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Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Vocabulary Knowledge among EFL Tertiary Learners: Match or Mismatch?

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Abstract:

This paper reports the findings of a research study which aimed to identify the range and frequency of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) students use in two departments at Al-Zawia University in Libya. Using a vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire, findings showed that students in both departments used discovery strategies such as using dictionaries, and guessing meaning from context more frequently than consolidation strategies such as practicing in groups, making word lists, or guessing vocabulary knowledge. The findings of this paper provides several implications for English language teaching in Libya and elsewhere.

Key words: vocabulary learning strategies (VLS); vocabulary knowledge; discovery strategies; consolidation strategies.

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1. Introduction

The research on good language learners is traced back to the seventies when it started with the studies of Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975). After these initiatives, a large amount of research into learner strategies was conducted by many researchers (e.g. Rubin, 1987; O'Malley, 1987; Wenden, 1987a, 1987b; Oxford, 1989, 1990, 1993; Oxford and Cohen, 1992; O'Malley and Chamot 1990). These studies yielded conclusions that differences between successful and unsuccessful language learners could be caused by quantity or quality of learning strategies or combination of both.

More attention has also been paid to vocabulary learning by researchers, materials designers, and teachers who have been trying to find answers to questions such as the strategies that learners use to acquire new words or to remember them. Some learners may be unaware of the various vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) they might use in order to develop their vocabulary acquisition.

Some researchers (e.g. Schmitt, 1997; Stoffer, 1995; Nation, 2001) involved in classifying VLS. The taxonomy for the current study is mainly based on Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy of VLS (see appendix 1), which was basically based on Oxford's (1990) social, memory, cognitive and metacognitive categories. It lists 58 VLS, and is categorized in two categories: (1) the discovery strategies that are "useful for the initial discovery of a word's meaning" and (2) the consolidation strategies that are "useful for remembering that word once it has been introduced" (Schmitt, 2000, p. 135). In addition, these strategies were further classified into five groups. The discovery category includes *determination and social* strategies. The consolidation category includes *social, memory, cognitive, and metacognitive* strategies.

The five categories of strategies were defined by Schmitt (1997) as follows: *determination strategies* are "used by an individual when faced with discovering a new word's meaning without recourse to another person's expertise" (p. 205). *Social strategies* are used when one asks other people (e.g. classmates, teachers) to understand a word. *Memory strategies* entail linking the word to be learned with some previously learned knowledge. The definition of *cognitive strategies* was adopted from Oxford (1990) as "manipulation or transformation of the target language by the learner" (p.43). Finally, *metacognitive strategies* involve "a conscious overview of the learning process and making decisions about planning, monitoring, or evaluating the best ways to study" (Schmitt, 1997, p. 205).

The current study aims to identify the vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) used by Libyan English language majors at university level. The focus is particularly on Libyan students to see whether the Libyan context is typical or different from other contexts since there are no studies related to VLS conducted on the Libyan context. It goes further to explore their vocabulary knowledge and proceeds to investigate the relationship between these learners' VLS and their vocabulary knowledge.

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2. Methods

2.1. Participants

The participants of this study were all the 4th year undergraduate students (112 students) majoring in English as a foreign language at the faculty of Arts/ Al:Zawia University, Zawia, Libya. They represented two English language departments at Al:Zawia University in the cities of Zawia and Sabratha. Zawia students (Group A) were 56 (6 males and 50 females), intended to be 60 (the total number), but four did not turn up for various reasons. Sabratha students (Group B) were 56 (6 males and 50 females) who turned up of the total number of 71 students. So coincidentally the two groups were identical in the number of students as well as their gender. Their age ranged from 20 to 45 with a mean age of 22.24 (SD = 3.39) for group A (GA) subjects and from 20 to 42 with a mean age of 21.97 (SD = 3.24) for group B (GB) subjects. Most of the subjects were in their twenties (20-23 years) so they reflect the actual age of university students.

