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Analysing student' attitudes towards vocabulary learning strategies

A Case Study of First Year Licence Students in the Department of Foreign Languages

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Presented by:

- 1) Ms. Meissa TOUIL
- 2) Ms. Fadia NAMOUS

Supervisor:

Dr. Fethi GUERID

Board of Examiners:

Chairman: Dr.

Supervisor: Dr. Fethi GUERID

Examiner: Dr.

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**ANALYSING STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS VOCABULARY LEARNING
STRATEGIES**

A CASE STUDY OF FIRST YEAR LICENCE STUDENTS IN THE DEPARMENT OF
FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ABD ELHAFID BOUSSOUF UNIVERSITY - MILA

DEDICATION

To:

- ❖ my beloved parents, Omar and Nedjet, whose boundless love, unwavering support, and invaluable guidance have been the cornerstone of my journey. Without your steadfast presence and enduring encouragement, I would not have reached this pivotal stage in my academic pursuits.
- ❖ my only lovely sister and all what I have, Roufaida, and my brothers Ahmed and
- ❖ Salah.
- ❖ my adorable nieces, Miral and Layen and my dear sister-in-law, Cilia.
- ❖ my second mom grandmother, Bibia, and my paternal uncle, Fouzi, and his wife Lamia.
- ❖ my pretty cousin, Yasmin, and his brothers, Yacin, Yasser, and Iyad.
- ❖ all my dear friends, and my family whose companionship, encouragement, and shared experiences have illuminated my path and enriched my life in countless ways.
- ❖ And finally, to all who know and love Fadia.

Fadia

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to:

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- ❖ Lahoumi my moonlight in the darkness, my precious diamond, I'm lucky to be your sister, thank you for your support and motivation.
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- ❖ my cousin, Hamada for all the lovely moments that we spent together.
- ❖ my grandfather, may your soul rest in peace, you're always remembered.
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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary knowledge is crucial for communicating in a foreign language. Academics have categorized a variety of vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) that support foreign language students in expanding their lexical knowledge and improving their speaking, writing and comprehension abilities. The goal of the current study is to find out how 1st year students of English at Mila University Center learn vocabulary and what are the different strategies and techniques the participants use in vocabulary acquisition. To conduct the investigation, a questionnaire has been used as a research tool. The participants of the study are 80 first-year students who have randomly been chosen from a total population of 242 students. The findings of the study have revealed that the participants use various strategies and techniques in vocabulary learning and acquisition such as note taking and dictionary use. The results have as well revealed that these participants face difficulties and challenges when learning vocabulary such as struggling with technical terminology and pronunciation.

Key words: vocabulary learning strategies, Vocabulary Acquisition, EFL, four language skills.

List of abbreviations

LLS: Language Learning Strategies

LA: Language acquisition

LL: Language Learning

VLSs: Vocabulary Learning Strategies

EFL: English as Foreign language

ESL: English a second language

FL: Foreign Language

L2: Second Language

L1: First Language

DET: Determination Strategies

SOC: Social Strategies

COG: Cognitive Strategies

MEM: Memory Strategies

MET: Metacognitive Strategies

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General Introduction

Vocabulary is extremely important in language acquisition. It serves as the foundation for linguistic proficiency, influencing reading comprehension, writing fluency, and general communication competence. Understanding students' views regarding vocabulary learning practices is critical for educators and academics working in the field of English language learning. This study investigates first-year English students' opinions regarding vocabulary learning tactics in order to shed light on the relevance of vocabulary, abilities, and the efficacy of various learning strategies. By assessing these attitudes, educators can adjust training to better fit their students' needs and preferences, thereby increasing the efficacy of vocabulary learning. Many researches have been conducted on the use of learning strategies in the context of language acquisition, with the goal of significantly improving language learners, particularly new ones, and developing their skills and abilities in acquiring new vocabulary. This study aims to contribute to the expanding body of strategies and methodologies while giving practical implications for teachers wishing to improve teaching in the setting of English language teaching.

1. Statement of the Problem

Students studying English as a foreign language often encounter challenges in effectively communicating using the language. They frequently struggle with using the correct terminology during speech, resorting to gestures to compensate for gaps in their lexical knowledge. These difficulties are particularly common among students who lack proficiency in vocabulary. As a result, they often struggle to convey the intended meaning behind their words, leading to potential misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication between speakers and listeners. This failure to acquire vocabulary can often be attributed to a lack of effective strategies and methods for vocabulary acquisition.

Therefore, it is recommended that learners are encouraged to employ specific vocabulary learning strategies to improve their lexical competence, ultimately enhancing their speaking, writing, reading and listening skills.

2. Aims of the Study

The current study seeks to investigate how first year students of English at Mila University center learn vocabulary. The study aims as well to raise the awareness of the participants about the importance of using vocabulary learning strategies for enhancing the mastery and acquisition of English language. It seeks as well to detect the difficulties and challenges that the participants encounter when they learn vocabulary.

3. Research Questions

In order to conduct our investigation, the following research questions are asked:

- Do the participants use vocabulary learning strategies? What is the effect of using VLSs on participants' performance?
- Do the participants face difficulties and challenges when learning vocabulary? What are the possible solutions to these difficulties and challenges?
- Do the participants have their own preferences in learning vocabulary?

5. Research Methodology

In this research, a questionnaire administered to 80 students of first year English department at University Center of Mila, has been used as a research tool. This questionnaire will lead to investigate how EFL students' are learning vocabulary and how will the use of vocabulary learning strategies will enhance their language mastery and acquisition

6. Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation will be divided into two parts; a theoretical part and a practical part. In the theoretical framework we will have one chapter. In this chapter will be divided into two sections. The first section we will define what is vocabulary and more precisely its importance, types and the usefulness of the four skills. In the second section it will cover all the questions above and highlight of learning and language learning strategies and its classifications and characteristics, and the paper will cover related also the definition of vocabulary learning strategies and other related concepts. In the practical framework, there will be one chapter that will analyze and interpret the collected data from the questionnaire, in addition to discussing the obtained results about the study. In the conclusion, the findings of this dissertation will be summarized, conclusions will be made, recommendations for teachers will be listed, and the future directions for further research on this topic will be suggested.

CHAPTER ONE

Section one: Vocabulary

Introduction

Language learning (LL) is a process that begins at birth and continues throughout life. It can present challenges particularly for students who are embarking on the journey of acquiring a foreign language for the first time. Vocabulary is one of the basic elements that language learners should master if they want to communicate in the target language. Learners with a broad vocabulary are better equipped to comprehend and communicate in a variety of contexts. Unquestionably, vocabulary plays a crucial role in language acquisition as it enables speakers to interact and control the language. Therefore this section of the theoretical chapter focuses on defining vocabulary, its types, its relation with the four skills, importance of vocabulary, and types of vocabulary.

1.1.1 What is Vocabulary?

Vocabulary is one of the knowledge areas in language; it has a big role for learners in acquiring a language. Vocabulary knowledge is more than just citing a word; it requires meaning based upon a given context. Vocabulary plays an important role in language learning, without sufficient vocabulary, people cannot express their ideas to communicate in both forms; the spoken and written one. The more people master vocabulary, the more they can speak, write, read and listen as they want.

According to Wilkins (2004) vocabulary mastery is more important than grammar and that without grammar very little can be conveyed, but without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. It means that even someone has good grammar, but it will be useless if they do not know many vocabulary items. Indeed, vocabulary is the total number of words people know and use in their language activities.

Different educators have varying definitions of vocabulary, with some emphasizing immediate word recognition as sight-words, while others focus on student's understanding of words. Hiebert and Kamil (2005) define vocabulary as the knowledge learners should have about word meaning. Moreover, vocabulary acquisition is crucial in language teaching and learning whether it is first, second or foreign language as it provides learners with the right words to express thoughts, ideas and feelings effectively.

On the other hand, Hornby et al. (1984, cited in Parsa et al., 2013:115) define vocabulary as "the total number of words which make up a language; and a range of words known to, or used by, a person," while Lessard-Clouston (2000:2) defines vocabulary as "the words of a language, including single items and phrases or chunks of several words, conveying a particular meaning, the way individual words do." According to Neuman (2011:60), vocabulary refers to the words needed for efficient communication, including expressive vocabulary and receptive vocabulary. Jackson and Amvela (2000:48) define vocabulary as "a collection of words" or "a package of sub-sets of words used in specific contexts" (Ibid: 118).

1.1.2 Importance of Vocabulary

Vocabulary helps learners in language comprehension and production. EFL learners need to expand their vocabulary knowledge because it is an important element in learning a language. The linguist David Wilkins (1972) concluded the importance of vocabulary learning compared to grammar by focusing on communication breakdown when learners lack vocabulary knowledge. This means that even when a learner has good grammar knowledge; it will not be useful if they lack vocabulary knowledge. Ur confirms (1996: 60) that —vocabulary is one of the important things to be taught in learning a foreign language because it will be impossible to speak up without variety of words|. Besides that, vocabulary

is central to reading comprehension because it is not possible to understand a text without having a large knowledge of vocabulary.

According to Nation (2001), readers need to know the maximum number of vocabulary in a text for an adequate understanding of it. McCarthy stated (1997: 140) that —No matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wider range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way. This leads to conclude that even the student has a good grammatical knowledge, efficient communication cannot be possible without having good vocabulary knowledge.

1.1.3 Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary learning is of a paramount importance for EFL learners. In order to master a foreign language it is important to study its grammar, phonetics and more importantly its vocabulary. According to Rubin and Thompson (1994) vocabulary learning is the heart of mastering a foreign language, since one cannot communicate either in written form or a spoken form a foreign language without having an acceptable knowledge of vocabulary. Therefore, learning vocabulary is important in the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). Similarly, Schmitt and McCarthy (1997) pointed out that vocabulary learning has been regarded as the most important parts in second or foreign language acquisition. Expanding the vocabulary knowledge is one of the main aims of vocabulary learning since a learner with rich vocabulary stock will succeed both in classroom as well as outside in various contexts. According to Nation (2001), vocabulary learning can be enhanced through the focus on the four skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking). Learners have to read books, articles and novels and face new words and check and note their meanings from dictionary. Besides this practice, learners can learn new vocabulary through daily conversations and interactions with friends or native speakers.

1.1.4 Types of Vocabulary

Some academics divide vocabulary into two categories: active and passive. Harmer (1991) created a distinction between these two groups of vocabulary. The first category of vocabulary consists of words that students have learned and should be able to utilize. The second, on the other hand, speaks of words that students will probably be able to identify but not pronounce when they come across them. Receptive and productive vocabulary are the two categories of vocabulary that Hatch and Brown (1995) distinguished.

1.1.4.1 Receptive vs. Passive Vocabulary

Receptive vocabulary, often termed passive vocabulary or comprehension, is a fundamental aspect of language acquisition and understanding. A notable study by Aeborsold and Field in 1977 highlighted the significance of receptive vocabulary in language learning. They described receptive vocabulary as linguistic objects that individuals can identify and comprehend when reading or listening, regardless of their ability to actively produce those words.

In the context of language acquisition, receptive vocabulary refers to the words that individuals understand and can respond to, even if they may not use them actively in their own speech or writing. This distinction between receptive and productive vocabulary is crucial in understanding language development and proficiency (Nation, 2001).

For instance, in educational settings, assessments of receptive vocabulary often involve tasks such as reading comprehension or listening comprehension exercises, where individuals demonstrate their understanding of words in context without necessarily needing to produce them. This underscores the importance of receptive vocabulary in communication and comprehension (Biemiller, 2001).

1.1.4.2 Productive and Active Vocabulary

Productive vocabulary, in contrast to receptive vocabulary, encompasses the ability not only to understand and recognize words but also to actively use them in speech or writing. This involves various aspects such as spelling, pronunciation, grammatical usage, and contextual appropriateness (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

Individuals with a developed productive vocabulary can not only spell and pronounce words correctly but also employ them in grammatically correct sentences, demonstrating an understanding of how words fit into syntactic structures. Moreover, effective use of productive vocabulary entails using words responsibly, avoiding overuse or misuse, and having the capacity to substitute appropriate alternatives when necessary (Nagy & Anderson, 1984).

In addition to that, enhancing productive vocabulary skills is essential for effective communication and language proficiency, as it enables individuals to express themselves clearly and accurately in various contexts. *"...productive vocabulary needs to represent a meaning through speaking or writing and retrieving and producing the proper spoken or written word form,"* According to Aeborsold and Field (1977), it is a dynamic vocabulary word. It also goes by the name "productive vocabulary" and describes words that students can accurately use while writing or speaking. In reality, since students are expected to be able to pronounce it, it is more challenging to put into practice accurately and use the grammar of the target language. In addition, they have to be conversant in word implications and collocation. It is therefore often used in speaking and writing abilities.

