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**Department of English**

**Postgraduate Studies and Training**

**Investigating the Strategies Used by Students of English in  
Learning Vocabulary in the University of Azawia**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Applied  
Linguistics

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the strategies used by learners of English in learning vocabulary at the University of Zawia. Identifying vocabulary as an important element of language competence, the study purposes to explore the most commonly used vocabulary learning strategies by learners (VLS) and assess their success in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) setting. The study uses a combined-method approach, using a learner questionnaire to gain quantitative data and teacher interviews to gain qualitative viewpoints. The study categorizes strategies into determination, social, memory, cognitive, and metacognitive types. Data analysis indicates that learners prefer cognitive and memory strategies, though difficulties remain in the aspects of memorization and contextual usage. Teachers' viewpoints further confirm the requirement for more structured and encouraging vocabulary teaching. The findings present a clearer comprehension of vocabulary learning strategy among university learners and provide empirical recommendations to support vocabulary learning. This study shares important points of views to the field of EFL teaching and proposes directions for future studies.

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled: "Investigating the Strategies Used by Students of English in Learning Vocabulary in the University of Azawia", submitted to the Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Zawia, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics, is my original work and has not previously been submitted, in part or full, for any degree or diploma at this or any other institution.

I confirm that all the work in this thesis is my own unless otherwise acknowledged and properly referenced. Where contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature and acknowledgements of collaborative work.

This thesis is a true representation of my scholarly research and findings.

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MA Student

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to myself and my loving family, whose unwavering support and encouragement have been the foundation of my journey, to my friends and mentors who believed in me and offered guidance along the way, I am forever grateful. Special thanks to all who contributed to this work, shaping it into what it is today. This accomplishment is not just mine but a reflection of the collective effort and belief of those who stood by me. Thank you for being a part of this significant milestone in my academic path.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>Total Meaning</b>
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
TOFEL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
ISVL	Involvement of Strategic Vocabulary Learning
MVLT	Mastery of Vocabulary Learning Tactics
VLS	Vocabulary Learning Strategies
MCQ	Multiple Choice Questions

# CAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Background of the Study

Vocabulary is an important element of learning and teaching another language (Jezek, 2016). Vocabulary proficiency is one of the most difficult tasks that any student encounters while learning foreign language (Nyikos and Fan, 2007). Wilkins states ‘Without grammar, very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed’ (1972, p. 111). He confirms the importance of learning vocabulary and states that very little of vocabulary a learner can make a statement without grammar rules, while without vocabulary nothing could be said or expressed. Then, helping learners to learn a large amount of vocabulary appears to be absolutely necessary for any program or plan of language teaching. Too many EFL learners suffer from the need and lack of enough vocabulary knowledge and get disappointed when not knowing the meaning of key vocabulary information in a text.

Using practical materials like short stories can make the learners enrich their vocabulary and increase their comprehension and become more independent learners. The usage of short stories is an effective method to acquire vocabulary in EFL. It is indicated that learners who read broadly have extensive words (Blachowicz & Fisher, 2004). The outcome of the short story strategy was more encouraging and effective rather than the classical method in the sustain vocabulary enhancement (Jabir, 2014).

## **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

It has been observed that the majority of Libyan English students in English department in the faculty of Arts at University of Zawia suffer from lack vocabulary when they use English language skills. Afzal (2019) states that lacking of acquiring vocabulary makes the performance of language skills difficult. According to Rosyada and Apoko (2023), knowing limited number of vocabulary guides to limited numbers of dialogues, however plenty of vocabularies dominated by learners enable the learners to speak easily. Using short stories is an inventive strategy and is considered one of the most essential methods in learning English language, because it presents learners with a big number of various vocabulary. In addition, it assists learners importantly in improving other skills, like listening, reading and writing.

## **1.2 Aims of the Study**

This study aims to:

- Investigate the strategies used by EFL learners in vocabulary learning.
- Identify the strategies used by EFL teachers in vocabulary teaching.
- Explore how the use of various strategies support language acquisition in an enjoyable and educational manner.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

This study attempting to answer these questions:

1. What vocabulary learning strategies do students of English use in the department of English in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zawia?

2. What strategies do teachers of English use when they teach new vocabulary?
3. How do these strategies influence the enjoyment and effectiveness of language learning among students?

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study would help teachers find alternative ways to teaching vocabulary as well as students to use effective strategies when they learn new vocabulary. It also sheds light on the importance of reading short stories in developing students overall attainment of words.

#### **1.5 Methodology of the Study**

The methodology of this study on strategies used by students in English department in the Faculty of Arts at the university of Zawia in learning English vocabulary included a mixed-method approach, mixing quantitative and qualitative data collection approaches. A structured questionnaire consists of 22 closed ended questions was fulfilled to 30 learners of third semester in applied linguistics department to gain insights into their vocabulary learning strategies, concentrating on the frequency and types of strategies used, for example, metacognitive, cognitive, and social strategies. This quantitative approach provided structured data on common applications, for example, using dictionary, contextual guessing, and note-taking, which are considered successful vocabulary strategies according to Nation (2001). The data that was collected by questionnaire was analyzed by using SPSS software. Moreover, semi-structured interviews consist of 4 questions were conducted with 6 teachers to gain qualitative insights into their observances related to their teaching strategies. The interviews were analyzed thematically. These

qualitative approaches are important for comprehending the success of these strategies in daily life settings according to Gu and Johnson (1996).

## **1.6 Organization of the Study**

The organization of this study on strategies used by learners of English in learning vocabulary at the University of Zawia is divided into six chapters. The first chapter introduces the study, outlining its background, aims, significance, research questions, methodology, organization of the study and scope and limitations. This chapter confirms the foundation for recognizing the importance of vocabulary learning strategies in university-level English education. The second chapter provides an overall review of the literature, discussing previous studies on vocabulary learning strategies and their relationship to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. It states theoretical structures and experimental findings that support the study. The third chapter describes the methodology and the mixed-method approach used. This contains questionnaire to learners to gain quantitative data and interviews with teachers for qualitative perceptions. The fourth chapter presents the results of the study, analyzing data gained from learners and teachers. It classifies strategies into cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies and examining their frequency and usefulness. The fifth chapter discusses the findings in the light of the literature review, recognizing patterns for vocabulary learning in EFL settings. This chapter also indicates difficulties faced by learners and provides practical recommendations for improving vocabulary learning. Lastly, the sixth chapter concludes the study by summarizing the main results and proposing areas for future study to further support vocabulary learning strategies used by university students.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to conduct a general study of the related literature. Firstly, definitions of vocabulary are indicated. Then, theories of learning vocabulary are discussed. Next, taxonomies of strategies of learning vocabulary are reviewed. After that, strategies of vocabulary learning and teaching are illustrated. An overview about teaching vocabulary to adults will be provided. Also this chapter will mention difficulties that encountered by teachers when they teach new vocabulary and the strategies that they use. In addition, the challenges of teaching vocabulary in EFL classrooms and their requirements will be discussed. Then, mentioning the common trends of teaching vocabulary. Finally, previous studies on strategies of learning vocabulary.

#### 2.1 Definition of Vocabulary

An important feature that learners have to masterfully learn in English learning process is vocabulary as indicated by Western European Journal of Linguistic and Education (2024). Nation (2013) states that lacking mastery of vocabulary can disturb their potentiality to use the language skills effectively. To clarify the conception of vocabulary, the researcher intends to provide some definitions suggested by some authors. Henriksen (1999) stated vocabulary as not only a fixed list of words but vocabulary have many dimension that

reflecting understanding word knowledge, involving explanation of meanings, structures, phonetics, and contextual usage important for effective contact among language learners. Studies confirm vocabulary as more than disconnected words yet as reciprocally connected semantic compounds, as claimed by Boutonnet, et al (2014). These compounds include vocabulary ordered based on semantic interconnections, for example, associations, equivalents, and groups of categories, which simplify cognitive processes included in language understanding and producing (Borovsky, et al. 2016). The effective nature of vocabulary develops and enlarges over time through revealing and learning experiments, stating a sequentially developing system affected by different linguistic backgrounds. Particularly, the reflective environment of vocabulary on language skills, as stated by Hymes (1972), emphasizes its important role in measuring a learner's communicative competence and abilities of language within different linguistic areas. According to Harmer (1991) understanding the difference between active and passive vocabulary is basic in language learning and skills development. Active vocabulary consists of vocabulary that learners can easily use in speaking and writing skills, showing their skills of language production. However, passive vocabulary composed of vocabulary that learners understand in reading or listening but may not lively use in their language production. In the field of vocabulary acquisition, Nation (2001) reveals that two major types are distinguished: receptive vocabulary as well as productive vocabulary. Nation stated that receptive vocabulary includes the vocabulary that learners can understand when reading or listening, confirming their ability to comprehend meanings and passages in writing or speaking language skills. In contrast, productive vocabulary composed of the vocabulary that learners can actively use in their own speaking or writing skills, confirming their ability to

convey views, opinions, thoughts and ideas effectively. According to Nagy and Anderson (1984), establishing an early emphasis on vocabulary acquisition is pivotal for reading comprehension and overall language learning. Kaufmann (2017) underlines that by concentrating on active and passive vocabulary, learners can develop their skills of language and fluency. Perceptions from Nation (2001) focuses on the importance of intended vocabulary learning strategies to improve active and passive vocabulary. The mix of effectual strategies of vocabulary learning, make learners enlarge their vocabulary knowledge and develop their skills in language. Nation also discusses the important role of vocabulary in reading comprehension, underling the relationship between knowledge of vocabulary and reading skills. Miyazaki (2019) indicates that recognizing and distinction between active and passive vocabulary are important for language students and teachers to produce better language learning outcomes and make effective communication easy in different contexts of linguistic.

## **2.2 Theories of Vocabulary Learning**

Using different strategies of learning vocabulary can make the process of vocabulary learning easier as stated by Schmitt (2007). Bromley (2007) states, when students use dictionaries the whole time in order to learn and enrich their vocabulary they do not usually understand the meaning of the words perfectly and use them correctly. In the following section, theories of vocabulary learning are described.

1. The Semantic Theory: Regarding to Jiang (2018), this theory concentrates on the meaning and comprehending of vocabulary in text. It proposes that vocabulary is best learned through presentation to words in relevant context better than remembering.

2. The Cognitive Theory: Ellis (1995) confirms cognitive processes in vocabulary learning, for example, how unfamiliar vocabulary are stored, returned, and used in different contexts. It states that learning vocabulary is a complicated mental process including comprehending vocabulary connections and forms.

3. The Sociocultural Theory: According to Lantolf and Thorne (2006) who consider the social and cultural features of vocabulary learning, proposing that language improvement is affected by social communications, cultural relations, and contextual elements.

4. The Constructivist Theory: Bruner (1960) points that learning is structured by active connection with input of language, with students linking new vocabulary to previous knowledge and experiments.

### **2.3 Taxonomies of Vocabulary Learning Strategies**

Recognizing the skilled strategies of language learning was presented by recognizing the strategies that successful and used by hard working language learners (Rubin, 1975). The aim was to make learning of second language easier by using these strategies. This led to the improvement of many categories and taxonomies (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1989, 1990). Nation (2001) sorted strategies of learning vocabulary into three groups containing: planning, sources and process. Oxford (1990) suggested six important various types of strategies of learning vocabulary: mnemonic, compensatory, cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social strategies. Four strategy classifications were indicated by Schmitt (1997): social, cognitive, metacognitive and memory.

Different categories of vocabulary learning were mentioned in Schmitt's (2000) study to form his strategies. His categories contain determination, cognitive, social, memory, and metacognitive strategies. Kudo's (1999) suggested the strategies of learning vocabulary sorting basically based on Schmitt's (1997) taxonomies of strategies of learning vocabulary. Tseng and Schmitt (2008) separated the strategies of learning vocabulary into two classes. The first class is Involvement of Strategic Vocabulary Learning (ISVL) which develops or finds the effectiveness of particular strategies containing exhausted actions that show the quantitative measure of vocabulary strategy. The second class, Mastery of Vocabulary Learning Tactics (MVLTL), it is interested with mastering specific strategies and mentions to qualitative dimension of acquisition of vocabulary knowledge.

## **2.4 Strategies for Vocabulary Learning**

Strategies for learning vocabulary includes many methods that assist students follow, memorize and apply new vocabulary successfully.