Some factors have been taken into account by the researcher regarding the choice of subjects. First, they were in a position, as current English learners, to bring in their immediate experience in language learning. Second, having spent three years learning English at university level, 4th year students should have more experience than their counterparts in other levels, so they would have their own beliefs about language learning, particularly VLS. Third, they should have received their pre-college English learning in an EFL setting in order to reflect the actual situation of English learning in Libya. Therefore, the subjects who have learnt English abroad (if any) would be excluded. This would help us discover the VLS used by EFL learners at this stage of their study and could help make more generalizations in terms of findings.

3. Data Collection Instruments

3.1. Vocabulary Learning Strategies Questionnaire (VLSQ)

This questionnaire was chosen to measure the range and the frequency of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) EFL learners use. It consists of 44 items related to VLS (see appendix 2). The VLSQ items have been developed in some studies (e.g. Schmitt, 1997) and proved to be effective in obtaining data about learners' VLS.

3.2. The Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT)

The Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) which was designed by Nation (1983, 1990) is a multiple-choice vocabulary test. It has been widely used by researchers to measure the EFL/ESL learners' vocabulary size receptively at four word frequency levels: the 2000 word level, 3000 word level, 5000 word level, 10,000 word level; it also measures the learners' academic vocabulary also called University Word List (henceforth UWL). The VLT has been validated and widely used in vocabulary research studies by researchers (Read, 1988; Schmitt and Meara, 1997; Laufer and Paribakht, 1998; Beglar and Hunt, 1999; Schmitt et al., 2001).

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3.3. The Vocabulary Size Test of Controlled Productive Ability (CPA)

The CPA is used to test the ability to use a word when asked to do so by a teacher or researcher (performance-based). The overall structure of the CPA test is modelled on the Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) that was originally made by Paul Nation (1983, 1990) and utilizing the same four word frequency levels and University Word List (UWL). The CPA is “reliable, valid (in that the levels distinguished between different proficiency groups) and practical” (Laufer and Nation, 1999, p. 33).

3.4. Semi-structured Interviews

15 participants were randomly selected out of 56 respondents according to their scores in the vocabulary knowledge tests and were divided into three groups of five. The high vocabulary knowledge group (HVK) represents the 5 students with the highest scores, the moderate vocabulary knowledge group (MVK) represents the 5 students with moderate scores, and the low vocabulary knowledge group (LVK) represents the 5 students with the lowest scores. The interviews were conducted as a group with the aims of eliciting information about learners’ perceptions of VLS use and most importantly, probing in detail how these learners use VLS.

4. Data Analysis Procedures

- Descriptive analysis of the vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire (VLSQ) items to identify the overall pattern of VLS used by the respondents;
- Descriptive analysis of the scores of the two vocabulary tests: VLT and CPA;
- Correlation analysis between vocabulary test scores to see how learners’ vocabulary knowledge in terms of reception and controlled production relate to each other;
- Correlation analysis between the VLS and the vocabulary knowledge.

5. Results

5.1. Vocabulary Learning Strategies Questionnaire (VLSQ) Analysis

The VLSQ items were analyzed by utilizing descriptive statistics. The VLSQ responses were scored using a score scale of 0 to 100. 100 was given for ‘always’, 80 for ‘usually’, 60 for ‘often’, 40 for ‘occasionally’, 20 for ‘seldom’, and 0 for ‘never’ (6 point scale). The score average for each of the five categories was calculated by dividing the total mean scores of the strategies by the number of strategies. The mean score for each strategy was calculated by dividing the subjects’ total scores by the number of the subjects. The way total scores were measured was by adding together the scores for all the subjects’ responses for each strategy. Table 1 below shows the score averages for each category and for the grand mean.

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Table 1: Score averages of the five categories

Category	Score Average Group A	Score Average Group B
Determination strategies	56	58
Social strategies	33	39
Memory strategies	47	52
Cognitive strategies	47	58
Metacognitive strategies	40	51
Grand mean	45	52

- **Determination strategies**

The determination strategies were found to be quite frequently used by both groups with a score average of 56 for group A (GA) and 58 for group B (GB); the most frequent strategies (in descending order) were (1) guessing from context (81 for GA; 73 for GB), (2) using bilingual dictionaries (English/Arabic) (76 for GA; 86 for GB), and (3) using monolingual dictionaries (English/English) (63 for GA; 56 for GB). The most significant difference between the two groups in this category was in using bilingual dictionaries (Arabic/ English) that received a low mean score (31) from GA respondents compared to a high mean score (66) from GB respondents.