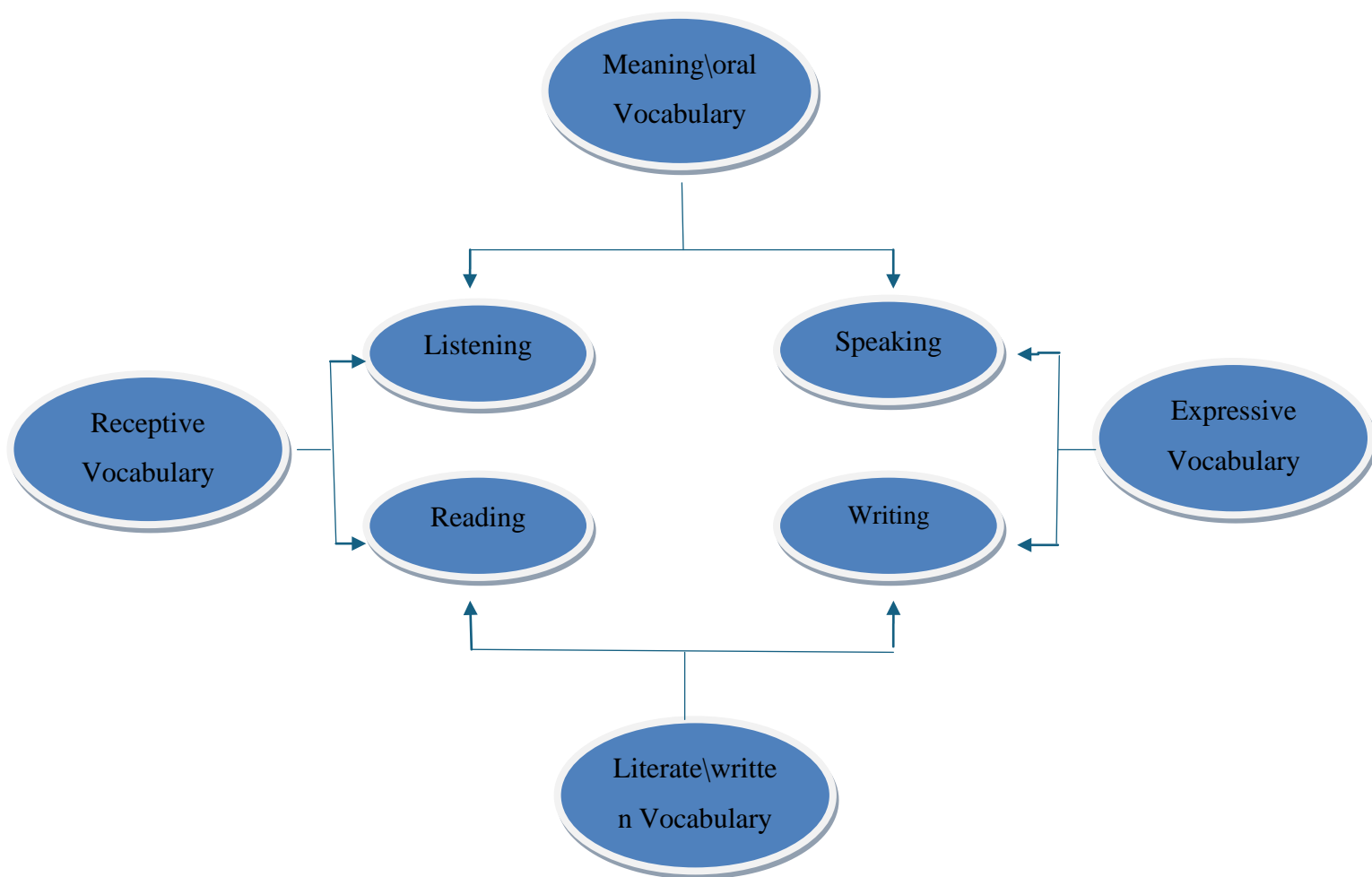


Figure 01: Types of Vocabulary (Source adapted from Pikulski and Templeton , 2004)

Figure 1 illustrates the categorization of vocabulary into receptive and productive types, adapted from Pikulski and Templeton (2004). Receptive vocabulary encompasses words understood but not necessarily actively used, while productive vocabulary involves active usage, including spelling, pronunciation, and grammatical application. This classification aids in understanding the different facets of vocabulary acquisition and utilization.

In summary, Schmitt (2000) said that passive and active vocabulary are interchangeable terms for productive and receptive vocabulary. Put differently, words that students are able to recognize when reading or listening to spoken language are referred to as

receptive vocabulary. On the other hand, students' productive vocabulary is the collection of terms they can think of and use in writing or speaking when faced with a particular situation. It is believed that words are first learned receptively before they are consciously or unconsciously acquired and then made available for useful use.

1.1.5 Vocabulary and the Four Skills

Language acquisition (LA), whether learning a first or second language, represents a dynamic and lifelong process that reflects the complicated interaction of cognitive, social, and cultural variables that shape human communication, beginning with babbling and word imitation in infancy, language learning accelerates as humans absorb linguistic input from their surroundings. For that matter, language acquisition is inextricably connected with the development of the four fundamental language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Individuals begin the process of language learning in infancy, strengthening these talents simultaneously.

Successful English teaching requires correct integration of the four skills to guarantee that students learn well and achieve the required outcomes, however, the four skills that students develop may not be balanced; for example, a student may be proficient in reading but not in writing, speaking, listening, or writing. Studies have shown that speaking abilities differ from those of reading, writing, and listening (Powers 2010, Sawaki et al 2009). Hammer declared (2007b) that pupils typically pick up speaking and writing skills from what they see, hear, and read. In this instance, Brown (2000) said that a reading course will cover other subjects as well. Hinkel (2007) added support to the idea that meaningful communication occurs when individuals use all of the fundamental skills in a cycle. It is evident that using these four abilities can both improve students' performance and encourage teachers to be more innovative (Brown, 2000). Furthermore, all theories have demonstrated that teaching language in isolation rather than in conjunction with the four skills is illogical.

As a result, a skilled writer, listener, or reader may not always be a skilled speaker.

1.1.6 Usefulness of the Four Skills in Vocabulary Learning

Activities about the four skills in the language classroom serve many valuable purposes; they give learners scaffolded support, opportunities to create, contexts in which to use the language for exchanges of real information, evidence of their own ability (proof of learning) and, most important, confidence.

1.1.6.1 Reading

An enjoyable method that represents a source of input for language learning and vocabulary knowledge, reading seems to be the major channel through which learners can keep in touch with English. It is for that reason many educators testify the fact that "reading is by far the most important of the four skills in a second language, particularly in English as a second or foreign language"(Carell, P.et al. 1988:01).

Reading is a skill that requires a specific interest in EFL because it is a valuable resource for expanding one's vocabulary. According to Lewis (1993), vocabulary building is the most important aspect of learning a second language, and any language skill, including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and interpreting which is impossible occur without vocabulary use. Reading is the most effective way to learn and acquire new vocabulary and the relationship between reading and vocabulary is widely documented (Eskey 2005). In fact, increased vocabulary knowledge leads to better oral performance (Oya et al. 2009). Reading helps students improve their language correctness and fluency. Reading is an effective method for increasing vocabulary and word strength. As demonstrated by Hedge (1985), extensive reading improves learners' ability to guess the meanings of unknown words and phrases based on context clues, and students who read a lot outside of the classroom can

improve both their comprehension and vocabulary, both of which are required components for improving speaking skills.

1.1.6.2 Speaking

Speaking is defined as the means by which humans communicate information and sustain social relationships through communication, the expressing of thoughts, sentiments, hopes, and intentions. Leong and Ahmadi (2017) stated that "speaking is used twice as much as reading and writing combined" (p. 35). Furthermore, persons who are familiar with a language are referred to as its speakers. According to Burkart and Sheppard (2004), the capacity to converse in the target language is a good indication of language learning progress.

After reading words, writing concepts, and hearing thoughts, all you have to do is use your speaking abilities to communicate. Your expressiveness is determined by the words you choose to say; however, according to Bygate (1987), speaking ability entails making the appropriate choices when using language forms, following the right order, that imitates native speakers' communication abilities, and providing the right meanings that the audience can understand. The speaking skill is required in all situations. Many people believe that speaking and mastering the language to be synonymous. According to Celce-Murcia (2001), "the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication" (p. 203). Speaking indicates mastery of the other abilities, most EFL learners prioritize this skill in their learning process. Hence those who are able to communicate in a language are called "speakers of that language" In fact; improving students' oral performance becomes imperative in EFL classrooms. Nunan (1991), on the other hand, stated that "To most people, mastering the art of speaking is the single most important factors of learning a second or foreign language, and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language" (p.39). Speaking can take a variety of forms, including public, cordial, and academic situations.

1.1.6.3 Writing

Writing is an essential means of communication in everyday life. It is a constructive and expressive skill that requires making words rather than receiving them. It is defined as a writer's capacity to use signs and symbols to express thoughts, ideas, sentiments or emotions. In Oxford Dictionary (2018) writing is defined as the activity or ability of writing a sequence of letters, words, or symbols indicated on a surface.

A proficient writer is always the winner when it comes to self-expression. Your writing ability is the "hard copy" of your expressive or intellectual capacity. Writing is clearly much more than the production of graphic symbols, just as speech is more than the production of sounds. The symbols have to be arranged, according to certain conventions, to form words and words have to be arranged to form sentences (Byrne 1988). Writing also considers a very important purpose, which is to communicate a message. In light of this purpose, Spratt, Pulverness, and Williams (2005) asserted that writing is simply the act of transmitting a message (something to say) by putting signs on a page. To write, we need a message and someone to share it with. We also need to be able to construct letters and words and join them together to form words, sentences, or a series of sentences that transmit a message. Swales. J.M (1990)

1.1.6.4 Listening

Another linguistic requirement is listening. The more effective you are at listening, the more fulfilled and prosperous you will be. Listening is a receptive condition that enables comprehension of what is heard and gives the listener complete participation in the communication process. Accordingly, Renukadevi (2014) stated:

—Listening is the most significant part of communication as it is pivotal in providing a substantial and meaningful response. Especially in learning a language for communicative purpose, listening plays a

vital role, as it helps the language learner to acquire pronunciation, word stress, vocabulary, and syntax and the comprehension of messages conveyed can be based solely on tone of voice, pitch and accent; and it is only possible when we listen. (p. 60)

For L2 learners, listening may be the main method of acquiring the language (Rost, 2006). In fact, adults spend about half of the time they need to communicate just listening to what other people are saying (Siegel, 2015). In other language learning situations, such as a PhD thesis, for example, the major focus of interest may be on skills like writing or reading, but this may not be the case in classrooms or approaches where oral engagement is prioritized. Research has demonstrated the importance of listening in a variety of communication contexts and the necessity of comprehending spoken input in a number of everyday scenarios. According to Vandergrift & Baker (2015) any improvement in our L2 students' usage of their listening skill, will be seen in their total language mastery and performance.

Section two: Language and Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Introduction

It is well-known that vocabulary has a paramount importance for the mastery of all the four English language skills (i.e. listening, reading, speaking, and writing) since it is one of the key elements in second language acquisition (Gardner, 2013). One of the most valuable quotes of all times is by Wilkins (1972, p.111) expressing the importance of vocabulary in communication, —without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyedll (as cited in Schmitt, 2010; Thornbury, 2002). Vocabulary is thus crucial in second language acquisition. Concerning vocabulary acquisition, vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) have long been supported by many scholars to facilitate learning and help enhance learners' vocabulary knowledge (e.g. Nation, 2001; Oxford, 1990; Schmitt, 2000).

1.2.1 Learning Strategies

People do not understand everything when they are born, but have to learn everything so that they are able to understand. Take learning English for example; not everyone can understand it, but some non-native speakers can use the language very well. This is not only the case with English, but also other subjects. Therefore, during the learning process, one might find that some people can learn every subject or several subjects very quickly and well. On the other hand, some people have problems learning. Therefore, many researches try to find how learners go about learning something, what makes learners successful at learning something, and why some people are more effective at learning than others. As Williams & Burden (1997) point out, that can only be answered by investigating learning strategies.

However what does the term "learning strategy" actually mean?. According to Wenden (1987a:7-8): "Learning strategies are the various operations that learners use in order to make sense of their learning". Furthermore, according to Williams & Burden (1997) when students are engaged in an educational assignment, they possess multiple resources that they

employ in various ways to complete or resolve the work; this can be referred to as a process of learning strategy. It might be easier to say that learning strategies are learning skills, learning-to-learn skills, thinking skills, problem skills, or, to put it another way, the techniques that students use to take in, store, and retrieve information during the learning process. Oxford (1990) defined learning strategies as —specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations (p.8). They support not just language acquisition but also the acquisition of mathematics, chemistry, and other topics. To put it another way, learners possess the capacity to react appropriately to the unique learning environment and to regulate their learning as they begin to acquire new knowledge. Thus, studying strategy is similar to watching football players in the stadium who employ strategies to win a game. In order to learn something more successfully, learners employ learning strategies.

1.2.2 Definition of Language Learning Strategies

Research into language learning strategies has increased significantly since the 1970s, because such categories play various important roles in language learning. Many researchers focus on how learners process new information and what kinds of strategies they use to understand, learn or remember the information in the area of second or foreign language learning. Naiman (1978), Rubin (1975), and Stern (1975) defended the idea that certain learners are more successful than others at learning a second or foreign language despite exposure to the same teaching methods and learning environments.

Various researchers and experts have defined language learning strategies from different points of view. According to Wenden (1987a), language learning strategies can be defined from the aspect of language learning behaviors, such as learning and regulating the meaning of a second or foreign language, cognitive theory, such as learners' strategic knowledge of language learning, and the affective view, such as learners' motivation,

attitude, etc. O'Malley, Chamot and their colleagues (Chamot & O'Malley, 1987; O'Malley et al., 1985a) were devoted to studying the use of learning strategies by ESL learners in the US. Based on their research, language learning strategies were divided into three main categories, metacognitive, cognitive, and social affective which refer to learners' planning their learning, thinking about the learning process, monitoring their own comprehension or production, and evaluating the outcomes of their own learning.

Furthermore, Rigney (1978), and Rubin (1987), defined language learning strategies as behaviors, steps, or techniques that language learners apply to facilitate language learning. Moreover, the definition by Oxford (1990) also included cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of language learning strategies that enhance learners' language learning proficiency and self-confidence.

1.2.3 Classification of Language Learning Strategies

There are several classifications of Language Learning Strategies (LLS) because they are controversial and the researchers did not agree on one classification (Griffiths & Oxford, 2014). Nevertheless, the classification of O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and that of Oxford (1990) have received a lot of attention and have been remarkably used and seen in LLSs scholarly literature.

The initial taxonomy of LLSs was primarily created by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) using research that was focused on cognitive psychology. Consequently, they developed three LLS (three-cluster categorization system) classifications:

1.2.3.1 Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive strategies are crucial components of effective learning, encompassing methods for organizing, observing, and assessing the progress of learning tasks (Flavell, 1979). They enable learners to make informed decisions about which words or concepts to

prioritize for learning, consciously plan their approach to learning tasks, and select the most effective learning methods based on individual needs and preferences (Brown, 1987).

These strategies involve a cyclical process of planning, monitoring, and evaluation (Veenman, Van Hout-Wolters, & Afflerbach, 2006). During the planning phase, learners set goals, outline strategies, and anticipate potential challenges. The monitoring phase involves ongoing awareness of one's comprehension and performance, allowing for adjustments or modifications as needed. Finally, the evaluation phase entails reflecting on the effectiveness of learning strategies employed and assessing progress towards learning goals (Schraw & Dennison, 1994).

