1975; Hambleton and Rogers 1991; Haynes, Richard and Kubany 1995). Every element of an assessment instrument is judged by multiple experts. Lawshe (1975) proposed that each of the experts respond to the following question for each item: "Is the skill or knowledge measured by this item 'essential,' 'useful, but not essential,' or 'not necessary' to the performance of the construct?" According to Lawshe, if more than half the panelists indicate that an item is essential, that item has at least some content validity.

The method of multiple judges was adopted for the measurement of content validity of the pilot version of S.I.D.U. The measurement was carrying out on a panel of 10 experts who judged the relevance and usefulness of each one of the 52 items of S.I.D.U. The 10 judges had to select 1 if they found the specific item essential, 2 if the specific item was 'useful, but not essential,' and 3 if the item was 'not necessary'. Only items which were assessed essential by more than half of the experts were kept. During that phase 5 items were eliminated. Thus the final version of the S.I.D.U consisted of 47 items (16 items assessing dictionary awareness, 12 items tracing strategies for dictionary selection and acquaintance with dictionary conventions, 5 items measuring the lemmatization strategies, and finally 14 items assessing the look up strategies) (see appendix I). The Quantitative indices of content validity of S.I.D.U were supplemented by qualitative feedback by the experts, which included additions and rewordings in four items.

Statistical analyses of data gathered with S.I.D.U included an examination of the reliability of the instrument and its ability to discriminate between effective and ineffective dictionary users.

4. Discriminatory Validity

Discriminatory validity is the ability of a psychometric instrument to show significant differences between subgroups with different characteristics. The ability of S.I.D.U to discriminate the effective from the ineffective dictionary users was checked.

4.1 Sampling

To check S.I.D.U's discriminatory validity, the sample consisted of 30 lexicographers which were considered as the group of expert users. Ineffective users were considered users with no dictionary experience. It was hypothesized that the nature of studies in departments such as the department of Electric Engineering, The Pre-Primary Education Department or the Physical Education Department does not involve frequently students with dictionary use activities. Thus, in order to select the sample of ineffective users, a randomly selected sample of 15 first year students of the Physical Education Department, 15 first year students of the Pre-Primary Education Department, and 15 first-year students of the Electric Engineering Department of the Democritus University of Thrace was interviewed. The interview included five questions tracing previous dictionary experience. It was found that the Physical Education Department students had the least dictionary experience. Consequently, the group of ineffective users consisted of 30 randomly selected first-year students of the Physical Education Department of the Democritus University of Thrace.

4.2 Statistics

In order to test whether the S.I.D.U can discriminate the effective from the ineffective dictionary users a T-test analysis for independent samples was performed. The results showed that in all four categories of strategies the expert users had a significantly higher score (dictionary awareness strategies $t=6,99$,

$p < .001$, dictionary selection and acquaintance with dictionary conventions strategies $t = 8,12$, $p < .001$, lemmatization strategies $t = 6,25$, $p < .001$, and finally look up strategies $t = 6,72$, $p < .001$). Consequently, the S.I.D.U classified effectively the subjects into two categories.

5. Reliability

5.1 Sampling

Reliability is how consistently a test measures what it attempts to measure. To check S.I.D.U's reliability, the sample consisted of 30 high-school pupils aged 12-15 years, 30 lyceum pupils aged 15-18 years, 30 professors at the secondary education and 30 university students of the department of Greek literature of the Democritus University of Thrace (total 120 subjects).

5.2 Statistics

A reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) was performed to examine the internal consistency of the S.I.D.U. The Cronbach's A was .97.

6. Conclusions and further investigation

This study allowed us to evaluate the reliability and the discriminatory validity of S.I.D.U which measures the use of strategies proposed in the literature as employed during effective dictionary use and specified the four categories of strategies which optimize the assessment of dictionary use.

The findings of the present study show that S.I.D.U is the first reliable and valid instrument for use in assessing dictionary use. Its discriminatory validity proved to be high.

The major application of S.I.D.U is to assess the dictionary use strategies employed by students or pupils in order to collect reliable data for the design of special curricula for dictionary use training. For ease of interpretation of the results, four subscales are designed in a manner to allow the profiling of dictionary users. It can also be used to assess the improvement in dictionary use as a result of the application of these curricula in specific target groups. Another possible use is for research purposes on pedagogical lexicography.