- **Social Strategies**

Compared to other categories, the category of social strategies was found to be the most infrequently used by the respondents of both groups with a low score average of 33 for GA and 39 for GB respondents. 1 out of 7 social strategies can be considered as frequently used by both groups: asking classmate for meaning received a mean score of 60 from the respondents of both groups.

- **Memory Strategies**

The use of memory strategies was fairly frequent by both groups with a score average of 47 for GA and 52 for GB respondents. Three strategies received similar mean scores from both groups, they include (in descending order) (1) connecting to personal experience (62), (2) study part of speech (54), and (3) make image of the form of the word (45).

Connecting to personal experience was the most frequently used strategy for GA respondents, whereas studying the sound of the word (55 for GA; 65 for GB) and studying spelling (57 for GA; 65 for GB) were the most frequently used strategies for GB respondents. The two groups were consistent in terms of ranking the least frequently used memory strategies; they were (in ascending order) as follows: (1) use keyword method

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(22 for GA and 34 for GB), (2) Use scales for gradable adjectives (27 for GA; 49 for GB), (3) associate word with its coordinates (35 for GA; 41 for GB), (4) Make image of the form of the word (45 for both groups).

- **Cognitive Strategies**

The category of cognitive strategies was ranked in the middle position in terms of use by GA respondents with a score average of 47; whereas for GB respondents, this category is sharing the top position with the determination strategies with a score average of 58.

Both groups ranked the two strategies of (1) repeating the word over and over (68 for GA; 73 for GB), and (2) writing the word many times (59 for GA; 62 for GB) at the top in terms of use with higher mean scores for GB respondents. Keeping vocabulary notebook was one of the least frequently used strategies for GA with a low score of 34, whereas it is quite frequently used by GB respondents with a mean score of 56.

- **Metacognitive Strategies**

With score averages of 41 for GA and 51 for GB respondents, the metacognitive strategies were more frequently used by GB respondents. Similarities between the two groups exist in the rank order among strategies; the two strategies of (1) skipping the new word (26 for GA; 28 for GB) and (2) assessing vocabulary knowledge (22 for GA; 33 for GB) were the least frequently used by both groups, whereas the strategy of watching TV (67 for GA; 66 for GB) was the most frequently used. The significant differences between the two groups in terms of mean scores include (in descending order) the strategies of (1) using computer programs (29 for GA; 49 for GB), (2) listening to English radio programmes (45 for GA; 61 for GB), (3) reading English newspapers and magazines (38 for GA; 51 for GB), (4) revising words using spaced repetition (41 for GA; 54 for GB), and (5) continuing to study word over time (43 for GA; 55 for GB).

5.2.Descriptive Analysis of the Scores of Vocabulary Tests

The descriptive analysis comprises the minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviations of each frequency level of the two vocabulary tests. Learners achieved higher scores in the VLT than the CPA. Also the gap between the scores gets wider as we move from the lower frequency levels to the higher frequency levels. The VLT scores are out of 30 at each level and the Total score is out of 120, the results show that there are many individual differences among learners in terms of the range of scores achieved (e.g. 7-30 for GA; 1-26 for GB in the 2000VLT). Compared to receptive vocabulary knowledge, the Libyan students' controlled productive vocabulary knowledge is less. In all word frequency levels including the Total scores for the CPA, there are students who achieved a minimum score of 0 whereas the highest score does not exceed 15 out of 18 for group A (GA) respondents and 11 for group B (GB) respondents.. But bear in mind that unlike the VLT scores, the scores for the CPA are out of a maximum score of 18 and the Total score is out of 72 . Moreover, the mean scores in all frequency levels for GA are significantly higher than those for GB. Figures 1a and 1b below show the mean percentages of the VLT and the CPA.