Metacognitive strategies provide learners with a conscious overview of the learning process, fostering self-regulation and autonomy in learning (Efklides, 2008). By actively engaging in metacognitive processes, learners become more adept at regulating their cognitive resources, managing their time effectively, and adapting their learning strategies to different contexts and tasks (Zimmerman, 2000).

1.2.3.2 Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies in language learning primarily center on the acquisition of target language resources and encompass techniques such as rehearsal, organization, and elaboration (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Unlike memory strategies, cognitive strategies primarily involve the manipulation and manipulation of language materials rather than focusing solely on mental processing (Oxford, 1990).

These strategies often involve repetitive and mechanical methods aimed at enhancing the retention and recall of vocabulary items. Common examples include the use of word lists, flashcards, and word books, which facilitate systematic practice and review of vocabulary (Nation, 2001).

While cognitive strategies may not directly engage higher-order cognitive processes, they play a crucial role in laying the foundation for language proficiency by providing learners with structured opportunities to engage with target language materials and reinforce their understanding (Oxford, 1990).

By employing cognitive strategies, learners can enhance their lexical knowledge, improve retention, and develop fluency in the target language, thereby facilitating more effective communication and language use (Nation, 2001).

1.2.3.3 Socio affective strategies

They direct learning into interpersonal communication or attitude modification. Oxford (1990) separated the two groups into six divisions. Memory, cognition, and comprehension methods fall under the direct group; they concentrate on using a second language directly while cognitively processing the information (Oxford, 1990, p. 135).

Conversely, the social, practical, and metacognitive methods fall under the indirect group. These strategies concentrate on not directly while acquiring a language, incorporating the second language (Oxford, 1990, p. 135).



Figure 02: Oxford's Classification of Language Learning Strategies

Oxford has established another widely used LLS classification (1990:14–15). She stated that her categorization is the most useful way to define LLS, and this is supported by a number of academics, including Ellis (1994) and Schmitt (1997). She claimed that her classification system is more comprehensive and complete. Although Oxford (1990) separated her approach into two primary components—direct strategies and indirect strategies—it does so in a different way from Rubin (1990).

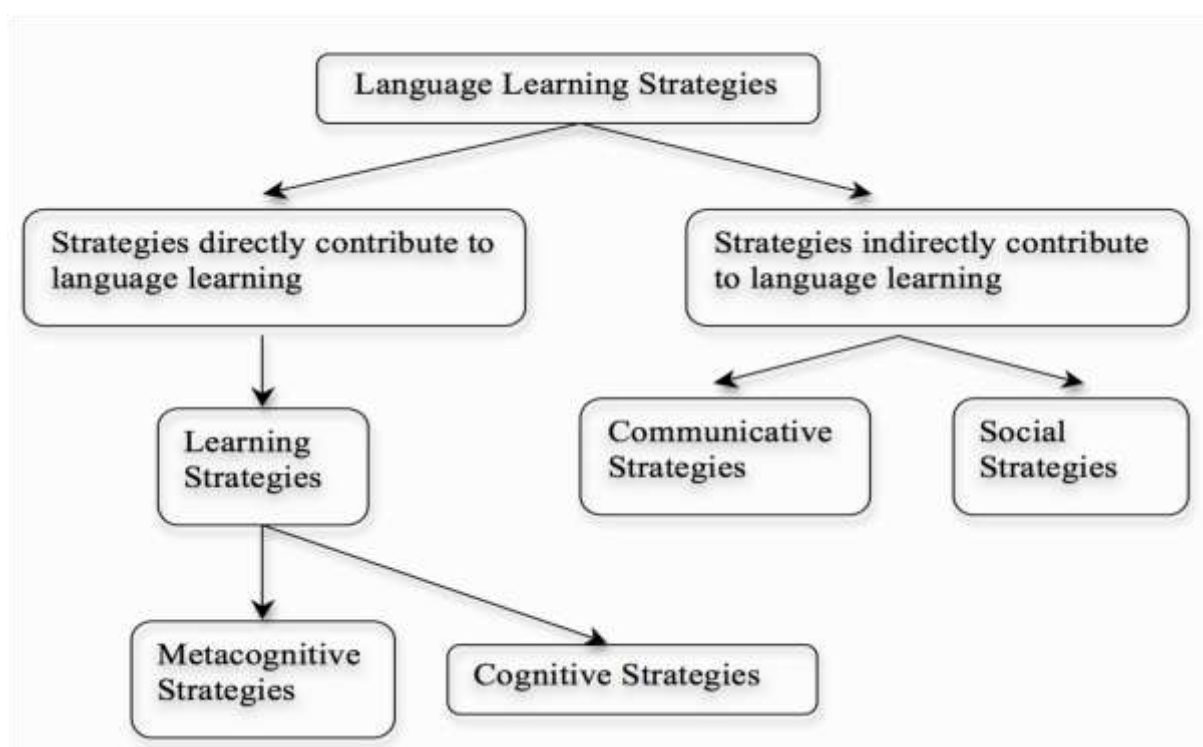


Figure3. Rubin’s Classification of Language Learning Strategies

Rubin's (1981) taxonomy divided language acquisition strategies into two primary categories: direct strategies and indirect strategies. The former is subdivided into six categories, accompanied by two indirect strategies. Rubin focuses on vocabulary learning in the first direct strategy, which is verification and clarification (e.g., asking others how to use a word in a language). The second direct strategy is monitoring, which is self-correction (e.g.,

when a learner corrects themselves when they make mistakes in spelling or expression). The third direct strategy is memorisation, which includes techniques that help learners retain vocabulary (e.g., taking notes, speaking the word aloud multiple times, or writing it down). Lastly, there is the deductive strategy, which entails drawing comparisons between the L1 and L2.

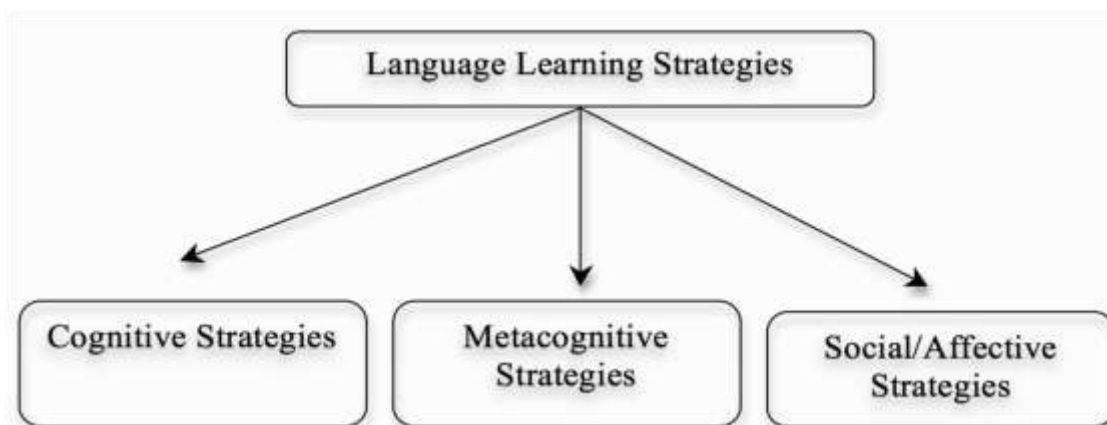


Figure 04: O'Malley and Chamot's Classification of Language Learning Strategies

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) offered the last set of LLS classifications that included VLS components. Their classification can be divided into three primary categories: socialaffective strategies; cognitive strategies; and metacognitive techniques.

Subcategories are then added to these, following the same scheme as the classes mentioned above. Therefore, summarizing, visualizing, practicing, organizing, elaborating, deducing, transferring, and differencing are the components of a cognitive strategy. Additional tactics that fall under the category of metacognition are appraisal, planning, monitoring, and selective attention. The last type is social / effective strategy, which includes self-talk, cooperation, and clarifying inquiries. To summarize, there are certain parallels between O'Malley, Chamot, and Oxford's taxonomies and they are both the most widely used in LLS research

1.2.4 Characteristics of Language Learning Strategies

Language learning techniques play a significant and advantageous function. According to Oxford (1990), using language learning strategies is essential since they help students improve their language proficiency and communication abilities, which in turn enhances their self-confidence. According to Oxford (1990), LLSs have several important qualities that can be summed up as follows:

- They support the primary goal of communicative competence
- They help students to become more independent.
- They clarify the role of the teacher and what is required from the learner to take specific actions.
- They cover a wide range of learner characteristics, not just perception.

Therefore language learning strategies have a positive contribution in the learning process because they clarify the duties of both teachers and learners.

1.2.5 Vocabulary Learning Strategies

1.2.5.1 Definition of vocabulary learning strategies

The term Strategy came from the ancient Greek word strategy which means generalship or the art of war (Oxford, 1990) in the realm of education, the term "strategy" was used to refer to learning as a learning strategy due to its qualities (Oxford, 1990). As stated in Ellis (1994) and Weinstein and Moyer (1986) Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) are defined as learners' behaviors, attitudes, and thoughts that influence their learning process.

In light of this, vocabulary learning strategies can be considered as a part of general learning strategies in second language acquisition. Gu (2005) explained that VLSs are "what learners utilize when confronted with a learning task" and these strategies are dependent on the Learners themselves (as cited in Letchumanan et al.,2016, p.174), vocabulary learning strategies are tools that learners use to acquire vocabulary and they may employ different

learning strategies that they assume to be an effective way of acquiring vocabulary. According to Rubin (1987) vocabulary learning strategies are concerned with what learners have do in order to learn and regulate their learning. This means that VLSs are useful to organize the steps and methods that a learner will go through to acquire new vocabulary.

1.2.5.2 Importance of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies are effective in enabling students to create an independent learning environment in accordance with their needs, and the level of proficiency in the target level can easily be achieved with these strategies.

In foreign language teaching, it is very effective to find students' vocabulary acquisition strategies, encouraging them to employ tactics, and teaching them strategies to increase language achievement. Learning is influenced by a variety of factors, including people's cultures, prior experiences, social and economic circumstances, intelligence kinds, relevance, and degrees of knowledge as well as their learning styles and learning strategies. Accordingly, every individual has a unique learning style and period (Tok and Yıgın, 2014). The teaching-learning process is impacted by learning strategies. By enhancing the teaching and learning process, the variety of learning strategies improves the process quality. It increases student awareness, boosts productivity, equips them with the ability to study on their own, encourages them to learn via enjoyment, and gets them ready for learning after school (Özer, 2002). Many approaches are advantageous to people learning a language, whether it is their first language or not. The learning strategy's goals are to empower students to learn independently, enhance their learning, and select the approach to learning that will be most helpful and convenient for them.

Students use all the learning strategies they know as they learn vocabulary on foreign languages, and therefore they are involved in the complexity of the strategy, Schmitt (1997), who found that this caused a great deal of time and power loss for the students, has

concentrated on a detailed vocabulary learning strategy classification that will facilitate vocabulary learning. Schmitt split his techniques into two categories: consolidation and discovery. When students encounter new words for the first time, they use discovery strategies to ascertain their meaning, and when they encounter the same words again, they use reinforcement strategies to confirm their meaning. The consolidation group includes social, cognitive, metacognitive, memory, and determination methods; the discovery group includes these strategies as well as social strategies.

1.2.5.3 Strategies used in Learning Vocabulary

Vocabulary learning strategies had been classified in multiple taxonomies. Rubin and Thomson (1994), Cohen (1987, 1990), Schmitt (2000) and Nation (2001) are few examples of VLSs Taxonomies.

1.2.5.3.1 Rubin and Thomson's Taxonomy (1994)

According to Siriwan, 2007, p. 47, Rubin and Thompson's (1994) taxonomy of vocabulary acquisition processes can be broken down into three primary categories:

a- The direct Approach

The direct approach involves the student's work on projects including making definition flashcards, writing or speaking word repetitions aloud, and recording sounds for auditory learning, color-coding words according to their components of speech, and employing words to create sentences.

b-The mnemonics approach

It entails adopting strategies like alliteration, rhyme, and word associations with actual items or their purposes. It also involves understanding word classes and related words, organizing words according to grammatical classes, and connecting words to context.

c- The indirect approach

Students in the indirect approach study writings on relevant subjects, analyze word components, and deduce word meanings from context. They focus on studying word lists and completing vocabulary exercises. According to Mayuree Siriwan (2007) the indirect approach emphasizes learning vocabulary through reading and listening, thus highlighting the importance of strategies for understanding unfamiliar words indirectly rather than relying on rote memorization.

1.2.5.3.2 Cohen's Taxonomy (1987, 1990)

According to Siriwan (2007), Vocabulary Learning Strategies classified by Cohen (1987; 1990) were categorized into three primary types:

a- Word memory strategies

They include utilizing mnemonic connections, such as seeing the word alone or in written context, and repeating the word and its meaning until it is ingrained in the learner's mind.

b- Semantic strategies

They involve having a large number of synonyms for a single word or associating a term with the context in which it appears.

c- Learning and applying strategies for vocabulary

They include activities such as using flashcards and dictionaries, or breaking down words into their structural components.

1.2.5.3.3 Schmitt's Taxonomy (2000)

Schmitt (2000) created a more thorough taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning Strategies, drawing inspiration from Oxford's (1990) taxonomy of Language Learning Strategies (Thiendatong & Sukying, 2021).

Schmitt (2000) divided VLSs into five categories: social, cognitive, memory, determination, and metacognition. These five groupings of strategies fall into two primary classes: consolidation and discovery. While memory, cognitive, and metacognitive techniques are included in the consolidation group, determination strategies are found in the discovery category.

Schmitt (2000) provided the following explanation of his VLSs taxonomy: **a-**

Determination strategies

are personal learning techniques that let students understand new words on their own for the first time without needing help from others. These techniques can include part-of-speech analysis, guessing from context or from L1 cognates, employing dictionaries, and more.

b- Social strategies

It involve students interacting with teachers and peers to pick up new vocabulary, such as by asking them to translate or provide a synonym for a word. They are employed in this case for the individual's discovery of new things since they might also be thought of as a consolidation technique for study and practice of meaning in groups.

c- Memory strategies

Are as well-known as mnemonics are methods for helping people remember and recall words by associating them with previously learned information. Examples of these methods include grouping words together, physically doing tasks, or employing pictures.

d- Cognitive strategies

Are concerned with learner's manipulation and transformation of the target words (Oxford, 1990) (as cited in Schmitt, 2000). They do not insist on the use of mental

thinking, but they do demand the use of mechanical tools (like notebooks) and vocal or written repetition.

e- Metacognitive strategies

Are concerned with decision-making in planning, keeping track of the most effective study methods, and assessing one's own development. An English language learner might, for example, watch movies in English or put one self through word tests.