### **2.4.1 Determination Strategy**

A determination strategy shapes a structured and intentional using of specific methodologies or strategies intended for increasing learning vocabulary process as stated by Schmitt (1997). These particular strategies are planned to increase activation, make deeper understanding easier, and simplify the successful comprehension of vocabulary.

The following, are the most common determination strategies:

### *1. Pre-Reading Activities*

A recent study by Pellicer et al; (2020) points out that the performance of pre-reading activities shapes a helpful strategy for increasing vocabulary learning during the teaching of words by short stories. Wixson (1986) enhances for steps before teaching words and concentrating on crucial words to develop recognizing the main themes in context more than focusing on new vocabulary. Before learners starting the story, teachers can attract learners in activities, for example, guessing the meaning of new vocabulary relying on contextual clues, creating relevant words, or activating previous knowledge (AERO, 2024).

### *2. Using Graphic Organizers*

A study conducted by Monroe (1997) points that graphic organizers, for example, conception maps or vocabulary webs, could be used as determination strategies in teaching vocabulary. Teachers can motivate students to visually explain the story through determining key words, main ideas, and connections between the words. This strategy supports active interaction and a deep understanding of the words in the story's context. Ajayi (2018) confirms the using of graphic organizers improves vocabulary understanding.

### *3. Provision of Contextual Definitions*

A study conducted by Cobb (2007) discusses how the offering of contextual definitions for unfamiliar vocabulary is of maximum significance when teaching vocabulary by short stories. The determination of relationships between definitions and the short story, enable learners to understand more productively the purposed meaning of words and memorize them for future need. A research by Rapaport (2003) states that the giving of relevant content definitions develops vocabulary learning and understanding.

#### *4. Implementation of Follow-up Activities*

Follow-up activities provide an important impact in supporting unfamiliar learned vocabulary obtained from short stories (Nation, 2001). Teachers can plan activities for instance, vocabulary tests, conversations, or writing assignments that force learners to use the vocabulary from the story. These activities present chances for learners to use the vocabulary in various contexts, and increasing deeper learning and memorizing.

#### **2.4.2 Social Strategy**

Social strategy points to a carefully designed and intended strategy of using various social plans and interactions to achieve particular aims or purposes in a social content (Wollan, Smith & Zhou, 2011). According to Rodhan (2021) the arrangement of learners into small groups supports the improvement of practical conversation focused around the summary of the stories and their particular vocabulary. In these restorative conversations, learners are given the chance to share personalized explanations, ask questions, and say clarifications for new words, supporting a collaborative learning environment. Therefore, learners become active contributors in the discussion and understanding of short stories vocabulary in the contextual structure of the storytelling (Khatib and Seyyedrezaei, 2013). Promoting the mix of societal implementation with the setting of short stories, the blending of combined assignment or tasks appears as a beneficial strategy. Ariffin (2021) supports for the portion of group-based tasks that need the production of presentations, cards, or videos obtained from the words. Slavin (1995) underlines that through corporate efforts, learners interactive in the interchange of thoughts, research related topics, and show creative use of the learned words in their tasks. These shared efforts deepen vocabulary

understanding and confess teamwork, analytical thinking, and oral skills of communication.

### **2.4.3 Memory Strategies**

Memory strategies are techniques that individuals use to develop their memory ability and memorize information better (Higbe, 1988). These strategies support with how we receive, store, and retrieve information successfully. They could be used in various conditions where we need to learn, for example, studying or learning a new language, in addition to in daily life when we want to memorize things. Garcia-Canarte and Ocana (2024) state that a useful strategy to teach vocabulary is through using short stories. Short stories provide words in a meaningful context, that helps learners memorize and recognize vocabulary better. According to Sembriring (2022), stories make learning more entertaining and develop memorization. Through using short stories, learners can memorize new vocabulary easily because they can link them to the story they are reading (Ellis and Brewster, 1991).

According to Higbee (1988) stating that to help learners memorize words from short stories, teachers can use games of memory and tricks. These games or tricks include producing links between new vocabulary and previous knowledge, making it easier for students to memorize. Abbassi, et al (2018) found that memory tricks like acronyms, visualization, and keyword strategies can considerably develop vocabulary memorization. For example, learners can produce mental images or connect new vocabulary to familiar thoughts or things, which helps them memorize vocabulary better. Spaced repetition is useful memory strategy for teaching words by using short stories. Spaced repetition means revising the new vocabulary at expanding periods over time. This strategy takes benefit of

something called the spacing impact, that is when learning and revising information at intervening period assists us memorize it for long time (Karpicke and Roediger, 2007). According to D'Alesio, et al (2007) show that providing knowledge through various approaches, like visible, audios, and activities, helps us memorize better. Teachers can use images, audio recordings, or motivate learners to play a role in stories to produce a more active learning experience. Nation (2001) enhances the benefits of these strategies through emphasizing the importance of interacting approaches in expanding vocabulary learning in language contexts.

#### **2.4.4 Cognitive Strategies**

Cognitive strategies include constructed strategies used by learners to actively participate in and operate knowledge. A useful strategy for vocabulary teaching is using short stories that include cognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies are intellectual processes that assist students learn, arrange, and use knowledge effectively.

##### *1. Metacognition*

A cognitive strategy that could be educated by short stories is metacognition, that includes thinking about learner's own thinking processes. Flavell (1979) indicates that by containing metacognitive strategies in a story, students will become more conscious of how they strategy of learning vocabulary. For instance, Stanton, et al (2021) debate the significance of metacognition and its result on learning productions. A story that describes a character using oneself-questioning strategies when meeting unfamiliar vocabulary could motivate students to reveal on their own words learning habits.

## *2. Context clues*

Context clues are vocabulary or phrases containing an unfamiliar vocabulary that present signs to its meaning. Alzahrane (2019) discusses that blending vocabulary teaching that contains context clues is useful for different students. Using context clues in short stories, give learners the ability to practice recognizing and to understand vocabulary meanings.

## *3. Visual Aids*

According to Bazeli and Olle (1995) Visual aids, like images or paintings, can assist learners understand and memorize unfamiliar vocabulary in short stories. When learners see the vocabulary with pictures, they can recognize them better and memorize them easily. According to Nation (2001) vocabulary collection is useful strategy, where learners link new vocabulary to something known in their previous knowledge.

## *4. Contextual Guessing*

According to Webb (2007) contextual guessing is a useful cognitive strategy for teaching vocabulary. Through providing learners with meaningful and relevant context clues in the story, they can make knowledgeable suppositions related to the meanings of new vocabulary. For example, the using of illustrative language, acts, or discussion helps learners in understanding vocabulary meanings (Nation, 2001).

## *5. Word Mapping*

Word mapping demands generating visual explanations of words and their common relations. Learners can set idea of maps or graphic organizers that make connects between unfamiliar vocabulary from the short story and their background information (Shanahan et

al, 2010). Word mapping helps learners in understanding the connections between vocabulary and their meanings, making the remembering of vocabulary easier (Marzano, 2004).

#### *6. Word Association*

Motivating learners to create links between unfamiliar vocabulary and known words or develop their comprehension and memorization. the connection of new words to previous knowledge, make learners set up intellectual links that help in learning vocabulary. Teachers can lead learners to form connections by activities like vocabulary webs or semantic maps (Nagy & Scott, 2000).

#### *7. Contextualizing Vocabulary*

Inserting vocabulary words in meaningful passages or contexts is important for successful vocabulary teaching as indicated by Nagy (1995). Short stories present comprehensive contexts which enable learners to face vocabulary in practical usage of language. Teachers can lead learners to analyze how vocabulary are used in different contexts in the story, making them understand different meanings and enlarge their vocabulary (Beck et al, 2013).

### **2.4.5 Meta-Cognitive Strategy**

Metacognitive strategies mean ‘thinking about thinking’ (Flavel, 1979). These strategies include being conscious of one's thinking capacities, recognizing how to use them effectually, and doing alterations when need. Zimmerman (1989) expresses the useful results of metacognitive strategies on learning process. Nation (2001) underlines when students use metacognitive strategies, for example, inquiring questions and confirming

understanding during reading short stories, it can support their vocabulary expertise. A study by Pressley and Afflerbach (1995) enhances the usage of metacognitive strategy for vocabulary learning, proving that they increase understanding and memorization of vocabulary.

## **2.5 Teaching Vocabulary for Adults**

Teaching vocabulary to adult learners includes a different scope of missions that need cogitative reflection of useful strategies. According to Nation (2001), it is important to use various strategies and activities to fit the various learning selections and manners of adult learners. Strategies as direct teaching, word games, and expansive reading are demonstrated to support learning vocabulary. Schmitt and Schmitt (2020) argue that the significance of setting conditions helpful to learning which motivates active participation and engagement with unfamiliar vocabulary. Folse (2004) challenges common misunderstanding including vocabulary teaching and supports for evidence based strategies found in L2 study. Basic percepts like spaced repeating, encounter to various words input, and organized practice of unfamiliar vocabulary are main parts of successful vocabulary teaching for adults. Indriyani and Sugirin (2019) explore the complicated connection between vocabulary teaching and language teaching, confirming the need for adapted strategies that provide to the distinctive aims and needs of adult language learners. Adult learners gain from strategies that link new words with their background knowledge and experiments, providing a deeper understanding and memorization of words (Bogaards Laufer, 2004). Nation and Newton (1997) discuss that when inserting vocabulary teaching into practical communication practices and supporting regular implementation and assessment, teachers can enable adult learners to enlarge their vocabulary successfully.

## **2.6 Difficulties of Teaching Vocabulary**

Teachers usually encounter many challenges when they teach vocabulary, particularly with adult students. Laufer and Hulstijn's research (2001) discussed the complexities of vocabulary learning, underlying elements as word repetition, encounter to vocabulary in context, and the effect of student distinctions. Choosing suitable words that stand with the requirements and concerns of adult students could be a difficult mission. Nation (2001) discusses the challenge of memorizing and using knowledge of vocabulary among adult students. The memorization of new learned vocabulary and their use in different passages and contexts could present an important problem for adult learners. Nation also emphasizes that without continuous implementation and motivation, remembering words might be restricted, disturbing the whole language learning development. The lack of practical language use chances further away the classroom environment could prevent adult students' ability to remember words in effective manner. The use of practical language input through potential learning is important for improving a deep understanding of word usage (Krashen, 1982). Oxford and Crookall's (1990) states the significance of increasing authentic encouragement and posting a helpful learning condition that enhances active contribution and engagement with materials of vocabulary.

## **2.7 Strategies of Teaching Vocabulary**

Creating useful strategies for teaching vocabulary is important for improving language learning among learners. Through the usage of different strategies adapted to provide different learning inclinations, teachers could achieve an activating educational environment that makes vocabulary easier to learn and memorize. Some important strategies are mentioned as:

### *1. Word Walls*

Using word walls in classrooms confirms to be an effective method specifically useful for visual students. When showing unfamiliar words on the walls, learners have regular face and interaction with the vocabulary, increasing their memorization was discussed by Anggriani (2012).

### *2. Semantic Mapping*

According to Heimlich & Pittelman (1986) semantic mapping strategy includes grouping vocabulary with relevant meanings together. When visually showing these links, learners could better understand and memorize the connections between vocabulary. Thaledon (2020) ensures that semantic mapping increases learners' understanding and helps in vocabulary memorization.

### *3. Contextual Analysis*

Leading learners to the way to use contextual clues to understand new and strange vocabulary meanings ensure to be a useful teaching strategy. Through learners' interactions in activities and passages rich in context, teachers help in improving their capacity to decode vocabulary meanings depending on existing information and knowledge (Nation, 2001).

### *4. Interactive Vocabulary Games*

According to Walyo and Bakoko (2021), blending games in word teaching could support encouragement and increase word memorization. Combining responsive and vocabulary games in teaching can develop the process of learning experiment, making it entertaining and unforgettable. Games as crossword puzzles, matching vocabulary, and word games help to improve vocabulary meanings in an enjoyment and attractive way.

### *5. Peer Teaching and Collaboration*

Basically, motivating peer teaching and in cooperation provides a chance to enlarge word learning. When learners work together to express, converse, and use unfamiliar vocabulary in passage, they increase their understanding by oral communication and activation. Fernandez (2014) confirms the important role of peer engagement in learning and improvement of language. Some of these strategies motivated by Richards and Renandya (2002) who purpose to develop vocabulary learning, memorization, and use among learners.