With its ease of administration and its four subscales, S.I.D.U promises to offer a psychometrically sound measure with which to assess effective dictionary use.

Finally, more testing of a normative sample with S.I.D.U is needed in order to provide reference ranges for its scores when administered to dictionary users and thus be able to offer a standardized version of that self-report questionnaire.

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APPENDIX I: SIDU Greek version

Όνομα (όχι επώνυμο)**Φύλο****Ημερομηνία γέννησης****Τμήμα Φοίτησης**

Το παρόν ερωτηματολόγιο θα χρησιμοποιηθεί για ερευνητικούς σκοπούς και η συμμετοχή σας είναι πολύ σημαντική. Ευχαριστούμε για τη βοήθειά σας.

Παρακαλώ διαβάστε με προσοχή τα παρακάτω ερωτήματα και κυκλώστε το 1, 2, 3, 4, ή 5 ανάλογα με το αν ΙΣΧΥΟΥΝ ΓΙΑ ΣΑΣ ΑΥΤΑ ΠΟΥ ΛΕΕΙ Η ΚΑΘΕ ΕΡΩΤΗΣΗ.

1. Ποτέ ή σχεδόν ποτέ
2. Συνήθως ποτέ
3. Μερικές φορές
4. Συνήθως
5. Πάντα ή σχεδόν πάντα

1. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό για να βρω τη σημασία μιας λέξης	1	2	3	4	5
2. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό για να βρω την ορθογραφία μιας λέξης	1	2	3	4	5
3. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό για να βρω συνώνυμες λέξεις	1	2	3	4	5
4. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό για να βρω αντίθετες λέξεις	1	2	3	4	5
5. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό για να ελέγξω πώς χρησιμοποιείται η λέξη	1	2	3	4	5
6. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό για να βρω την ετυμολογία μιας λέξης	1	2	3	4	5
7. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό για να βοηθούμαι στη μετάφραση	1	2	3	4	5
8. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό για να βρω τη σύνταξη μιας λέξης	1	2	3	4	5
9. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό για να βρω παράγωγα μιας λέξης	1	2	3	4	5
10. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό για να βρω οικογένειες λέξεων	1	2	3	4	5
11. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό για να βρω τη σημασία μιας έκφρασης	1	2	3	4	5
12. Χρησιμοποιώ λεξικό στο σχολείο	1	2	3	4	5
13. Χρησιμοποιώ λεξικό στο σπίτι	1	2	3	4	5
14. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό όταν διαβάζω ένα κείμενο	1	2	3	4	5
15. Χρησιμοποιώ το λεξικό όταν γράφω ένα κείμενο	1	2	3	4	5
16. Χρησιμοποιώ ένα λεξικό όταν κάνω μια άσκηση γραμματικής	1	2	3	4	5

