

Perceptions towards the Integration of VLS: the Case of EFL Learners in Tertiary Level

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Abstract:

This study investigated Moroccan university students perceptions and attitudes towards the the training they received in five vocabulary learning strategies (VLS). The five vocabulary learning strategies were 'Dictionary Work', 'Word Cards', 'Semantic Mapping', 'Word Parts', and 'Guessing from Context'. Following a pilot study, the strategy training integrated with the regular teaching by the researcher was conducted at the Aerospace Engineering School, the International University of Rabat, Morocco. Forty eight first year university students belonging to similar proficiency and vocabulary size levels, participated in the study. Subjects attended an English course: Composition I (ENGL. 1101) which contained five teaching hours per week for sixteen weeks, in which the intervention took place. Data were collected utilizing a semi-structured interview. Students were interviewed individually at the end of the course to elicit their attitudes and comments. In addition, questions were used to elicit the perceived effectiveness and ineffectiveness of the training techniques used. The qualitative data were statistically analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) along with content analysis. The qualitative data showed that the students had a positive attitude towards vocabulary learning strategies and the training.

Key Words: *Strategic learning; L2 vocabulary; Qualitative Study; Student' perceptions;*

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I. Introduction

Vocabulary is fundamental to language and is of undeniable importance to language learners. Words are the constructing blocks of a language since they tag objects, actions, and ideas without which people cannot convey the intended meaning. Grammatical knowledge does not make for great proficiency in a language. McCarthy emphasizes that "No matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wider range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way" (McCarthy, 1990:viii). The prominent role of vocabulary knowledge in second or foreign language learning has been recently recognized by theorists and researchers in the field, after a period of relative neglect. Accordingly, numerous types of approaches, techniques, exercises and practices have been introduced into the field to teach vocabulary (Hatch & Brown, 1995).

The focus of the present study is on vocabulary learning strategies and their instruction within an EFL context. It seeks to investigate the students' perceptions of vocabulary learning strategy instruction and the strategies that are considered as the most helpful. The key aspects that will be explored in this research are: the central role of lexis within EFL, vocabulary learning strategy taxonomies, learning strategy instruction models and learners' perceptions of vocabulary learning strategies, in general, and their instruction, in particular.

In line with the objectives outlined above, the present study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What are students' attitudes towards the whole strategy training and which strategies are perceived as the most helpful?
2. Is there a difference between the students of the experimental group who have strategy instruction and those in the control group in terms of vocabulary knowledge?

This Study seeks to either refute or support the following hypotheses :

1. Learners will have positive attitudes towards strategy training.
2. There will be a positive effect of explicit vocabulary learning strategy instruction on L2 vocabulary acquisition.

Vocabulary Learning Strategies

As this study aims to explore students' perceptions of vocabulary learning strategies and their integration in an EFL course, it is important to clarify the concept of vocabulary learning strategies from different angles. Then, the specific vocabulary learning strategies involved in the present study will be reviewed and discussed.

Vocabulary learning strategies can be considered a subset of general learning strategies which in turn are a subclass of learning strategies in second language acquisition. Interest in learning strategies first developed in the 1970s with research to identify the characteristics of good language learners (e.g. Naiman, Frohlich et al., 1996). O'Malley and Chamot define learning strategies as "the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn or retain new information" (1990:1). This very broad definition is echoed by Schmitt in defining vocabulary learning strategies. Citing Rubin (1987), Schmitt says learning is "the process by which information is obtained, stored, retrieved and used ...Therefore vocabulary learning strategies could be any which affect this broadly defined process" (1997:203). This definition leaves open to question whether vocabulary learning is incidental or deliberate, a factor which has been much debated in the literature. Gu (1997) defines 'vocabulary' as 'a dynamic complex of interrelated words' (1997:6), and 'learning strategy' as 'a set of deliberate plans and operations a learner employs to facilitate learning processes and boost learning results' (1997:4). In his definition Nation makes clear the intentional character of vocabulary learning and, interestingly, bases his description on the qualities a strategy must possess in order to warrant attention from a teacher. According to Nation, a strategy must:

- 1 involve choice, that is, there are several strategies to choose from
- 2 be complex, that is, there are several steps to learn
- 3 require knowledge and benefit from training
- 4 increase the efficiency of vocabulary learning and vocabulary use (2001:217).

