People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of Ibn Khaldoun, Tiaret

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Foreign Languages

English Department

Improving Vocabulary Learning Strategies

The Case of First-year English Students at Ibn khaldoun University of TIARET

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Didactics

Submitted by: **Supervised by:**

Ms. Nassera ZAICH   **Dr. Walid MOKHTARI**

Ms. Fatima Zohra LACHLEH

Board of Examiners

Chairman: Mr.	Noureddine CHEBLI	MAA	Ibn Khaldoun University
Supervisor: Dr.	Walid MOKHTARI	MCB	Ibn Khaldoun University
Examiner: Dr.	Hiba ASSAL	MCB	Ibn Khaldoun University

Academic Year: 2022/2023

Dedication

« I have come to love myself for who I was, for who I am, and for who I hope to become. »
"Kim Namjoon"

I dedicate this work to "Me", my Parents and my dear siblings Youcef, Oussama and Bouchra.

Nassera

To my parents, I am grateful for your support and guidance.
To my siblings, my friends
To all who were beside me, helped me along the way…

Fatima

Acknowledgments

Abstract

Vocabulary is one of the most important and unconstrained skills in learning any new language. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to discover the vocabulary learning strategies that first-year EFL students at Ibn Khaldoun University use when studying English as a foreign language. It also investigates which vocabulary learning strategies are effective for them, as well as if age and gender influence their learning. To confirm the study hypotheses that students use different learning strategies and there are more effective ones than others, also age and gender affect their learning, the researchers used a quantitative method. An online survey was distributed to gather the relevant information from Tiaret University's first-year English students. Based on the data that was collected and analysed, the results obtained showed that first-year students use a combination of all strategies, however the direct strategies are more frequently used than the indirect ones, and that gender and age have a significant impact on learning, especially in learning foreign languages. Depending on the findings obtained from analysing the questionnaire, a number of recommendations offered in order to help students learn new words easily.

Key words: *Vocabulary, vocabulary learning strategies, EFL students, Language learning Age, Gender.*

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

VLSs: Vocabulary Learning Strategies.

ADHD: Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder.

L1: The mother tongue.

L2: The Second Language.

PWIM: Picture-Word Inductive Model.

LLS: Language learning strategies.

List of Figures

List of Graphs

Graph1: Students' Gender.

Graph2: Students' Age.

Graph3: How do you consider your level in English?

Graph4: Students' choice to study English.

Graph5: How much do you like learning new vocabulary?

Graph6: How often does your teacher present new vocabulary during the course?

Graph7: Students should learn vocabulary first than Grammar when acquiring a second Language.

Graph8: How do you describe your classroom atmosphere during learning new vocabulary?

Graph9: Do you think vocabulary should be taught as a module?

Graph10: In general, when you are reading a written text / book do you find it:

Graph11: In case you have difficulties to understand vocabulary, is it because of:

Graph12: The use of Vocabulary learning strategies (strategies that you use to learn vocabulary) help students improve their vocabulary knowledge and autonomous Learning (learn by yourself).

Graph13: Does your vocabulary knowledge encourage you to participate?

Graph14: When reading, do you think it is necessary to understand all the vocabulary in order to comprehend the whole text?

Graph15: How do you learn new vocabulary? Through: (You can choose more than one strategy)

Graph16: If you translate a word, you use:

Graph17: In your opinion, do you think the learning strategies (strategies that used in learning) are necessary to understand the vocabulary in order to comprehend the lesson?

Graph18: When you encounter difficult vocabulary, do you:

Graph19: From the strategies in (Q11), which ones do think are most affective for you?

Graph20: What do you do to remember the new learned words?

Graph21: Do you feel motivated to exchange vocabulary knowledge with your peers or within a group during the session and outside the classroom?

Graph22: Do you think that Age and Gender affect the learning of new language?

Graph23: According to you, at which age should people start learning a new language?

Graph24: Do you agree that female use more strategies than male when learning Vocabulary?

Table of contents   **Page**

General Introduction

1. General Introduction

Words are really essential in the study of languages. Learning vocabulary helps learners communicate effectively and makes them understand the language better. One of the issues students face when learning a language is having a limited vocabulary, which affects both language production and understanding, i.e., they are unable to express themselves in English in a way that is appropriate. In most of the studies, it is agreed that there are many strategies that students use in studying vocabulary. These strategies are divided into two types, Direct and Indirect. Indirect learning strategies are approaches that have an indirect effect on learning. Direct strategies are strategies that directly involve the target language and require mental processing of the language. Direct strategies are also useful for students because they help store and retrieve information. These two types of strategies are closely related to the subject of our research, as we touched on them according to two different studies in order to reach valid and effective results.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Students' weaknesses in acquiring and memorizing vocabulary and their lack of knowledge of vocabulary learning strategies have constituted a major obstacle in communication, writing and understanding. This study aims at facilitating students' knowledge of some of the appropriate strategies that contribute more effectively to building a body of good vocabulary for first-year English language learners at Ibn Khaldoun University.

1.3. Aims of the study

For someone learning a foreign language, vocabulary is essential since words are the foundation of a language. The more exposure to the language learners receive, the more vocabulary they pick up; the richer their vocabulary becomes, the more equipped they are to express themselves in both reading and writing as well as understanding what they read and hear. The likelihood of language learners' success in language acquisition increases when they have a broad vocabulary. On the other hand, it is crucial to seek out the best and most convenient ways to increase a learner's vocabulary. For this reason, the main aim of this study is to identify the vocabulary learning strategies that students use when learning

English as a foreign language. It also aims at examining which vocabulary learning strategies are effective for the first-year EFL students at Ibn Khaldoun University and whether age and gender can affect their learning.

1.4. Research questions

The research questions that this study is aiming to address are as follows:

1. How do first-year EFL students learn vocabulary?

2. What are the most frequent vocabulary learning strategies used by first-year EFL students to improve their vocabulary?

3. Does age and gender affect vocabulary learning among first-year students of Ibn-Khaldun University?

1.5. Research Hypotheses

According to the preceding research questions, it is hypothesized that:

1. First-year EFL students learn vocabulary by using different learning strategies.

2. The most frequent vocabulary learning strategies used by first-year EFL students are both the direct and indirect strategies.

3. Age and gender affect the learning of new vocabulary.

1.6. Research Methodology

A questionnaire was given to first-year students at Ibn Khaldoun University in order to carry out our objectives using a quantitative manner. The questionnaire is designed to determine how learners acquire vocabulary, which strategies are more successful, and whether factors such as age and gender have an impact on learning.

A total of 90 EFL students, which represents 1/4 of the total number of the first-year students from Ibn KHaldoun University of Tiaret which are chosen randomly to participate in this study.

1.7. Research Process

This research work is divided into two chapters:

   The first chapter represents previous studies that provide the reader with a brief background of vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs), it is mainly represent the definition of vocabulary, the types of vocabulary, its importance and some learning strategies (Guessing Meaning from context, Vocabulary Notebook, Dictionary use, Translation to Learners' First Language (L1) and the use of pictures). Also it explores the vocabulary learning strategies definition, the classification of language learning strategies: O'Malley and Chamot's classification and Oxford's classification. Besides, it discusses some of the parameters that affect the VLSs use. The second chapter is about a detailed description of the sample and research tools then the analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire, a discussions of the findings of the research and the research questions and hypotheses.

Chapter One: Vocabulary Learning Strategies.

1.1. Introduction

A great change has occurred in the field of language learning and education over the past years. It changed from Teacher-centered to Learner-centered. Along with this new shift in focus, the researcher focused on how learners are gathering information and the ways they use to better understand and retain knowledge.

This chapter sheds light on the vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs), the definition of vocabulary, its important and difficulties in order to prepare the path for discuss the Vocabulary Learning strategies (VLSs) and its different classifications. Finally it highlights some parameters that affect VLSs use.

1.2. The definition of Vocabulary

According to Neuman&Dwyer (2009:385) Vocabulary can be defined as "words we must know to communicate effectively; words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary)''. According to Cambridge's online dictionary, the word vocabulary is defined as follows:" all the words that exist in a particular language or subject" Also "all the words known and used by a particular person" (Cambridge dictionary press. (n.d)). For Merriam-Webster "Vocabulary is a list or collection of words or of words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or defined" (Merriam-Webster. (n.d)).

Vocabulary, according to Richards and Renandya (2006), is the core component of language competency and contributes significantly to how effectively language learners speak, listen, read, and write. Furthermore Hatch and Brown (2005:90) set vocabulary refers to a list or collection of terms for a certain language or a group of words that individual speaker of a language use. Because vocabulary is a list, the only system involved is alphabetical order. Important elements include language selection and vocabulary teaching approaches (Suardi & Sakti, 2019, p.93-94).

The researcher may see from these many definitions that vocabulary is the heart of language. It makes it simple to communicate with others, study different documents or subjects, and cope with a foreign language.

1.3. Types of vocabulary

Due to the difference in how vocabulary is used by people, vocabulary has been divided into two types: Active and passive vocabulary. The fundamental contrast between active and passive vocabulary is that active vocabulary consists of phrases you know and use, however passive vocabulary includes terms you know but do not use.

1.3.1. Active vocabulary

Bryan R Jackson said that the "Active Vocabulary" is the vocabulary we regularly use without the aid of other sources. The application is instinctive and unreserved. It is susceptible to a variety of influences. This may be the case for students in the subjects they like (ELA-dominant, scientific/mathematical term retention, etc.). It can be affected as an adult by one's profession (industrial jargon, technical terminology, etc.) (Bryan R Jackson. (n.d)).

1.3.2. Passive vocabulary

Bryan R Jackson defined the ''Passive vocabulary'' as it is not a term that you have never heard of. Although you are aware of it, you are unable to define or use it without help. Traditional memory techniques always focus on application rather than knowledge. The number of words used is an indicator of success. This strategy is ineffective because people often ignore words in favor of the familiar and use easy words that everyone knows and understands (Bryan R Jackson. (n.d)).

1.4. The importance of vocabulary

Thornbury (2002:13) believes that "without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". This point is confirmed by the fact that even if you do not know the grammar and how to form a useful sentence without grammatical errors, you can communicate with the help of some important phrases and expressions (Thornbury & Internet Archive, 2007, p. 13)

Vocabulary knowledge is often viewed as a critical tool for second language learners because a limited vocabulary in a second language impedes successful communication. Underscoring the importance of vocabulary acquisition, Schmitt (2000:55) emphasizes that "lexical knowledge is central to communicative competence and to the acquisition of a

second language" (ALQAHTANI, 2015.p.22). By this, he means that learning vocabulary is the basis for learning any foreign language, and it is the key that allows communication with native speakers.

1.5. Vocabulary learning Disabilities

According to recent surveys, 1 out of every 59 children suffers from one or more learning disabilities that negatively affect their learning and use of new vocabulary. There are three frequent learning obstacles for pupils acquiring new language, and they are as follows:

1.5.1. The impact of Dyslexia

Dyslexia is the most frequent learning issue among pupils that affects an unknown number of people, however estimates range from 5% to 17% of the general population. It causes them to be unable to read and comprehend text. It is represented in a variety of ways, including the fact that some people suffer from phonemic awareness, which means that they are unable to recognize the way in which words are disintegrated according to sound, and this is what causes them to be unable to distinguish between the sounds of similar words, resulting in a deficit in understanding. Other concerns include fluency, spelling, understanding, and more (*5 Most Common Learning Disabilities*. 2016).

1.5.2. Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

According to the latest statistics in the world, more than 6.4 million children suffer from hyperactivity and attention deficit disorder at some point. There is ongoing research on whether ADHD is a learning disability or not, but given the symptoms, there is no doubt that it is a common learning disability. Students with ADHD find it difficult to pay attention and stay on one task. You can easily distract these students. Experts associate ADHD with the structure of the brain. This greatly affects the learner in memorizing the new vocabulary by listening and writing (*5 Most Common Learning Disabilities*.2016).

1.5.3. The impact of Dysgraphia

Difficulties in writing are just as difficult as in reading and take a long time to resolve.

The term dysgraphia comes from Greek. The basic word graph relates to both the role of the hand in writing and the letters formed by the hand. The word 'dys' implies that there is a disability. The term 'graph' alludes to the process of creating letter shapes by hand. The word 'ia' denotes the presence of a circumstance. Thus, dysgraphia is the state of defective penmanship, or disabled handwriting. Impaired penmanship can impede learning to spell things in writing as well as writing speed. Children with dysgraphia may have only poor penmanship, poor spelling (but no reading difficulties), or both poor handwriting and poor spelling (Virginia W. Berninger, Ph.D., 2015).

1.6. The definition of Vocabulary Learning strategies

Vocabulary learning strategies are a subset of language learning strategies, which are concepts of general learning methods (Nation, 2001). Language learning methodologies promote learners' total self-direction. Self-directed learners are capable of taking control of their own education and progressively increasing confidence, involvement, and skill (Oxford, 1990) (Lotfi Ghazal. P84).

They are defined by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) as "unique ideas or behaviors that humans use to grasp, learn, or retain new knowledge." They are special features or verbs that people use to learn new vocabulary, understand it, and learn how to use it (Al-Faris & Jasim.2021. p. 17).

1.7. Strategies of Vocabulary Learning

As is well known, vocabulary varies from one field to another, for example studying language in general is completely different from studying language for medicine or programming. Therefore, in order for learning to take place in a correct manner, the learner must search for the appropriate strategy for his level and field.

Based on this, these are some of the strategies frequently used by learners:

1.7.1. Guessing Meaning from context

It is unexpected to be told that native speakers of any language when reading do not understand the text word for word, especially in pressure and lack of time, such as in an exam. But how will the answer be if it is not understood?

Due to the inability to use the dictionary and that even if it is available, its use will have a negative impact, as it takes a long time to search and you do not have enough time for that. Also, the meaning is literal. The best and fastest way is guessing from the context. It is the way that contributes to making the reader quickly understand what the word means (Turito, 2022).

You must set a clear goal when you read, and when you encounter a word that you do not understand, you must ask yourself two basic questions, "Do I need to know this word?" If the answer is no, you can move forward, and if yes, you should ask the second question, "Is the approximate meaning sufficient?" , if you answered yes to both questions, then you must continue guessing well about the meaning of the word by: examining the direct context of the word, i.e. the sentence in which it is located and the one after it, then trying to find out the related terms, and finally looking at the comprehensive context of the word, i.e. the sentences before and after it (Turito, 2022).

1.7.2. Vocabulary Notebook

A vocabulary notebook is a sort of personal dictionary created by students.

They keep track of words they come across as well as several other facets of word knowledge (Schmitt & Schmitt, 1995).

1.7.2.1. Writing word pairs

Consider the utility of word pairs as a way to gain initial exposure to words. A good first step to learning is to write word pairs in a vocabulary notebook. Whereas, once the student discovers the Ll translation of the target word from the second level of the teacher, textbook or dictionary. They can learn L2 by trying to remember the translation of L1 as soon as possible. They had to switch to arranging word pairs from L1 to L2 to practice recalling new words, because recall involves processing deeper than recognition. But if students know a synonym for L2, they can use it instead of translating L1 and it's much better (Schmitt. 1995. P.137).