### **2.8 Vocabulary in EFL Classrooms "Difficulties"**

Lack encounter to real English language input could provide a clear difficulty for adult EFL learners according to Siyanova and Webb (2016). However, adult EFL students may have few opportunities to engage with English in daily life circumstances and situations, influencing their vocabulary learning (Schmitt, 2008). Only remembering unfamiliar vocabulary without actual chances for use and motivation could end in restricted memorization and simplistic understanding. Rumbouw (2021) stated that EFL learners may consider it difficult to remember new learned words and strive with using them in various passages, impeding their skills of communication in English language. Lacking of regular application and improvement of words, adult EFL students might face challenges in vocabulary knowledge (Place, 2017). Motivation is an important element in teaching words to adult EFL students (Dornyei, 2001). According to Schmitt (2010) ensures that maintaining adult students' concern and excitement for word learning among different needs and diversions could be daring for teachers.

## **2.9 Requirement of Teaching Vocabulary**

According to Thornbury (2002), one important area of teaching vocabulary is the cautious choice of words that is relevant to students' requirements and their language levels. In this regard, Van den Broek, et al (2018) underlining the unification of richness of context insert to help in vocabulary learning and memorization. Forcing adult students to encounter vocabulary in practical contexts by reading items, multimedia tools, and daily activations in real life assists increase unfamiliar words and improve understanding. Manyak, et al (2021) enhances using multimedia resources and personal exercises in vocabulary learning. Brown (2010) states that the usage of contexts in language learning and the applying of newly learned words in real-life situations is effective. Nation (2001) emphasizes the value of applying words in context to expand learning and memorization of vocabulary. Additionally, Nation (2013) states that through blending unknown vocabulary in meaningful language insert, teachers could develop adult students' ability to comprehend vocabulary meanings, using, and elements successfully. Nation also points that teachers must use strategies as providing obvious definitions, giving examples of a context, and confirming vocabulary structures and appositions to help adult students in recognizing words deeply. Curtis (2006) confirms that achieving the needs for successful vocabulary teaching make teachers provide adult students with the language expertness and comprehension required, to participate in educational, expert, and societal communicating in confident way.

## **2.10 Trends in Vocabulary Teaching**

Investigating the most recent evolutions in vocabulary teaching presents useful visions into modern strategies that could enlarge language learning skills for adult students in different

instructional atmospheres. One important trend is the usage of technology in vocabulary teaching, for example, using digital methods and online sources to interact learners and make vocabulary learning easier (Loyst, 2017). Nami (2022) points that platforms as apps of vocabulary, banks of online vocabulary, and resources of multimedia provide engaging and custom-make learning chances, enabling adult students to discover and use words in effective and dynamic digital atmospheres. Anderson (2002) highlights that the combination of strategies of vocabulary learning as well as metacognitive strategies is an emerging trend in language teaching, emphasizing the importance of bringing up students' consciousness and master over their vocabulary learning procedures.

According to Schmitt (2008) who argues that teaching adult students useful strategies of vocabulary learning, like tools that support memory, vocabulary association, semantic mapping and practices make them take responsibility of their learning process and support self-dependent vocabulary learning experiences. Moreover, Schmitt emphasizes that involving metacognitive missions which motivate self-regulated learning and results, teachers could help adult students in observing their vocabulary improvement, recognizing aspects for development, and setting their vocabulary learning strategies appropriately. A study by Peng (2019) stated confessing the effect of culture, recognition and identity on vocabulary teaching has appeared as a famous trend, confirming the need of combining students' cultural traditions, experiments, and identities of linguistic into word teaching. According to Gay (2010), identifying the cultural areas of vocabulary use and importance assists teachers produce comprehensive and culturally flexible teaching strategies that come across with adult students from different language environments.

## **2.11 Previous Studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategies**

Strategies point to an entire process through which students decide to develop their usage of language by learning knowledge and information about language by memorizing and storing the learned data (Cohen, 1998). Gu and Johnson (1996) conducted a dominant study which investigated the connection between strategies of vocabulary learning results among university learners. They classified different strategies, for example, guessing from passage, using dictionaries, in addition to mnemonic devices, noticing that learners who actively used different strategies tended to learn words effectively. Marulis and Neuman (2013) investigated how vocabulary teaching via short stories affects word learning in young students. Their study revealed that using photo-rich short stories abroad strategic activities, for example, repetition of reading and contextual inferring guided to noticeable developments in vocabulary memorization and understanding.

In their study, Al-Ghazo and Ta'amneh (2022) investigated the success of different strategies of vocabulary learning among university leaders in Jordan. Their findings reveal that strategies such as using visual aids, guessing from passage, and engaging in active practice obviously expand the proficiency of vocabulary. They recommend for incorporating comprehensive strategy practicing into language curriculum to increase vocabulary learning. Aravind and Rajasekaran (2018) examined the vocabulary learning strategies used by research teachers at VIT Chennai. Using a questionnaire based on Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies. The findings demonstrated that cognitive strategy was the most common used among other strategies. Shen (2003) explored the vocabulary teaching weakness in classroom. This study proposed an important

area in vocabulary teaching that was discovering various effective and sizes of learner strategies to learning vocabulary and the necessity to tell learners about a large amount of strategies of learning vocabulary. Kafipour and Naveh (2011) discovered that the strategy of metacognitive was the most common strategy used by the Iranian EFL learners, and the least common strategy used by them was social strategy. A wide scale study including 35 universities in China was explored by Zhang (2011). Data indicated that there were important distinctions between the strategies of learning vocabulary used by efficient and less efficient learners. However, the six advantages shared by two groups of students were their concern in English language, doing exercises in the skills of reading and listening, attempting to learn vocabulary in passage, usage of bilingual dictionaries, focus on spelling, and reading books in English language in available time.

## **2.12 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter shed light on the definition of vocabulary, dealing with the main theories of vocabulary learning and taxonomies of vocabulary learning strategies. A concentration on strategies for vocabulary learning has been given with their common types. An overview about teaching vocabulary to adults has been provided. Also this chapter mentioned difficulties that encountered by teachers when they teach new vocabulary and the strategies that they usually use. In addition, the challenges of teaching vocabulary in EFL classrooms and their requirements are discussed. Then, mentioning the common trends that teachers use when they teach vocabulary. Finally, the previous studies that are conducted by many researchers are highlighted in this chapter.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents a description of the research design. Also it describes the methods of data collection, the selection of participants, the pilot study and preparation of data for analysis. Ethical issues are also provided.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study explores the strategies used by students of English in learning vocabulary in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zawia by using combined approaches in the design of the study. A designed questionnaire was organized in line with the outlines put by Gu's (2018) and was distributed to 30 learners. It aimed to determine learners' favored strategies of learning vocabulary and their effects. Besides the questionnaire, a semi-structured interview was conducted with 6 teachers to gain large, clarifying data on the educational strategies. This interview was structured to support the qualitative research strategies indicated by Creswell and Clark (2017). The mix of the questionnaire and the interviews presented a deep analysis of the process of learning vocabulary, reflecting Gu's (2003) strategies in learning vocabulary in second language.

#### **3.2 Data Collection Methods**

The researcher used mixed methods in this study. Quantitative method consists of a structured questionnaire which was distributed to the students to collect deep data about the strategies that they use to learn vocabulary. A qualitative data consists of semi-

structured interviews also were conducted with 6 teachers to identify the strategies that they use when they teach vocabulary and their influence on the students' engagement.

### **3.2.1 The Structured Questionnaire**

To explore the strategies used by English language learners in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zawia in vocabulary learning, a designed questionnaire including 22 questions has been improved as the primary tool for collecting data. The questionnaire was distributed to 30 students from the English department in the university. The objective was to gain a wide range of data and to be done within the time needed to finish it. The questionnaire contained different questions indicating how often learners interact with unknown vocabulary and their favored strategies for learning. Particular questions have been designed to explore visual aids usage, learning passages and technology means among different aspects. The structured way of the questionnaire allowed the collection of data which could be directly analyzed statistically to reveal important results in the field of vocabulary learning. Through mixing components from previous experimental studies, for instance, those provided in Schmitt's (1997) exploration of effective vocabulary learning strategies. The structure of the questionnaire organized according to Gu's (2018) investigation of learning vocabulary in another language.

### **3.2.2 Semi-Structured Interviews**

There are several types of interview in data collection methods. Semi-structured interview is the most common used method to ask the interviewee. Semi-structured interviews have been conducted with six teachers from the English department. Four major open-ended

questions founded the interview, designed to promote a complete and clear different points of view and experiments. The first question aimed to know the preferred teaching strategies of the teachers when teaching vocabulary. The second question encouraged teachers to talk about the challenges encountered by learners when learning new and unfamiliar vocabulary and the adaptations have been made in teaching to overcome these challenges. The third question explored the kinds of teaching materials and strategies that teachers use, and how they make sure that learners learn vocabulary effectively. The fourth and the last question purposed to know how often teachers use short stories to teach new vocabulary because short stories provide vocabulary in meaningful context which help students memorize and identify vocabulary better. The process of exploration has been supported by academic studies to make sure the structure of the interview has been indicated by studies in the field of language learning. Original work by researchers, for example, Marzano's (2004) who confirms the need of teaching vocabulary was useful in this background.

### **3.3 Pilot Study**

Pilot study could be considered as an important first move in research to confirm the impact of approaches selected for data collection. In passages where knowledge described processes and strategies is important, for example, investigating the strategies used by learners to learn new vocabulary, a mix of questionnaire and interviews is proposed. Questionnaire presents a large quantitative outline, enabling for the analysis themes beyond a wider size of sample (Humble, 2020). Interviews suggest qualitative description, providing understanding of the learners' concept processes, encouragements, and the differences of their learning strategies (Patton, 2015). By using the two approaches,

researchers can get an observation of learners' learning strategies, that enhances the reliability and validity of data. These two approaches are particularly related to the educational study where student levels are important (Creswell, 2014).

Before beginning an extensive study plan, a pilot study was conducted to explore the strategies used by English language learners for developing their vocabulary in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zawia. This study included a selected group of learners from the English department, purposing to outline the common strategies they use for vocabulary improvement. The main objective of the pilot study was to support the study process for a wider standard that would be followed by the study. The mix of data collection approaches from questionnaire and interview was used to gain data about learners' strategies for learning new vocabulary, for example, the use of dictionaries, taking notes, and different tools of technology. Findings from the investigation of this study would play an important role in supporting the aims and methodology of this study, allowing the organization of the design and approaches for collecting data. The pilot study has been done in a managed area in one day, intended to evaluate the feasibility and the validity of study approaches before full size implementation. A small sample of participants representing the intent population got described guidance and perfect interviews. Feedback gained during the pilot study served to improve study approaches, indicating challenges and improving study design. This essentially assisted mange difficulties and make the design of the study standard.

### **3.4 Sampling and Population**

Regarding the exploration of this study, the population involved this study included the students of the third semester in English language at the university, who study vocabulary

as a separated subject to enhance their vocabularies. A sample of 30 learners has been selected to answer the questionnaire that was planned to investigate their strategies of learning vocabulary. The learners have been chosen because they have been learning vocabulary as an obligatory subject. Beside the learners' questionnaire, semi-structured interviews have been done with 6 teachers from the English department in the faculty of Arts at the University of Zawia. These teachers have been chosen as they have been teaching vocabulary or they taught it before. Fetters's et al, (2013) recommendations on blended approaches study suggested the scale of qualitative and quantitative data collection, whereas Kothari's (2011) concentrations on sampling presented instruction on the cautious approach concerning the choice process.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures**

After conducting a pilot study, the researcher was able to examine the efficiency of data collection approaches. The study started with the distribution of questionnaire which was handed to 30 students from the English department. The questionnaire included different multiple-choice questions, aimed to explore and assess the different strategies those students use in vocabulary learning. The questionnaire design was aimed to be easy to use to encourage participation, in order to collect useful data. This approach was done the middle of January 2024 with the third semester learners. The data collection was carried with semi-structured interviews with 6 English teachers from the same faculty. The interview' questions were set up in specific order, besides to using clear language and simple vocabulary. The questions have been designed carefully to include aspects of teaching and evaluating vocabulary learning strategies. Three Interviews were online, one

audio recorded and two were transcribed to be accurate in data analysis. The data collection procedure was planned through guiding academic resources on research methodology. Robson's (2011) stated investigation of real-life research and Yin's (2018) knowledge in case study research provided the basis for designing the process of data collection in a real manner.