Several strategies have these features. However, according to Nation (2001), learners not only need to know about these strategies, but need to have skill in using them.

An important fact about language learning strategies is that learners use more strategies for learning vocabulary than any other task. Other studies such as (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990, O'Malley et al., 1985) confirm that most language learning strategies are used for vocabulary (followed by pronunciation) tasks. O'Malley and Chamot note: "Research on training second language learners to use learning strategies has been limited almost exclusively to applications with vocabulary tasks" (1990:201). The importance and popularity of vocabulary learning strategies in the group of language learning strategies in terms of actual use is reflected by the fact that the majority of language learning strategies listed in taxonomies such as Oxford's are either vocabulary learning strategies, or can be used for vocabulary learning tasks. According to Schmitt (1997: 201), this phenomenon might be due to two reasons: (1) the relatively more discrete nature of vocabulary learning than other integrated activities, such as oral presentation, which makes it easy to apply learning strategies effectively; (2) learners' awareness of the importance vocabulary in language learning.

II. Material And Methods

Acquiring words in a foreign language is extremely important and it is acknowledged that people cannot communicate successfully if they do not know enough words. For many learners vocabulary learning is very difficult especially for learners whose English is a foreign language. The main concern of this study is to explore students' perceptions of the whole strategy training and to elicit their preferences of vocabulary learning strategies. To get to this objective, a qualitative study was conducted. Qualitative research focuses on understanding people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behavior and interactions. It is an approach used to answer questions about the complex nature of a phenomenon, usually with the purpose of describing and understanding a phenomenon from the participants' point of view. The concern is understanding and interpreting real-life events and stories, as well as people's attitudes, perceptions, experiences and behavior. Data collection is through observations and interviews are usually presented in a narrative form (Thomas, 2003). It is also called interpretative or constructivist approach. Case studies and action research are manifestations of qualitative research.

The strategy training programme

A vocabulary learning strategy intervention programme is meant to equip students with vocabulary learning strategies that they can apply while discovering new words and/or consolidating their already existing vocabulary knowledge. Explicit instruction has been found to be one of the major factors that accounts for students' success in vocabulary learning. In view of this, the researcher needed to find means of teaching strategies explicitly and the approach, The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) designed by Chamot and O'Malley seemed to be suitable because of its explicitness and because of its emphasis on using strategies as a means to an end, i.e. to achieve better vocabulary knowledge. In the CALLA method,

the teacher uses explicit instruction, modelling and discussion to teach vocabulary learning strategies. It focuses on the application of strategies and gives several opportunities to practice so that students become independent in the strategy use. Even though the CALLA was adopted in the introduction of the three main strategies; different methods have been used depending on the nature of the strategy. Besides, different handouts were selected, prepared in advance and given to students as an extra support to introduce and practice the VLS.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are used in this study to collect qualitative data regarding the students' perceptions of the strategy training programme. This type of interview is considered as the most appropriate for several reasons. Unlike unstructured interviews -where there is no particular questioning technique- in semi-structured interview questions are pre-set, but allow more scope for open-ended answers. Besides, while the data obtained from unstructured interviews is difficult to interpret and categorize, the data gathered from a structured interview is "uniformly organized for all respondents and lends itself to statistical analysis" (Cohen and Scott, 1996).

The interviews consisted of eight questions that evaluate the vocabulary strategy training from the students' point of view. Some questions are open ended. Other questions, on the other hand, are closed ended such as Q.2 where students were provided with a list of strategies and had to make a choice of the strategy/strategies they believed to be the most useful.