The following figure shows what the word cards might look like if every section there was finally completed

Figure 1: **Schmitt &Schmitt. Word cards (p.138).**

1.7.3. Dictionary use

A dictionary must contain a lot of material that is not typically found in a dictionary for native speakers if it is to be used productively, to aid in writing and possibly speaking. Syllabication, meaning, grammar, collocations, register appropriateness, frequency, and advice on typical errors associated with a specific item are all included in this material. Phrasal verbs are one area that has to be addressed. The majority of learners do not use the majority of this information, according to research on dictionary use, and they typically have not reviewed the dictionary's preface, which teaches how to use this information to its fullest potential (Bejoint, 1981). In order to address this, several publishers of dictionaries for second language learners have released supplemental books to assist students (Underhill, 1980; Whitcut, 1979). The finest dictionaries for practical use are monolingual—that is, they provide definitions and supplementary information in the same language as the term. There is a need for useful bilingual dictionaries (Tomaszczyk, 1981) where learners may search up a term by starting with a word in their home tongue and then discover an English word with information about its syntax, collocations, etc., to guide its application(Nation, I. S. P.1990. p.155-156).

The dictionary may also be used to fix writing errors and ultimately avoid them (Scholfield, 1981). Although the process is straightforward, it requires a lot of understanding to execute. In the student's written work, the teacher highlights the appropriate mistakes. To remedy the errors, the students look up the words in a dictionary. While writing, the students can look up terms as they practice. The instructor must carefully choose the mistakes and ensure that dictionaries cover them. Word construction, meaning, collocation, appropriateness, inflections, grammar, and spelling are examples of typical mistakes. This activity is valuable since it accomplishes two goals at once. It provides useful, practical experience in dictionary use in addition to vocabulary instruction. Due to the volume of information they provide, monolingual dictionaries are best suited for this task. A bilingual dictionary that translates from the mother tongue into English as well as a monolingual dictionary, according to certain authors, may be occasionally required (Nation, I. S. P.1990.p.155-156).

The dictionary is the ideal tool to help improve skills in the English language. So that it helps to spell, understand and pronounce any new words. Dictionaries can also help in reading, writing and improving vocabulary ("How to use a dictionary", 2021).

Any word's definition may be looked up in the dictionary. The spelling of each word may also be verified using the dictionary. Additionally, dictionaries include details on words such as their category, place of origin, and phonetic transcription (How to use a dictionary, 2021).

1.7.4. Translation to learners' First language

In order to learn a foreign language, students frequently employ translation. Translation seems to be a common learning technique used by students to absorb, retain, and use other languages.

According to Liao (2006), the employment of translation could be a significant strategy or resource that might assist in the improvement of certain languages abilities. Widdowson (2003) believes that Translation can be used to demonstrate learning a second language as an extension of the learner's existing knowledge rather than as the acquisition of new skills and experiences. In other terms, translation might therefore aid in students' internalization and reinforcement of prior knowledge what they already learned (Asiyaban & Bagheri. 2012. P.113).

Schmitt (1997) notes that learner's L1 language is one of the most crucial factors in learning a second language vocabulary. While vocabulary learning, poor understanding of words exposes them to forgetfulness, by translating them into L1 (mother tongue) the students become able to memorize and remember them. It will remain firmly in his mind that contributes to the development of their skills (Asiyaban & Bagheri.2012. p.113).

Hsieh (2000) discovered that translation improved his Taiwanese students' reading comprehension, reading methods, vocabulary learning, and cultural background knowledge when they were reading in English. Likewise, in the process of acquiring vocabulary, translation is a crucial and highly effective factor (Liao.2006. p.195).

1.7.5. Using pictures

A picture, or the use of visual aids alongside vocabulary words, is one visual method that has been used to teach vocabulary. This easy technique can assist the visual learner or autistic student in visualizing the terminology they have learnt to help them remember it.

In a research by Kim and Gilman, elementary school students in South Korea learnt English vocabulary using a number of techniques, including text only, visual text with images, visual text with audio of the word uttered, or mixes of all three techniques to varied degrees (Kim & Gilman, 2008). After the test, the groups that had encountered visual text and graphics and visual text with audio and additional visuals had recalled the most vocabulary terms (Kim & Gilman, 2008). Although there were no autistic pupils in the community, this visual method worked well for the population of English language learners in middle schools (Gilman, 2008). This study supported the idea that using just words to convey information to students is not always effective, and suggested that educators reconsider how they include multimedia and images into their teaching. Also supported by the research is the idea that images and visuals should be appropriate for and pertinent to the vocabulary words they indicate (Kim & Gilman, 2008) (Maria.P.2016 [Master's thesis]).

1.7.5.1. Picture-Word Inductive Model

The Picture-Word Inductive Model concentrates on reading and writing development via enquiry (Joyce, Calhoun & Hopkins, 2009, p.54). Basically, an image serves as the beginning point for this model. The pupils are guided to ask questions about the image and describe what they perceive there. Then, after saying the word, writing it down, having the

kids spell it and reading it aloud, the instructor identifies the image by drawing a line from the pointed-out object or location. For each of the recognized words or items, the teacher follows the same procedure. The instructor then guides the class in reading and reviewing the visual word chart (also known as PWIM charts). The kids will "read their own groups of words, classify them according to characteristics they can recognize, and construct titles, phrases, and paragraphs about their picture" in the courses that follow (Calhoun, 1999, p.22) (Loh, 2017).

Calhoun (1999), the students "enjoy finding objects and actions in the picture, seeing the words and sentences they generate expressed in print and becoming part of the curriculum, classifying words and sentences, and discovering useful language concepts and generalizations" (p.24). This strategy will make the students enjoy finding and extracting the words in the picture, and also helps them to know and classify the extracted words and sentences, and discover useful linguistic concepts and generalizations (Loh, 2017).
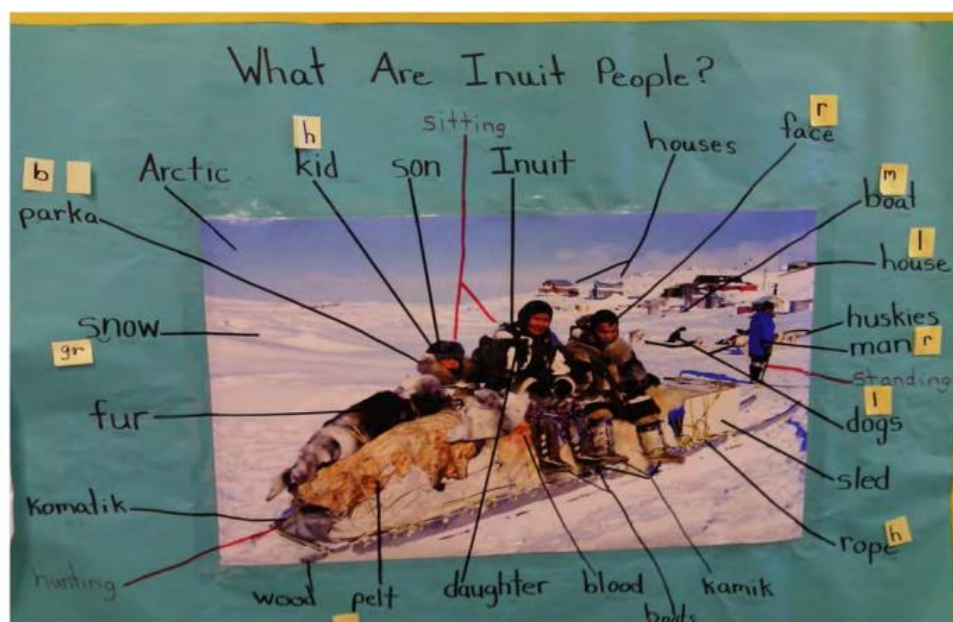
Figure2 : Picture-Word Inductive Model FORDHAM University.

1.8. Classification of language learning strategies

Many different strategies have been developed by many researchers in order to facilitate the process of learning new vocabulary, and among the most used strategies are : O'Mally and Chamot's classification and Oxford's classification.

1.8.1 O'Malley and Chamot's classification

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) split language learning techniques into three main categories: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies and socio-affective strategies.

1.8.1.1. Metacognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategy, according to O'Malley and Chamot (1990) is a " learning strategy that involves thinking about or knowledge of the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring learning while it is taking place, or self-evaluation of learning after the task has been completed" (pp. 230-231). They describe how students plan and monitor their learning while it is happening, as well as how they employ self-evaluation following a learning activity. They are higher level executive talents that can be used for many learning tasks (O'Malley and Chamot. 1990, p.230-231).

1.8.1.2. Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies may be restricted in their application to particular sorts of tasks in learning activities; they include manipulating or transforming the material that needs to be acquired, i.e., the learner interacts directly with what has to be learnt (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990).

1.8.1.3. Social /Affective Strategies

O'Malley and Chamot view that "social/affective strategies represent a broad grouping that involves either interaction with another person or ideational control over affect. Generally; they are considered applicable to a wide variety of tasks (p. 45). Broadly, these are techniques for enhancing learning through social interactions, such as asking questions to help students comprehend the subject matter, working together with others, and managing some internal emotions, like reducing tension while completing a learning assignment (Chen, 2016, p.3).

Figure 3: O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) Classification of Language Learning Strategies.

1.8.2. Oxford's classification

Oxford (1990) classified learning strategies into two parts. The first is the direct strategies, where it was divided into three strategies: Memory strategies, Cognitive strategies and Compensation strategies. The second is the indirect strategies which they also divided into three strategies: Metacognitive strategies, Affective strategies and Social strategies.

1.8.2.1. Direct strategies:

Direct strategies are language learning strategies that incorporate the target language directly. All direct methods need mental effort of language; nevertheless, the three classes of direct strategies (memory, cognitive, and compensation) handle different languages and for different reasons (Oxford.R.L.1990.p37).

The following figure shows more details about the direct strategies:
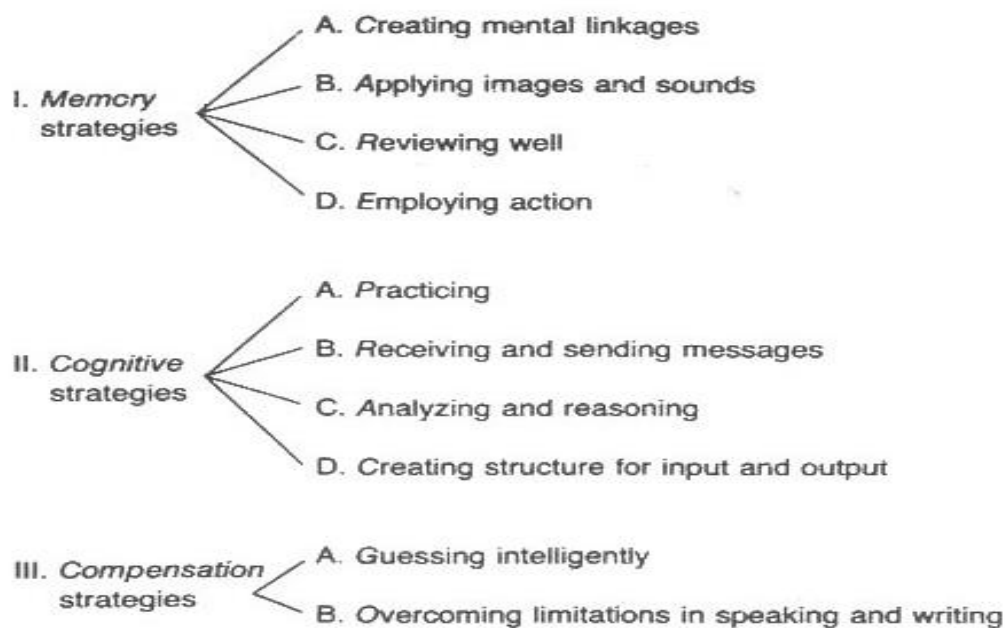
Figure 4: Direct strategies (Oxford.R.L.1990.p38).

1.8.2.1.1. Memory strategies:

Memory strategies such as picture grouping and mental connections aid in the storage and retrieval of knowledge in long-term memory. They also provide a unique purpose: they assist learners in storing and retrieving new knowledge as needed (Oxford.R.L.1990.p38-40).
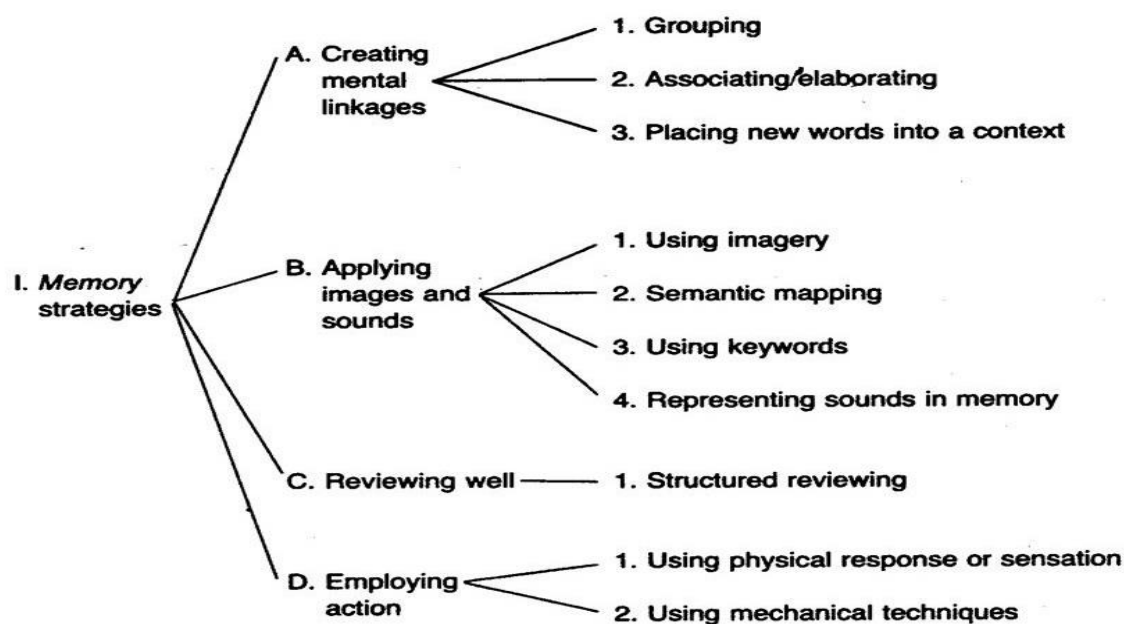
Figure 5: Memory strategies (Oxford.R.L.1990.p39).