### **3.6 Preparing Data for Analysis**

The data analysis process was carefully arranged to compare findings from a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. SPSS software has been used to analyze quantitative data. The qualitative data has been transcribed, and analyzed thematically to conclude teachers' opinions and teaching experiences, besides recognizing any new themes related to vocabulary teaching strategies.

### **3.7 Ethical Issues**

The researcher managed ethical consideration in this study. Including the ethical process of the 30 student participants and 6 teacher participants was vital for protecting the validity of the research findings and including to academic ethical issues. Privacy was carefully supported through maintain in the participants' identity anonymous and informing them that their responses would remain confidential. Notifying approval was an authentic step, with clear sheets of information and approval forms summarizing the area of the study and the rights of the participants. The participation nature and the right to depart without consequences were obviously reported. Through the design period, the study tools

questionnaires and interview, were carefully revised to avoid causing pressure or anxiety to the participants.

### **3.8 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter described the methodological part of the study. Research design and the data collection tools, namely a questionnaire and semi-structured interview were presented. The pilot study and the sampling techniques were described. In addition to the methodological issues that have been discussed, this chapter also dealt with data collection procedures and ethical issues. The quantitative data were analyzed by SPSS software while the qualitative data were analyzed by using thematic analysis approach.

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter provides detailed data analysis of structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview. Basically, 30 participants answered the questionnaire, and 6 semi-structured interviews were conducted and then analyzed to answer the research question. The data collected from questionnaire was analysed by SPSS software while the data obtained from interviews was analysed by using thematic analysis approach. Cohen et al, (2007) have indicated that each type of analysis suits different types of data. The next sections provide an analysis of the data collected from questionnaires and interviews to answer the research question accurately.

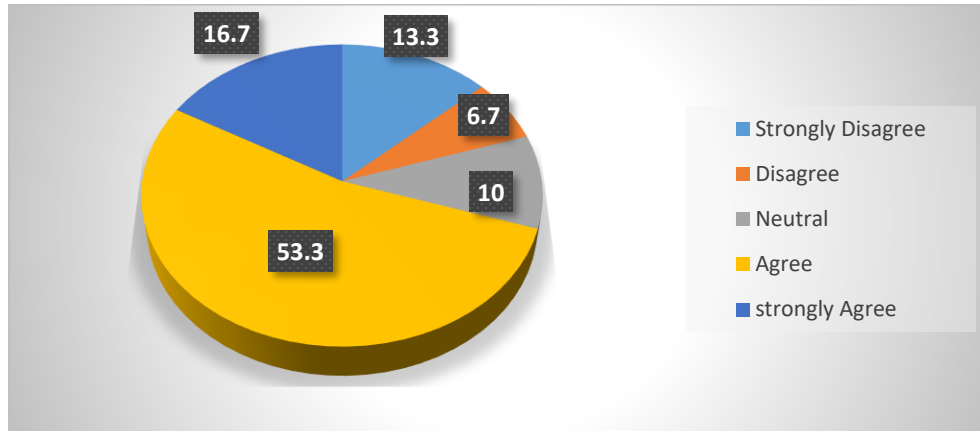
### **4.1 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire**

In this section, the analysis of the questionnaire like scale statements is drawn on pie chart as a visualizing strategy followed by a description with students' percentages of each questionnaire's item.

#### **4.1.1 Students Strategies in Learning Vocabulary**

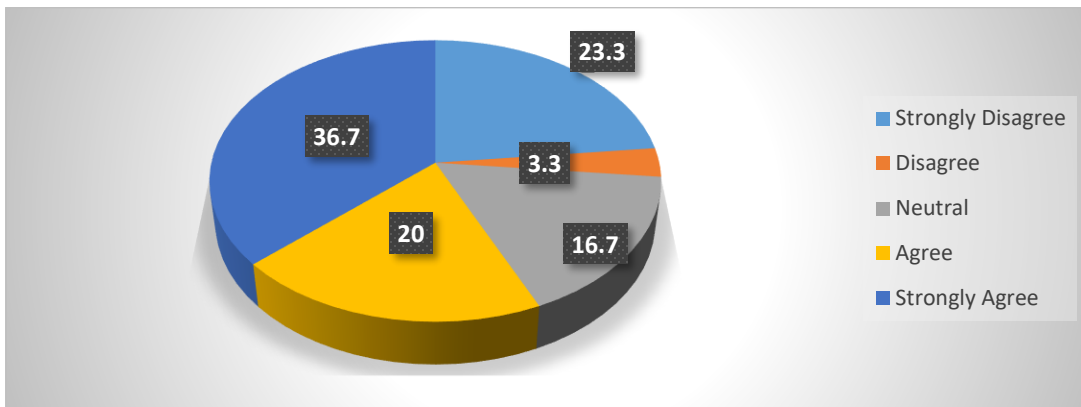
In this section, the following figures [1-22] explore the students' attitudes towards the strategies of learning vocabulary.

**Item 1. I know whether a new word is important in understanding a passage.**



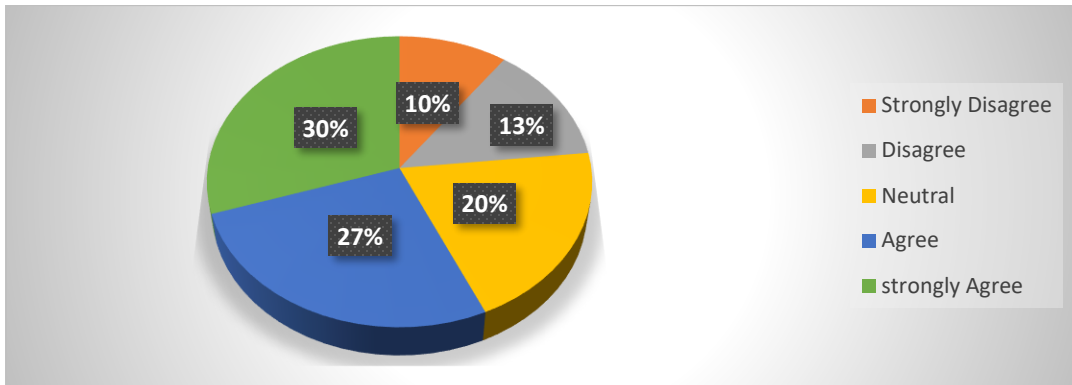
The result shows the majority of learners (70%) state they can recognize important new words in a passage. However, (20%) of learners either disagree or strongly disagree, while 10% stay neutral.

**Item 2. I only focus on things that are directly related to examinations.**



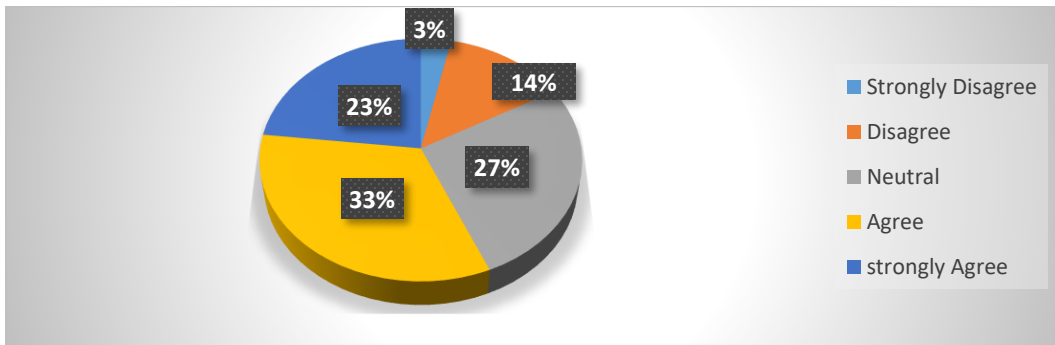
As shown in the chart there is a difference in learners' strategies to learning, 57% of students leaning towards a concentration only on examination (20% agree and 37% strongly agree). However, a mixed 26% of students (23% strongly disagree and 3% disagree) do not use this strategy, while 17% of students are neutral.

**Item 3. I make use of logical development in the context (e.g., cause and effect) when guessing the meaning of a word.**



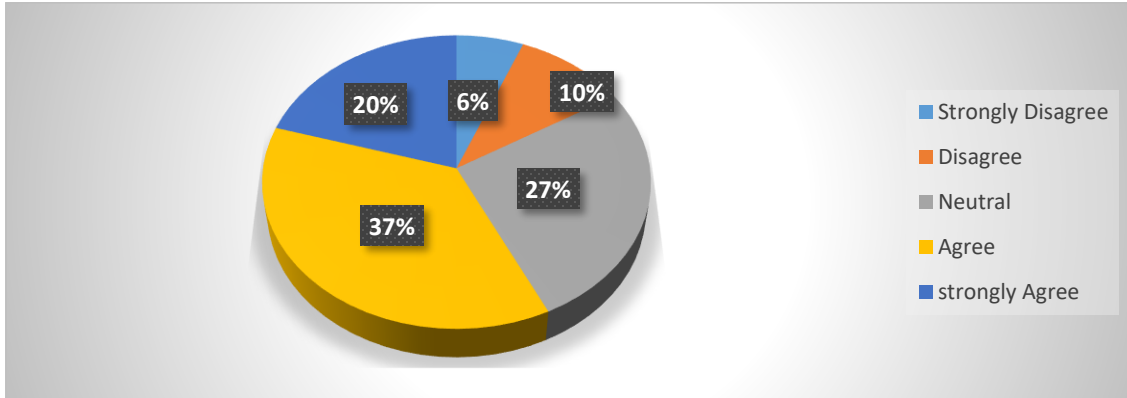
From the pie chart, 57% of students confirm using logical development (27% agree and 30% strongly agree). However, 23% do not use this strategy (10% strongly disagree and 13% disagree), while 20% stay neutral.

**Item 4. I make use of the part of speech of a new word when guessing its meaning (e.g., noun, verb, adjective, etc).**



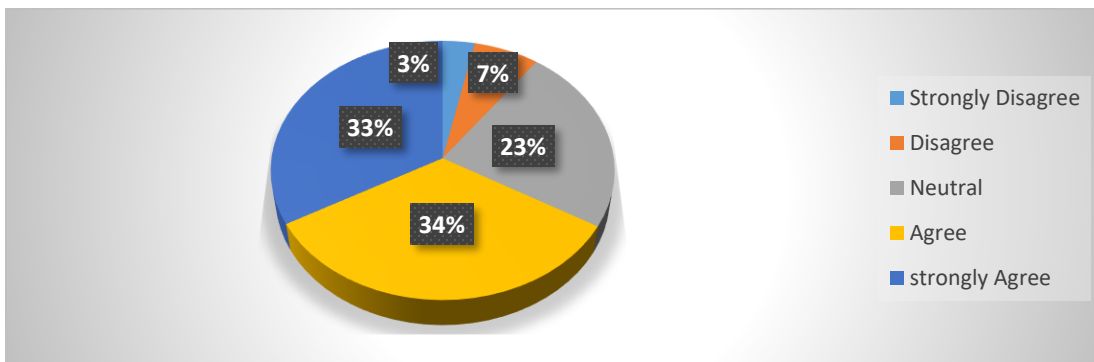
The data reveals a majority of 56% of students (33% agree and 23% strongly agree). On the other hand, 17% of students do not follow this strategy (3% strongly disagree and 14% disagree), while 27% of the participants continue neutral.

**Item 5. I check my guessed meaning in the paragraph or whole text to see if it fits in.**



The findings reveal that 57% of students (37% agree and 20% strongly agree) check their guessed meanings of vocabulary in the paragraph or whole text. However, 16% of students (6% strongly disagree and 10% disagree) do not use this strategy. The other 27% of participants are neutral.

**Item 6. When I do not know a new word in reading, I use my common sense and background knowledge of the topic to guess the meaning of the new word.**



This chart clarifies that 67% of students—divide between agree and strongly agree towards using their common sense and background knowledge to guess the meanings of new words in texts. In contrast, a small group of 10% (3% strongly disagree and 7% disagree) do not use this strategy, while 23% of participants stay neutral.