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Fig. 1a: Comparing the mean percentages of the VLT and the CPA (Group A)

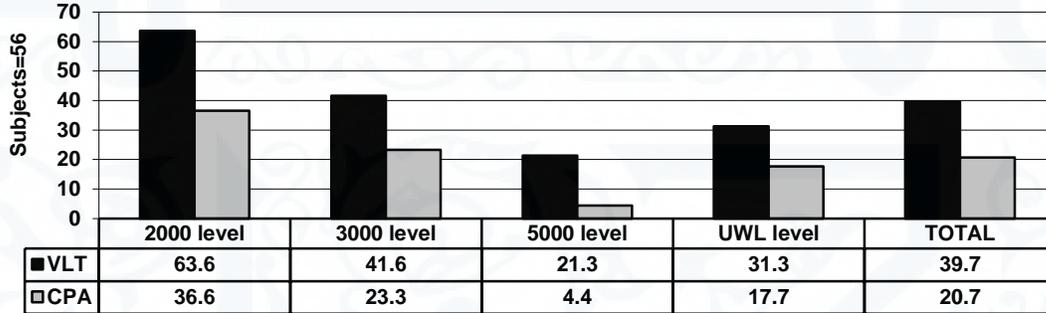
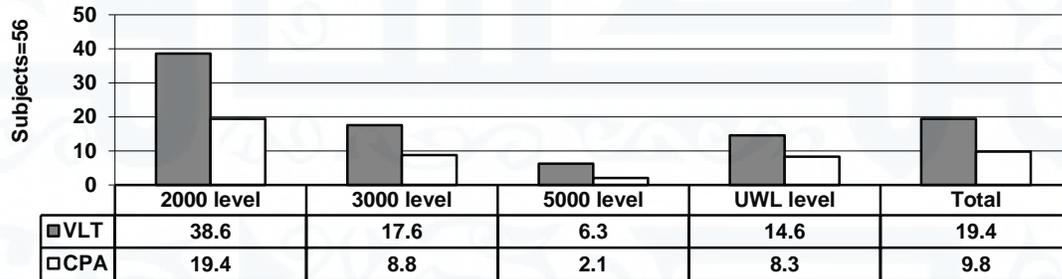


Fig. 1b: Comparing the mean percentages of the VLT and the CPA (Group B)



5.2.1. The Relationship between Vocabulary Test Scores

The first point to establish is that there is an internal positive correlation among the elements of the VLT and CPA. The results also show significant correlations across all word frequency levels of the VLT and CPA. These correlations ranged from moderate to high. For example, a very high Correlation ($r=.79$, $p<.01$) between the *3000VLT* and the *3000CPA*.

5.3. The relationship between VLS and vocabulary knowledge

With respect to GA respondents, we obtained some statistically significant correlations between VLS and various elements of VLT and CPA, distributed as follows:

- Determination strategies: *checking for L1 cognate* and *using Arabic/ English dictionary* were negatively correlated with the VLT, as were *using English/Arabic dictionary* with the two measures (VLT and CPA) and *breaking word up into main parts* with the CPA; *using monolingual dictionaries* and *guessing meaning from context* were positively correlated with the two measures, as was *identifying part of speech* with the three measures.

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- Memory strategies: *learning words of an idiom together* was positively correlated with the two measures.
- Cognitive strategies: *making own word lists* was positively correlated with the VLT and the CPA.
- Metacognitive strategies: *using computer programs* was positively correlated with the CPA; as was *reading English newspapers* with the VLT and the CPA.

Compared to GA, for GB respondents we obtained fewer correlations between VLS and the VLT, CPA, and FPA elements, distributed as follows:

- Determination strategies: *identifying part of speech* was positively correlated with the VLT and the CPA.
- Social strategies: *asking classmate for meaning* was negatively correlated with the two measures; as was *discovering meaning through group work* with the CPA.
- Memory strategies: *making image of the form of the word*, *studying the sound of the word* and *learning words of an idiom together* were positively correlated with the two measures.
- Cognitive strategies: *taking notes in class* was positively correlated with the VLT.
- Metacognitive strategies: *listening to radio* was positively correlated with the VLT.
- No statistically significant correlations were found between any strategy of the categories of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and any of the CPA word frequency levels for GB respondents.