III. Result

Interviews: students' perceptions of VLS and VLS training

To answer the research question : what are students' perceptions about the whole strategy training and which strategies are considered the most helpful? Semi-structured interviews were carried out and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively (see 2.9.). The twenty interviewees (four students did not show up for the interview) were asked to express their attitude to learning English vocabulary, how beneficial the strategy training has been to them and what they have learned about learning and retaining vocabulary more easily and more effectively.

Each individual interviewee was asked to answer eight questions. The summary of the interviewees' responses is tabulated in Table 1. Furthermore, the numbers of subjects using each strategy (answers to Q.2 and 3) are shown graphically in figure 1.

Category one	Follow up of the VLS training	Answers 'yes' (%)	Answers 'no' (%)
Q.1	Did you use any of the VLS strategies you were trained in to help you remember the vocabulary taught? If no, why not?	Twenty 100%	-
Q.2	Which strategy do you think can help you remember vocabulary and which is less helpful?	See details in Figure 3.4.	
Q.3	Did you use other VLS of your own in combination with the strategies in which you were trained?	Nineteen interviewees (95%)	One interviewee (5%)
Category two	Outcomes after VLS training	Answers 'yes' (%)	Answers 'no' (%)
Q.4	Is your vocabulary retention better after the training in VLS?	Twenty interviewees (100%)	-
Q.5	Do you think you will use the strategies you have learnt to help you create your own VLS to improve your retention in the future?	Twenty interviewees (100%)	-
Q.6	Do you think the training in VLS has made you more aware of vocabulary learning? If yes, in what way? If no, why not?	Twenty interviewees (100%)	-
Category three	Attitudes towards VLS and VLS training	Positive attitude shown in (%)	
Q. 7	How do you feel about VLS in general and the VLS training sessions? You are welcome to give any comments or suggestions about VLS training.	Twenty interviewees (100%)	-
Part four	Additional views		
Q.8	Do you have any suggestion or comments about vocabulary teaching in general? What kind of vocabulary teaching would you like to see in the future?	Answers to this question are presented in detail in the end of this section	

Table 1. Summary of the eight responses of the interview questions

The results obtained from the questions in the semi-structured interview categories 1, 2, and 3 (see Figure 1 and Table 2) and the results gained from question 8 in part four will be presented in the end.