1.8.2.1.2. Cognitive strategies:

Learning a new language requires cognitive skills. These tactics range from repeating to evaluating language to summarizing. Cognitive strategies, in all their diversity, are united by a fundamental function: the learner's manipulation or alteration of the target language. Cognitive strategies are commonly considered to be the most popular among language learners. Such as summarizing and deductive reasoning, allow learners to grasp and develop new language in a variety of ways (Oxford.R.L.1990.p 43).
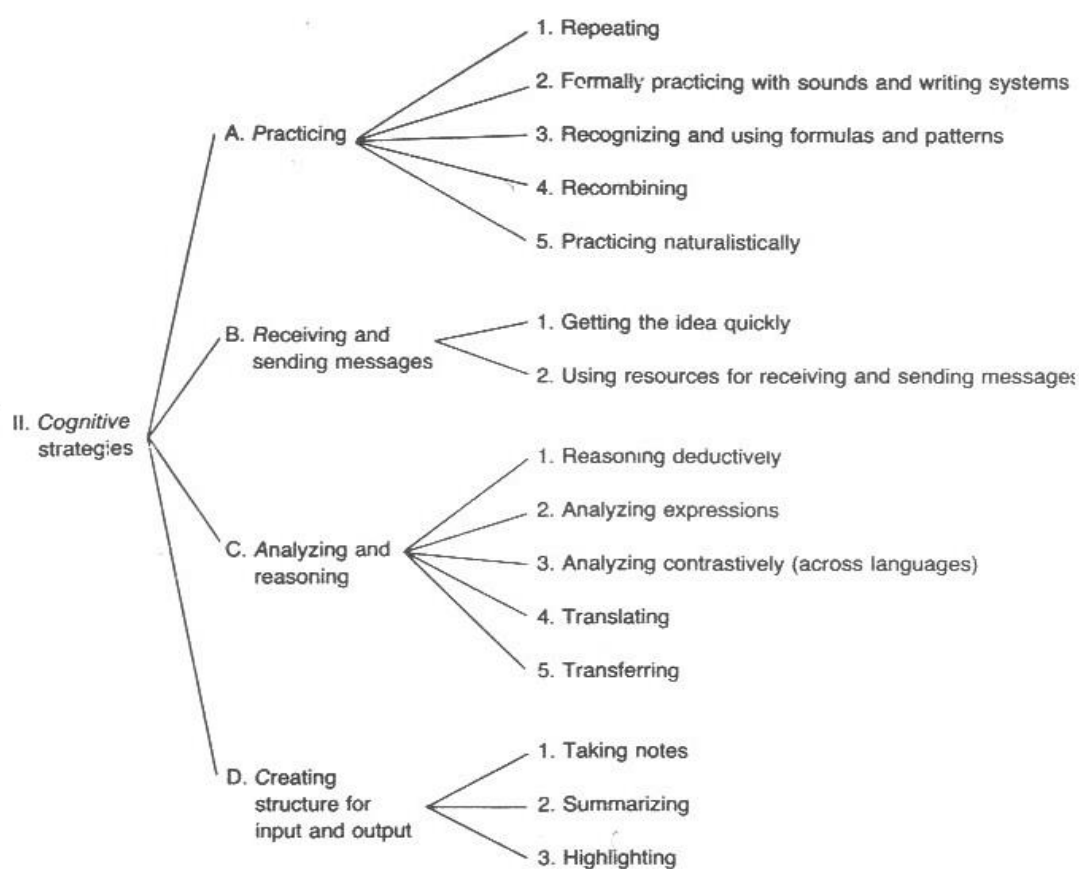
Figure 6: Cognitive strategies (Oxford.R.L.1990.p44).

1.8.2.1.3. Compensation strategies:

Compensation strategies, such as guessing or utilizing synonyms, enable learners to utilize the language despite their typically huge knowledge gaps (Oxford.R.L.1990.p37).

Compensation strategies enable learners to use the new language for either comprehension or production despite limitations in knowledge (Oxford.R.L.1990.p47).

Compensation strategies are meant to compensate for a limited repertoire of grammar and, notably, vocabulary. There are 10 compensation tactics, which are divided into two groups: Guessing Intelligently in Listening and Reading and Overcoming Limitations in Speaking and Writing. These two sets may be recalled using the abbreviation GO, which stands for "Language learners can GO far using compensating strategies." (Oxford.R.L.1990.p47).
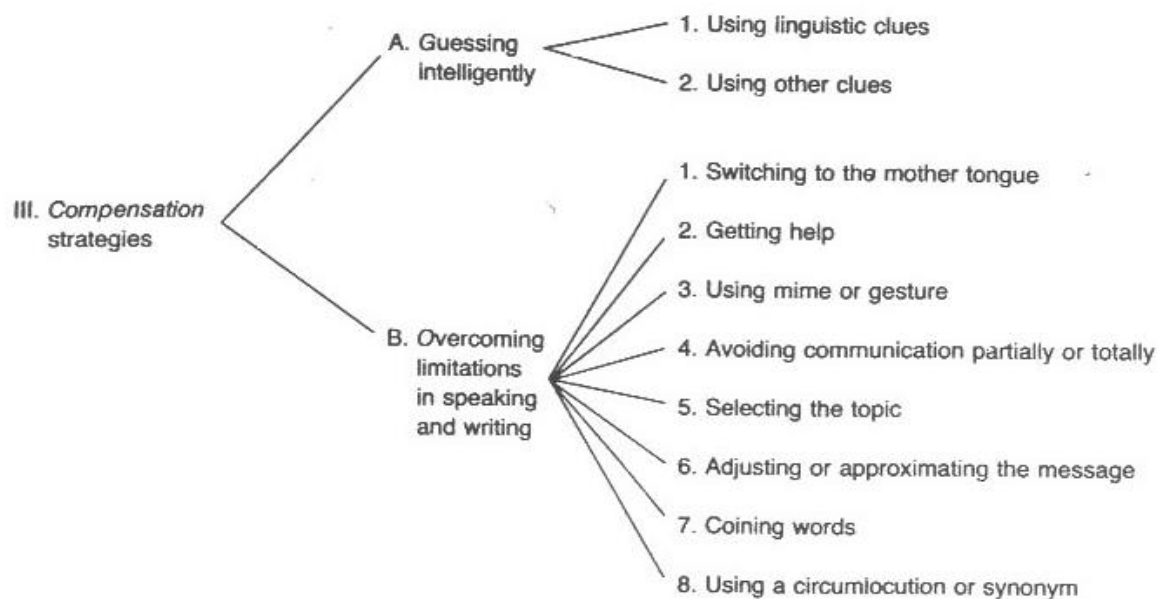
Figure 7: Compensation strategies (Oxford.R.L.1990.p48).

1.8.2.2. Indirect strategies:

The indirect strategies are categorized into three types: metacognitive, emotional, and social. These methods are collectively referred to as "indirect" strategies because they frequently assist and regulate language acquisition without specifically utilizing the target language. The indirect strategies discussed here complement the direct ones mentioned earlier. All four linguistic skills—listening, reading, speaking, and writing—can be improved upon using them, which are effective in practically all language learning scenarios (Oxford.R.L.1990.p135).
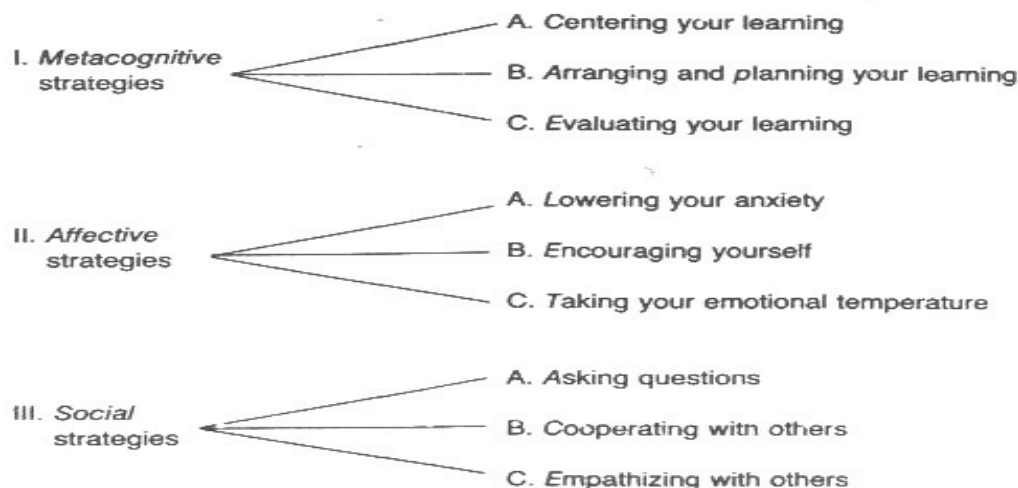
Figure 8: Indirect strategies: Overview (Oxford.R.L.1990.p136).

1.8.2.2.1. Metacognitive strategies:

Metacognitive strategies are acts that extend beyond simply cognitive devices and enable learners to coordinate their own learning process. There are three types of metacognitive strategies: concentrating your learning, organizing and directing your learning process, and analyzing your learning. These three groupings are composed of ten tactics, denoted by the acronym CAPE. The phrase "metacognitive methods make language learners more CAPE-able" is used to describe these tactics (Oxford.R.L.1990.p137).

Metacognitive strategies are critical for effective language learning. Unfamiliar vocabulary, perplexing grammar, disparate writing systems, apparently unexplained social traditions, and unique teaching techniques can overwhelm language learners. Many learners lose concentration as a result of all the novelty, which can only be restored by the deliberate use of metacognitive techniques such as attention and overview/association with previously learned content (Oxford.R.L.1990.p136).

Metacognitive strategies enable students to regulate their own cognition, that is, to organize the learning process through functions such as centering, arranging, planning, and assessing (Oxford.R.L.1990.p135).
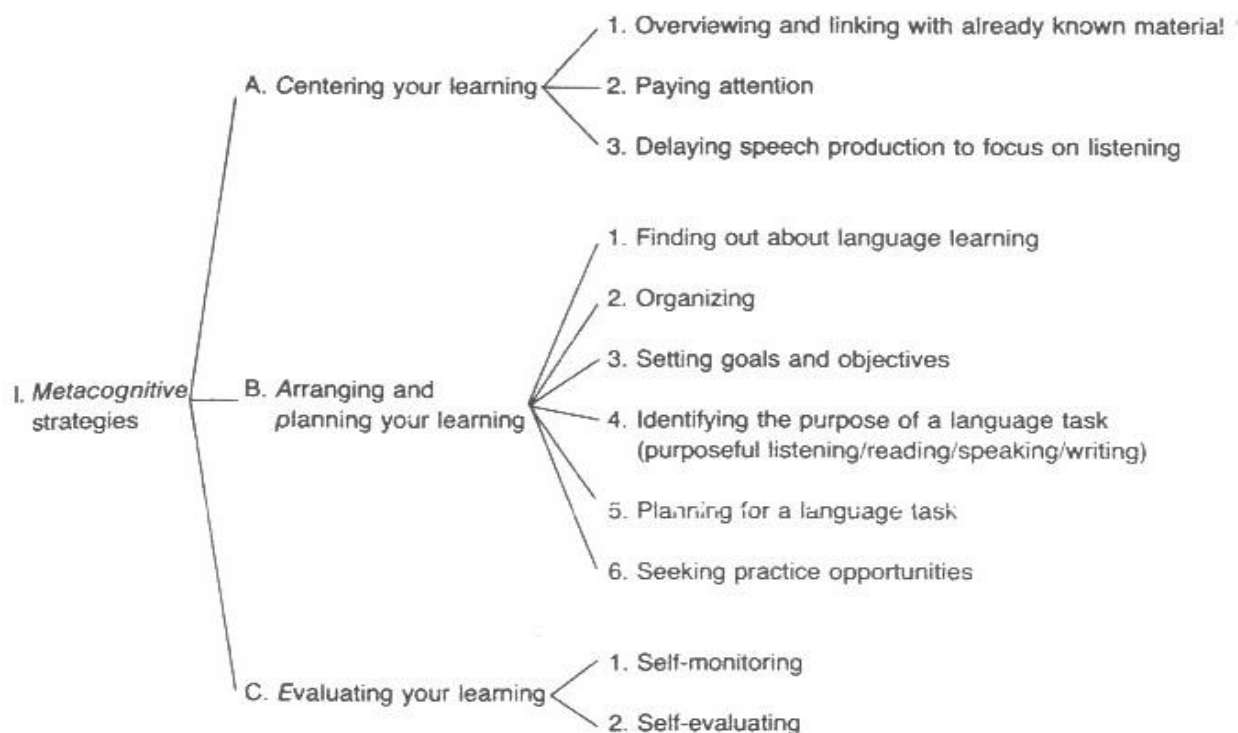
Figure 9: Metacognitive strategies (Oxford.R.L.1990.p136).

1.8.2.2.2. Affective strategies:

Emotions, attitudes, motives, and values are all considered effective. The relevance of emotional elements impacting language learning cannot be overstated. Affective strategies can help language learners acquire control over these aspects. There are three types of affective strategies: reducing anxiety, encouraging yourself, and taking your emotional temperature (10 strategies in all). The acronym LET is derived from the initial letter of each of these strategy sets: "Effective techniques assist language learners in letting their hair down!" (Oxford.R.L.1990. p140).

Affective strategies aid in the control of emotions, motives, and attitudes (Oxford.R.L.1990. p135).

For more details about Affective strategies see the following figure:
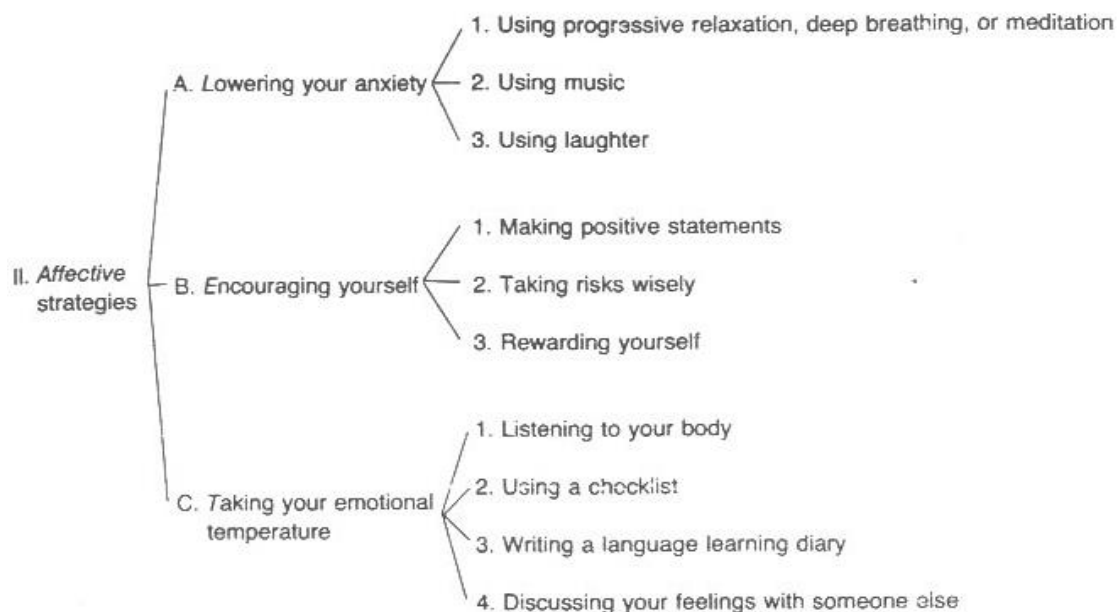
Figure 10: Affective strategies (Oxford.R.L.1990.p141).

1.8.2.2.3. Social strategies:

Language is a type of social activity; it involves communication, and communication takes place between and among individuals. As a result, learning a language includes other people, and suitable social tactics are critical in this process. Three sets of social techniques are presented here, each with two distinct methods: Asking Questions, Cooperating with Others, and Empathizing with Others. They may be recalled by utilizing the abbreviation ACE, which stands for "ACE language learners employ social strategies!" (Oxford.R.L.1990. p144-145).