6. Discussion

6.1. Range and Frequency of Use of VLS

The most frequently used of all strategies by these EFL learners were the discovery strategies of guessing meaning from context, using bilingual dictionaries (English/Arabic), and monolingual dictionaries. These results are congruent with the results of Schmitt's (1997) and Gu and Johnson's (1996) studies. Yet, differences between student interviewees were observed in terms of ways of use. While high vocabulary knowledge (HVK) students reported that they used bilingual dictionaries when they could not understand the meaning of a new word after consulting other reference sources like guessing or monolingual dictionaries, moderate vocabulary knowledge (MVK) and low vocabulary knowledge (LVK) students usually use English/Arabic dictionaries immediately after they come across a new word; they indicated that it is easier and faster compared to using a monolingual dictionary.

These differences could be attributed to HVK students having more vocabulary knowledge that helped them make use of other strategies such as guessing meaning from context and monolingual dictionaries which require certain vocabulary knowledge to be

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used successfully as Laufer (1997) suggested that knowledge of about 3000 word families is a prerequisite for making a successful guess. HVK are more conscious about managing and planning their learning (metacognitive strategies), i.e. they would try various strategies in sequence on each unknown word as Scholfield (1999) suggested that dictionary use should not be used as an alternative, rather “strategies can be used in sequence on the same lexical problem” (p. 18). In doing so, they would use more appropriate strategies for getting the meaning and learning the new word in the long run.

Interestingly, while using bilingual dictionaries (Arabic/English) is the least frequent discovery strategy for GA learners, it is a frequent strategy for GB learners. On the other hand, GA learners reported more frequent use of monolingual dictionaries than their GB counterparts. This could indicate that GA’s vocabulary knowledge is better than that of GB, as shown in the results of vocabulary tests. Moreover, differences among the three groups of interviewees are obvious from their responses to using Arabic/ English dictionaries. HVK students reported that they had never used this strategy, while some MVK and most of LVK students reported frequent use of it when involved in writing activities; some LVK students said that they think and write in Arabic first, then they translate from Arabic into English using Arabic/English dictionaries; this is certainly due to the fact that they do not have enough productive L2 vocabulary to express themselves in English. It also indicates that writing is ignored as a skill and writing activities were probably done out of class where teachers’ focus is only on product instead of process. This, of course, is done without any monitoring from teachers who should be familiar with how their students go about writing as an essential skill of language learning.

With regard to consolidation strategies, the two cognitive strategies of verbal and written repetition come at the top in terms of use. This frequent use could be attributed both to the ease of using them as rote strategies and to learners being used to those strategies since they were in pre-college where the teacher makes the class repeat words aloud as a typical way of teaching pronunciation and introducing new words in Libyan schools, as some student interviewees reported. It also indicates that the Libyan EFL learners may not have other alternatives to be used instead of or along with these rote strategies. Moreover teachers, as student interviewees reported, pay no attention to strategy training which plays a crucial role in developing language learning (Nation, 2001; Macaro, 2006). Wenden (1987b) claims that “learner training remains a secondary concern in many second language classrooms” (p. 159).

By comparing the two groups in terms of strategy use, they to a great extent seem to be similar in terms of the rank order among VLS. For example, the determination strategies ranked highest and the social strategies lowest in terms of use by both groups. Still, we should not simply argue that there is no difference between the two groups of learners. Instead we should consider Macaro’s (2006) suggestions that differences in language learning strategies use exist between groups (e.g. Group A and Group B, or HVK, MVK and LVK in this study) as well as individuals; the individual differences identified in the current study were in line with the findings of other studies (e.g. Naiman et al.,1996; Ahmed, 1989). Although the differences in strategy use between the two groups were not

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statistically significant in most cases, there were some unexpected significant differences in terms of mean scores. One major difference was found to be in using bilingual dictionaries (Arabic/English) that was very infrequently used by GA learners but very frequently used by GB learners; some possible explanations for this were discussed earlier in this section. Most importantly, the important thing would not be the difference between the two groups in absolute scores, as is the case here, so much as the difference in rank order between the strategies, and here there is hardly any difference.