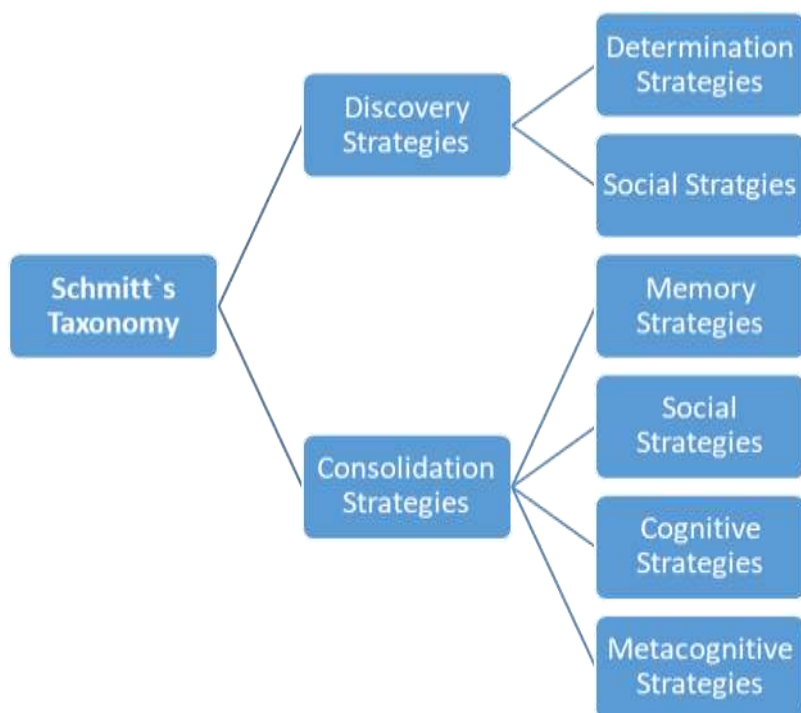


Figure 05: Schmitt's Taxonomy (1997)

1.2.5.3.4 Nation's Taxonomy (2001)

Nation (2001) created a general classification of VLSs, which is planning, sources, and processes. First, planning entails deciding which words to focus on according to objectives and having a well-defined plan for addressing particular facets of a word. Utilizing a variety of tactics can speed up learning and increase effectiveness. Second, sources are involved in VLSs. In order to acquire vocabulary, students must analyze word parts, comprehend stems and affixes, and use reference materials. This aids in comprehending

shape, meaning, context, and connections. Third, vocabulary knowledge is established via processes including memory, retrieval, and creation in VLSs. During the learning process, noticing, retrieving, and generating are crucial activities that improve word processing and production.

1.2.6 The Significance of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Utilizing learning strategies is essential for accelerating language acquisition especially in terms of picking up new vocabulary in order to aid in the process of learning language. Research has shown how important vocabulary learning strategies are for various facets, such as encouraging their use, growing learner autonomy, and strengthening EFL/ESL students' independence. Gaining a grasp of these tactics is essential for effective language acquisition in general, and for enhancing the acquisition of vocabulary and information in particular. As such, they ought to be included in curricula and educational programs (Ahmed, 2017). This indicates that in order to facilitate students' vocabulary acquisition more effectively, language teachers should include these practices into their lesson plans.

1.2.7 Factors Influencing Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Numerous studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategies have identified a variety of factors that contribute to diversity in learners' usage of VLS. Ellis's framework (1994) is among the studies that focused on the elements influencing students' VLS. His framework included the following three broad categories:

1.2.7.1 Learner Individual Difference Factors

Individual differences in the utilization of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs) are influenced by various factors. Belief plays a significant role, as evidenced by studies such as Gu and Johnson (1996) and Sixiang and Srikhao (2009), indicating that students' beliefs about language learning shape their strategy usage. However, Wei (2007) found conflicting results,

suggesting that beliefs might not always align with actual strategy use. Attitude also contributes to VLS usage, with research by Wei (2007) and Zhi-liang (2010) showing that positive attitudes toward language acquisition correlate with increased strategy utilization among Chinese students. Moreover, motivation plays a crucial role, as demonstrated by Fu (2003) and Marttinen (2008), who found that intrinsic motivation and overall motivation levels positively correlate with VLS usage. Additionally, language learning experience influences VLS use, as observed by Porte (1988), Stoffer (1995), and Siriwan (2007) indicating that prior experiences in language learning impact the frequency and variety of strategies employed. These findings collectively highlight the complex interplay of belief, attitude, motivation, and experience in shaping individuals' utilization of VLSs.

1.2.7.2 Social and Situational Factors

Social and situational factors significantly influence the use of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) among learners. These factors include the learners' field of study, course type, class level, gender, and the language learning environment (Gu & Johnson, 1996).

The field of study can affect VLS use due to the specific vocabulary demands and learning contexts associated with different academic disciplines (Cohen & Aphek, 1981). For instance, students in technical fields may require specialized terminology, prompting the adoption of distinct learning strategies compared to those in humanities disciplines.

Course type and class level also play significant roles in shaping VLS use. Learners in language-intensive courses or at advanced levels may employ more sophisticated and varied strategies to cope with the demands of their studies (Oxford, 1990).

Gender differences have been observed in the utilization of VLS, with some studies indicating that females tend to employ more diverse and systematic vocabulary learning strategies compared to males (Bialystok & Frohlich, 1980).

Additionally, the language learning environment profoundly influences VLS use.

Factors such as exposure to authentic language input, opportunities for interaction, and access to learning resources impact learners' engagement with vocabulary learning strategies (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

Understanding how social and situational factors intersect with VLS use is crucial for designing effective vocabulary instruction and supporting learners in diverse learning contexts.

1.2.8 Vocabulary knowledge

Vocabulary size is frequently used by researchers as a proxy for vocabulary expertise. The relationship between students' vocabulary size and their usage of VLS is supported by a large body of evidence. Tilfarlioglu and Bozgeyik's (2012) results, for instance, revealed that there was a positive correlation between a student's vocabulary size and VLS use. The results were in line with earlier studies by Ahmed (1989), Gu and Johnson (1996), Lawson and Hogben (1996), Fan (2003), Cusen (2005), Hamzah, Kalifpour, and Abdullah (2009), Kafipour, Yazdi, Soori and Shokrpour (2011), Komol and Sripetpun (2011), and Waldvogel (2011).

Conclusion

Overall, this chapter had tackled both vocabulary learning, and vocabulary learning strategies in two sections. The first section has dealt with defining vocabulary and highlighting its importance in language learning. Besides that, this section discussed the vocabulary and its relation with the four skills. The second section started by defining LLSs and their classification and characteristics then it discussed definition of VLSs and its taxonomies, significance and it concluded by the different factors that affect vocabulary learning strategies.

Chapter Two

Introduction

Assessing vocabulary acquisition strategies necessitates the collection of many sorts of information regarding the idea, as well as the practice that the learner should engage in to master it. In fact, Vocabulary learning strategies is —Knowledge about the mechanisms (processes) used in order to learn vocabulary as well as steps or actions taken by students (a) to find out the meaning of unknown words, (b) to retain them in long-term memory, (c) to recall them at will, and (d) to use them in oral or written model (Catalán, 2003). Students must apply what they have learned in class to real-life situations. They must also learn how to use various external sources and understand that the teacher is not the only resource and the sole source of knowledge but rather a guide, a collaborator and a good role model.

This chapter provides a practical framework for the current research. It seeks to collect all of the necessary data on students' awareness of vocabulary methods, as well as their significance and importance in the learning process. Throughout this chapter, we have analyzed the data collected from the students' questionnaires, taking into account our study questions and hypotheses.

2.1 Methodology

The choice of an appropriate research method is axiomatically important for producing credible research results; this is mostly determined by the type of research and the setting. The research methodology employed in this study is a case study with quantitative methods and one main instrument: the student questionnaire. Its primary objective is to focus on the concept of vocabulary techniques and students' existing attitudes towards it.

2.1.1 The Sample population

The students were requested to answer the questionnaire, in fact the Google drive form (online questionnaire) have helped us a lot to successfully reach to as large as possible

number of students and to effectively show the statistical analysis of the quantitative data of the students' questionnaire.

This questionnaire is an attempt to gather information needed for the accomplishment of a Master dissertation. It seeks to gather the perceptions and attitudes of 1st year English students at Mila university centre toward vocabulary learning strategies and its impact on their speaking proficiency. To conduct this study, we distributed a questionnaire to 80 firstyear students. These students were randomly chosen from a total population of around 242.

The questionnaire was administered during class time and collected immediately afterward.

2.1.2 Students' Profile:

The study's participants are first-year students at Mila University Centre's Foreign Languages Department. There were 80 students, which is estimated to be one-third of the total population. They were chosen to complete a questionnaire about their understanding of vocabulary learning tactics, specifically whether or not they use them. Because first-year Licence students are new to the LMD system, they were chosen as participants in this study with purpose. Furthermore, they are ready to begin acquiring new vocabulary, so they face greater hurdles and must put up more effort than second and third-year students.

2.1.3 Research Instruments: Questionnaire

The research instrument used in this study is a questionnaire for EFL learners, because vocabulary learning strategies is a process resulting from interdependence of learners. The questionnaire is adequately designed to meet certain goals, already planned by the researcher. It is basically a set of written questions that symbolize a definite inquiry sought after, in order to reach the participants' perspectives and standpoints. It is commonly regarded as the most used research instrument, since, it is easier to be designed and it gathers a large amount of data. As Dornyei (2003:101) pointed out : —the popularity of questionnaires is due to the fact

that they are relatively easy to construct, extremely versatile, and capable of gathering a large amount of information, quickly in a form that is readily possible. In addition, the questionnaire is an effective tool which allows the informants to answer freely and express their feelings and thoughts. Moreover, it helps to translate the research hypothesis into questions.

The students were requested to answer the questionnaire, in fact the Google drive form (online questionnaire) have helped us a lot to successfully reach to as large as possible number of students and to effectively show the statistical analysis of the quantitative data of the students' questionnaire.

The questionnaire is divided into five sections. Each section has specific aims. The first section which contains two questions aims at knowing the gender and the age of the participants. The second section aims at discovering students' level in the four skills and their experiences and qualifications in using the four skills. The third section aims at discovering learners' knowledge and perceptions towards vocabulary learning strategies. The fourth section deals with difficulties faced by the participants when learning vocabulary. The fifth section is entitled —solutions to the difficulties of learning vocabulary‖ and it suggests solution to difficulties that learners face during the process of learning new vocabularies.

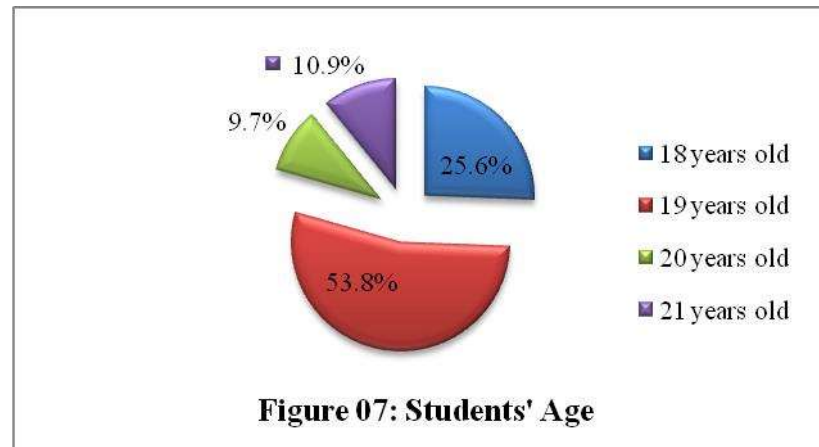
2.1.4 Time and Place Settings

The Study has taken place at Mila University Centre during 2023/2024 academic year.

2.2 Results of the Study

Section One: Personal Information Q01:

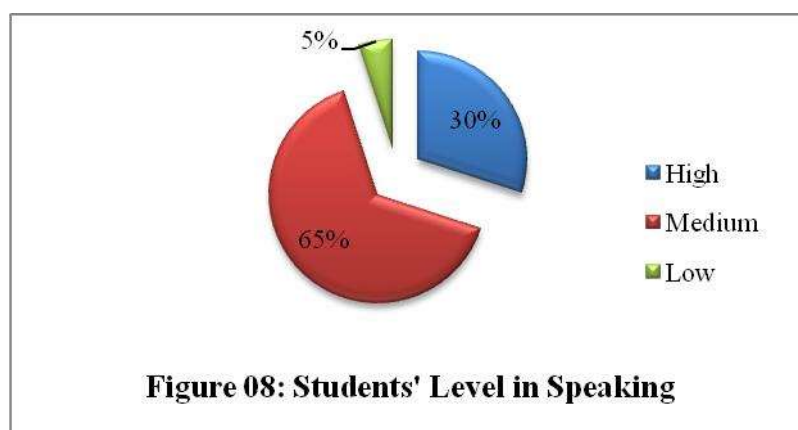
. Q2: What is your age?



The responses to the question regarding age distribution reveal that 25.6% of the participants are 18 years old, while the majority, constituting 53.8% are 19 years old. Additionally, 9.7% of respondents are 20 years old, and 10.9% are 21 years old.