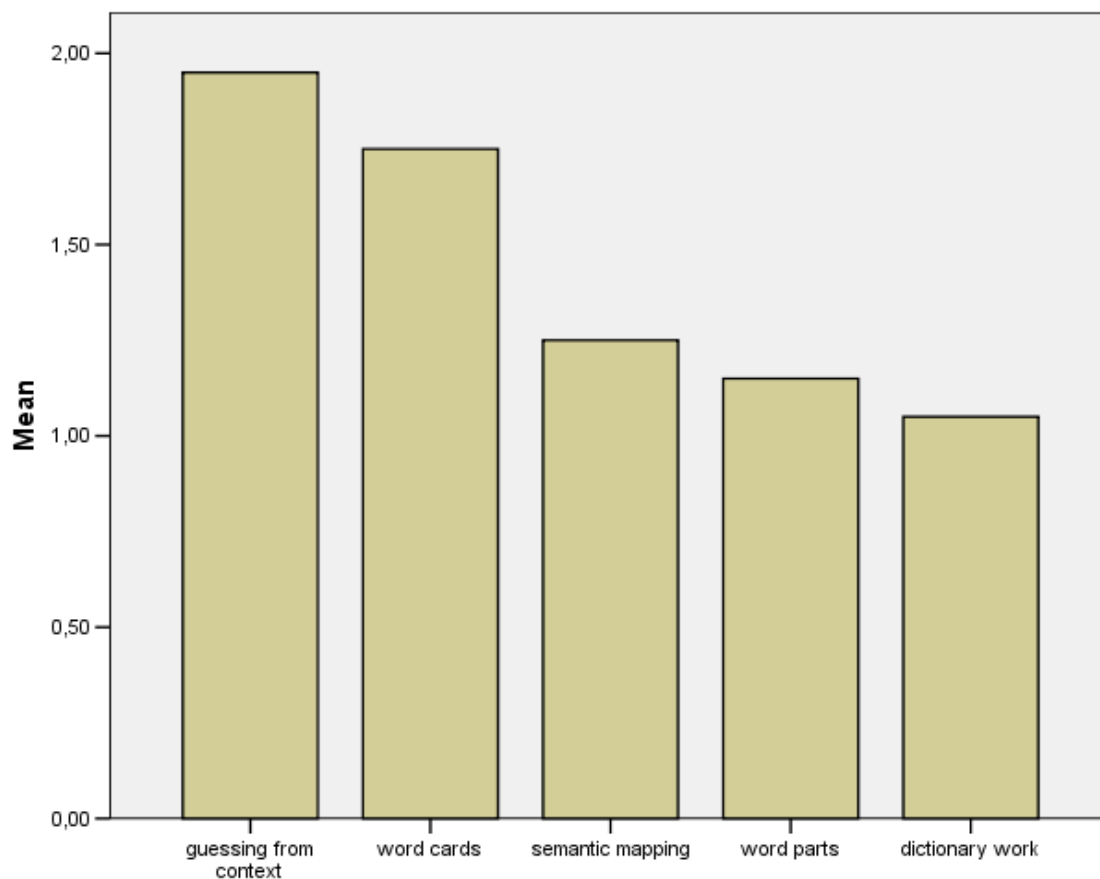


Figure1: Results of the semi-structured interview question no. 2

The graph on Figure 1 shows which strategies are stated to be more helpful than others by the students. The strategies with a mean score of 2.00 are deemed helpful, and those with a mean score of 1:00 are considered as less helpful.

Questions		no	yes
Q1	Count	0	20
	%	0%	100%
Q3	Count	1	19
	%	5%	95%
Q4	Count	0	20
	%	0%	100%
Q5	Count	0	20
	%	0%	100%
Q6	Count	0	20
	%	0%	100%
Q7	Count	0	20
	%	0%	100%
Helpful- GC*	Count	1	19
	%	5%	95%
Helpful-WC*	Count	5	15
	%	25%	75%
Helpful-SM*	Count	15	5
	%	75%	25%

Helpful-DW*	Count	19	1
	%	95%	5%
Helpful-WP*	Count	17	3
	%	85%	15%
*Answers from semi-structured interview Q.2 N=20			

Table2. Table of frequencies- responses to questions no. 1 to 7

The aim of the questions, in the semi-structured interview, is to follow up the effect of the VLST in five VLS.

The semi-structured interview Q.1: ‘Did you use any of the VLS taught to help you memorize the vocabulary introduced? If no, why not? The result reveals that all twenty interviewees answered in the affirmative. The answers showed that the subjects selected VLS variously. The subjects used the VLS in combinations – for example, S.1 used ‘guessing from context’ and ‘word parts’ strategies; and S. 12 used all five VLS. Nevertheless, some subjects selected just one strategy from the five strategies in which they had been trained, for example, S3 said that he used the ‘word card’ strategy.

The interviewees’ responses to seven of the questions are presented in table 25 and answers to Q. 2 are further displayed in figure 1. The graph (Figure: 1) shows the VLS the interviewees’ report they used to discover and/or to memorize the meaning of L2 words and consider as helpful or less helpful.

The second question (Q.2): ‘which strategy do you think can help you to memorize vocabulary and which is less helpful in terms of facilitating your vocabulary retention?’ this actually implies two questions: to elicit which strategies the subjects thought 1) useful and 2) not useful. The answers reveal that nineteen learners (95%) thought that the ‘GC’ strategy was helpful in discovering the L2 word; fifteen (75%) reported that the ‘WC’ strategy helped in consolidating the L2 word knowledge; five (25%) ‘SM’; three (15%) ‘WP’; and one (5%) ‘DW’.