6.2.Vocabulary knowledge

The results show a clear pattern of declining scores across frequency levels from highest to lowest in the VLT and CPA word frequency levels and from receptive knowledge (VLT scores) to controlled productive knowledge (CPA scores). This gap means that learners are unable to use their receptive knowledge of vocabulary in productive situations. Hence, it is a must for such learners to be more exposed to the language through language in use activities.

The findings also show that there were internal high positive correlations within the elements of the VLT and CPA. This to a great extent confirms that the learners who did well in a lower frequency level (e.g. 3000 word level) could normally be assumed to have done well in a higher frequency level and vice versa. Significantly moderate to high positive correlations were observed across all word frequency levels of the VLT and CPA. These positive correlations could mean that learners with higher receptive vocabulary knowledge are also higher in productive knowledge and vice versa.

6.3.Relationship between VLS and Vocabulary knowledge

With regard to the discovery strategies, *using the monolingual dictionary* was positively correlated with the learners' vocabulary knowledge, as were *guessing meaning from context* and *identifying part of speech* with the vocabulary knowledge. These findings are congruent with Gu and Johnson's (1996) findings. This could be attributed to the fact that both strategies require a certain level of vocabulary knowledge to be used efficiently as Laufer (1997) stated that a learner should know about 95% of the words in a text in order to guess words successfully. This can explain the more frequent use of these strategies by the HVK learners than the MVK and LVK learners, as mentioned earlier. Thus, the learners with higher vocabulary knowledge are normally more successful and higher in terms of using monolingual dictionaries and guessing from context and vice versa.

Since the relationship between learner variables and language learning, in this case the learners' VLS and their vocabulary knowledge, goes in both directions, i.e., both can influence each other (Cook 1986), building a vocabulary store would help learners use a wide range of VLS like guessing from context, using monolingual dictionaries and using media that require a certain knowledge of vocabulary (about 3000) to be used efficiently; Such strategies in turn will enhance incidental learning and contribute to developing learners' vocabulary knowledge. Moreover, teachers should focus their learners' attention on the VLS positively correlated with the learners' vocabulary knowledge, especially

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after finding out that most of the VLS correlated with their receptive vocabulary were correlated with the controlled productive vocabulary knowledge as well.

7. Conclusion and implications

In general, learners reported using discovery strategies more frequently than consolidation strategies. One interpretation of this is that those learners seem to be more interested in discovering or understanding the meaning of new words than learning them. This could be attributed to the fact that the Libyan English majors restrict themselves to the task they perform so during a reading activity, they just discover the meanings to understand the reading passage and/or to answer the comprehension questions. These learners need to use some metacognitive strategies like assessing their vocabulary in order to help them be aware of their vocabulary knowledge and develop it.

The Libyan EFL learners' infrequent use of metacognitive strategies indicates that most of these learners do not have plans or directions for their learning which are important for success. It also indicates that learners are not independent in their learning and lack the knowledge of what to learn about words. Most of them, especially MVK and LVK learners, rely only on class material. These findings are consistent with those of Moir and Nation (2002) who discovered that their subjects were not responsible for their learning and unaware of what learning vocabulary should require. Such students should be more independent in their learning through learner training.

A possible recommendation for these learners is to focus on strategies that help develop their receptive and productive knowledge similarly, since both are very low, with more focus being given to the high frequency words. Learners with low vocabulary knowledge should maximize their vocabulary size as much as possible in direct vocabulary learning through word lists or vocabulary games. Teachers should also be more realistic and focus their learners' (especially year 1 and 2 students) attention on more intentional learning of vocabulary through providing more courses that mainly focus on vocabulary like listening and speaking, or reading comprehension courses that were reported to be beneficial for learners in terms of vocabulary learning, so that learners can build a good vocabulary repertoire.

Regarding the relationship between VLS and vocabulary knowledge, the Libyan EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge was positively and/or negatively correlated with both frequently (most often) and infrequently used VLS; this indicates that the range of VLS used by the Libyan EFL learners rather than the frequency of use determines the correlations among VLS and vocabulary knowledge. There is usually consistency in that the VLS correlated with the learners' receptive vocabulary knowledge are also correlated with their controlled productive vocabulary knowledge. Thus, EFL/ESL learners are required to focus on a range of VLS, (e.g. group learning in classrooms, talking to native speakers, making own lists of words) that enhance their productive vocabulary knowledge as well as their receptive knowledge.