**Item 7. When I see an unfamiliar word again and again, I look it up in the dictionary.**

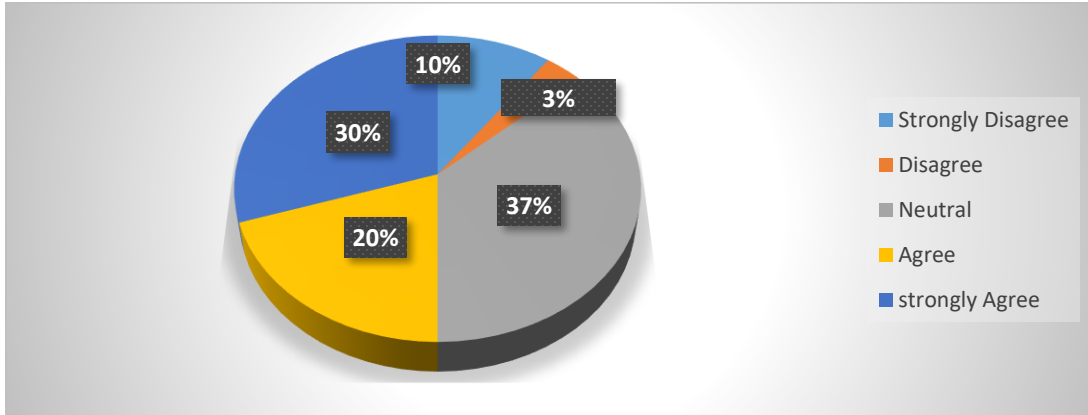
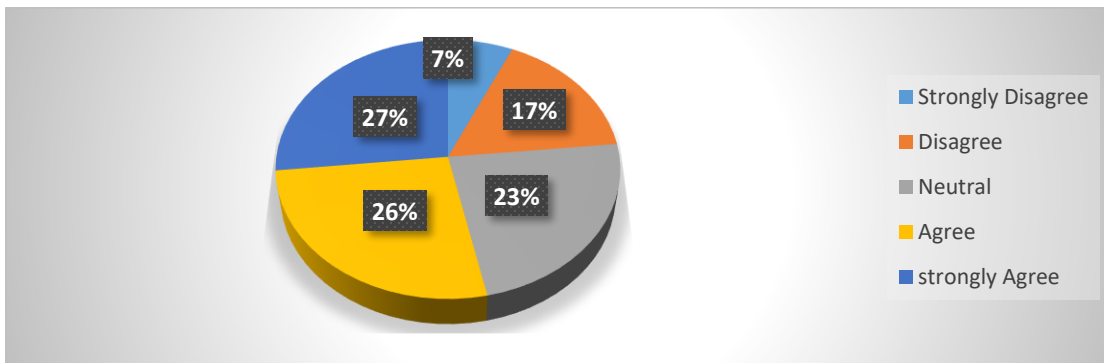


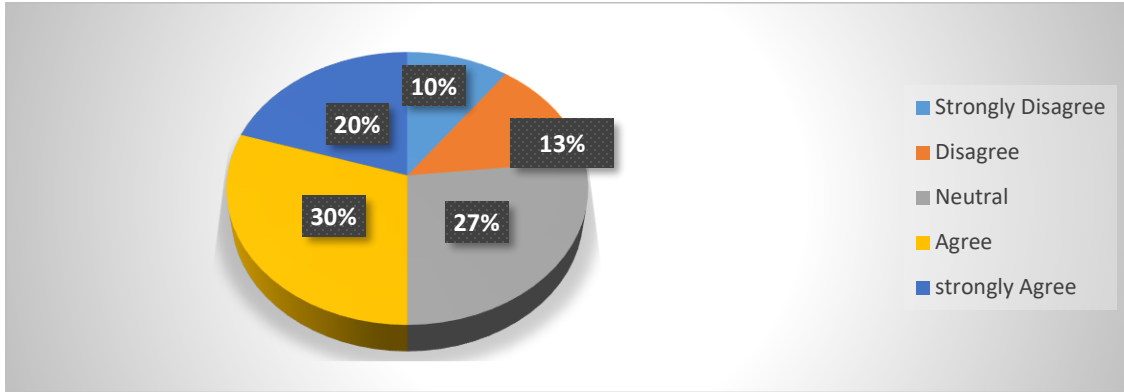
Chart above reveals a division in the strategy of students towards dealing with repeatedly faced unfamiliar words. A total of 50% of students (20% agree and 30% strongly agree). In contrast, 13% (10% strongly disagree and 3% disagree) do not use this strategy. A group of 37% learners stay neutral.

**Item 8. When not knowing a word prevents me from understanding a whole sentence or even a whole paragraph, I look it up in the dictionary.**



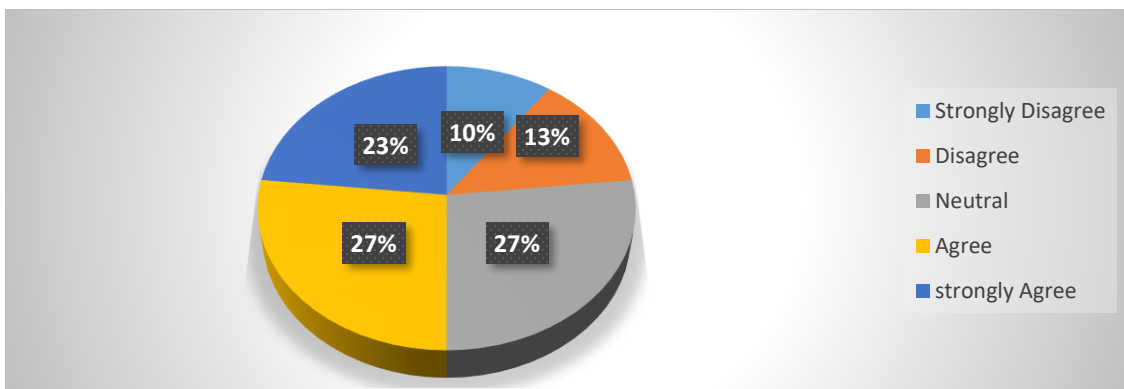
According to the above chart a mixed majority of 53% (26% agree and 27% strongly agree) use dictionary when not knowing a word prevents them from understanding. A total of 24% (7% strongly disagree and 17% disagree) do not use a dictionary in this case. The other 23% of students are neutral.

**Item 9. I pay attention to the examples when I look up a word in a dictionary.**



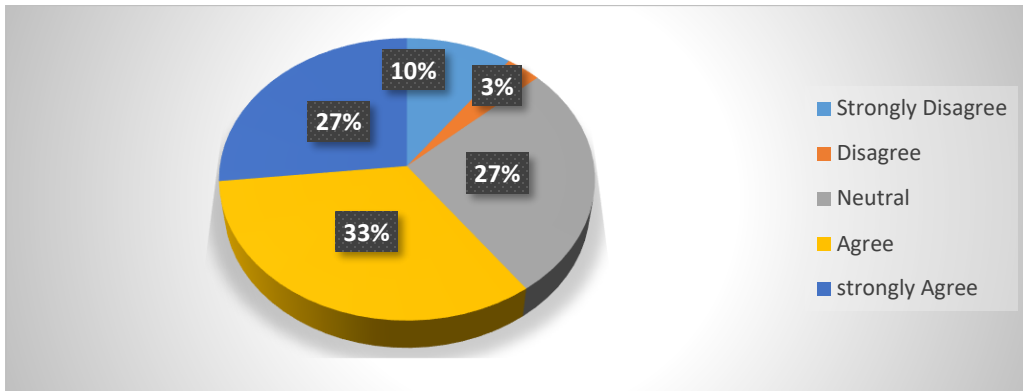
Based on the data presented in the chart half of the participants (50%)—with 30% agreeing and 20% strongly agreeing—pay attention to examples that are given. However, 23% of students expressed disagreement (10% strongly disagree and 13% disagree) with this strategy. 27% of students were neutral.

**Item 10. I make a note when I see a useful expression or phrase.**



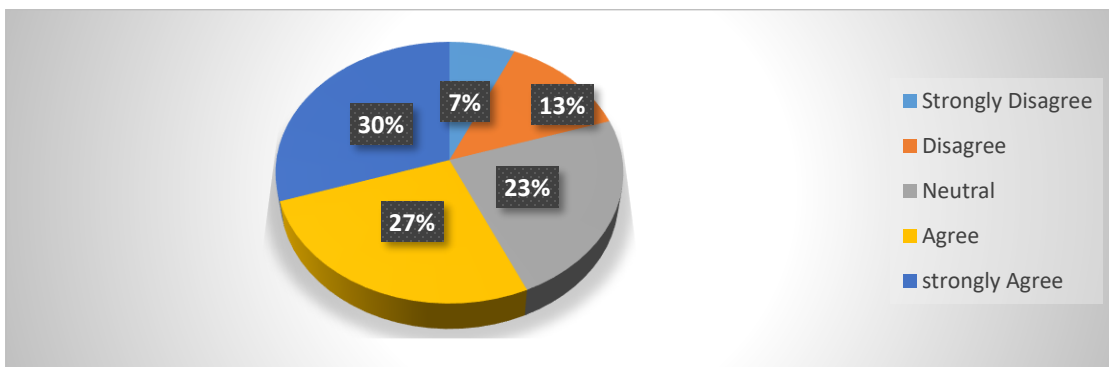
From the pie chart, it is clear that 50% of the participants, with 27% agreeing and 23% strongly agreeing, which reveals that new expressions are written down, while, 23% of participants (10% strongly disagree and 13% disagree), do not prefer this strategy. The neutral stance of 27% reveals students are not sure about its impact.

**Item 11. I write down both the meaning in my native language and the English explanation of the word I look up.**



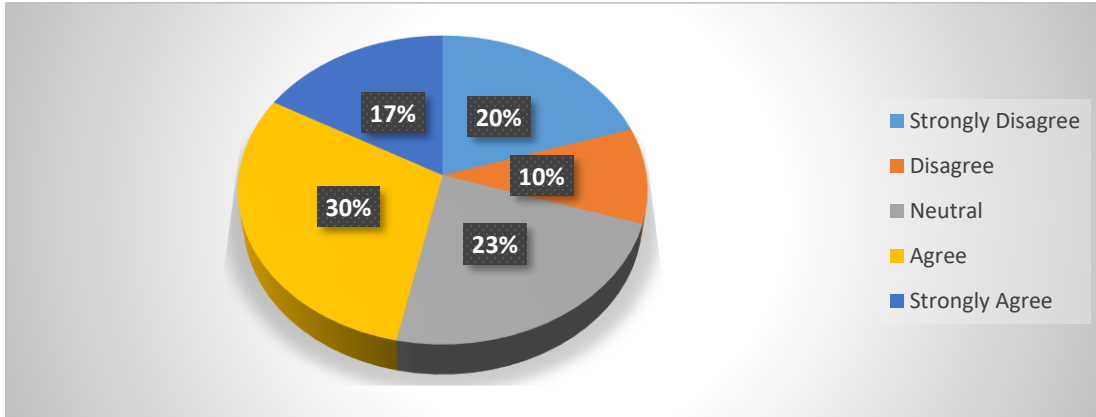
The findings reveal that 60% (33% agree and 27% strongly agree) use a bilingual strategy to vocabulary learning. However, a small group of participants, 13% (10% strongly disagree and 3% disagree), avoid this strategy. Whereas 27% of participants stay neutral.

**Item 12. I go through my vocabulary list several times until I remember all the words on the list.**



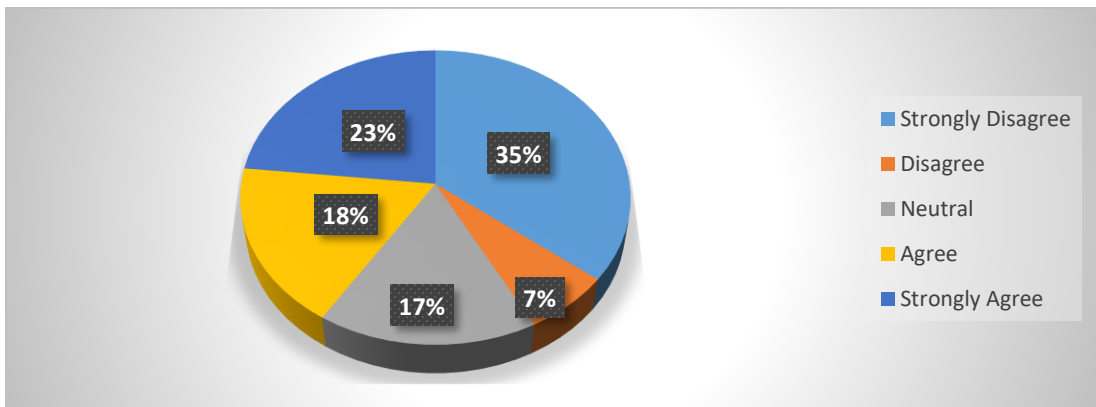
As shown in this chart, the learners' responses to a vocabulary memorization strategy show more than half (57%) support for repeating words over and over until all words are memorized. Whereas 20% of students disagree with this strategy, while 23% remain neutral.