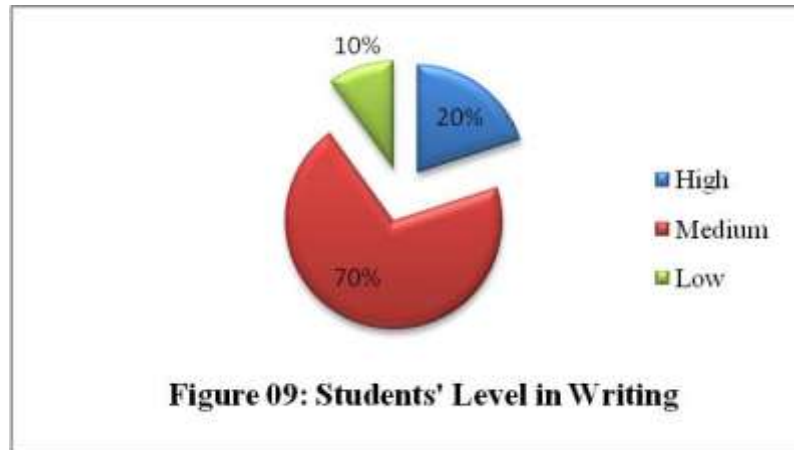
Section Two: Mastery of the Four Skills

Q1: How do you master the four language skills?

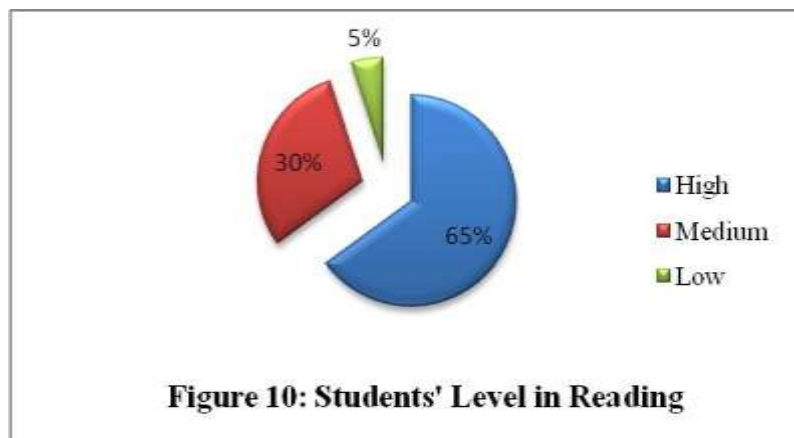


In response to the question concerning proficiency in mastering the speaking skill, the data shows that 30% of respondents rated themselves as having a high level of

proficiency, while the majority, comprising 65%, considered their proficiency level to be medium. Additionally, 5% of participants rated their proficiency level as low.

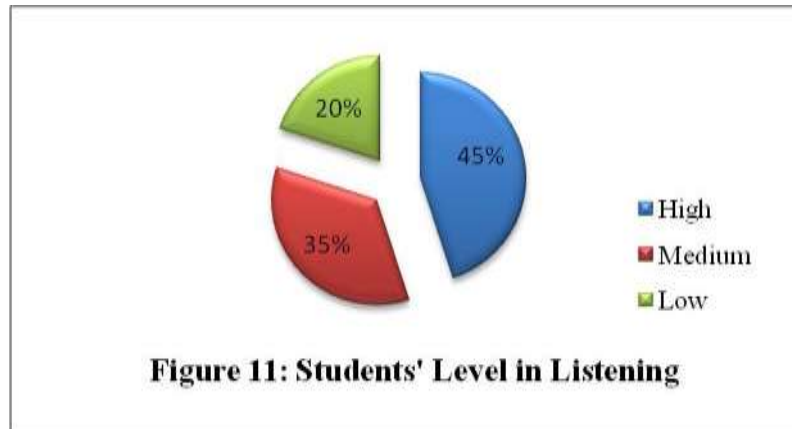


In response to the inquiry about proficiency in mastering writing skills, the data reveals that 20% of respondents rated their proficiency level as high, while the majority, comprising 70%, considered their proficiency to be at a medium level. Additionally, 10% of participants rated their proficiency level as low.



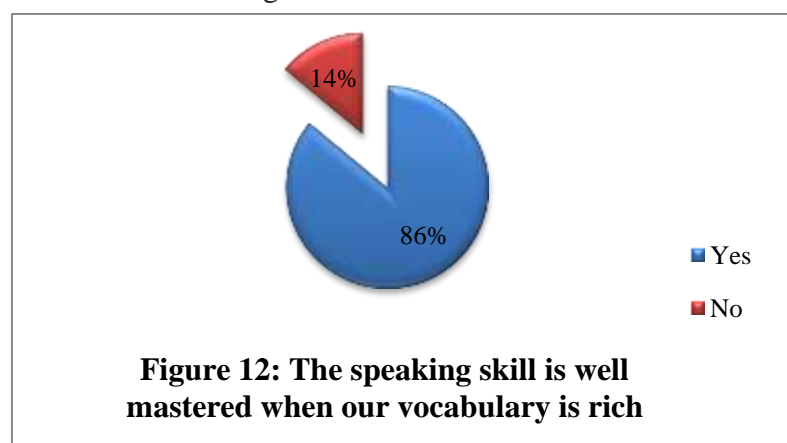
In response to the question regarding proficiency in mastering reading skills, the data indicates that 65% of respondents rated their proficiency level as high, signifying a strong level of competence. Meanwhile, 30% considered their proficiency to be at a medium level,

suggesting a moderate level of skill. Only 5% of participants rated their proficiency level as low, indicating a smaller proportion with perceived weaker skills in reading.

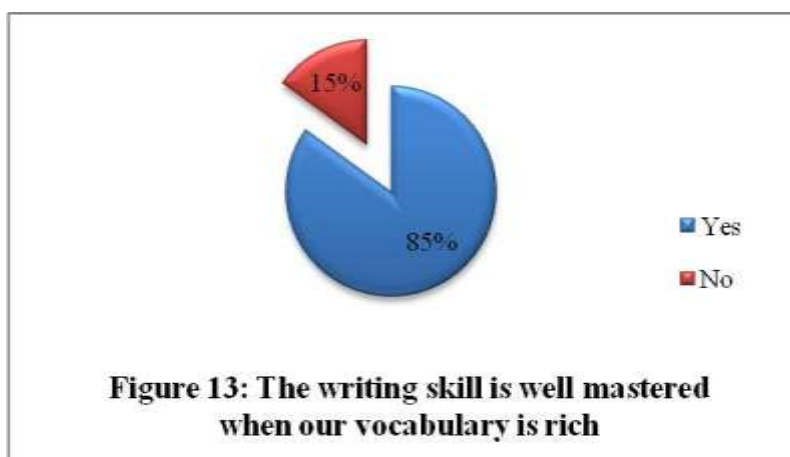


In response to the question regarding proficiency in mastering listening skills, the data reveals that 45% of respondents rated their proficiency level as high, indicating a strong ability to comprehend spoken language. Meanwhile, 35% considered their proficiency to be at a medium level, suggesting a moderate level of skill in listening. A smaller proportion, 20%, rated their proficiency level as low, indicating a perceived weaker ability in listening comprehension.

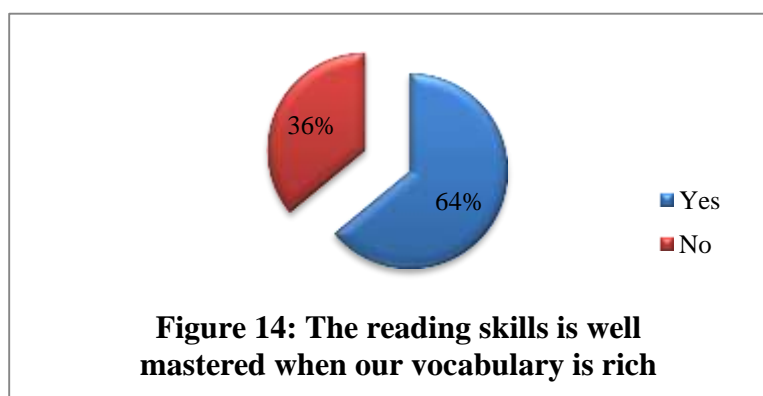
Q2: Do you agree with the following statements?



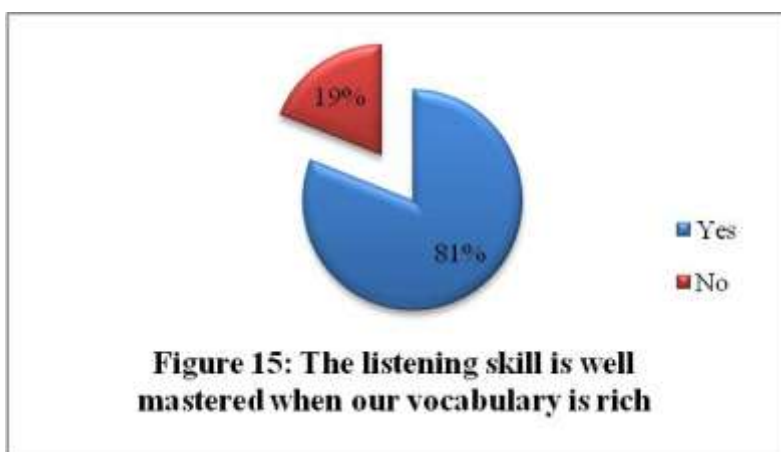
In response to the question regarding agreement with the statement "The speaking skill is well mastered when our vocabulary is rich," the data indicates that 86% of respondents agreed with the statement, while 14% disagreed. This overwhelming majority agreement suggests a strong belief among first-year students that having a rich vocabulary contributes significantly to mastering the speaking skill.



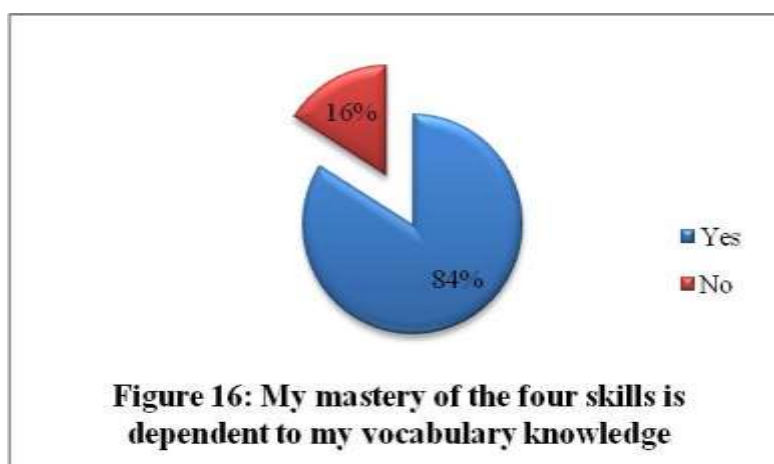
In response to the query concerning agreement with the statement "The writing skill is well mastered when our vocabulary is rich," the data reveals that 85% of respondents agreed with the statement, while 15% disagreed. This substantial agreement indicates a prevalent belief among first-year students that possessing a broad vocabulary is crucial for mastering the writing skill effectively.



In response to the inquiry about agreement with the statement "The reading skill is well mastered when our vocabulary is rich," the data indicates that 64% of respondents agreed with the statement, while 36% disagreed. This distribution suggests a notable but not overwhelming majority belief among first-year students that a rich vocabulary contributes significantly to mastering the reading skill.

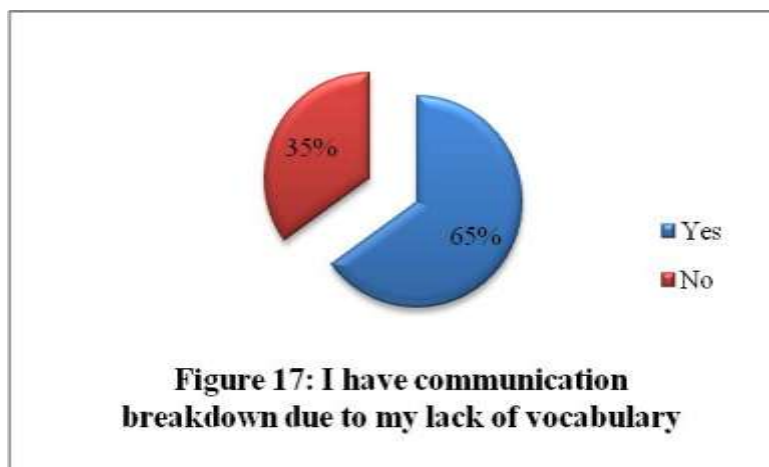


In response to the question regarding agreement with the statement "The listening skill is well mastered when our vocabulary is rich," the data indicates that 81% of respondents agreed with the statement, while 19% disagreed.



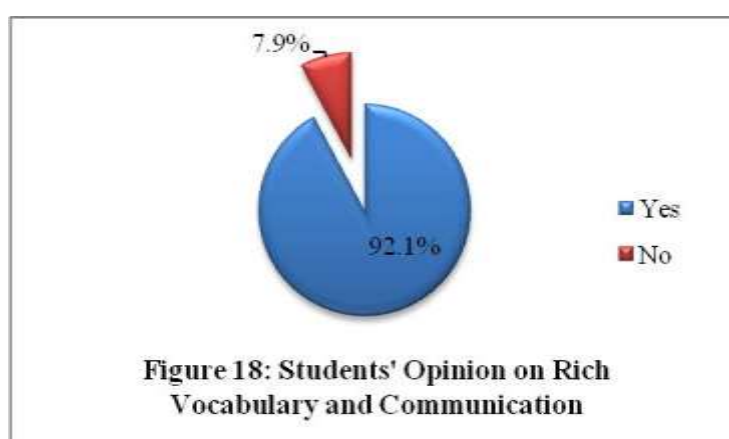
In response to the assertion "My mastery of the four skills is dependent on my vocabulary knowledge," the data shows that 84% of respondents agreed with the statement, while 16% disagreed. This overwhelming majority agreement underscores a prevalent belief

among first-year students that vocabulary knowledge significantly influences their proficiency across all language skills.



Regarding the assertion "I have communication breakdowns due to my lack of vocabulary," the data reveals that 65% of respondents agreed with the statement, while 35% disagreed. This indicates a notable majority belief among first-year students that inadequate vocabulary contributes to communication breakdowns.

Q3: Do you think that having a rich vocabulary leads to successful written and spoken communication?