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The findings of this study reconfirm that the correlation between vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) and vocabulary knowledge is more a matter of quality than quantity of use of VLS. The findings show that the Libyan EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge was positively and/or negatively correlated with both frequently (most often) and infrequently used VLS; this indicates that the range and quality of use (confirmed by interviews data) of VLS rather than the quantity and frequency of use determine the correlations between the Libyan EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge and the VLS they use. This can also be demonstrated by the fact that GB learners reported more frequent use of VLS than that of GA learners, but GA learners' vocabulary knowledge is significantly better than that of GB learners; this indicates that GA learners are more efficient in using different VLS than GB learners, considering the positive correlations observed between the Libyan EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge and a range of VLS they use. This also contradicts research because other studies of LLS and VLS generally show better students using more strategies; this result, therefore, stands out as new here.

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Appendix 1: The Taxonomy of the Current Study

1. Determination Strategies

1. I identify the part of speech of the new word (verb, noun, adjective) to help me know its meaning.
2. I break the new word up into the main parts (un-safe-ly = unsafely).
3. I check for Arabic words that are similar in form and meaning to the new word.
4. I analyze any available pictures to help me understand new words.
5. I analyze any available gestures to help me understand new words.
6. I use a bilingual dictionary (English / Arabic).
7. I use a bilingual dictionary (Arabic / English).
8. I use a monolingual Dictionary (English / English).
9. I guess the meaning of the new word from the context in which it occurs.

2. Social Strategies

10. I ask a teacher for translation of the new word into Arabic.
11. I ask a teacher for a paraphrase of the new word.
12. I ask a teacher for a sentence including the new word.
13. If you use word lists, do you ask a teacher whether they are accurate?
14. I ask classmates for the meaning of the new word.
15. I discover new meanings through group work activity.
16. I study and practice meaning of the new words in a group of students.

3. Memory Strategies

17. I make a picture in my mind of the new word's meaning.
18. I study the spelling of the new word.
19. I study the part of speech of the new word (verb, noun, adjective) to remember it.
20. I connect the new word to a personal experience (e.g. connecting the word research with the final project).

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21. I paraphrase the meaning of the word I am learning in another way.
22. I study the sound of the new word.
23. I associate the new word with its coordinates (apples with oranges, peaches and etc.).
24. I say the new word aloud when studying.
25. I connect the new word to its synonyms and antonyms.
26. I learn the words of an idiom together.
27. I make an image in my mind of the form of the new word.
28. I use 'scales' for gradable adjectives (e.g. huge, big, small).
29. I use the Keyword Method.
30. I use the new word in sentences.

4. Cognitive Strategies

31. I repeat the new word over and over.
32. I write the new word many times.
33. I make my own lists of new words.
34. I keep a vocabulary notebook for expanding rehearsal.
35. I take notes of the newly learned words in class.

5. Metacognitive Strategies

36. I try to develop my vocabulary knowledge by watching English TV channels (e.g. movies, songs, documentary).
37. I try to develop my vocabulary knowledge by using computer programs (e.g. internet).
38. I try to develop my vocabulary knowledge by listening to English radio programs (songs, news).
39. I try to develop my vocabulary knowledge by reading English newspapers and magazines.
40. I revise the newly learned words soon after the initial meeting.
41. I continue to study the word over time.
42. I revise the newly learned words using spaced repetition.
43. I skip the new word.
44. I try to assess my vocabulary knowledge (e.g. with word tests).