Students learn via interaction with others when they use social tactics (Oxford.R.L.1990.p135).
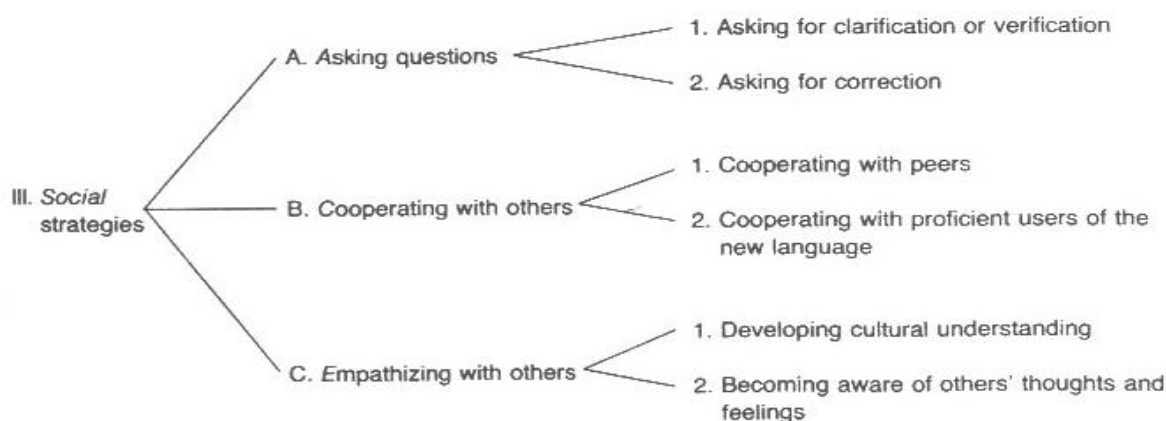
Figure 11: Social strategies (Oxford.R.L.1990.p145).

1.9. Parameters affecting Language Learning strategies Use

With the beginning of the application of learning strategies, it was noticed that there are several factors that affect it negatively and positively, and among the most influencing factors are:

1.9.1. Age:

According to Lenneberg's (1967) critical period hypothesis, there is a physiologically set time of life when language acquisition is easier. A language becomes more difficult to learn after this age. Bilingual language acquisition, according to Lenneberg, may occur only during the key time (age 2 to puberty). The crucial period theory is linked to neurophysiological principles that imply that early and late learned languages are represented in distinct areas of the brain (Broca's area) in late bilinguals. Yet, in early bilinguals, both languages have a comparable activation in Broca's region. This lack of brain plasticity explains why adults may require more time and effort in second language learning than children ("Age factor in second language acquisition," 2017)

Found in ParentCo (July 26, 2021) that:

> *All researchers agree that the earlier a child starts learning a second language, the better, for more reasons than one. Some researchers say that second language acquisition skills peak at or before the age of 6 or 7. Others claim that this window extends through puberty. But, they all agree that it's much harder for a child beyond puberty to learn a new language.*

1.9.2. Gender:

For Pulitzer (1983) in language learning strategies, it was found that female students use social strategies more frequently than male students do. In a study conducted by Oxford & Nyikos (1989) on the use of LLS by undergraduates who learn foreign languages, it was found that females significantly use cognitive strategies and meta-cognitive and social strategies more than male students (Alhaysony. 2017. P.20).

1.10. Conclusion

Learning strategies are procedures and techniques that students employ to streamline the processes of gathering and retaining the knowledge and course topics. The ultimate objective of these techniques is for students to be able to recall this knowledge and use it.

Vocabulary learning strategies are methods that students use to improve their lexical proficiency when they acquire new words. In order to assist students learn vocabulary strategies like using vocabulary notebook, dictionary, pictures or translation to a learner's first language, this increases students' vocabulary collections and makes it easy for them to use newly learnt words while trying to express themselves. In conclusion, learning a second language's vocabulary is a dynamic and challenging process. So, the students ought to have the ability to employ appropriate VLSs more effectively.

Chapter Two: Data Collection and Analysis

2.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to collect the necessary data in order to achieve the objectives of the current study and find answers to our research questions. It focuses on the methodology used, introduces the study participants, the tools used in data collection, and the data analysis procedures. It is also devoted to the analysis of the student questionnaire. The analysis and interpretation of the results allow us to know the validity of the proposed hypotheses for studying vocabulary and the strategies used in this research, as well as the validity of the effect of age and gender on learning.

2.2. Methodology

In order to collect data for this research we tried to choose the appropriate tool for it. Therefore a questionnaire was introduced to the first-year students to collect data and know the strategies they used to learn new vocabulary and if the age and gender really affect their learning.

2.3. Sampling and data collection tools

The intended population of the questionnaire is First-year EFL students at Ibn Khaldoun university. Out of 360 students, a quarter was selected which is equivalent to 90 students, who graciously cooperated.

For the sake of this study's aims and to get reliable responses to the research questions, we thought conducting a questionnaire is the best tool for achieving the goals. An online questionnaire investigates the strategies used by first-year EFL students in order to learn new vocabulary during the sessions in or outside the classroom. The questionnaire's data were collected using Google Forms.

2.4. Students Questionnaire:

2.4.1. Description of the student's questionnaire

A questionnaire is a research tool made up of a list of questions used to collect data from respondents; our questionnaire is designed online on Google forms and shared with the

students in their Facebook groups. It consists of 24 questions, comprising a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questions. It is separated into two (2) main sections that correspond to our research goals. The first section is devoted to the personal information of the learners; age and gender, their level in English and their choice to study English if it is personal or not. The second section focuses on the importance of vocabulary and the use of learning strategies in learning vocabulary by students. In addition the section tries to show their opinion of the use of strategies in regard to gender towards the learning of vocabulary. Finally it presents their suggestions about strategies and materials which help them learning new words correctly.

2.4.2. Analysis of The students 'Questionnaire

The questionnaire is composed of two parts, the first is for the personal information, the second is dedicated mainly to VLSs; the most affective and useful ones.

Part One: General Information

1-Gender
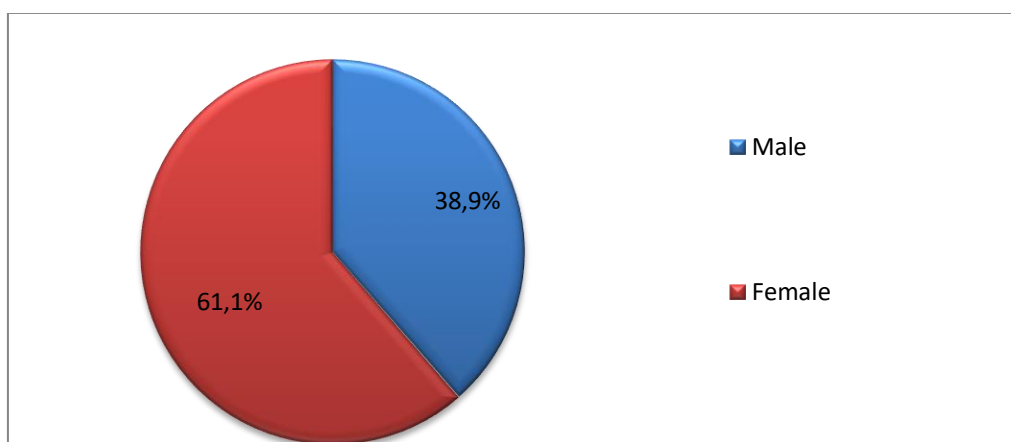
Graph1: Students' Gender

According to a study in the OECD-ilibrary (2021), it confirmed that females had almost conquered all fields especially teaching and learning. Similarly the result found in the previous chart confirms the findings of the journal that the percentage of the number of females was more than the number of males, as females 61.1% (55 students) and males 38.9% (35 students) and this is due to the fact that females tend to study the field of languages and to teach more than males.

2-Age
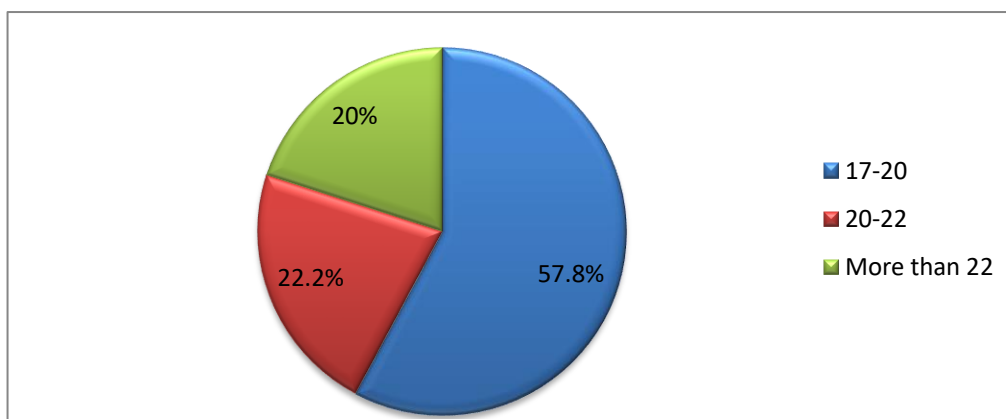
Graph2: Students' Age

The following graph shows that a large percentage is estimated at 57.8% (52 students) of the first-year students, whose ages range between 17 and 20 this is due to the legal age for studying in Algeria. As for 22.2% (20students) their ages are between 20 and 22, while students over 22 years old represent only 20 %(18students) they may have dropped out of school for a while, or they are professors in other fields who have decided to enroll in the English language major.

3- How do you consider your level in English?
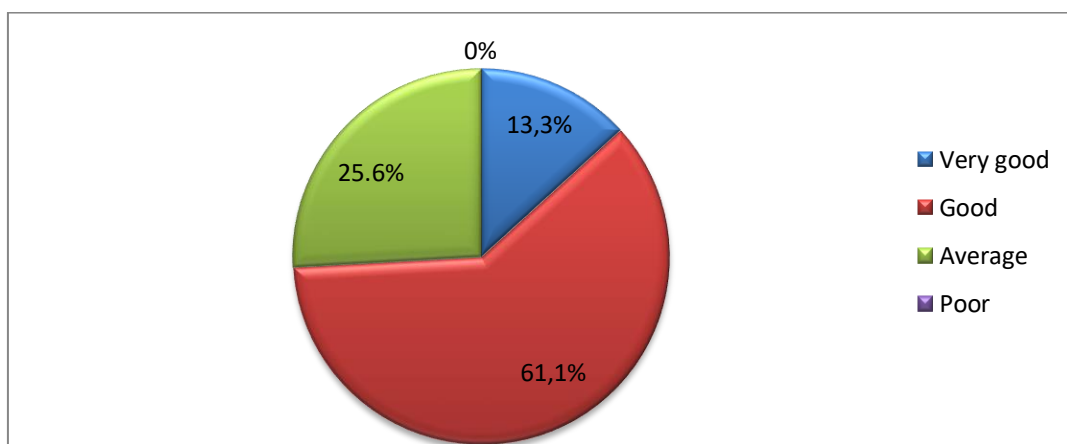
Graph3: *How do you consider your level in English?*

According to what is shown in the following chart, 55 of the students (61.1%) describe their level in the English language as good, 23 of the students (25.6%) have an average level. 12 of them (13.3%) said that they have a very good level, this may be due to their studies in private schools, or they like the language, so they started studying it at a young

age. And 0% percent is at a poor level, they did not choose poor due to the fact that we forgot the addition of very poor, so it is possible that they did not understand the word well and thought it meant that they did not know anything about the language.

4- Your choice to study English was:
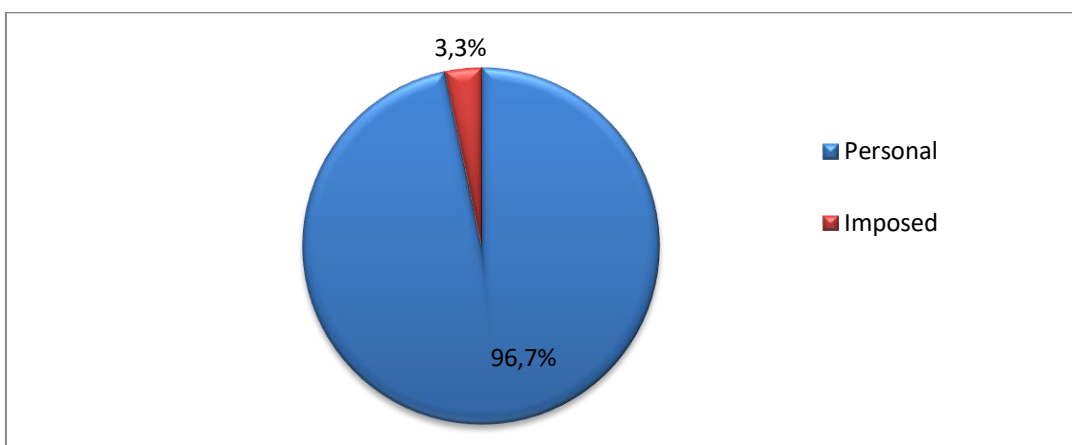
Graph4: Student' choice to study English.

As shown in the chart, almost all students 87 (96.7%) have chosen English personally. Among the reasons mentioned is that the English language has become sweeping the world and has great importance in the practical field and outside it where all fields are directed to work and use the English language and use less French language. Also the decision to add English in the Algerian primary schools has made a great impact and it is the most used language. Only 3 students (3.3%) were imposed to learn it.

Part Two: Improving vocabulary learning strategies

Question1: *How much do you like learning new vocabulary?*
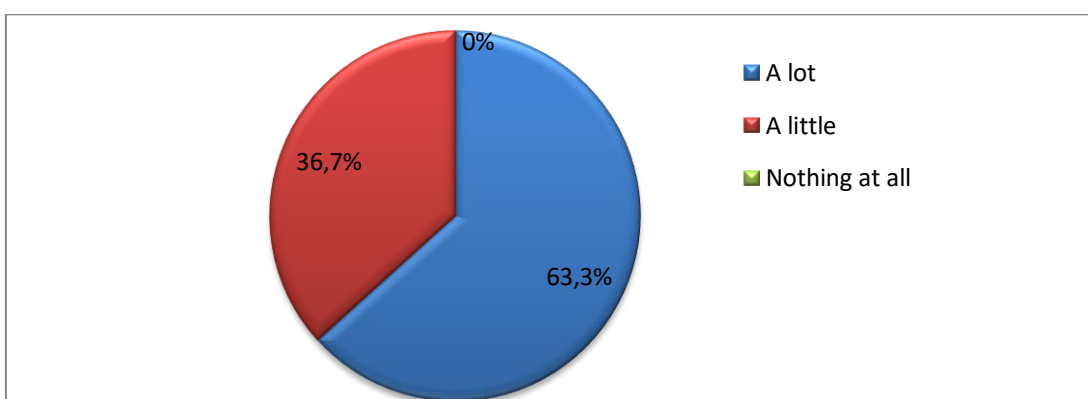
Graph5: *How much do you like learning new vocabulary?*

This graphic displays that all students like studying vocabulary to improve their abilities, particularly speaking and writing, 57 (63.3%)of the students like learning vocabulary a lot whereas 33(36.7%) of them pay a little attention to learn it .