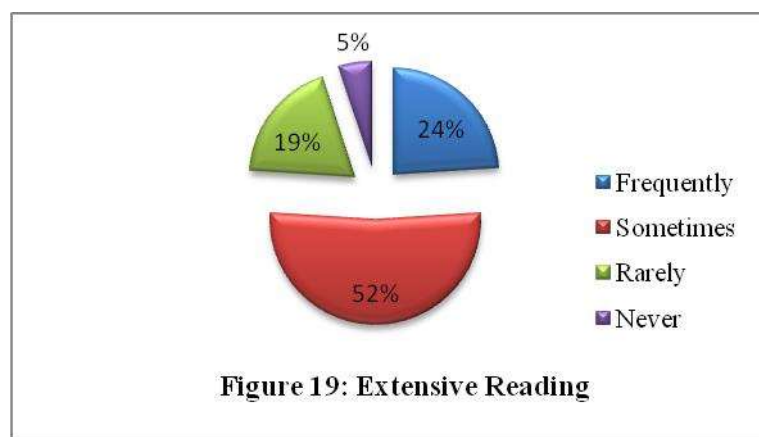


Regarding the consideration that "having a rich vocabulary leads to successful written and spoken communication," the data demonstrates a significant majority consensus,

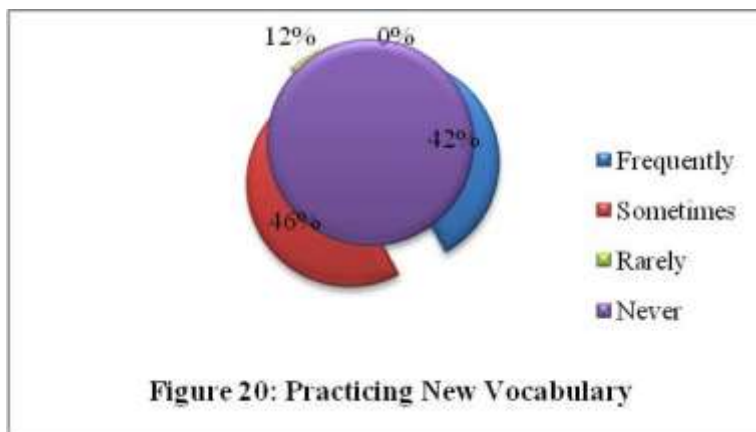
with 92.1% of respondents agreeing with the statement, while 7.9% disagreed. This overwhelming agreement suggests a widespread belief among first-year students that vocabulary richness plays a crucial role in facilitating successful communication, both in written and spoken forms.

Section Three: Vocabulary Learning Strategies used by Participants

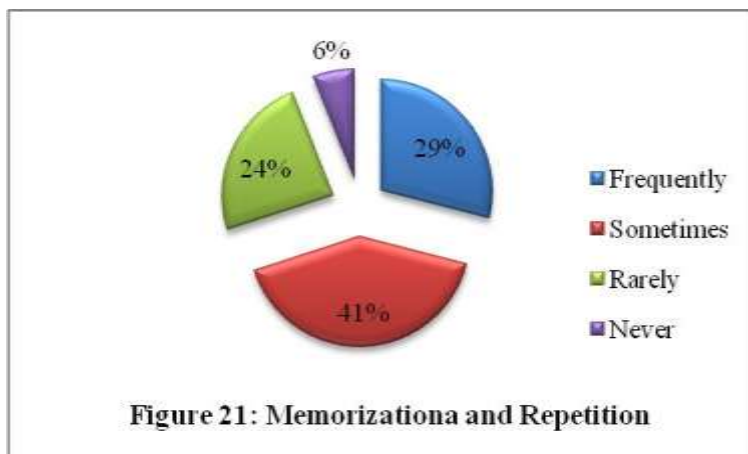
Q1: How often do you use the following vocabulary learning strategies?



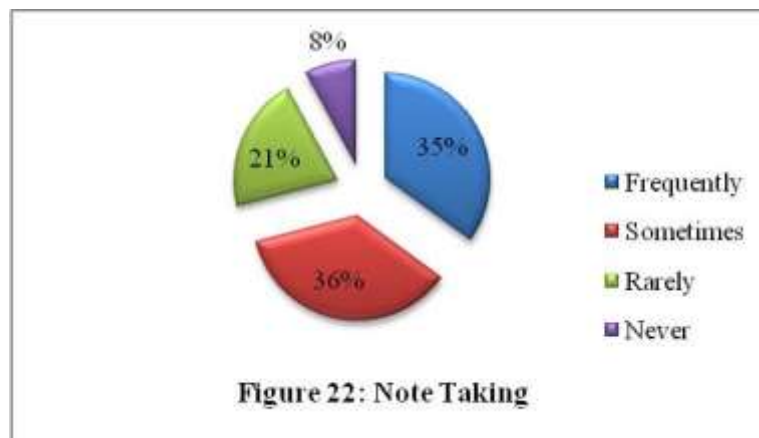
In examining the utilization of the extensive reading strategy among respondents, the data illustrates a spectrum of engagement levels. Approximately 24% reported frequent utilization, suggesting consistent incorporation of extensive reading into their vocabulary acquisition practices. A majority, constituting 52%, indicated occasional use, implying periodic engagement depending on contextual factors or personal preferences. Meanwhile, 19% reported rare usage, indicating infrequent integration of extensive reading into their learning routines. Additionally, 5% stated never utilizing this strategy, suggesting a lack of engagement or familiarity with extensive reading as a vocabulary learning method.



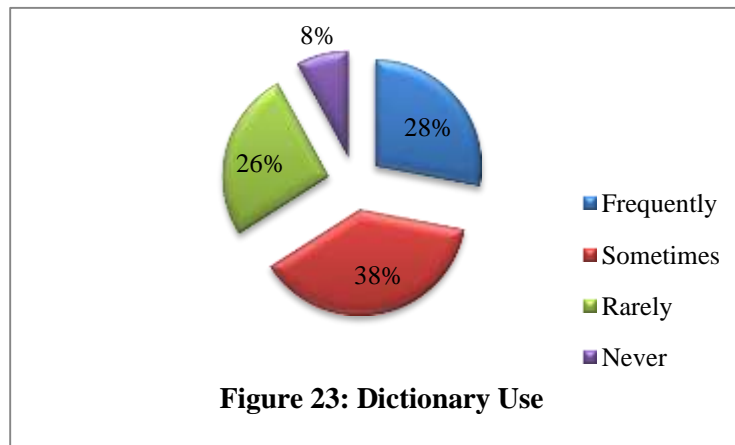
Analysing the utilization of practicing new vocabulary as a learning strategy, the data reveals robust engagement levels among respondents. A substantial 42% reported frequent usage, indicating a strong integration of vocabulary practice into their learning routines. Additionally, a significant proportion of 46% indicated occasional utilization, suggesting that they engage in vocabulary practice regularly but with some variation based on contextual factors. A smaller but notable 12% reported rare usage, implying that they infrequently incorporate vocabulary practice into their learning activities. Remarkably, none of the respondents indicated never practicing new vocabulary, signalling a unanimous acknowledgment of the importance of this strategy.



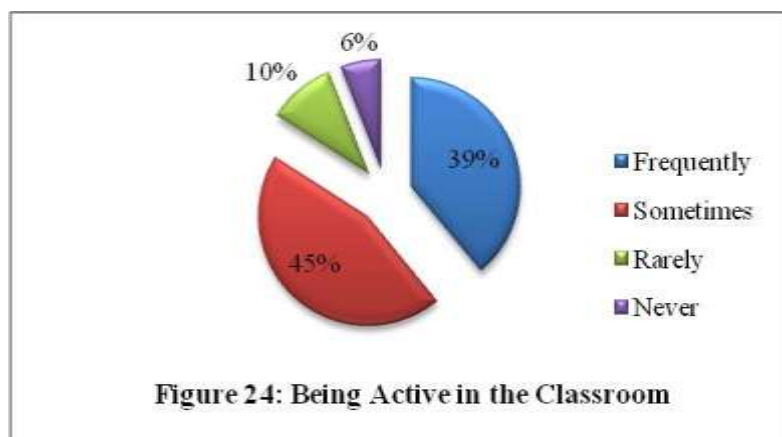
In analysing the usage of memorization and repetition as vocabulary learning strategies, the data showcases diverse levels of engagement among respondents. Approximately 29% reported frequent utilization, indicating a consistent incorporation of memorization and repetition into their learning routines. A larger proportion, comprising 41%, indicated occasional usage, suggesting that they employ these strategies intermittently, possibly depending on the complexity of the vocabulary or their learning objectives. Meanwhile, 24% reported rare usage, implying that they infrequently rely on memorization and repetition as primary learning methods. Additionally, 6% stated that they never employ these strategies, indicating a preference for alternative approaches or a belief that memorization and repetition are not effective for their learning style.



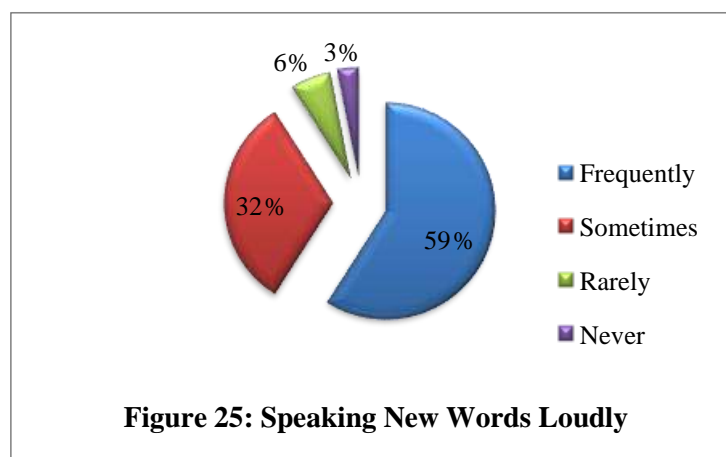
Examining the utilization of note-taking as a vocabulary learning strategy, the data presents a range of engagement levels among respondents. Approximately 35% reported frequent usage, indicating a consistent integration of note-taking into their vocabulary learning practices. Another significant portion, comprising 36%, indicated occasional utilization, suggesting that they employ note-taking intermittently, possibly depending on the complexity of the vocabulary or the learning context. Meanwhile, 21% reported rare usage, implying that they infrequently rely on note-taking as a primary learning method for vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, 8% stated that they never engage in note-taking for vocabulary learning, suggesting either a preference for alternative methods or a belief that note-taking is not effective for their learning style.



In examining the use of dictionaries as a vocabulary learning strategy, the data reveals a range of engagement levels among respondents. Approximately 28% reported frequent usage, indicating a consistent reliance on dictionaries as a resource for vocabulary acquisition. Another significant portion, comprising 38%, indicated occasional utilization, suggesting that they consult dictionaries intermittently, possibly when encountering unfamiliar words or needing clarification. Meanwhile, 26% reported rare usage, implying that they infrequently rely on dictionaries for vocabulary learning. Additionally, 8% stated that they never use dictionaries, indicating a preference for alternative methods or a belief that dictionary use is not effective for their learning style.

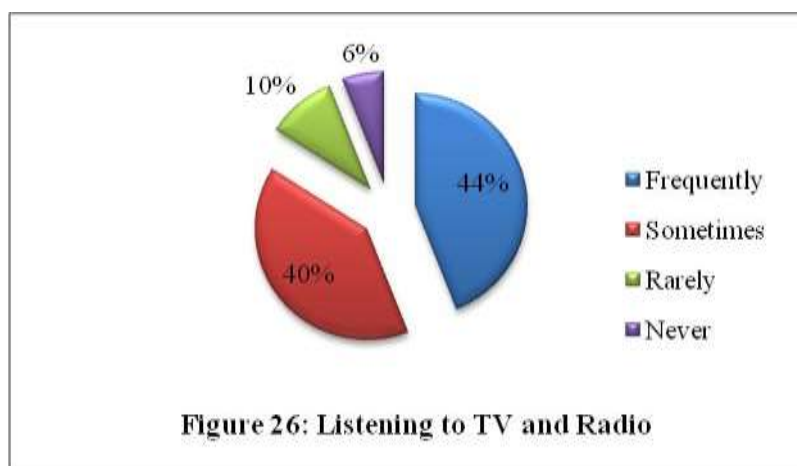


In assessing the level of classroom engagement as a vocabulary learning strategy, the data indicates varying degrees of participation among respondents. Approximately 39% reported frequent involvement, suggesting active participation in classroom activities aimed at vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, a substantial portion, comprising 45%, indicated occasional participation, implying engagement with classroom activities related to vocabulary learning but with some variability in frequency. A smaller proportion, constituting 10%, reported rare participation, indicating infrequent involvement in classroom-based vocabulary learning activities. Moreover, 6% stated that they never actively participate in classroom activities related to vocabulary acquisition, suggesting a preference for alternative learning methods or a lack of perceived effectiveness in classroom engagement for their learning style.



In evaluating the practice of speaking new words aloud as a vocabulary learning strategy, the data reflects a strong level of engagement among respondents. Approximately 59% reported frequent utilization, indicating a consistent integration of speaking new words loudly into their vocabulary learning routines. Additionally, 32% indicated occasional usage, suggesting that they engage in this practice periodically, possibly to reinforce retention or pronunciation of new vocabulary. A smaller proportion, comprising 6%, reported rare usage,

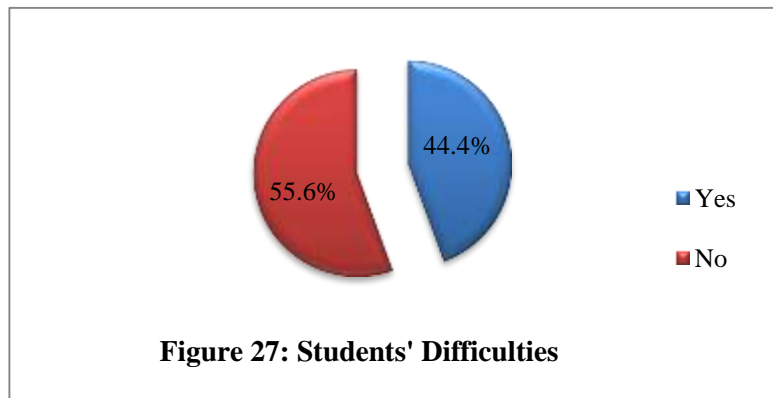
implying infrequent incorporation of this strategy into their learning activities. Moreover, 3% stated that they never speak new words aloud, suggesting a preference for alternative methods or a belief that speaking new words loudly is not effective for their learning style.