Appendix 2: Vocabulary Learning Strategies Questionnaire

Dear Student

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This Questionnaire is designed to gather information about how Libyan majors of English at university level as students of a foreign language, go about learning vocabulary. This information will be for a study investigating the role of vocabulary learning strategies used by EFL learners on their vocabulary acquisition. Please read each of the following statements. You are kindly requested to indicate how often you have used a certain strategy, irrespective of the skills (i.e. listening, reading, speaking, and writing) and of the place of learning (i.e. university, and home). If you do not use a strategy at all, please tick the word *never*. If you use a strategy, please tick one of the words, *seldom*, *occasionally*, *often*, *usually* or *always*, according to the frequency. These words mean: *never* (0%); *seldom* (rarely, 20%); *occasionally* (40%); *often* (60%); *usually* (80%) and *always* (100%). If you use a bilingual dictionary 80% of the time when learning vocabulary, for example, please tick the word *usually* the following way:

Never 0%	Seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%
				×	

Please tick the response (*never*, *seldom*, *occasionally*, *often*, *usually* or *always*) that tells what you actually do. NOT what you should do or want to do. There are no right or wrong responses to these statements.

Part One

Please answer these questions first, before you continue on to the following questionnaire.

1. Name _____ (optional):
2. Sex: male / female (circle one)
3. Age: _____ years old
4. Mother tongue _____
5. How long have you been studying English? _____ years
6. If you have studied English or lived in an English speaking country please indicate how long it was.
Years: _____ and months: _____ .
7. If and only if you have studied a foreign language other than English, please indicate which language and for how long.

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language: _____ ' length of study: _____ years and _____ month.

Part Two

1. I identify the part of speech of the new word (verb, noun, adjective) to help me know its meaning.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

2. I ask a teacher for translation of the new word into Arabic.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

3. I make a picture in my mind of the new word's meaning.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

4. I repeat the new word over and over.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

5. I try to develop my vocabulary knowledge by watching English TV channels (e.g. movies, songs, documentary).

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

6. I break the new word up into the main parts (un-safe-ly = unsafely).

sever 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

7. I study the spelling of the new word.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

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8. I study the part of speech of the new word (verb, noun, adjective) to remember it.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

9. I try to develop my vocabulary knowledge by using computer programs (e.g. internet).

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

10. I ask a teacher for a paraphrase of the new word.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

11. I connect the new word to a personal experience (e.g. connecting the word research with the final project).

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

12. I write the new word many times.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

13. I check for Arabic words that are similar in form and meaning to the new word.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

14. I try to develop my vocabulary knowledge by listening to English radio programs (songs, news).

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

15. I ask a teacher for a sentence including the new word.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

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16. I paraphrase the meaning of the word I am learning in another way.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

17. I study the sound of the new word.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

18. I associate the new word with its coordinates (e.g. apples with oranges, peaches and etc.).

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

19. I try to develop my vocabulary knowledge by reading English newspapers and magazines.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

20. I make my own lists of new words.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

21. If you use word lists, do you ask a teacher whether they are accurate?

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

22. I analyze any available pictures to help me understand new words.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

23. I analyze any available gestures to help me understand new words.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

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24. I revise the newly learned words soon after the initial meeting.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

25. I continue to study the word over time.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

26. I keep a vocabulary notebook for expanding rehearsal.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

27. I ask classmates for the meaning of the new word.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

28. I say the new word aloud when studying.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

29. I revise the newly learned words using spaced repetition.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

30. I connect the new word to its synonyms and antonyms.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

31. I learn the words of an idiom together.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

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32. I discover new meanings through group work activity.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

33. I make an image in my mind of the form of the new word.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

34. I skip the new word.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

35. I take notes of the newly learned words in class.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

36. I use a bilingual dictionary (English / Arabic).

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

37. I use a bilingual dictionary (Arabic / English).

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

38. I study and practice meaning of the new words in a group of students.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

39. I try to assess my vocabulary knowledge (e.g. with word tests).

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

40. I use 'scales' for gradable adjectives (e.g. huge, big, medium, small).

never	seldom	occasionally	often	usually	always
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0%	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%

41. I use the Keyword Method. Using this strategy involves finding an L1 word sounding like the L2 word, then creating an image combining the two concepts.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

42. I use a monolingual Dictionary (English / English).

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

43. I guess the meaning of the new word from the context in which it occurs.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

44. I use the new word in sentences.

never 0%	seldom 20%	occasionally 40%	often 60%	usually 80%	always 100%

Part Three

Please add any additional strategies you have used that are not written above, if any.

Thank you very much for your cooperation