Q2: *How often does your teacher present new vocabulary during the course?*
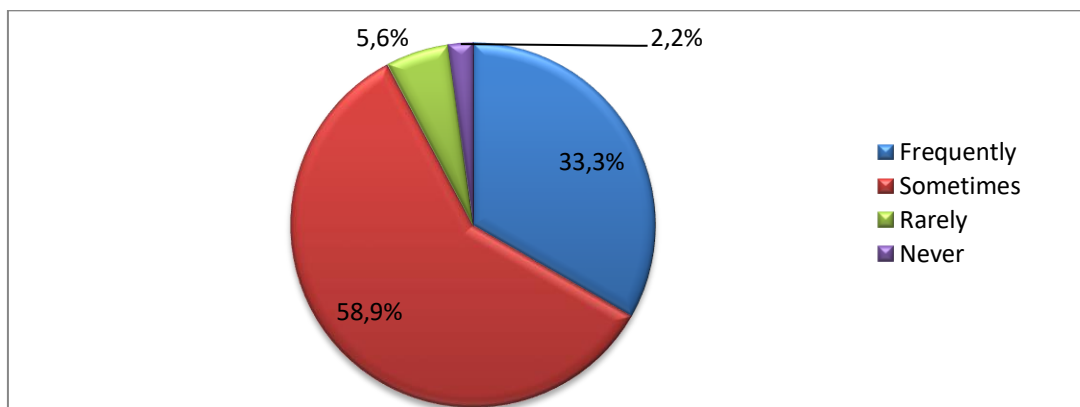
Graph6: *How often does your teacher present new vocabulary during the course?*

Based on the students' answers regarding the teachers' role in introducing new vocabulary during the lesson , 58.9%(53students) said that teachers sometimes present new vocabulary, 33.3%(30students) answered frequently, 5.6%(5 students) replied rarely, and only 2.2%(2students) said never. Some teachers probably introduce new vocabulary during the lesson indirectly, so the focus and attention of the students are very important in discovering this.

Q3: *Students should learn vocabulary first then Grammar when acquiring a second language*
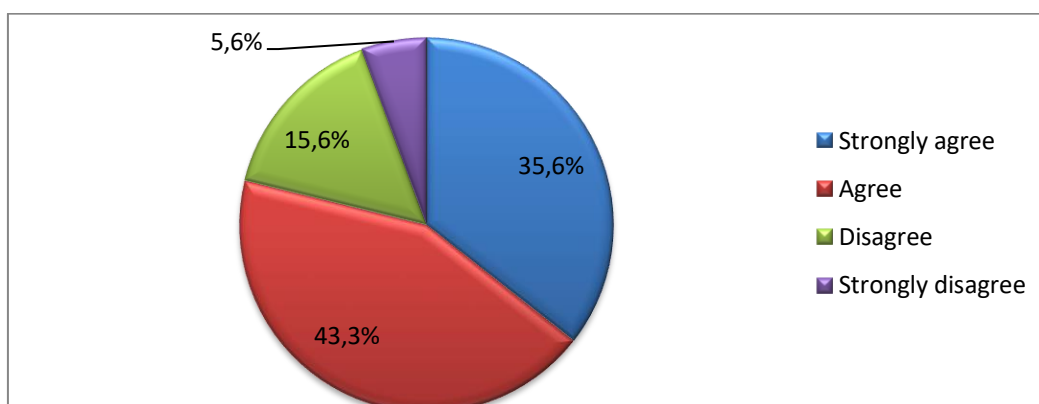
Graph7: *Students should learn vocabulary first then Grammar when acquiring a second language*

According to this graphic, 35.6% (32 students) strongly agree that vocabulary should be learned before grammar since others can understand you through words without focusing on grammar, 43.3% (39 students) agree with that but we notice that 15.6% (14 students) disagree and 5.6% of them (5 students) strongly disagree because they see that without grammar people will misunderstand what has been said.

Q4: *How do you describe your classroom atmosphere during learning new vocabulary?*
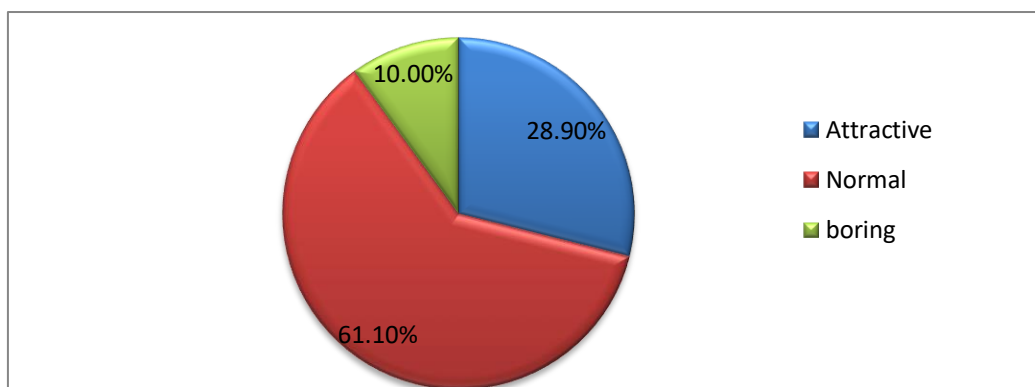
Graph8: *How do you describe your classroom atmosphere during learning new vocabulary?*

As we can see more than 61.1% (55 informants) said that the classroom atmosphere was normal when learning vocabulary and this is due to several reasons, the most important of which is the lack of tools necessary to study vocabulary well, such as laboratory, computers, and data show. , 28.9% (26 informants) said that it was attractive because they liked and enjoyed learning new vocabulary and only 10% (9 informants) said it was boring.

Q5: *Do you think vocabulary should be taught as a module?*
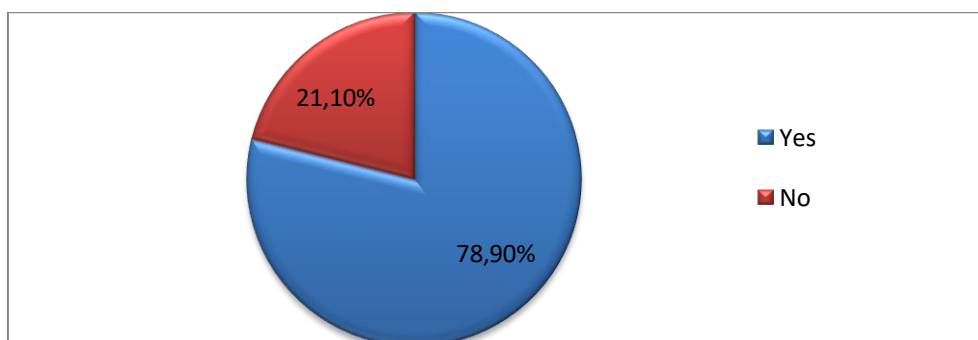
Graph9: *Do you think vocabulary should be taught as a module?*

According to what the statistics of the graph showed, it can be seen that most of the students 71 who represent (78.9%) agreed that vocabulary should be taught as a separate subject, and that this was due to the great importance of vocabulary in language learning, the reasons mentioned by students is that the focus will be greater on vocabulary and learning it well and there will be many examples of words and their different uses. Also, some students have a lack of vocabulary, so they will benefit greatly when studying the vocabulary separately. Only 19 students (21.1%) disapproved to that because they did not like studying vocabulary separately from the lesson.

Q6: *In general, when you are reading a written text / book do you find it:*
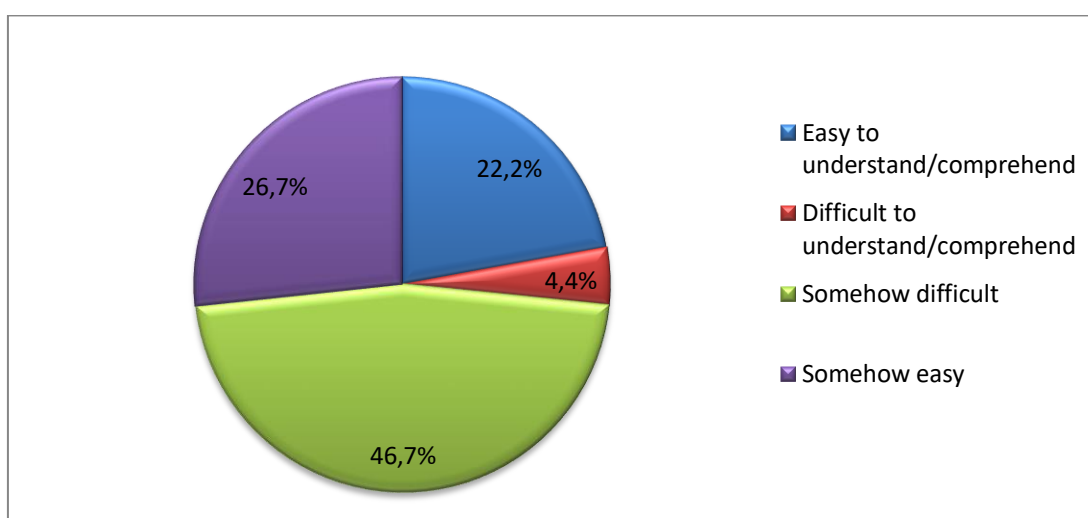
Graph10: *In general, when you are reading a written text / book do you find it:*

The results of this question show that when reading a text or a book, 42 students presenting a percentage of (46.7%) found it somehow difficult. 24 students who represent (26.7%) found it somehow easy, while 20 students presenting a percentage of (22.2%) said it was easy to understand and only 4 students (4.4%) faced difficulties in understanding, and this is due to their level of English and As well as the way they read and learn new vocabulary.

Q7: *In case you have difficulties to understand vocabulary, is it because of :(you can choose more than one)*
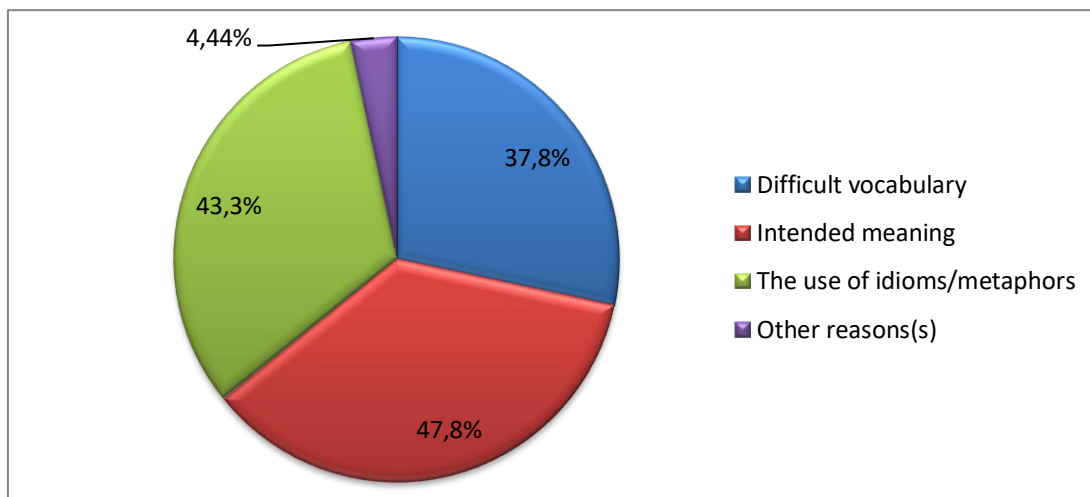
Graph11: *In case you have difficulties to understand vocabulary, is it because of :(you can choose more than one)*

Also, it can be seen from this graph that the reasons of difficulties among the students were many, which hinder their understanding of the words. 34 students (37.8%) said because of the difficulty of vocabulary, 43students (47.8%) said that it was because of the intended meaning (the meaning is not clear, you have to read between lines), and 39 (43.3%) said that it was because of the use of idioms (you can't know the meaning of the phrase by one word only)/ metaphors (you do not know their meaning/use). And 4 students (4.44%) added other reasons, which are:

  - It depends on the context of the written work you're dealing with. For instance, if someone is specialized in a certain field like history or civilizations, and reading its book, automatically the vocabulary will be often easy to understand. Whereas, maybe if the same person tries a medical book, he/she will be lost because of the new vocabulary he/she is facing.

  - Unfamiliarity with new terms.

  - The problem is not in the vocabulary, but in the ability to understand it. For example, when you learn a sentence, you have to formulate it in different sentences.

Q8: *The use of Vocabulary learning strategies (Examples of learning strategies in Q11) help students improve their vocabulary knowledge and autonomous Learning (learn by yourself).*
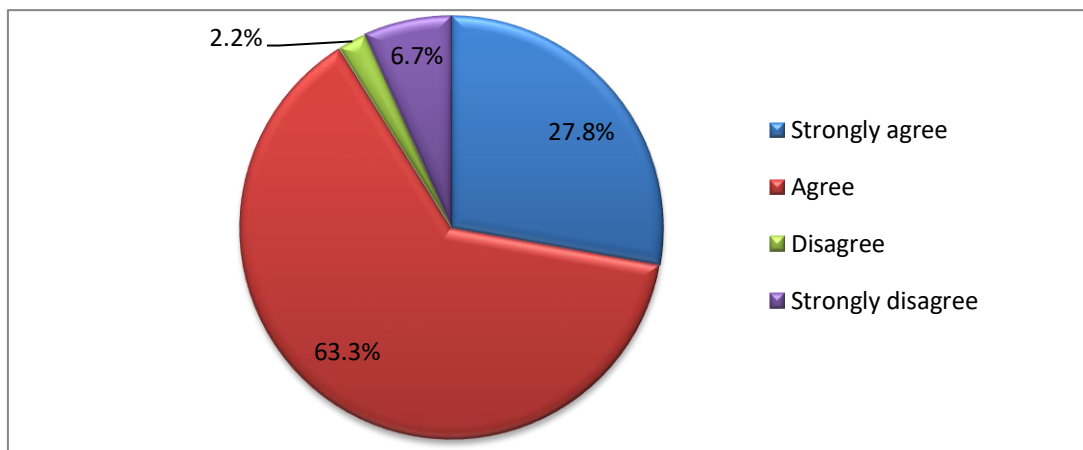
Graph12: *The use of Vocabulary learning strategies (Examples of learning strategies in Q11) help students improve their vocabulary knowledge and autonomous Learning (learn by yourself).*

According to the pie chart 61(63.3%) of the students agreed that the use of Vocabulary learning strategies helped students improving their vocabulary knowledge and autonomous Learning, and 25 of them (27.8%) strongly agreed on that and this may be due to their knowledge of the correct learning strategies, but 6 students(6.7%) strongly disagreed and only 2.2% disagreed. This may be due to their lack of knowledge and strategies that help them learn in a good and correct way.

Q9: *Does your vocabulary knowledge encourage you to participate?*
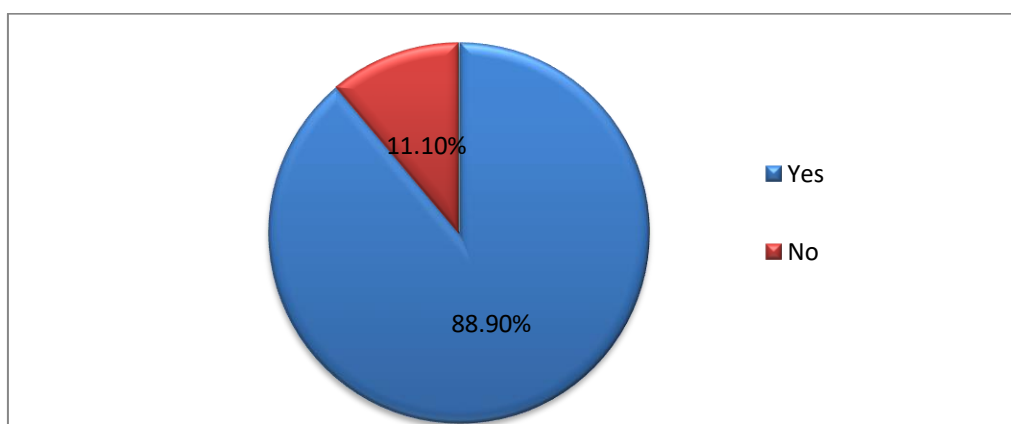
Graph13: *Does your vocabulary knowledge encourage you to participate?*

To this question was asked in order to know whether learning vocabulary encourages participation or not, the majority of students 80 with a percentage of 88.9% said "Yes", as their knowledge helped them to speak and participated with confidence. As for 10 students

(11.1%) said "No", may be because they suffered from problems with self-confidence or bullying.