**Item 13. When I try to remember a word, I say it aloud to myself.**



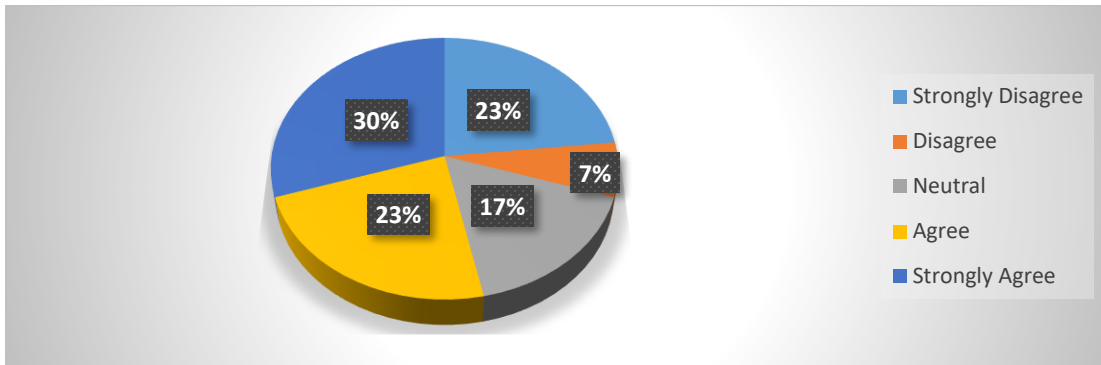
It is observed from the chart above that 47% of the participants (30% agree and 17% strongly agree) find saying words aloud useful for remembering them. In contrast, 30% (20% strongly disagree and 10% disagree) do not find this strategy useful. A good group of 23% participants remain neutral.

**Item 14. When I try to remember a word, I write it again and again.**



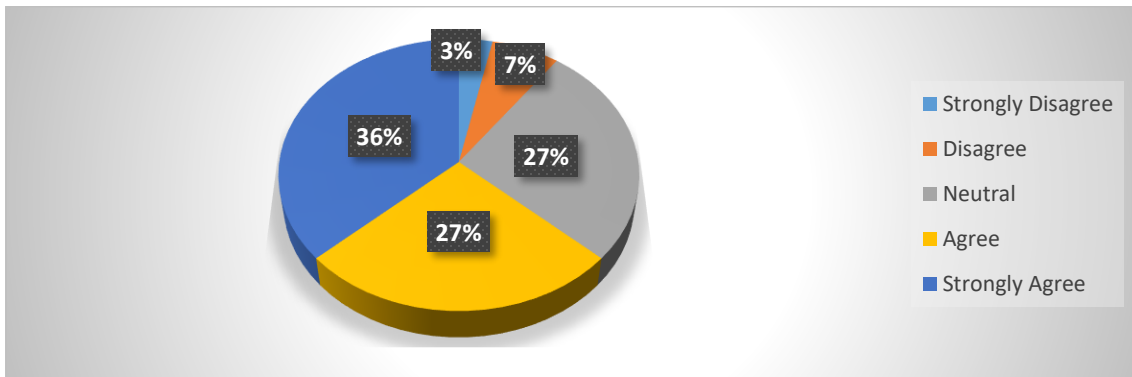
This pie chart results show that a large group, 42% (35% strongly disagree and 7% disagree), does not find this strategy helpful. While, 41% of the students (18% agree and 23% strongly agree) confirm that repetition of words through writing is helpful, whereas 17% of participants stay neutral.

**Item 15. I write both the new words and their translation in my native language again and again in order to remember them.**



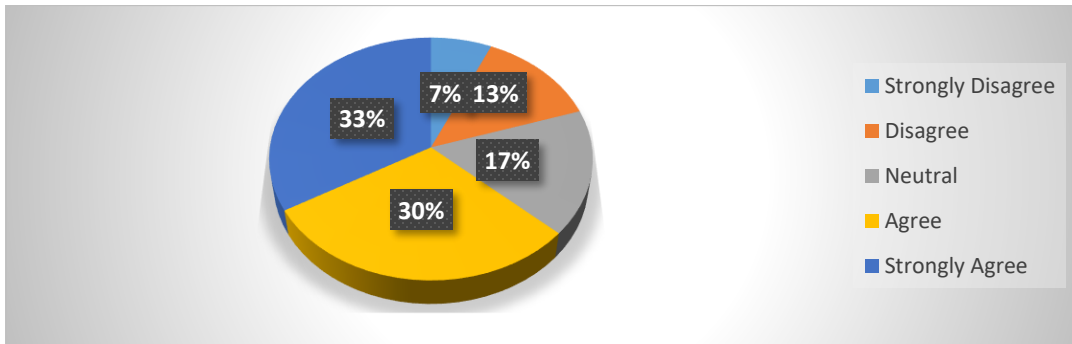
As noticed from the chart above, the majority of participants (53%) involving those who agree (23%) and strongly agree (30%)—support this strategy. However, 30% of the students (23% strongly disagree and 7% disagree) do not support this strategy, and 17% of students maintain neutral.

**Item 16. I create a picture in my mind to help me remember a new word.**



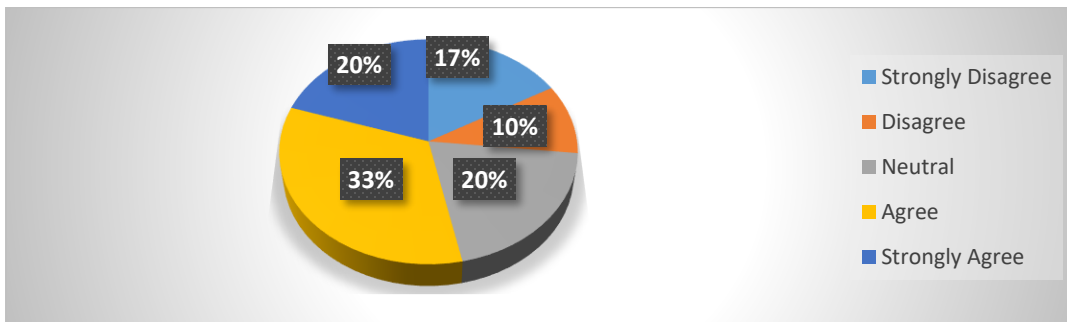
Based on the data presented in the chart, approximately 63% (27% agree and 36% strongly agree) expressed agreement that creating mental images helps their memorization of words. However, only 10% of participants (3% strongly disagree and 7% disagree) disagree with this strategy, while 27% of participants remain neutral.

**Item 17. To help me remember a word, I try to “see” the spelling of the word in my mind.**



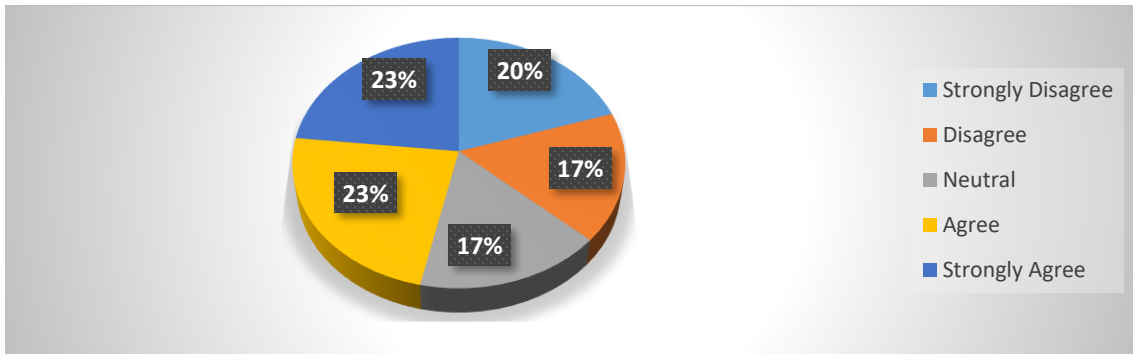
It is clear that the majority of the students 63% (30% agree and 33% strongly agree), supported the strategy of visualizing the spelling of a word in their mind. While, 20% of students (7% strongly disagree and 13% disagree) do not find this strategy helpful, whereas 17% remain neutral.

**Item 18. I intentionally study how English words are formed in order to remember more words (e.g., learner is a derived form of “learn+er”).**



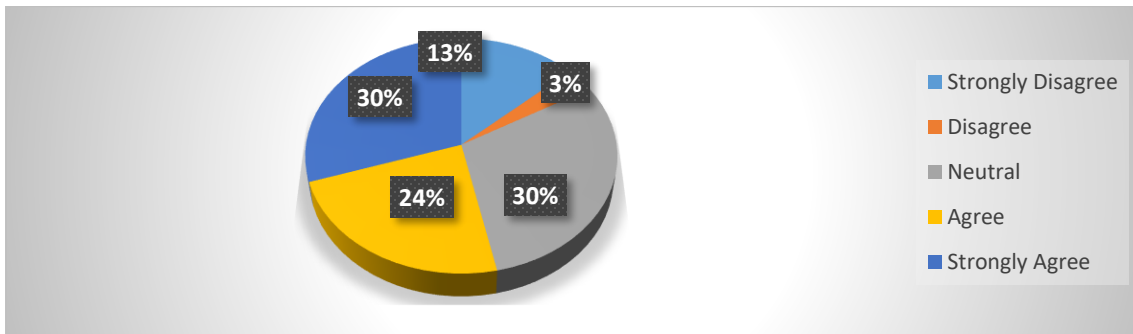
Regarding the above chart, 53% of participants (33% agree and 20% strongly agree) agreed with this analytic strategy. However, 27% of students (17% strongly disagree and 10% disagree) disagreed with this strategy, while (20%) of the students stand neutral.

**Item 19. When I try to remember a word, I also try to remember the sentence in which the word is used.**



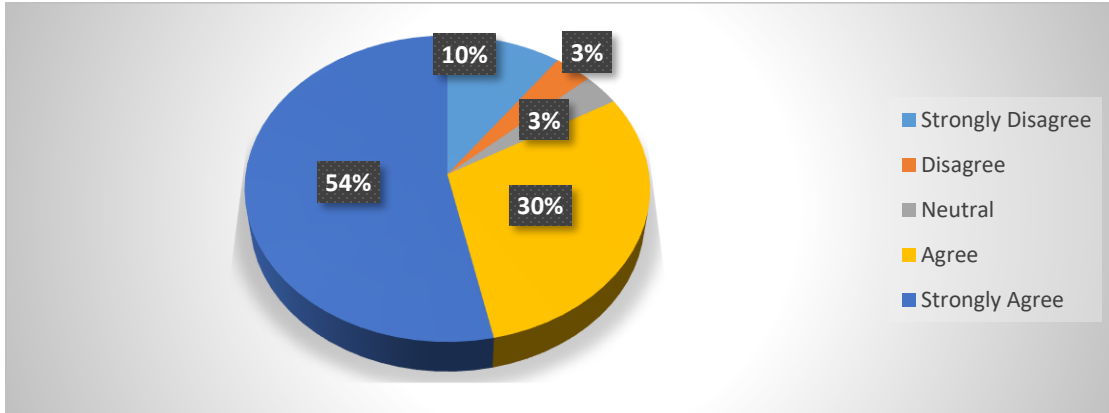
This chart illustrates a divide opinion among students about this strategy. Equal groups, 46% (23% agree and 23% strongly agree) find contextual memorization helpful. However, 37% of students (20% strongly disagree and 17% disagree), do not use this strategy, and 17% stay neutral.