Analysing the practice of listening to TV and radio as a vocabulary learning strategy, the data reveals a notable level of engagement among respondents. Approximately 44% reported frequent utilization, indicating a consistent integration of TV and radio listening into their vocabulary learning routines. Additionally, 40% indicated occasional usage, suggesting that they engage in this practice periodically, possibly to expose themselves to a variety of language contexts and vocabulary usage. A smaller but still significant proportion, comprising 10%, reported rare usage, implying infrequent incorporation of this strategy into their vocabulary acquisition efforts. Moreover, 6% stated that they never listen to TV and radio for vocabulary learning purposes, indicating a preference for alternative methods or a belief that this approach is not effective for their learning style.

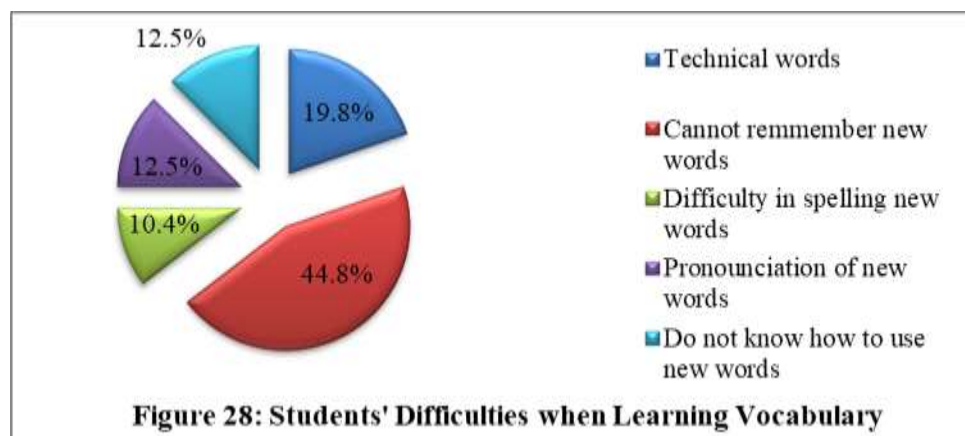
Section Four: Difficulties Faced by Participants when Learning Vocabulary Q1:

Do you face difficulties when you learn vocabulary?



In response to the query about encountering difficulties when learning vocabulary, the data demonstrates that 44.4% of respondents answered affirmatively, indicating that they face challenges in vocabulary acquisition. Conversely, the majority, comprising 55.6%, answered negatively, suggesting that they do not encounter significant difficulties in learning new vocabulary. Understanding the prevalence of challenges in vocabulary learning is essential for educators to provide targeted support and interventions to address students' specific needs and enhance their vocabulary acquisition strategies effectively. Additionally, recognizing the proportion of students who do not face difficulties highlights the importance of acknowledging individual differences in learning experiences and tailoring instruction accordingly to promote successful vocabulary learning outcomes for all students.

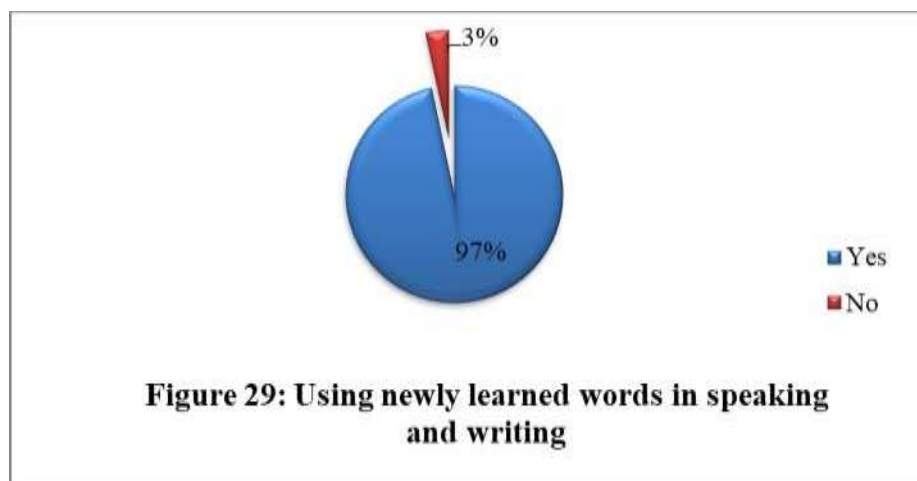
Q02: Choose from the list below the difficulties that you may find when learning vocabulary:



In the survey question presented to the first-year students regarding difficulties in learning vocabulary, several key insights can be gleaned from the responses. The highest reported challenge, with 44.8% of respondents selecting it, was the struggle to remember new words—an issue that can significantly impede language acquisition and communication. This underscores the importance of effective memory retention strategies in vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, technical words presented a notable challenge for 19.8% of participants, highlighting the specialized knowledge domains that students may encounter in their studies. Pronunciation and usage difficulties were cited by 12.5% of respondents each, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of vocabulary acquisition beyond mere memorization, encompassing pronunciation practice and contextual understanding. Meanwhile, the challenge of spelling new words, selected by 10.4% of participants, showcases the orthographic aspect of language learning, which is crucial for written communication.

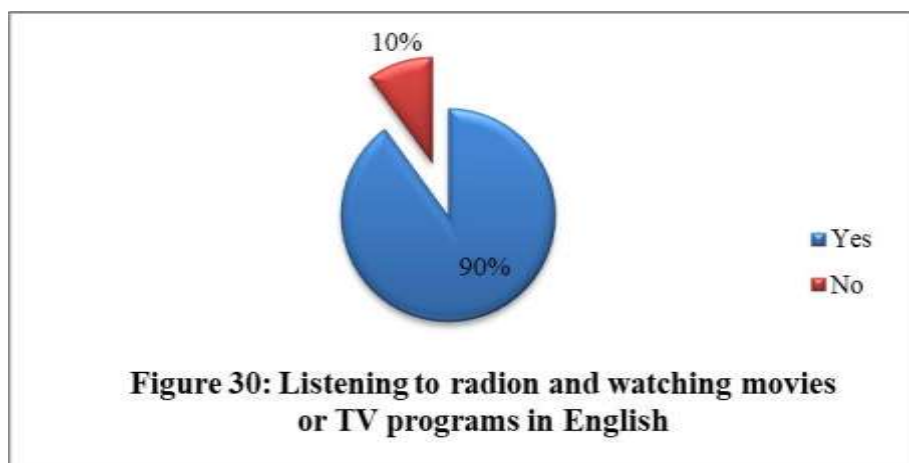
Section Five: Solutions to the Difficulties of Vocabulary Learning

Q01: Do you consider the following suggestions as solutions to difficulties of learning vocabulary?

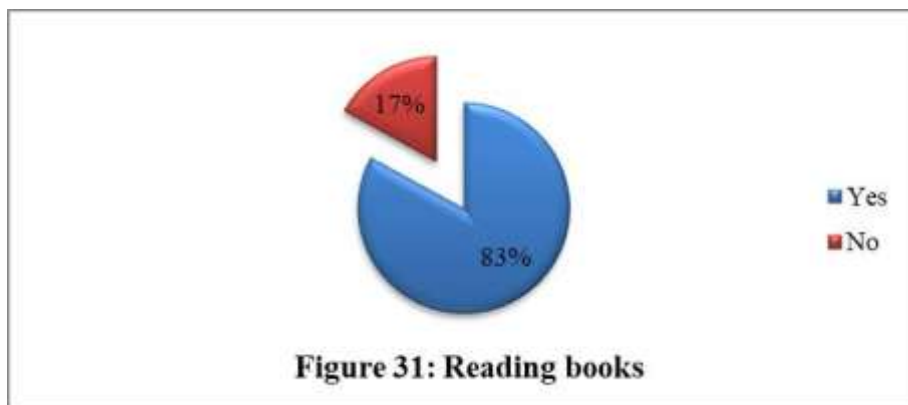


With 97% of first-year students affirming the effectiveness of using newly learned words in speaking and writing as solutions to difficulties in learning vocabulary, and only 3%

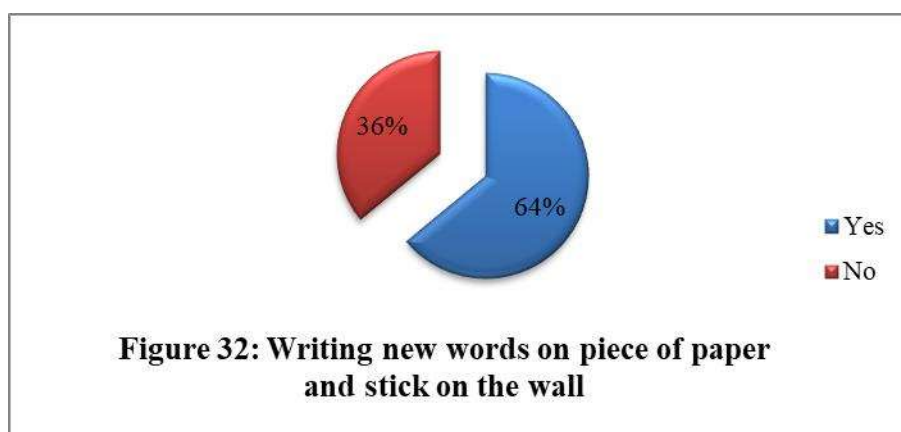
expressing dissent, it's evident that the overwhelming majority perceive this strategy as highly beneficial. This resounding agreement underscores the widely held belief among students that active usage of newly acquired vocabulary is crucial for solidifying learning and enhancing retention.



With 90% of first-year students affirming the effectiveness of listening to radio and watching movies or TV programs in English as solutions to difficulties in learning vocabulary, and 10% expressing dissent, there exists a strong consensus regarding the perceived benefits of this strategy. The overwhelming majority endorsing this approach suggests a widespread recognition among students of the value of immersive language exposure in authentic contexts. This result underscores the importance of incorporating multimedia resources into language learning curricula to provide students with opportunities for real-world language exposure and contextual understanding.

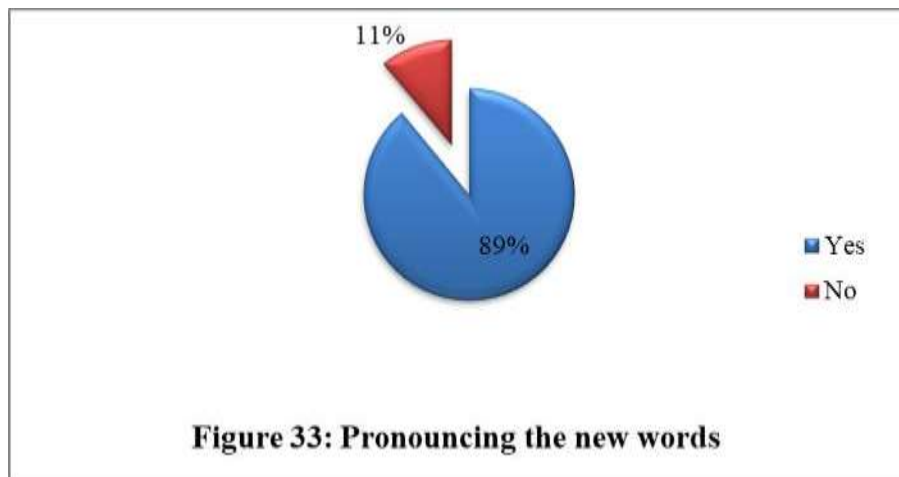


With 83% of first-year students affirming the effectiveness of reading books as a solution to difficulties in learning vocabulary, and 17% expressing dissent, there exists a notable but still substantial consensus regarding the perceived benefits of this strategy. The majority endorsing this approach suggests recognition among students of the importance of extensive reading for vocabulary acquisition and language proficiency development. This result underscores the pedagogical significance of promoting independent reading habits among language learners to enhance their exposure to diverse vocabulary in context.



With 64% of first-year students affirming the effectiveness of writing new words on a piece of paper and sticking them on the wall as a solution to difficulties in learning vocabulary, and 36% expressing dissent, there's a notable divergence in opinion regarding the efficacy of this strategy. While a significant portion of students support this approach, the

relatively high percentage of dissenting responses suggests a lack of consensus among the student population. The majority endorsing this method indicates recognition among students of the potential benefits of visual reinforcement and repeated exposure in aiding vocabulary retention.



With 89% of first-year students affirming the effectiveness of pronouncing new words as a solution to difficulties in learning vocabulary, and 11% expressing dissent, there's a strong consensus among the majority of students regarding the efficacy of this strategy. The overwhelming endorsement of this approach suggests a widespread recognition among students of the importance of phonetic practice in vocabulary acquisition and language proficiency development. This result underscores the pedagogical significance of incorporating pronunciation activities into vocabulary learning instruction to facilitate accurate and fluent spoken language production.

2.3 Discussions and Interpretations of the Results

Through the different sections of the Questionnaire, various results have been revealed which lead to make various discussions and interpretations related to the subject of vocabulary learning strategies.

The dominant gender of this case study is the female one (87.1%). This gender analysis in research is essential for understanding potential gender-related nuances in attitudes toward vocabulary learning strategies, ensuring a comprehensive examination of the topic. As for the age of the participants, it ranges between 18 and 21 years old with a majority for 19 years old which indicates that these participants are in the typical age range for first-year students in higher education.

The results reveal that the speaking and writing skills are mastered at a medium level by the majority of the participants 65% and 70% respectively. This distribution suggests that a significant portion of first-year students perceive themselves to have a moderate proficiency level in speaking and writing. This might imply that understanding self-perceived proficiency levels in specific language skills such as speaking is crucial for tailoring vocabulary learning strategies to address students' perceived strengths and weaknesses effectively.

Concerning the reading and listening skills, the results demonstrate that the participants have a higher mastery of them compared to speaking and writing (see results figures 10 and 11). This suggests that the majority of the participants perceive themselves as having a high level of proficiency in reading, which is a fundamental skill for effective vocabulary acquisition and comprehension. This leads and helps course designers and teachers while tailoring vocabulary learning strategies to build upon students' existing strengths and address any perceived areas for improvement effectively.