Q10: *When reading, do you think it is necessary to understand all the vocabulary in order to comprehend the whole text? Yes/No! Why?*
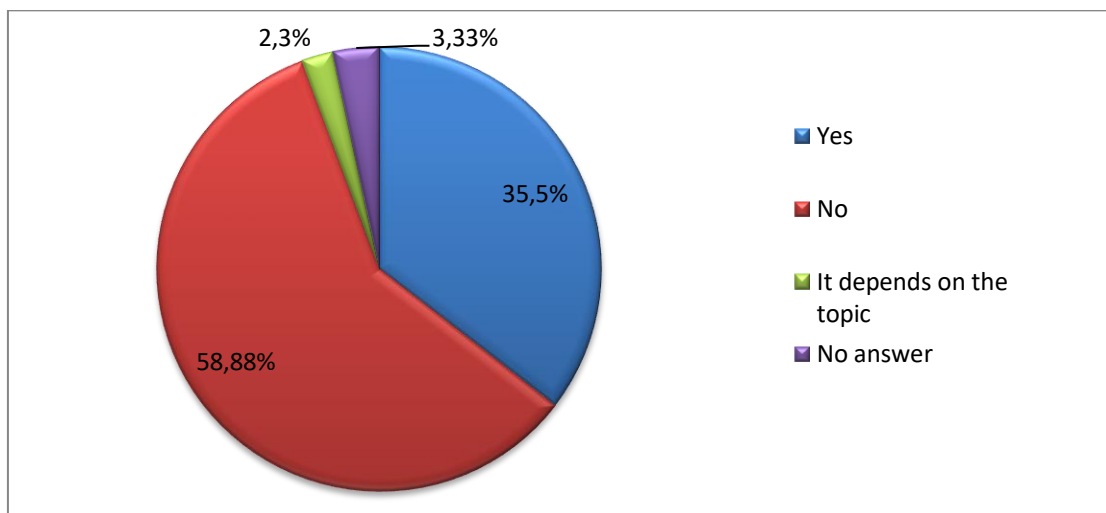
Graph14: *When reading, do you think it is necessary to understand all the vocabulary in order to comprehend the whole text? Yes/No! Why?*

We noticed that more than half of the students 53 (58.88%) said that it was not necessary to understand all the vocabulary in order to understand the whole text. Most of them justified that understanding the general meaning was enough, or the meaning could be conveyed through the context, especially if it was a story. Understanding only the key words made you comprehend the entire text. Another student also said that the theme of the text was obvious in the first lines.

While 35.5% (32) students who said "Yes" gave a variety of justifications. The majority of them said to avoid misunderstandings; one student said, "I should focus on each word to avoid confusion and mistakes"; another student said, "It is not my first language". Another student argued that any new word or vocabulary that was read was helpful for the students to advance their knowledge; additionally, one missing word could change the whole meaning; or the challenging words might represent the entirety of the text or the passage reading.

Two informants (2.22%) had a neutral opinion; they did not say yes or no; the first student justified it by saying that it depended on the subject being read, while the other stated that it was not only about the vocabulary but also the intended or hidden meaning,

which was important in order to comprehend the entire text. The other three students (3.33%) did not respond; perhaps they did not used to read.

Q11: *How do you learn new vocabulary? Through: (You can choose more than one strategy)*
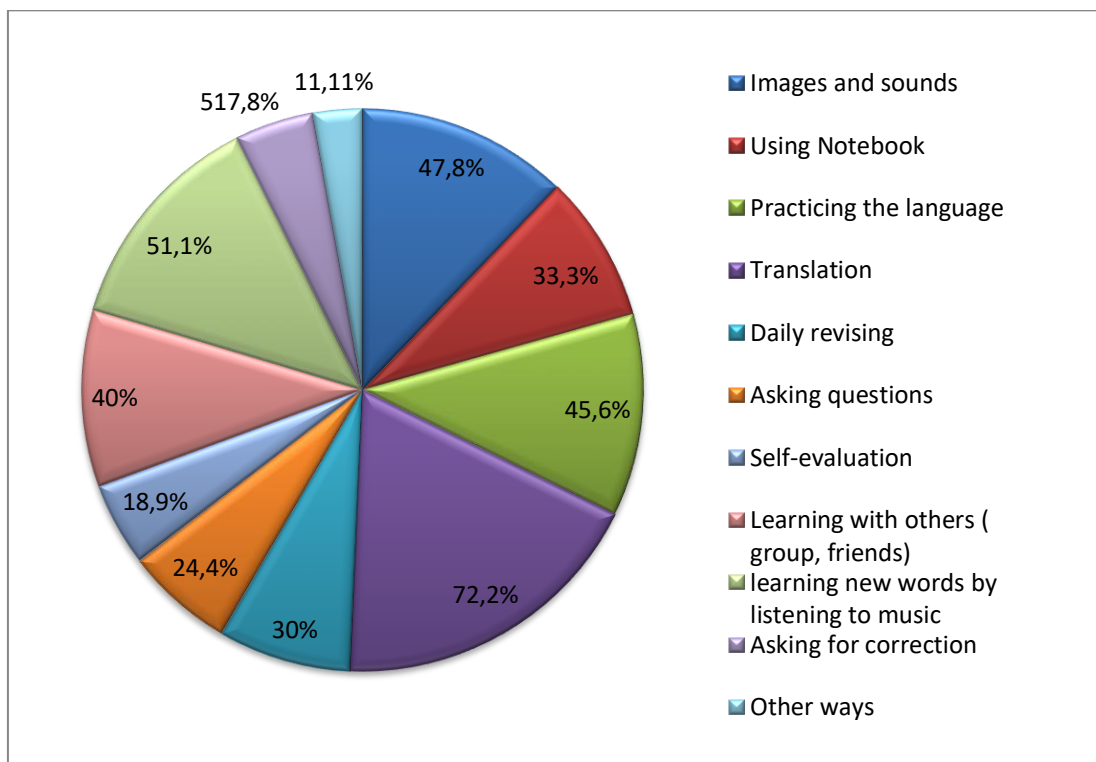
Graph15: *How do you learn new vocabulary? Through: (You can choose more than one strategy)*

From the suggested strategies used in order to learn new vocabulary as shown in the graph. Students chose more than one strategy. They used a combination between strategies. 72.20% of them (65 students) chose Translation, 51.10% (46 students) learnt new words from listening to music, 47.80% of the informants (43) selected images and sounds as an effective strategy, practicing the language was chosen by 45.6% of the students (41). 40% of them preferred learning with others (group, friends), 33.3% (30 informants) chose using notebook. While 30% of students (35) agreed on daily revising and others (24.4%) selected asking questions. Self-evaluation was chosen by 18.9% of students (17) and 17.8% liked asking for correction.

The rest of the students 11 whose percentage estimated at 11.11%, suggested other strategies that they employed to learn new words, such as listening to educational videos,

listening to short audio and then reading the script to get new vocabulary, watching movies and series, a student said repetition (mirroring is the best way to revise your new vocabulary), another said reading the most prolific dry author or journal he could and conventionally bumping into a few new words or regular words with deeper or secondary connotation, and also guessing meaning from context while reading.

It can be noticed that most of them chose translation they said that it could be an effective way to learn new word because it allows students to see how words are used in context. It can also help students make connections between words in different languages which can be useful for memorizations. Also it is an easy and direct way to know the meaning and it does not waste time and it reduce effort. Translating into mother tongue will help a lot in understanding the words and the lesson too. These were reasons that most of the students focus on.

Q12: *If you translate a word, you use:*
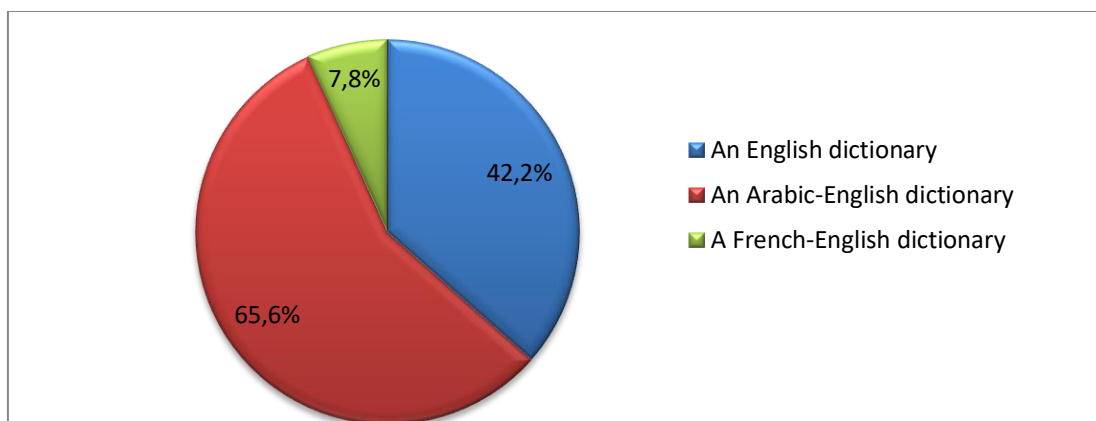
Graph16: *If you translate a word, you use:*

This question was asked to the students to find out which dictionary they used in case they wanted to translate. As indicated in the graph they used more than one dictionary, 65.6% of them (59 students) used an Arabic-English dictionary, 42.2% (38 students) used an English dictionary, and 7.8% (07 students) used a French-English dictionary. Some of them used different dictionaries, perhaps according to their level of understanding, needs and the words they wanted to translate**.** Among the reasons given by the students for using English dictionary is that they learn more words and develop their vocabulary without having to use the mother tongue and also know different uses of words and not the literal meaning. As for those who chose the Arabic dictionary, for them, the use of the Arabic

language increases their understanding, as well as learning words in both languages, especially difficult words.

Q13: *In your opinion, do you think the learning strategies (strategies that are used in learning) are necessary to understand vocabulary in order to comprehend the lesson?*
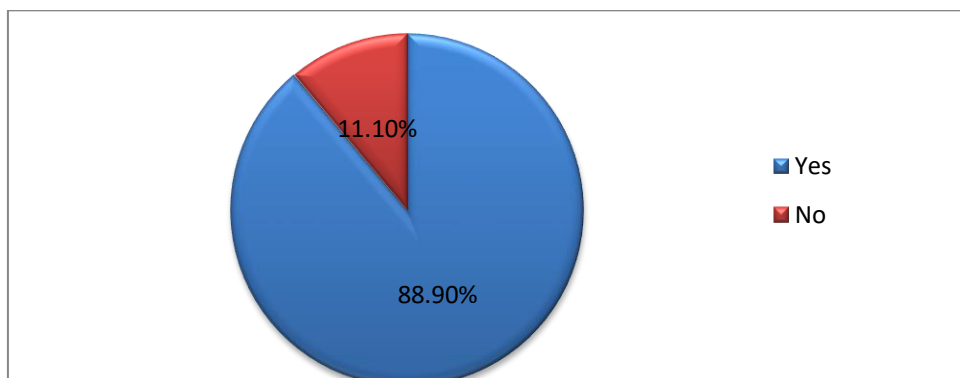
Graph17: *In your opinion, do you think the learning strategies (strategies that are used in learning) are necessary to understand vocabulary in order to comprehend the lesson?*

The graphic represents the opinion of students regarding the learning strategies whether they are necessary to understand vocabulary in order to comprehend the lesson or not. 80 (88.9%) of them said Yes from their employment of learning strategies, it became clear to them it is of great importance, and just 10 students (11.1%) said No; perhaps they were not benefited by it or they did not even know those strategies.

Q14: *When you encounter difficult vocabulary, do you:*
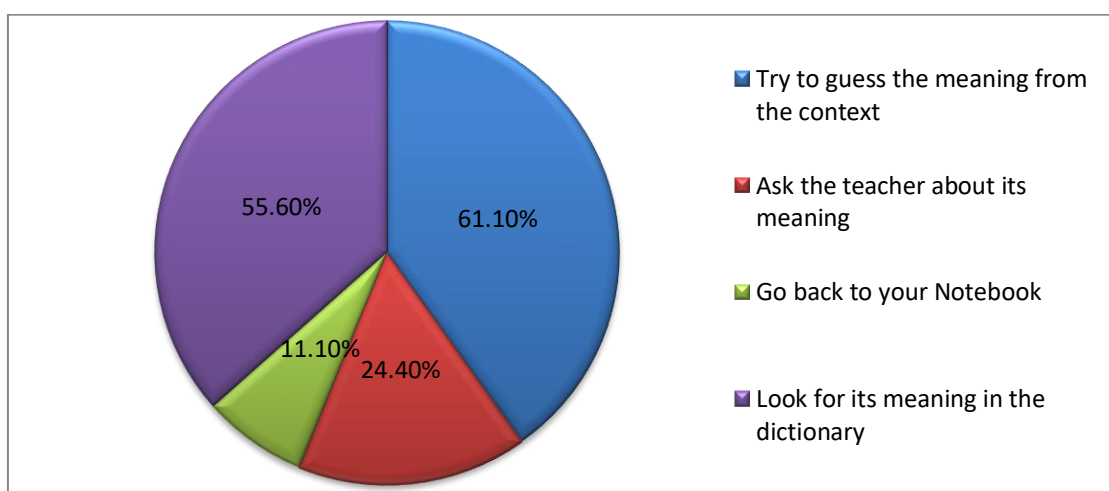
Graph18: *When you encounter difficult vocabulary, do you:*

This question aimed to know what students do when they encounter difficult vocabulary. 61.1% of students (55) try to guess the meaning from the context. 24.4% (22) they ask their teacher about its meaning, as for going back to notebook just 11.1% (10) doing that, while 55.6% of the students(50) look for its meaning in the dictionary, we allowed them to select more than one option since we knew that if one did not work out for them, they would use a different strategy.

Q15: *From the strategies in (Q11), which ones do think are most affective for you?*
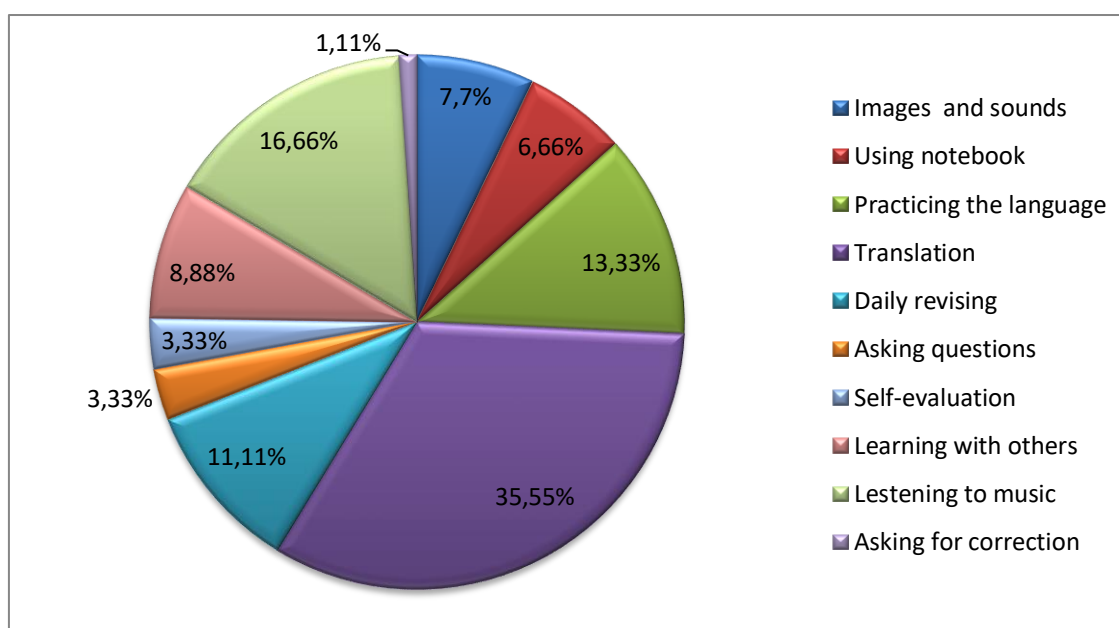
Graph19: *From the strategies in (Q11), which ones do think are most affective for you?*

This question elicits responses from students and their opinions about the most effective strategies for them from the ones mentioned in Question 11. Their responses varied: 35.55% (32 students) said translation; it can make learners quickly learn new words and remember their meaning easily. Also the use of mother tongue makes it easy to understand the words are learned. 16.66% (15 students) answered learning new words by listening to music, 13.33% (12 learners) learning with others, 8.88% (8 learners) learning with others, 11.11% (10 students) said daily revising, and with a lower percentage, 7.77% (7 students) images and sounds, 6.66% (6 students) using a notebook, 3.33% (3 students) asking questions, and only one student said asking for correction (1.11%), according to one of them 1.11% all the strategies are useful and effective.