**Item 20. When words are spelled similarly, I remember them together (e.g., back “part of body” and back “away from front or centre”).**



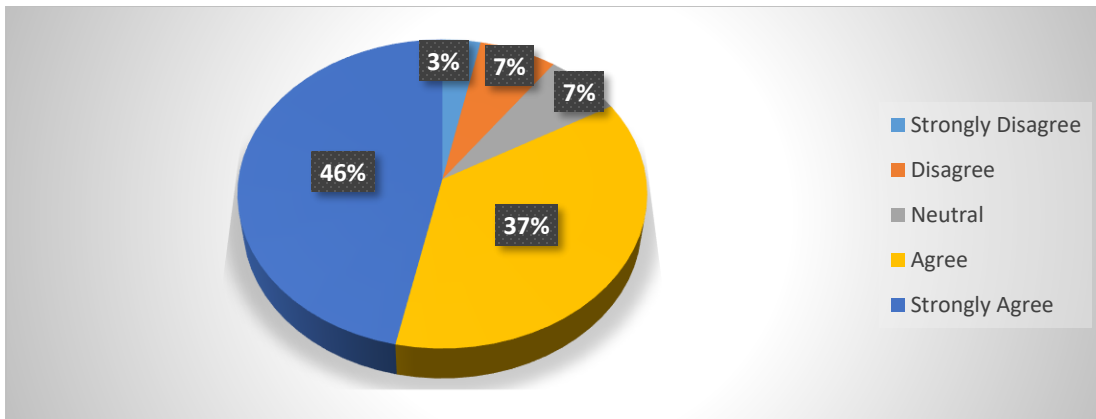
The results obtained from the chart above reveal that the majority 54% of students (24% agree and 30% strongly agree) supported this strategy. However, 16% of students (13% strongly disagree and 3% disagree), did not support this strategy. While, a group of 30% students remained neutral.

**Item 21. I try to use newly learned words in real-life situations.**



In this chart majority of students 84% (30.0% agree and 54% strongly agree) had positive attitudes towards this strategy. While 13% of students (10% strongly disagree and 3% disagree) disagree with this strategy, and 3% remain neutral.

**Item 22. I try to use the newly learned words as much as possible in speech and writing.**



Based on the findings presented in the chart, approximately 83% of participants (37% agree and 46% strongly agree) use new learned words in speech and writing. While 10% of participants (3% strongly disagree and 7% disagree) do not use this strategy, whereas 7% remains neutral.

### 4.1.2 The Results of the Questionnaire

Based on the data collected by the researcher, the general findings of the research could be presented as follows:

1. Statistics revealed that learners favor using the activation strategy as a strategy of learning vocabulary among six strategies.
2. The inference strategy was the second most used strategy among the students.
3. The encoding strategy was the third most used, declaring that learners transform sentences into symbols to support vocabulary memorization.
4. The knowledge strategy stands fourth in usage among learners, emphasizing that learners depend on background knowledge to learn new vocabulary.
5. Dictionary usage was the fifth most common strategy, confirming that it is not the most common strategy among learners.
6. The least common used strategy among learners was note-taking strategy.

According to statistical analysis and the findings obtained, the sub-strategy of mental and visual repeating vocabulary did not indicate a considerable effect on increasing vocabulary memorization. It was noted that strategy number 14 "When I try to remember a word, I write it repeatedly" was reiterated very slimly. So, this sub-strategy was not efficient in this specific context, or there may be other factors affecting memorization, for example (focus and attention, sentimental and mood factors, relaxation and sleep, healthy habits, progression of age).

## 4.2 Analysis of Teachers' Interview

The purpose of the study was to reveal the effectiveness of the most effective strategies for improving vocabulary learning in university learners, with six teachers promoted to share their experiences. These teachers would be providing opinions and points of view through responses to a group of four cautiously designed questions. The objective is to collect data to know if short stories are blended into vocabulary teaching, the strategies used during this process, the strategies used to evaluate learner vocabulary understanding, and the strategies are taken to motivate students and support successful learning results. The objective behind this question is to offer described interviews that may help as an outline for other teachers within their strategies of teaching vocabulary.

### ***Theme 1: Teaching Vocabulary to EFL Students***

Teachers were asked how do they teach new vocabulary to your English learners, teacher 'A' said *'I use contextual learning, vocabulary exercises, word families, reading and vocabulary expansion'* the teacher uses these strategies to recognize themes in language and support reading as a method for important vocabulary enlargement. Moreover, teacher 'B' said *'the strategies that I use to teach new vocabulary are contextualizing the words, giving definitions, offering examples, visual aids, word families, word forms and context clues'* these strategies compare terms of suggesting contextual clues to set new vocabulary, but it includes the direct presentation of definitions and instances. Visual aids usage develops the ability to remember vocabulary, while attention to vocabulary structures and their different uses in statements leads to a complete understanding of the vocabulary.

In addition, teachers 'C' and 'E' were the same *'Using word cards and connecting maps with familiar words'* this option of using these strategies stands with visual learning aids like vocabulary cards and linking maps that link new words to vocabulary already familiar to the learners. Such strategies probably make memorization easier by using visual memory and associations, making unfamiliar vocabulary more accessible and easier to use. Teachers 'D' and 'F' use the same strategy *'Using short stories'*. They choose narrative strategy, using short stories as their first strategy for vocabulary teaching. This strategy depends on the contextual form of language, gives students the ability to understand the meaning and usage of vocabulary within a wealthy and interactive text.

### ***Theme 2: Vocabulary Evaluation***

Another significant question was asked to the teachers was about how do they evaluate students' vocabulary learning when using short stories as a teaching tool and what assessment strategies do they find most useful. The findings revealed that teachers use different evaluation strategies. Teacher 'A' stated *'I evaluate them by asking yes or no questions and multiple choice questions'* the teacher uses simple strategies, for example, yes-no questions and multiple-choice questions, probably aiming to evaluate understanding and memorization of vocabulary in a structured way.

Teacher 'C' answered *'I prefer to evaluate by using writing assessment'* prefers for assessments writing, that could contain learners showing their comprehension of vocabulary by using them in written texts. Teachers 'B' and 'D' said the same answer which is *'using contextual writing, assignments, vocabulary quizzes, oral presentations, vocabulary journals, word maps or graphic organizer and peer assessment'*. They share a

strategy through the usage of contextual written assignments and vocabulary tests, concluded by oral presentations to evaluate learners' speaking skills and their ability to use vocabulary in contexts. Teacher 'F' uses ' *vocabulary journals and word maps or graphic organizers, beside peer assessment*'. Journals give the ability to continue revealing learning vocabulary results, whereas graphic organizers motivate visual learning, and peer assessment supports joint learning. Teacher 'E' answered ' *I ask the students to give examples*' the teacher supports asking learners to set sentences by themselves using new words, presenting a proof of their comprehension of the source text.

### ***Theme 3: Teaching Vocabulary Strategies***

The teachers were asked what strategies do they use particularly when teaching vocabulary and how do they make sure learners learn effectively and stay engaged. The findings gained from the interviews revealed that teachers use various strategies to make sure that learners learn effectively and stay engaged. Teacher 'B' said ' *the strategies that I use when I teach vocabulary are word play activities, reading aloud and repeating the most important words*' the teacher uses word playing, that can contain play on words, and concentrates on learning by reading loudly and repeating key words.

Teachers 'A, C & E' shared the same strategies by saying they use ' *pre-reading activities, vocabulary preview, contextual understanding and vocabulary highlighting*'. They confirm introductory steps like activities of pre-reading and vocabulary previews to make the learners understand, beside highlighting and concentrating on important and new words in the contexts. Teacher 'F' answered ' *I prefer to use contextualization and pre-teaching,*

*guessing, active reading, vocabulary exercises, discussion and reflection, personalized activities, multimedia resources, gamification and regular assessment*'. The teacher presents many different strategies that keep learners engaged and test their levels in learning vocabulary. Teacher 'D' answered *'I always evaluate the students by using strategies like synonymous, equivalent meaning and paraphrasing*'. The teacher teach vocabulary through using these strategies to enlarge learners' vocabulary, confirming the flexible use of language in different statements and texts.

#### ***Theme 4: The Use of Short Stories When Teaching Vocabulary***

The final question that asked to the teachers was about how often do they use short stories to teach vocabulary in their university English classes. The findings of the interviews showed that including short stories in teaching vocabulary to learners of university is different from teacher to another. Teacher 'E' answered *'not very much, usually in tests or quizzes*'. The teacher indicated that the results of using short stories are not motivated to use it regularly, he preferred to use them in tests or quizzes. Teachers 'B & C' stated the same answer by saying *'in necessary situations*'. They blend short stories into their vocabulary teaching process when they need to. This points to an intended use of short stories. In this regard, teachers 'A, D & F' answered by saying they *'always use short stories when they teach vocabulary*'. The teachers confirm using short stories always in their vocabulary teaching process. The continuous use of short stories proposes an educational concentration on the process of context learning.

### **4.3 Summary of the Chapter**

The data collected from quantitative [Students questionnaire] and qualitative [Teachers interviews] was analyzed. Quantitative data findings indicated that learners favor using the activation strategy when they learn unfamiliar vocabulary. However, qualitative data findings confirm the effect of contextual and short stories teaching strategies used by teachers in teaching new vocabulary. These findings will be discussed in detail in chapter five.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter has provided research questions, data collection and analysis procedure, discussion of data collected by the questionnaire and the interviews. The data was collected and analysed to answer the following research questions:

1. What vocabulary learning strategies do students of English use in the department of English in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zawia?
2. What strategies do teachers of English use when they teach new vocabulary?
3. How do these strategies influence the enjoyment and effectiveness of language learning among students?

#### 5.1 The Use of Social Strategy ‘Activation’

In the light of the findings of the study, results revealed that EFL Libyan third semester students in department of English in faculty of Arts at Zawia University used several strategies when they learn new vocabulary. These strategies are discussed in the following paragraphs as the most important questionnaire’s domains.

The first domain strategy concerned with the usage of newly learned words in real-life situations. The results got majority support among learners, with approximately 84% of student. However, a small group of 13% students rejected the use of this strategy, with

merely 3% staying neutral about this strategy. The study shows the personal aspect of language learning, with some learners regularly unfamiliar learned vocabulary in real-life situations while other learners reject to practice this strategy, maybe because of their lack of language or needing people to share their ideas with in the English language. This finding proved with Brown (2010) who states the success of using contexts in language learning and the applying of new words that are learned recently in real-life situations.

The second domain strategy related to the usage of the newly learned words as much as possible in speech and writing. The data revealed a clear preferring among learners to use newly learned words regularly, with approximately 83% using this strategy. However, 10% of the students rejected to use this strategy, whereas only of 7% of the students maintained neutral according to the use of recently learned vocabulary in spoken and written settings. The data results show the different views in which learners use recently learned vocabulary in their contact dealings. This strategy agreed with Nation (2001) who confirms the value of using words in context to increase learning and memorization of words.

## **5.2 The Use of Cognitive Strategy**

According to the third domain question of the questionnaire concerned with students know whether a new word is important in understanding a passage. The results show that a majority of the learners (70%) are certain in their ability to understand significant unfamiliar words in a passage, while a smaller group of the learners (20%) show that they disagree or strongly disagree on this strategy, proposing a lack of certainty or disability in their vocabulary evaluation experiences, whereas a small group of the learners (10%)

maintain neutral, stating a possible chance for improving their capacity to recognize important words during reading. It appears that the largest group of learners provide powerful understanding when reading by their knowledge in recognizing key vocabulary. Despite that, the 30% missing knowledge shows the requirement for intended word help strategies. The finding in this respect concurs with Nation (2001) who supports the significance of words in reading comprehension, confirming the necessity to recognize vocabulary meanings and usage in passage. This strategy agreed with Nagy and Anderson (1984) who enhance that vocabulary learning is crucial for reading comprehension and overall language learning.

### **5.3 The Use of Metacognitive Strategy**

The fourth and last domain strategy related to when students do not know a new word in reading, they use their common sense and background knowledge of the topic to guess the meaning of the new word. In this regard, a question asked to the students was When they do not know a new word in reading, they use their common sense and background knowledge of the topic to guess the meaning of the new word. 67% of the learners agree or strongly agree with this strategy, confirming how background knowledge assist in understanding vocabulary. However, 10% of the learners disagree with this strategy, including 3% who strongly disagree, whereas 23% stay neutral, probably showing a necessity for more instruction in understanding vocabulary meanings. The largest group of learners use common sense and previous knowledge to recognize new vocabulary. Despite that, some participants disagree with this strategy, whereas others stay neutral. Nation (2001) Debates the importance of using previous knowledge as well as contextual

clues to conclude vocabulary meanings, showing the way these strategies increase word understanding.