17. Πριν αγοράσω ένα λεξικό, γνωρίζω για ποιους λόγους το χρειάζομαι	1	2	3	4	5
18. Πριν αγοράσω ένα λεξικό στο βιβλιοπωλείο, το φυλλομετρώ για να δω τι πληροφορίες δίνει	1	2	3	4	5
19. Πριν αγοράσω ένα λεξικό, ρωτάω σχετικά μ' αυτό το δάσκαλό μου ή το βιβλιοπώλη	1	2	3	4	5
20. Διαλέγω ένα λεξικό, επειδή έχει πολλά λήμματα και κάθε λήμμα παρέχει πλούσιες πληροφορίες	1	2	3	4	5
21. Γνωρίζω τι είναι ένα ετυμολογικό λεξικό και πού χρησιμεύει	1	2	3	4	5
22. Γνωρίζω τι είναι ερμηνευτικό λεξικό και πού χρησιμεύει	1	2	3	4	5
23. Γνωρίζω τι είναι δίγλωσσο λεξικό και πού χρησιμεύει	1	2	3	4	5
24. Γνωρίζω τι είναι λεξικό ορολογίας και πού χρησιμεύει	1	2	3	4	5
25. Πριν χρησιμοποιήσω το καινούριό μου λεξικό, διαβάζω προσεκτικά την εισαγωγή του	1	2	3	4	5
26. Πριν χρησιμοποιήσω το καινούριό μου λεξικό, μελετώ προσεκτικά τις συντομογραφίες	1	2	3	4	5
27. Πριν χρησιμοποιήσω το καινούριό μου λεξικό, διαβάζω τυχαία λήμματα για να δω τη δομή τους					
28. Γνωρίζω ή καταλαβαίνω όλες τις συντομογραφίες που χρησιμοποιούνται στο λεξικό μου					
29. Όταν συναντώ μια άγνωστη λέξη σε ένα κείμενο, προσπαθώ να σκεφτώ με ποιον τύπο να την αναζητήσω στο λεξικό	1	2	3	4	5
30. Όταν συναντώ μια παροιμία ή μια έκφραση που δεν καταλαβαίνω, ψάχνω για τη σημασία της στο λεξικό στο λήμμα που αντιστοιχεί στο πρώτο ουσιαστικό ή επίθετο της παροιμίας	1	2	3	4	5
31. Όταν δεν βρίσκω μια παροιμία ή μια παγιωμένη έκφραση στο λήμμα που νόμιζα ότι βρισκόταν ξεκινώ μια νέα αναζήτηση	1	2	3	4	5
32. Όταν ακούω μια λέξη που δεν καταλαβαίνω, σκέφτομαι τους πιθανούς τρόπους ορθογραφίας της και την αναζητώ σε διαφορετικά σημεία του λεξικού	1	2	3	4	5
33. Όταν δεν βρίσκω μια λέξη στο σημείο που πιστεύω πως θα βρισκόταν, ξεκινώ νέα αναζήτηση με άλλα κριτήρια έως ότου τη βρω	1	2	3	4	5
34. Αναζητώ ένα κύριο όνομα σε ειδικό πίνακα στο τέλος ή σε κάποιο άλλο σημείο του λεξικού	1	2	3	4	5
35. Για να δω πώς χρησιμοποιείται μια λέξη στο λόγο βοηθούμαι από τις ειδικές συντομογραφίες χρήσης που υπάρχουν στο λήμμα	1	2	3	4	5
36. Όταν αναζητώ μια λέξη που αρχίζει από Ε, ψάχνω στο 1 ^ο τέταρτο των σελίδων του λεξικού, γιατί το Ε είναι από τα πρώτα γράμματα της αλφαβήτας	1	2	3	4	5

37. Όταν αναζητώ μία λέξη από Λ ανοίγω στο μέσο του λεξικού μου	1	2	3	4	5
38. Όταν αναζητώ μια λέξη, έχω στο μυαλό μου από τι αρχίζει η λέξη αυτή και ψάχνω εκεί που νομίζω πως βρίσκονται λέξεις που αρχίζουν από το συγκεκριμένο γράμμα	1	2	3	4	5
39. Όταν αναζητώ μια λέξη, ανοίγω λίγο το λεξικό και ελέγχω αν είμαι κοντά στο ζητούμενο ψηφίο	1	2	3	4	5
40. Όταν αναζητώ μια λέξη, καθοδηγούμαι από τα κεφαλάρια	1	2	3	4	5
41. Ανοίγω το λεξικό και διαβάζω τις λέξεις μόνο όταν είμαι σίγουρος/η πως βρίσκομαι στη σωστή σελίδα	1	2	3	4	5
42. Όταν αναζητώ μια λέξη, την έχω διαρκώς στο μυαλό μου κατά τη διάρκεια της αναζήτησης	1	2	3	4	5
43. Όταν διαπιστώσω ότι η λέξη που αναζητώ έχει πολλές διαφορετικές σημασίες, ελέγχω μία προς μία όλες τις σημασίες βοηθούμενος/η από τα παραδείγματα	1	2	3	4	5
44. Όταν βρω τη λέξη που με ενδιαφέρει επιστρέφω στο κείμενο για να επιβεβαιώσω από τα συμφραζόμενα ότι βρήκα την κατάλληλη σημασία	1	2	3	4	5
45. Πριν χρησιμοποιήσω στο κείμενο που γράφω μια λέξη που βρήκα στο λεξικό αναζητώ όλες τις γραμματικές πληροφορίες (κλίση, σύνταξη) και πληροφορίες χρήσης για να είμαι σίγουρος/η ότι τη χρησιμοποιώ σωστά	1	2	3	4	5
46. Βοηθούμαι από τα συνώνυμα ή τα αντίθετα για να βρω τη σημασία της λέξης που με ενδιαφέρει	1	2	3	4	5
47. Αναζητώ έναν εξειδικευμένο όρο σε ένα λεξικό ορολογίας	1	2	3	4	5