Some of them suggested other strategies that we did not include. Reading suggested by 2 students (2.22%), watching movies and videos 4 students (4.44%), playing video games from young age one student (1.11%), and using dictionary 1.1%, mirroring 1.11%, phone apps 1.11%.

Q16*: What do you do to remember the new learned words?*
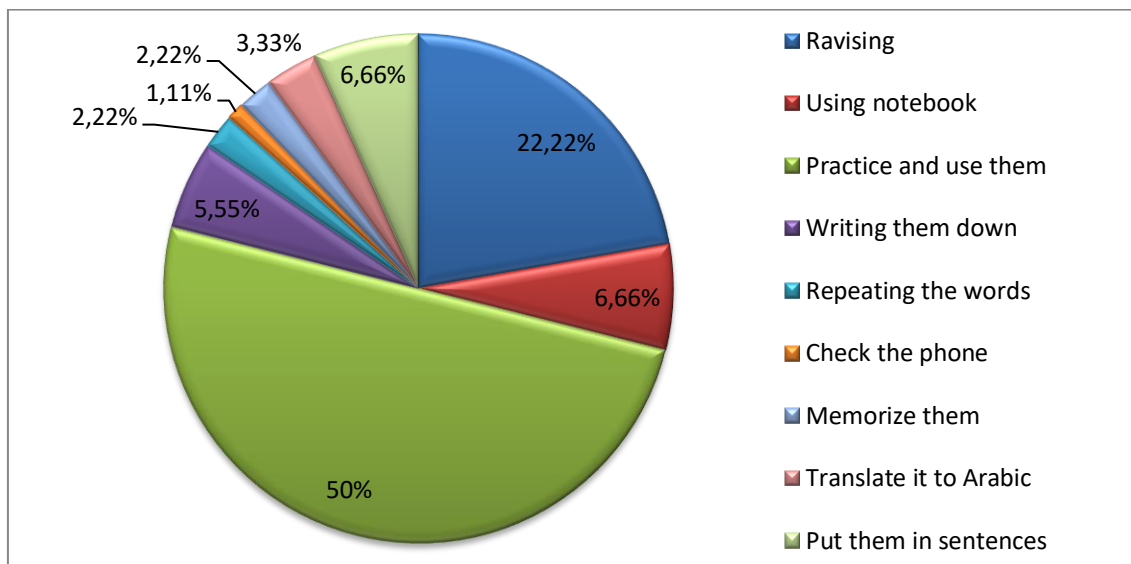
Graph20: *What do you do to remember the new learned words?*

The question is crucial since it seeks to determine students' techniques for remembering the newly learned words. 45 (50%) of students agreed that practice and using the new vocabulary was important to remember them; revising was also suggested by20 students 22.22% of them: using a notebook 6 students (6.66%), putting the words in sentences also 6 students (6.66%), translating to Arabic to remember them easily 3 students (3.33%), writing them down 5 students (5.55%), repeating the words 2 students (2.22%), memorizing them also 2 students (2.22%), and 2 students (2.22%) didn't answer; maybe they used to memorize the new vocabulary without using any techniques.

Q17: *Do you feel motivated to exchange vocabulary knowledge with your peers or within a group during the session and outside the classroom?*
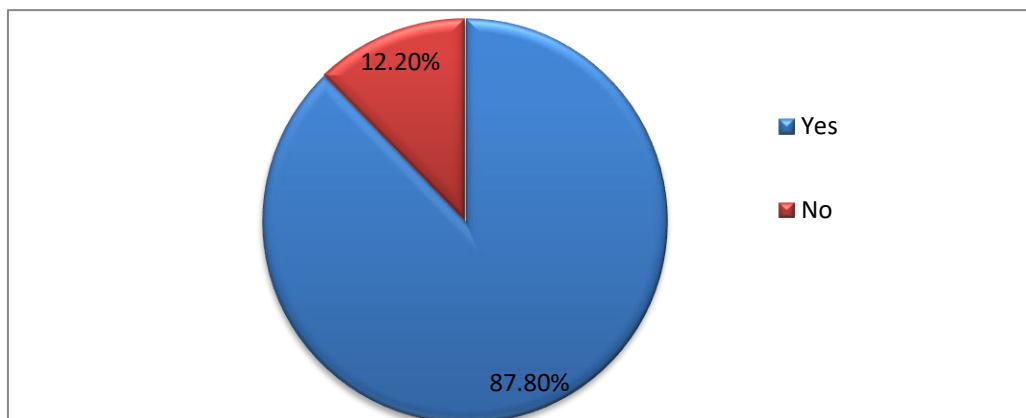
Graph21: *Do you feel motivated to exchange vocabulary knowledge with your peers or within a group during the session and outside the classroom?*

The graph above demonstrated that the majority of students 87.80% (79students) felt motivated to exchange vocabulary with their peers or within a group during the session and outside the classroom; therefore, they answered 'Yes '. While 12.20%(11students) answered ' No ' meaning that they do not like to exchange vocabulary with their classmates, they feel shy when speaking or fear of making mistakes in front of their colleagues.

Q18: A: *Do you think that Age and Gender affect the learning of new language?*
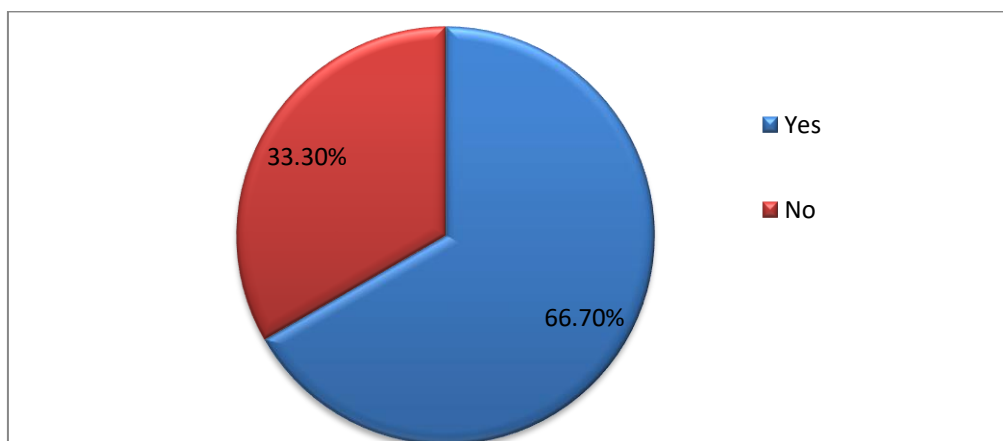
Graph22: A: *Do you think that Age and Gender affect the learning of new language?*

As shown in the graph above, 60 students who represent percentage of 66.7% have agreed that age and gender greatly affected learning a new language, due to several well-known prior studies and also from the personal experiences of some students, while 30

students (33.3%) disagreed maybe because they saw that the important thing was the students' intelligence regardless to the age or gender.

Q18: B: *According to you, at which age should people start learning a new language?*
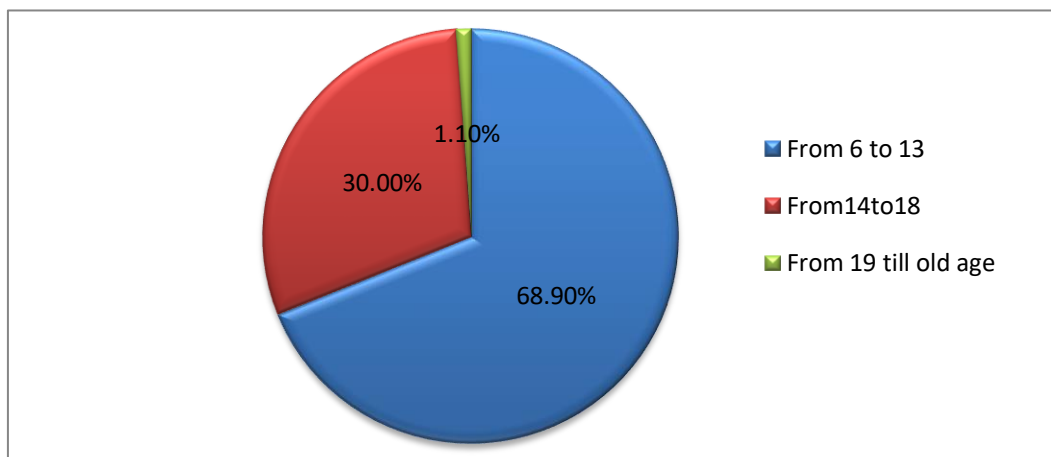
Graph23: B: *According to you, at which age should people start learning a new language?*

This question clarified   the informants' thought about the ideal age to begin learning a new language. 62 (68.9%) of the informants chose from 6 to 13, because most of the studies in the world said that kids were more energized and able to learn and memorize new language. Then 27 informants (30%) suggested from 14 to 18, and the least selected item was from 19 to old age by only one student (1.1%).

Q19: *Do you agree that female use more strategies than male when learning vocabulary?*
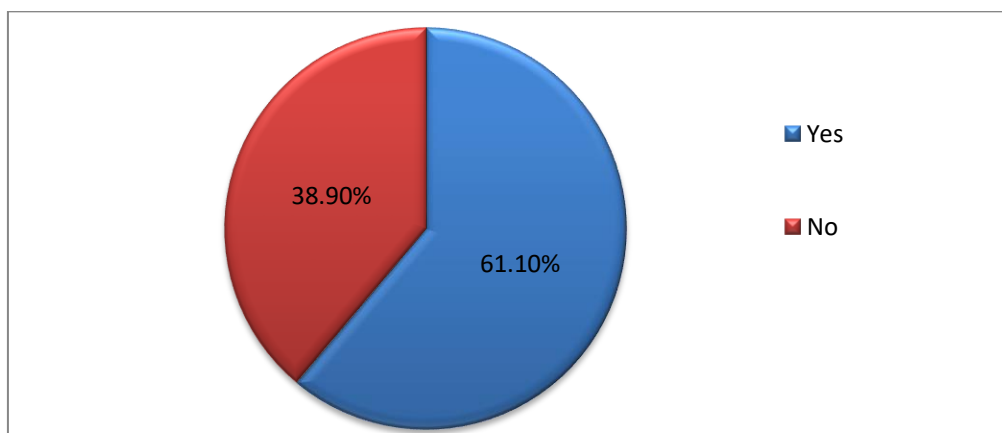
Graph23: *Do you agree that female use more strategies than male when learning vocabulary?*

As it is clarified in the pie chart above, 35 (38.9%) of students said No, they did not agree that female used more strategies than male when learning vocabulary. The respondents who said' Yes' estimated with 55 student (61.1%), maybe because female is more interested and careful to learn quickly and easily especially in the field of language.

2.4.3. Discussion of the Students ' Questionnaire Findings

The questionnaire included specific questions that were easy to understand; It is intended to discover the learning strategies that students utilize in order to improve their vocabulary when studying English as a foreign language, and whether demographic factors affect learning new vocabulary or not. The responses of the students documented carefully in tables and presented in graphs, furthermore, the results showed the following findings:

It can be noted through the responses to the students' questionnaire that (78.9%) of the students strongly agree with the idea of studying vocabulary as an independent subject during their university study, and this indicates their awareness of its great importance in the process of learning English, in addition to that it encourages students to study vocabulary constantly And seriously. Moreover, (88.9%) of the students confirm that the use of learning strategies helps a lot in proper and good learning. As for whether gender affects learning or vocabulary or not (61.10%) consider that females use more strategies than males in obtaining new words and that children learn more quickly and at a good level.

At the end students suggested different and new strategies to learn vocabulary easily such as translating Quran in English would help a lot, Online courses, educational apps, YouTube videos, podcasts, speaking with native speakers, watching movies, following Linguamarina(YouTube channel), playing video games, the two skills reading and listening. These were the top strategies that students reported and agreed to be effective to them.

2.5. Discussions of the Research Questions and Hypotheses

The analysis of the data collected with the questionnaire revealed a great deal of variation among the targeted students. According to the results, the students, in general, use all the direct and indirect strategies in a different and integrated way in order to obtain good results in their study of the new vocabulary.

The data collected by the target learners has been analyzed and interpreted and is now discussed to validate or reject the hypotheses put forward previously.

-With regard to the first hypothesis, in which a question is asked about the way first-year students of Ibn Khaldoun University learn vocabulary, the answer obtained through data analysis is that they use a mixture of direct and indirect strategies. It means that the hypothesis has been confirmed.

-As for the second hypothesis which relates to strategies that significantly affect vocabulary learning for first-year students at Tiaret University. And through the answers provided by the students, it was agreed that direct strategies are the ones that have a significant role and impact on learning.

-The last hypothesis, which indicates whether age and gender affect learning new vocabulary or not. The results have confirmed this.

In sum, the use of one strategy is not sufficient to learn vocabulary at the required level, so it is necessary to use several strategies together in order to facilitate learning. And since gender and age have a great influence on this, it is necessary to use strategies that match the level. For example, most of the male students added that they learn through video games, while most of the females said that they remember the words through notebooks and daily review.

2.6. Conclusion

The findings of the analysis of the students' questionnaires show that those are the main issues that have been investigated in this study.

The students' questionnaire showed that the majority of first-year students have chosen to study English language with complete conviction and that they like to study new vocabulary. The students agreed that vocabulary must be learned before learning grammar, for several reasons, including that the general meaning of the sentence is sufficient to understand the meaning without the need to translate each word alone. Students think that it is good to add lessons to study vocabulary. As for their choice of strategies, there was a mixture between the direct and the indirect, with a focus on the direct (Images and sounds, practicing the language, using notebook, daily revising and translation) and in translation they use the mother tongue because their vocabulary is fast. And to ensure the

memorization of the words they learned, they chose to practice and using them in several forms and revision, which makes them feel motivated when speaking. Also, from their personal experiences and what they see in society now, they said that age and gender affected greatly on learning new vocabulary. They also emphasized that strategies are necessary in order to organize the way they learn.