#### **5.4 Teaching New Vocabulary to EFL Students**

Results viewed that teachers use various strategies including short stories when they teach new vocabulary to university students. The most important domain questions about teacher's perception of the strategies are explained in the following sections.

The first domain question was about the strategies that teachers use particularly when they teach vocabulary and how do they ensure that students learn effectively and stay engaged. Teacher 'A' concentrates on blending vocabulary play and audile learning in word teaching like reading loudly and vocal repetition of new words that is important in engaging learners and increasing their memorization of unfamiliar words. Through using these strategies, teachers can make an effective learning environment that supports interactive contribution and higher activation with the language. These strategies agreed with Nation (2001) who enhances the benefits of these strategies through confirming the importance of interacting approaches in developing vocabulary learning in language settings. These responsive strategies make the procedure of learning entertaining and motivate audio learning. They also make teachers increase a merit of inventiveness and scientific investigation of language among learners.

Confirming initial stages and declaring new words in short stories is an important strategy used by the teachers 'A, C & E' to increase learners' learning and simplify understanding.

The participation in pre-reading exercises and presenting word revisions, enable teachers to arrange the class for learners to understand important ideas and expressions before starting the text. This strategy helps in concentrating learners' awareness on analytical words which is going to be important for comprehending the story. These results agreed with Wixson (1986) who enhances for steps before teaching words and concentrating on important words to increase recognizing the main thoughts in context more than focusing on new vocabulary. Through presenting important words previously and interacting learners in exercises that make them familiar with the language and ideas they may face, teachers create an encouraging learning setting that makes learners participate effectively with the context.

Using many various strategies in teaching vocabulary by short stories is an effective strategy that intends to make a wide and interacting learning experiment for learners. Through revealing with context and previous teaching steps to predict new words. Teacher 'F' makes the learners ready for the forthcoming topic and assess them improve predatory expertise by making guessing about the topic they will study. Blending conversations, personal exercises, and multiple resources develop the learning procedure, making it more engaging and concentrating on developing learner skills. Manyak, et al (2021) supports using multimedia resources and personal exercises in vocabulary learning.

Concentrating on teaching synonymous and doing exercises on paraphrasing is a useful strategy used by teacher 'D' to develop learners' to use words correctly in different contexts and improve their language skills. Through researching equivalent meanings and

motivating learners to paraphrase statements by using various vocabularies, teachers assist to increase learners' words and improve their comprehension of the way vocabulary could be applied alternately to carry identical thoughts. This strategy enlarges learners' language storage and supports their capacity to demonstrate their ideas successfully in various linguistic contexts. This agreed with Schmitt (2000) who confirms the significance of teaching synonyms to enlarge students' words and improve their communication capacities.

### **5.5 The Use of Short Stories When Teaching Vocabulary**

The second domain question was about how often do teachers use short stories to teach vocabulary in their university English classes. In the field of education, the use of short stories as a strategy for teaching words in university English classes shows many strategies used by teachers. When some teachers choose for a more limited use of short stories, others show them as regular elements in their teaching strategies. These findings agreed with a study indicated by Khatib and Seyyedrezaei (2013) which points that students become active contributors in the discussion and recognizing of short stories vocabulary in the contextual formation of the storytelling. Teacher 'E' stated limited use of short stories, mostly in evaluations. This viewpoint may pay attention on word proficiency to achieve evaluation needs, possibly ignoring the extensive advantages of language experiences and in context learning that short stories could provide.

In this regard, teachers 'B & C' who use short stories as a requirement tool show an empirical and intended strategy to increase tales in word teaching. Their usage of short stories declares a carefully application in context resources to support particular word

learning aims or recognize learners' specific understanding gaps. However, teachers 'A, D & F' who regularly use short stories in their teaching show a powerful obligation to in context learning and language engagement. When routinely blending tales in their vocabulary teaching, these teachers focus on learner interaction, meaningful language application, and to expand comprehending of vocabulary in a short story setting.

### **5.3 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter discussed the most important finding that analysed in chapter four which collected by quantitative data [structured questionnaire] and qualitative data [semi-structured interviews]. The conclusion of these findings will be presented in chapter six.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

#### 6.0 Introduction

The findings of the study which gained from the questionnaire revealed important and main results about how learners learn new vocabulary. Learners prefer to learn new vocabulary through being activated and interacting. They were great at finding out new vocabulary from the context in which they be revealed. The use of pictures and symbols to memorize vocabulary was necessary for their learning of vocabulary. Learners also preferred using what they already learned to understand and recognize unfamiliar vocabulary. Many learners do not prefer to use dictionary or taking notes when learning new words, revealing various predilection in vocabulary learning strategies. The study recommended that repeating vocabulary in your mind or in a visual manner may not be the best strategy to memorize new and unfamiliar vocabulary. This require a deep view at different elements that have an impact on memory, for example, concentration, feelings, relaxation, sleep habits, and lifestyle choices, as well as how age effects learning and memorizing new vocabulary.

Various teaching approaches including short stories in universities declare teachers have various concentrations when they teach new vocabulary. While some concentrate on evaluating learners' understanding of new vocabulary, others choose generating too many learning experiences to help learners better learn and memorize language. These various

strategies confirm the importance of using easy and extensive teaching strategy to help learners use new vocabulary effectively in various contexts. Teachers show their responsibilities to develop students' vocabulary through using attractive activities like vocabulary games, exercises of listening, and preparatory tasks. The practicing of context, discussions, reflections, and resources of multimedia in teaching vocabulary produces comprehensive frameworks that suit various learning strategies and support critical thinking. Skills of language learners could be improved through using synonyms, paraphrasing and short stories. In addition, they raise creativity and help learners express themselves well. The different teaching strategies show teachers' interests to improve learners' language skills.

## **6.1 Conclusion of the Whole Study**

This study aims to investigate the strategies used by EFL students when they learn vocabulary. It also tries to identify the strategies used by EFL teachers in vocabulary teaching. Additionally, it aims to explore how the use of various strategies enhance language learning in an enjoyable and educational manner. The data of the study was collected by using structured questionnaire for quantitative data which was distributed to students and semi-structured interviews for qualitative data that conducted with teachers. The study indicates the significance of exploring how EFL learners use strategies to learn vocabulary as an important aspect in language learning. Understanding and focusing on the different challenges that English learners encounter, for example, grammar rules and improving their vocabulary, is important for teachers to indicate effective encouragement. Learners favor active learning and using visual aids to identify vocabulary. Teachers must use different teaching strategies to develop learners' learning. The process of remembering

grammar rules may not be the best strategy. It is important to be creative in language learning. Learners have their own favorite strategies, for example, encoding vocabulary, using dictionaries or activation. This confirms the requirement for teachers to manage their strategies based on each learner's needs. The usage of short stories is effective for expanding vocabulary and developing language skills. Innovative strategies of teaching vocabulary make learning delectable and enjoyable. The support of critical thinking, positive feedback and creativity helps learners to improve their language learning. The study underlines the significance of developing teaching strategies to suit learners' learning techniques. It reveals teachers' responsibility to provide personalized learning experiences to develop learners' language skills productively.

## **6.2 Recommendations of the Study**

According to the results of the study, some recommendations are provided below:

1. The study results purpose to lead learners of English language in selecting the proper strategy to learn English vocabulary and form a powerful knowledge base for learning new vocabulary by reading and watching different materials in English.
2. The activation strategy has been the most useful in learning vocabulary; as a result, learners could be encouraged to use responsive and practical, and interactive strategies to remember vocabulary, for example, playing parts or dialogues.
3. The inferencing strategy discovered to be successful; hence, learners could be supported to use context and their knowledge to understand and recognize new vocabulary.
4. The encoding strategy could be improved through using pictures, symbols, and visual aids to reinforce students' vocabulary storage.
5. Learners may have encouraged to use dictionaries successfully and cleverly.

6. Learners could be encouraged to take notes and making a notebook to write down new vocabulary and use it for following revision and exercise.

7. Learners can select the strategy depending on their capacities and requirements to develop their vocabulary learning based on study factors.

The study also provides recommendations to the teachers as follows:

1. Teachers may teach lessons that contains short stories to provide a meaningful context to enhance vocabulary.

2. Teachers may use easy and extensive teaching methods to assist learners to apply new vocabulary effectively in various contexts.

3. Teachers could apply engaging activities to enhance vocabulary development.

4. Teachers could use synonyms, paraphrasing and short stories to enhance students' language skills.

### **6.3 Limitations**

There have been some limitations in this study. The conducted study is limited in terms of time, place and population. With regard to time, the distribution of the questionnaire has been postponed for four months due to a strike by faculty members of the university. There were also some challenges encountered when conducting interviews with teachers, as they were busy with lectures and had limited time.

### **6.4 Suggestions for Further Research**

1. Further studies could help to decide the elements affecting students' selections of strategies of learning language and to better recognize the causes behind the classifying of learning strategies as revealed.

2. The scope of the study could be enlarged to find out the relationship between the use of various strategies and students' act in other aspects and skills of English language learning.

### **6.5 Summary of the Chapter**

In this chapter, the conclusions obtained from the findings of this study on the strategies of learning vocabulary which are used by Libyan English language students, in addition to strategies that are used by teachers in teaching vocabulary in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zawia. The results of these findings and the consequent recommendations were also explained. Limitations, recommendations and suggestions for further research based on the conclusions and aims of the study were presented.

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# APPENDIX 'A'

## Vocabulary Learning Questionnaire

I am Awatef Mesbah Emlish, I am MA student at University of Zawia. Presently, I am organizing a research study concentrated on the strategies used by learners studying English Education to increase their vocabulary in the process of learning. Your participation in answering the questionnaire would majorly indicate to the data collection for my research study. I kindly ask your desires to take the time to answer the questionnaire.

### SECTION 1

Please write down based on your data.

Name (initial): .....

Age: .....

Gender: Male / Female

### SECTION 2

Select ONE expression that suits your current situation "YES" or "NO".

#### NOTE:

<b>1: Strongly Disagree</b> <b>2: Disagree</b> <b>3: Neutral</b> <b>4: Agree</b> <b>5: Strongly Agree</b>
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Items	1	2	3	4	5
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1. I know whether a new word is important in understanding a passage.					
2. I only focus on things that are directly related to examinations					
3. I make use of logical development in the context (e.g., cause and effect) when guessing the meaning of a word.					
4. I make use of the part of speech of a new word when guessing its meaning (e.g., noun, verb, adjective, etc).					
5. I check my guessed meaning in the paragraph or whole text to see if it fits in.					
6. When I do not know a					

<p>new word in reading, I use my common sense and background knowledge of the topic to guess the meaning of the new word.</p>					
<p>7. When I see an unfamiliar word again and again, I look it up in the dictionary</p>					
<p>8. When not knowing a word prevents me from understanding a whole sentence or even a whole paragraph, I look it up in the dictionary.</p>					
<p>9. I pay attention to the examples when I look up a word in a dictionary</p>					
<p>10. I make a note when I see a useful expression or phrase.</p>					
<p>11. I write down both the meaning in my native language and the</p>					

English explanation of the word I look up.					
12. I go through my vocabulary list several times until I remember all the words on the list.					
13. When I try to remember a word, I say it aloud to myself					
14. When I try to remember a word, I write it again and again.					
15. I write both the new words and their translation in my native language again and again in order to remember them					
16. I create a picture in my mind to help me remember a new word.					
17. To help me remember a word, I try to “see”					

the spelling of the word in my mind					
18. I intentionally study how English words are formed in order to remember more words (e.g., learner is a derived form of “learn+er”).					
19. When I try to remember a word, I also try to remember the sentence in which the word is used.					
20. When words are spelled similarly, I remember them together (e.g., back “part of body” and back “away from front or centre”).					
21. I try to use newly learned words in real-life situations.					
22. I try to use the newly learned words as much as possible in speech and writing					

## **APPENDIX 'B'**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

Q1. How do you teach new vocabulary to your English students?

Q2. How do you evaluate students' vocabulary learning when using short stories as a teaching tool? What assessments strategies do you find most useful?

Q3. What strategies do you use particularly when teaching vocabulary? How do you ensure that students learn effectively and stay engaged?

Q4. How often do you use short stories to teach vocabulary in your university English classes?