Regarding the awareness of the participants about the relationship of having a rich vocabulary and mastering the four skills, the results indicate that the majority affirmed that rich vocabulary knowledge leads to the mastery of speaking, writing, reading and listening. Therefore a dependency relationship is constituted between mastering the four language skills and vocabulary knowledge. This dependency relationship is confirmed by the results (figure 17) where 65% of the participants confirmed that their communication breakdowns are due to their lack of vocabulary. By acknowledging the perceived impact of vocabulary on communication breakdowns, educators can tailor interventions to help students overcome these obstacles and foster more effective communication skills.

This section has dealt with vocabulary learning strategies. The results reveal that extensive reading is not the choice of the majority of the participants; it is rather the choice of only 24% of the research population. Understanding the distribution of usage frequency for extensive reading provides valuable insights into students' preferences and habits regarding vocabulary acquisition, aiding educators in designing targeted interventions to promote more effective vocabulary learning strategies.

Regarding practicing new vocabulary as a learning vocabulary, the results indicate that this strategy is more used than extensive reading because a mixed proportion of 88% of the participants adopt this strategy frequently and occasionally. This distribution underscores the widespread recognition among students of the efficacy of practicing new vocabulary for effective language acquisition. Understanding such high levels of engagement emphasizes the significance of tailored interventions to further enhance vocabulary learning strategies and maximize language proficiency outcomes.

Memorization as a vocabulary learning strategy is occasionally used by the majority of the participants. This helps teachers while teaching and explaining vocabulary to adopt other

vocabulary learning strategies that are more used and preferred by these participants in order to enhance their mastery of vocabulary items is quick time.

As for note taking as a vocabulary learning strategy, a mixed proportion of 71% use this strategy frequently and occasionally in learning vocabulary. This strategy should be given importance by teachers who should not ignore this preference for the purposes of enriching vocabulary items of the participants. Understanding the distribution of usage frequency for note-taking underscores the varied approaches students take toward vocabulary acquisition, emphasizing the importance of offering diverse learning opportunities to accommodate individual preferences and optimize learning outcomes.

In examining the use of dictionaries as a vocabulary learning strategy, the data reveals a varied range of engagement levels among respondents. 28% frequently use dictionary, 38%, occasionally use it, 26% rarely use it and 8% never use dictionaries. This distribution can be understood as warning sign towards achieving the goal of vocabulary acquisition. In fact dictionary use has always been considered as one of the most effective vocabulary learning strategies and a practice that should be maintained by language learners.

In probing the level of classroom engagement as a vocabulary learning strategy, the data indicates varying degrees of participation among respondents. 39% reported having active participation in classroom activities, 45%, having occasional participation, 10% reported rare participation, indicating a low involvement in classroom-based vocabulary and 6% stated that they never actively participate in classroom activities related to vocabulary acquisition, suggesting a preference for alternative learning methods or a lack of perceived effectiveness in classroom engagement for their learning style. Understanding the distribution of participation frequency underscores the importance of fostering an inclusive and interactive classroom environment to enhance learning preferences and optimize vocabulary learning outcomes.

Regarding the other strategies used by the participants to enhance their vocabulary acquisition, the data reveal speaking new words loudly and listening to TV and Radio appear among the preferred strategies. However the degree of preference is different from one proportion to another (see results figures 25 and 26). This implies that learners should be encouraged by their teachers to use various strategies in fostering their vocabulary mastery and acquisition.

The results indicate that approximately 55% do not face difficulties when Learning Vocabulary whereas approximately 44% do. Therefore, understanding the prevalence of challenges in vocabulary learning is essential for educators to provide targeted support and interventions to address students' specific needs and enhance their vocabulary acquisition strategies effectively. Additionally, recognizing the proportion of students who do not face difficulties highlights the importance of acknowledging individual differences in learning experiences and tailoring instruction accordingly in order to promote successful vocabulary learning outcomes for all students.

As far as the difficulties of learning vocabulary as concerned, the results indicate that the participants suffer mainly from forgetting new learned vocabulary. They face challenges as well in learning technical words, in pronunciation of new words and in spelling them. Henceforth, understanding these diverse challenges can lead to targeted interventions to support students in overcoming obstacles and enhancing their vocabulary acquisition skills effectively.

This section has dealt with suggested solutions to difficulties of learning vocabulary where results have indicated that the majority of participants agree that the following measures can lead to alleviate their difficulties:

- Using newly learned words in speaking and writing
- Listening to radio and watching movies or TV programs in English
- Reading books
- Writing new words on a piece of paper and sticking them on the wall
- Pronouncing new words

Therefore, learners should be encouraged to use these techniques that they find useful in overcoming difficulties in vocabulary learning. This encouragement might imply a higher level of motivation because learners in this case are not obliged to follow a given technique imposed by another part.

2.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

2.4.1 Conclusions of the Study

The findings of the study can lead to consider that the research questions have been answered.

As for the 1st research question which is: Do the participants use vocabulary learning strategies? What is the effect of using VLSs on participants' performance?

The different answers and findings confirm the importance of using vocabulary learning strategies and that students' performance is affected by the use of those strategies. In fact the results have indicated that the participants are highly aware of the relationship between having a rich vocabulary and mastering the four skills. They have confirmed the dependency relationship between mastering the four language skills and vocabulary knowledge by acknowledging the perceived impact of vocabulary on communication breakdowns.

Regarding the 2nd research question which is: Do the participants face difficulties and challenges when learning vocabulary? What are the possible solutions to these difficulties and challenges?

Forgetting new learned vocabulary, technical words, pronunciation of new words and spelling them have been confirmed by the participants as hampers in vocabulary learning. As a possible solution to these difficulties and challenges the findings have revealed that using newly learned words in speaking and writing, listening to radio and watching movies or TV programs in English Reading books can be considered as solutions to enhance the participants' vocabulary learning and acquisition.

Regarding the 3rd research question which is: Do the participants have their own preferences in learning vocabulary?

The findings of the study have revealed that the participants use various strategies and techniques in learning vocabulary. However there are varied preferences among the participants as for the use of those strategies. The following strategies are the most used ones:

- Practicing new vocabulary
- Memorization
- Note taking
- Speaking new words loudly
- Listening to TV and Radio appear

2.4.2 Recommendations of the Study

The outcomes of this study can lead to suggest various recommendations to participants related to vocabulary learning strategies such as:

- ❖ Students ought to be more conscious of their language requirements, since this will encourage them to use VLSs that meet those needs and advance their language proficiency.
- ❖ Having knowledge of VLSs is important for students since it makes them better presenters.
- ❖ It is strongly recommended that participants should practice more reading outside the classroom in order to enrich their vocabulary. They have to practice as well listening to native speakers to enhance their understanding and pronunciation skills.
- ❖ To help students utilize these strategies effectively, teachers must clearly teach them about VLSs.
- ❖ Teachers should support the engagement of students in class by using authentic material which is relevant to their needs and motivation.

- ❖ Vocabulary learning should be given importance by teachers the same way that other linguistic components.
- ❖ To increase awareness of the usage of VLS, the English Department at Abdelhafid Boussouf University Center should dedicate a specific session in the curriculum for teaching vocabulary.

General Conclusion

Vocabulary proficiency holds a crucial position within the landscape of language education, serving as a cornerstone for both general language acquisition and more targeted improvements, such as enhancing the mastery of the four language skills. This study has investigated how 1st year students of English at Mila University Center learn vocabulary. It has investigated what are the different strategies and techniques the participants use in learning vocabulary. The study has focused on the difficulties and challenges that the participants encounter when learning vocabulary.

In order to cover the different items related to this investigation, this dissertation has been divided to two parts; a theoretical part and a fieldwork part. The theoretical part is composed of two sections in which we have discussed two main scopes; vocabulary and vocabulary learning strategies. Both sections present different definitions, elements, types, importance, classifications, and specific terminologies related to the subject of the study. The fieldwork part included the methodology, results of study, discussions and interpretations of the results and conclusions and recommendations.

Using Vocabulary Learning Strategies improves students' language skills and mastery and acquisition of English language. Henceforth, confirming this research hypothesis throughout the analysis and interpretations of the results of the study.

Vocabulary knowledge plays a pivotal role in language education, underpinning not only general language acquisition but also targeted enhancements of their four language skills. Moreover, the utilization of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs) emerges as a catalyst in this process, facilitating learners' transition towards independence and selfdirection. This empowerment enables students to assume greater responsibility for their

education, leading to an expansion of their vocabulary repertoire and a notable enhancement to their mastery and acquisition of English language and therefore, enabling students to be successful communicators inside the classroom and outside it.

This research has investigated how 1st year students of Mila University Center learn vocabulary and what are the different vocabulary learning strategies and techniques used by the participants. It can be stated that the different research aspects related to vocabulary learning and the use of VLSs cannot be all covered in a master's dissertation research. It requires rather various and deep studies to attain reliable results. Henceforth, the research in this area should continue to cover the other areas related to Vocabulary Learning Strategies.

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Appendices

Students' Questionnaire

Dear Participants,

In order to conduct our master's research, you are kindly requested to answer this questionnaire. We are thankful to your collaboration and devotion and be assured that the collected data will only be used for study and research purpose.

Section 1: Personal Information

1- What is your age?

.....

Section 2: Mastery of the Four Skills

1- How do you master the four language skills?

	High		Medium	Low
○ Speaking ○	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Writing ○	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Reading ○	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Listening	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

2- Do you agree with the following statements?

- a- The speaking skill is well mastered when our vocabulary is rich Yes No
- b- The writing skill is well mastered when our vocabulary is rich Yes No
- c- The reading skill is well mastered when our vocabulary is rich Yes No
- d- The listening skill is well mastered when our vocabulary is rich Yes No
- e- My mastery of the four skills is dependent to my vocabulary Yes No
- f- I have communication breakdowns due to my lack of vocabulary Yes No

3- Do you consider that having a rich vocabulary leads to successful written and spoken communication?

Yes No

Please justify:
.....

Section 3: Vocabulary Learning Strategies used by Participants

1- How do you use the following vocabulary learning strategies?

- a-Extensive Reading Frequently Sometimes Rarely Never
- b-Practicing new vocabulary Frequently Sometimes Rarely Never
- c-Memorization and repetition Frequently Sometimes Rarely Never
- d- Note taking Frequently Sometimes Rarely Never
- e-Dictionary use: Frequently Sometimes Rarely Never
- f-Being active in the classroom Frequently Sometimes Rarely Never
- g-Speaking new words loudly Frequently Sometimes Rarely Never
- h-Listening to TV and Radio Frequently Sometimes Rarely Never

2- Please mention other strategies that you use when learning vocabulary?

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Section 3: Difficulties faced by participants when learning vocabulary

1- Do you face difficulties when you learn vocabulary? Yes No

2- Can you mention the difficulties that you face when you learn vocabulary?

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3- Choose from the list below the difficulties that you may find when learning vocabulary?

- Technical words
-
-
-
-

Cannot remember new words

Difficulty in spelling new words

Pronunciation of new words

Do not know how to use new words

4- How do you deal with the difficulties that you face when learning vocabulary?

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Section 4: Solutions to the difficulties of learning vocabulary

1- Do you consider the following suggestions as solutions to difficulties of learning vocabulary:

a-Using newly learned words in speaking and writing Yes No b-

Listening to radio and watch movies or TV programs in English Yes No

c-Reading books Yes No

d-Writing new words on a piece of paper and stick it on the wall Yes No e

Pronouncing the new words Yes

2- What can you suggest as other solutions to difficulties of learning vocabulary?

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Thank you for your collaboration

Résumé

La connaissance du vocabulaire est cruciale pour communiquer dans une langue étrangère. Les chercheurs ont classé une variété de stratégies d'apprentissage du vocabulaire aidant les étudiants en langues étrangères à élargir leurs connaissances lexicales et à améliorer leurs capacités d'expression orale, d'écriture et de compréhension. L'objectif de la présente

étude est de découvrir comment les étudiants de 1ère année d'anglais au Centre universitaire de Mila apprennent le vocabulaire et quelles sont les différentes stratégies et techniques utilisées par les participants pour acquérir le vocabulaire. Pour mener l'enquête, un questionnaire a été utilisé comme outil de recherche. Les participants à l'étude sont 80 étudiants de première année choisis au hasard parmi une population totale de 242 étudiants. Les résultats de l'étude ont révélé que les participants utilisent diverses stratégies et techniques d'apprentissage et d'acquisition du vocabulaire, telles que la prise de notes et l'utilisation d'un dictionnaire. Les résultats ont également révélé que ces participants trouvent des difficultés et à des défis lors de l'apprentissage du vocabulaire notamment avec la terminologie technique et la prononciation.

Mots clés : stratégies d'apprentissage du vocabulaire, acquisition du vocabulaire, anglais comme langue étrangère, quatre compétences linguistiques.

المخلص

هعرفت الوفرداٲ أهر بالؒ الأهويت للخصاصل بلغت أجببت. قام الأكاديويني بخصنً يف هجوبعت هخنعت هي اسخراحيجاٲاٲ

حعلن الوفرداٲ الخي حذن طلاب اللغات الأؒببت في حسبع هعرفخهن الوعجوبت وحصبي قذراحن في الخذن والكخابت والفهن .

الهدف هي الدراسة الحالية هي هعرفت كيف يخعلن طلاب السنّ الأولى هي اللغت الإّجليزية في هرکز جاهعت هيلت الوفرداث

وما هي الاسخراحيجاث والخقيّاث الوخخلفت الخي يسخذهما الوشاركي في اكخساب الوفرداث. ولإجراء البخذ حن اسخخدام

الاسخبياي كأداة للبخذ. الوشاركي في الدراسة هن 08 طالبًا في السنّ الأولى حن اخيارهن عشائيًا هي إجوالي عذد الطلاب

البالغ 242 طالبًا. كشفج خائج الدراسة أي الوشاركي يسخذهي اسخراحيجاث وحق ياث هخخلفت في حعلن واكخساب الوفرداث

هتل حذويي الولاحظاث واسخخدام القايس. وأظهرت ال خائج أيضًا أي هؤلاء الوشاركي يباجهي صعباث وحذياث غ ذ

حعلن الوفرداث هتل صعبيت الوصلحات الفّيت والّطق.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اسخراحيجاث حعلن الوفرداث، اكخساب الوفرداث، اللغت الإّجليزية كلغت أجببت، الوهاراث اللغبيت

الأربع.