General conclusion

Vocabulary gets students engaged in the classroom and in many activities, however improving first-year EFL students' vocabulary is not a simple undertaking. The main concern in our research is to identify the vocabulary learning strategies that students use when learning English as a foreign language in order to improve their vocabulary. It also tries to determine the effect of age and gender on their learning and the strategies used. The current study took place at the department of foreign languages at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret, it included two chapters. The first chapter represents the theoretical background, which consists of an overview of vocabulary; its concepts, types, importance and vocabulary learning disabilities, in addition to LLS definition, the most important VLS; it also provides the classification of language learning strategies and parameters that affect LLS use.

While the second chapter is assigned to the analysis of the data collected from the students' questionnaire, which supports the previously stated hypotheses in the general introduction, as a result, first-year students use different vocabulary learning strategies, also confirming that age and gender affect learning new words. Moreover, females use more strategies than males. VLSs are essential learning aids for students, because they allow them to be autonomous learners and help them remember the meaning of the new words they learned.

Among the problems that we faced during the completion of this research is the lack of books in PDF format, lack of knowledge of using Word and Excel, which took us a lot of time, and also lack of experience in scientific research methodology. We also faced a problem with the students when submitting the questionnaire, as the majority avoided answering the open-ended questions.

To conclude, we can say that the research hypothesis has been confirmed and our outcome questions have been addressed.

Recommendations

Given the importance of vocabulary learning strategies, the following suggestions can be addressed to teachers:

- Explain the strategies and how to use them to the students and make them aware of their importance for good learning.

Try to allocate hours to teach vocabulary separately in order to focus and learn more.

- Using different teaching tools such as using video and audio in order to attract their attention and focus.

-Translation is a very effective strategy and since we are Muslims, translating the Quran will help a lot to acquire new vocabulary.

-Using the mother tongue from time to time in the classroom; this will help learners understand the difficult words and not forget them.

List of References

5 Most Common Learning Disabilities – Masters in Special Education Degree Program Guide.

   (2017). Masters-In-Special-Education.com; Masters-In-Special-Education. Retrieved

   January 27, 2023, from https://www.masters-in-special-education.com/lists/5-most-

   common-learning-disabilities/

Al-Faris, S., & Jasim, B. Y. (2021). Memory Strategies and Vocabulary Learning Strategies: Implications

   on Teaching and Learning Vocabulary. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Studies*, *3*(10),

   11–21. https://doi.org/10.32996/jhsss.2021.3.10.2

Alhaysony, M. (2017). Language Learning Strategies Use by Saudi EFL Students: The Effect of

   Duration of English Language Study and Gender. *Theory and Practice in Language

   Studies*, *7*(1), 18. From https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0701.03

Asiyaban, A., & Bagheri, M. (2012). Does Translation Contribute to Learners' Free Active

   Vocabulary? *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics*, *16*(1), 111–121.

   From https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ979925.pdf

Bryan R Jackson A. A., B. F. A. (n.d.). Passive to Active Vocabulary. *Www.academia.edu*, 7.

   Retrieved January 24, 2023, from

   https://www.academia.edu/44921142/Passive_to_Active_Vocabulary

Chen, Z. (2016). Language Learning Strategies Based on the Educational Concept of Innovation

   and Entrepreneurship. *OALib*, *03*(06), 1–6. https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1102780

Cmabridge dictionary online. (n.d).Vocabulary. Retrieved January 24,2023 from

Co, P. (2021, July 26). *The Best Age for Kids to Learn a Second Language*. Parent Co. Retrieved

   February 9,2023, from https://www.parent.com/blogs/conversations/the-best-age-for-kids-

   to-learn-a-second-language

Colon, A., & Martinez, S. (2015). Building language with the picture word inductive model.

Fatma, G. & Ouassila,K. (2022). *The impact of Facebook language use on EFL students'*

    vocabulary learning [Master's thesis,The university of Tiaret, Algeria].

    From http://dspace.univ-tiaret.dz:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/2354

Ghazal, L. (n.d.). LEARNING VOCABULARY IN EFL CONTEXTS THROUGH

    VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES. *Novitas-ROYAL*, 84–91. Retrieved

    February 11, 2023, from https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/111894

How to use a dictionary. (n.d.). BBC Bitesize. Retrieved February 4, 2023, from

    https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zbmv2sg/articles/zjyyb82#:

    https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/vocabulary

Ieltsboost. (n.d.). *Reading Skills: Guessing New Words from Context | IELTS*. Ieltsboost.com.

    Retrieved February 9, 2023, from https://ieltsboost.com/lessons/reading/reading-skills-

    guessing-new-words-context

International Dyslexia Association, & Virginia W. Berninger, Ph.D. (2019). *Understanding*

    Dysgraphia - International Dyslexia Association. International Dyslexia Association.

    Retrieved March 2,2023, from https://dyslexiaida.org/understanding-dysgraphia/

Karimian, Z., & Talebinejad, M. R. (2013). Students' Use of Translation as a Learning Strategy in

    EFL Classroom. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *4*(3), 605–610.

    https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.4.3.605-610

Liao, P. (2006). EFL Learners' Beliefs about and Strategy Use of Translation in English Learning.

    RELC Journal, *37*(2), 191–215. From https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688206067428

Loh, J. (2017, March 8). VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION THROUGH THE USE OF

    PICTURES. *EFL Magazine*. Retrieved February 10,2023, from

    https://www.eflmagazine.com/vocabulary-instruction-use-pictures/

MOFAREH ALQAHTANI (2015). The importance of vocabulary in language learning and how

to be taught. International Journal of Teaching and Education, Vol. III(3), pp. 21-34. ,

DOI: 10.52950/TE.2015.3.3.002

Nation, I. S. P., & Internet Archive. (1990). Teaching and learning vocabulary. In *Internet Archive*

(pp. 155–156). New York : Heinle & Heinle Publishers. From

https://archive.org/details/teachinglearning0000nati/page/n3/mode/2up

Neuman, S. B., & Dwyer, J. (2009). Missing in Action: Vocabulary Instruction in Pre-K. *The*

Reading Teacher, *62*(5), 384–392. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27639449

NEVAL, B. (July, 2007). *The Effect of Vocabulary Notebooks on Vocabulary Acquisition*

[Master'sthesis, The university of Ankara, Turkey].

O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A.U. (1990).Language learning strategies in second language

acquisition .230-231.Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Oxford, R. L. (1990, January 1). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should*

Know. From https://doi.org/10.1604/9780838428627

Schmitt, N. (1995). Vocabulary notebooks: theoretical underpinnings and practical suggestions.

ELT Journal, *49*(2), 133–143. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/49.2.133

Souad, A.&Asma, K. (2018). *Investigating Students" Strategies for Learning Vocabulary*

[Master's thesis,The university of Mila,Algeria]. Retrieved from http://dspace.centre-univ-

mila.dz/jspui/handle/123456789/111

Suardi, S., & Sakti, J. E. (2019). Teacher Difficulties in Teaching Vocabulary. *IDEAS: Journal on*

English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature, *7*(2), 93–94.

https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v7i2.1026

Termcoord, & Karavasili, K. (2017, May 3). *The age factor in second language acquisition*.

Terminology Coordination Unit. Retrieved February 9,2023, from

https://termcoord.eu/2017/05/age-factor-second-language-acquisition/

Tertiary, P. P. P. S. Indicator D5. Who are the teachers?. Retreived April 15,2023, from

https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2021_892d714e-en

The Jesuit University of New York.

Thornbury, S., & Internet Archive. (2007). How to teach vocabulary. In *Internet Archive* (p. 13).

Harlow : Longman. From

https://archive.org/details/howtoteachvocabu0000thor_y8i6/page/12/mode/2up?q=13

Turito. (2022, August 30). *Guessing meaning from context | Turito*. US Learn. Retrieved February

9,2023, from https://www.turito.com/learn/english/guessing-meaning-grade-7

Vocabulary. (n.d). In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved January 24, 2023, from

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vocabulary

Appendix: Students" Questionnaire

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of Ibn Khaldoun, Tiaret

English Department

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is to collect information for a Master's dissertation about "Improving Vocabulary Learning Strategies". Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions. Your contribution is of a great importance for the success of this research work. Be sure that your responses will be anonymous and will be used for research purposes only.

Section One: General Information

Q1. Gender: A. Male □   B. Female □

Q2. Age: A. 17-20 □

B. 20-22 □

C. more than 22 □

Q3. How do you consider your level in English?

 a. Very good □   b. Good □   c. Average □   d. Poor □

Q4. Your choice to study English was:

 a. Personal □   b. Imposed □

Section Two: Improving Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Q1. How much do you like learning new vocabulary?

 a. A lot □   b. A little □   c. Not at all □

Q2. How often does your teacher present new vocabulary during the course?

 a. Frequently □   b. Sometimes □   c. Rarely □   d. Never□

Q3: Students should learn vocabulary first than Grammar when acquiring a second language

   1-Strongly disagree ☐   2-Disagree☐   3-Agree ☐   4-Strongly agree ☐

Q4. How do you describe your classroom atmosphere during learning new vocabulary?

   a. Attractive ☐   b. Boring ☐   c. Normal ☐

Q5: Do you think vocabulary should be taught as a module?

   Yes☐   **No** ☐

Q6: In general, when you are reading a written text / book do you find it:

   a. Easy to understand / comprehend   ☐

   b. Difficult to understand / comprehend ☐

   c. Somehow difficult   ☐

   d. Somehow easy   ☐

Q7: In case you have difficulties to understand vocabulary, is it because of:

   a. Difficult vocabulary ☐

   b. Intended meaning (the meaning is not clear; you have to read between lines) ☐

   c. The use of idioms (you can't know the meaning of the phrase by one word only)/ metaphors (you do not know their meaning/use) ☐

 Other reason(s): **……………………………………………………………………**

Q8: The use of Vocabulary learning strategies (strategies that you use to learn vocabulary) **help students improve their vocabulary knowledge and autonomous Learning** (learn by yourself)**.**

1-Strongly disagree☐   2-Disagree☐   3-Agree ☐   4-Strongly agree☐

Q9: Does your vocabulary knowledge encourage you to participate?

   a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

Q10: When reading, do you think it is necessary to understand all the vocabulary in order to comprehend the whole text?

   a. Yes ☐   b. No☐

 Why? ……………………………………………………………………………...

Q11: How do you learn new vocabulary? Through: (You can choose more than one strategy)

o   Images and sounds   ° Asking questions

o   Using Notebook   ° Self-evaluation (evaluate your own work.)

o   Practicing the language   ° Learning with others(group, friends)

o Translation   ° learning new words by listening to music

o Daily revising   ° Asking for correction

o Other ways: ……………………………………………………………………

Q12: If you translate a word, you use:

a. An English dictionary   □

b. An Arabic-English dictionary   □

c. A French-English dictionary   □

Q13: In your opinion, do you think the learning strategies (strategies that used in learning) are necessary to understand the vocabulary in order to comprehend the lesson? a. Yes   □   b. No□

Q14: When you encounter difficult vocabulary, do you:

a. Try to guess the meaning from the context □

b. Ask the teacher about its meaning □

c. Go back to your Notebook □

d. Look for its meaning in the dictionary □

Q15: From the strategies in (Q11), which ones do think are most affective for you?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

Q16: What do you do to remember the new learned words?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

Q17. Do you feel motivated to exchange vocabulary knowledge with your peers or within a group during the session and outside the classroom?

a. Yes □   b. No□

Q18: A: Do you think that Age and Gender affect the learning of new language?

a. Yes □   b. No □

B: According to you, at which age should people start learning a new language?

a. From 6 to 13 ☐   b. From 14 to 18 ☐   c. From 19 till old age. ☐

Q19: Do you agree that female use more strategies than male when learning vocabulary?

Yes☐   **No** ☐

Q20: Do you have any other suggestions concerning the materials or specific strategies that help in learning vocabulary correctly?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

Thank you for you kindness and for giving time to help us

Follow up to the questionnaire:

Q1: What are the motives (reasons) that made the majority of students prefer to specialize in the English language by personal decision?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

Q2: The idea of studying vocabulary as a separate module was liked by more than half of the students. Why?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

Q3: When translating a word, you use an Arabic-English dictionary, why? An English dictionary, why?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

Q4: Why translation is the most effective strategy that students use to improve their vocabulary?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

Thank you for your answers

Summary

Vocabulary is one of the most important skills in learning a new language. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to discover the vocabulary learning strategies used by first-year English students at Ibn Khaldun University in the study of English as a foreign language. It also studies effective strategies for them in learning vocabulary, as well as whether age and gender affect their learning to confirm the hypotheses of the study. An online survey was distributed to collect the necessary information from first-year English language students at the University of Tiaret. The results obtained showed that first-year students use a combination of all strategies, however direct strategies are used more frequently than indirect strategies, and that gender and age have a significant impact on learning, especially in learning foreign languages. A number of recommendations have been made to help students learn new words easily.

Key words: *Vocabulary, vocabulary learning strategies, EFL students, Language learning Age, Gender.*

الملخص

تعد المفردات من أهم المهارات في تعلم لغة جديدة. لذلك ، فإن الهدف الرئيسي من هذه الدراسة هو اكتشاف استراتيجيات تعلم المفردات المستخدمة من قبل طلاب السنة الأولى في اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة ابن خلدون في دراسة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. كما يدرس الاستراتيجيات الفعالة بالنسبة لهم في تعلم المفردات ، وكذلك ما إذا كان العمر والجنس يؤثران على تعلمهم لتأكيد فرضيات الدراسة. تم توزيع استطلاع عبر الإنترنت لجمع المعلومات اللازمة من طلاب السنة الأولى للغة الإنجليزية في جامعة تيارت. أظهرت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها أن طلاب السنة الأولى يستخدمون مزيجًا من جميع الاستراتيجيات ، ولكن يتم استخدام الاستراتيجيات المباشرة بشكل متكرر أكثر من الاستراتيجيات غير المباشرة ، وأن الجنس والعمر لهما تأثير كبير على التعلم ، خاصة في تعلم اللغات الأجنبية. تم تقديم عدد من التوصيات لمساعدة الطلاب على تعلم كلمات جديدة بسهولة

الكلمات الأساسية: المفردات ، استراتيجيات تعلم المفردات ، طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ، تعلم اللغة ، العمر ، الجنس.

Résumé

Le vocabulaire est l'une des compétences les plus importantes dans l'apprentissage d'une nouvelle langue. Par conséquent, l'objectif principal de cette étude est de découvrir les stratégies d'apprentissage du vocabulaire utilisées par les étudiants de première année d'anglais à l'Université Ibn Khaldun dans l'étude de l'anglais comme langue étrangère. Il étudie également des stratégies efficaces pour eux dans l'apprentissage du vocabulaire, ainsi que si l'âge et le sexe affectent leur apprentissage pour confirmer les hypothèses de l'étude. Une enquête en ligne a été distribuée pour recueillir les informations nécessaires auprès des étudiants de première année en langue anglaise à l'Université de Tiaret. Les résultats obtenus ont montré que les élèves de première année utilisent une combinaison de toutes les stratégies, cependant les stratégies directes sont plus fréquemment utilisées que les stratégies indirectes, et que le sexe et l'âge ont un impact significatif sur les apprentissages, en particulier dans l'apprentissage des langues étrangères. Un certain nombre de recommandations ont été faites pour aider les élèves à apprendre facilement de nouveaux mots.

Mots clés : Vocabulaire, Stratégies d'apprentissage du vocabulaire, Etudiants EFL, Apprentissage des langues, Age, Sexe.