Hence, the two strategies that are reported as the most helpful are ‘GC’ and ‘WC’. Some students justified their choice with the following comments:

S.19 *“Guessing from context is the more useful because sometimes we can know, not only the signification, but also the way to use the word and where to use it exactly especially for expressions, we can guess their meaning only from context and we can also know when to use them in writing and talking”.*

S.15 *“I think guessing from the context is the most useful strategy because even if you haven’t seen the word before, you can guess the meaning from the sentence and also the ‘WC’ is very useful to help you remember the new word”.*

S.8 *“The word cards are the best strategy because it makes us guess the other side of the card and we will learn fast especially if we repeat the activity”.*

S.20 *“I prefer the ‘WC’ because it’s more funny, and we enjoy when we use it”*

S.9 *“The most helpful strategy is ‘GC’ because sometimes when we are reading a difficult novel or text for example, we can’t keep writing and searching all the words at each time, because it can get boring. So, the most useful strategy at that time is ‘GC’ ”.*

Other subjects gave similar explanations to those mentioned above. On the other hand, some subjects said that ‘SM’ is less helpful for them. For example,

S.10 explained: *“I think that the ‘semantic mapping strategy is not suitable for me, as I find it difficult to think of related words, and then to memorize many words shown on the map at one time.”*

S.8 commented: *“the ‘semantic mapping’ strategy is less effective in that it is one of the techniques that require a lot of effort to find the words to be placed on the map. I do not like complicated techniques”.*

Three other subjects (15%) commented that all strategies were helpful in facilitating vocabulary retention.

Q.3 ‘Did you use other VLS in combination with the VLS taught? Fifteen students (75%) used other VLS in combination with those taught. Five subjects (15%) said they did not use other strategies in combination with the VLS taught. Clearly, most subjects used a few integrated strategies to help them in vocabulary retention.

The strategies used in combination with those taught are summarized as follows:

- Nine subjects (60%) said they used the ‘association strategy’ of various types, i.e. linking a new word with known words.
- Six subjects (30%) used the ‘repetition strategy’ of various types and gave some comments, e.g. to remember short words.
- Six subjects (30%) used the ‘social strategies’, i.e. talking to other classmates to discover the meaning of words.
- Five subjects (25%) used the ‘affective factor’ strategy, e.g. memorizing L2 words in front of the mirror.

- Two subjects (10%) used the 'practicing strategy', in this case, using the L2 words when writing/texting or chatting with friends.

Visibly, the results from Q.3 suggest that the 'association strategy' and the 'social strategy' of were the ones mostly used by the subjects, in combination with the strategies they have been trained in.

Q. 4: What do you think of your vocabulary retention after you have been trained in VLS?

The twenty subjects (100%) thought that after the training their vocabulary retention is better than before.

In answer to semi-structured interview Q.5: 'Do you think you will use the strategies trained to create your own VLS to help you deal with word retention in the future?' All twenty subjects (100%) answered 'yes'. For example, S.10, S.12, and S.14 said that in future they would create their own techniques based on the five VLS taught because the techniques would be more suitable for them and would help them memorize L2 words effectively.

The semi-structured interview Q.6: 'Do you think training VLS make you more aware of vocabulary learning? If yes, in what way? If no, why not?' Again all twenty subjects (100%) answered 'yes'. Every subject thought that VLST had made them realize the importance of vocabulary learning and VLS.

Clearly, the subjects' answers to this particular question show that they were all aware of the importance of vocabulary retention and vocabulary learning. For example,

S.1 said: "I learned how to cope with new words, how to discover the meaning of new words using different strategies which are very useful and interesting. I actually learned how to learn."

S.3 reported: "we learned a lot about learning English vocabulary, we did a lot of strategies to find the meanings of words. Personally, I learned a lot of new words. That pushed me to become addicted to read books and stories in English."

S.11 explained "there are a lot of methods to learn English but we must select the most effective ones such as classifying words according to its semantic meaning, or making word cards, and also by practicing and quizzing with friends."

S.12 said: "the concept of strategy training is a way of new learning especially the word cards. And learning English effectively helps me to understand the language and communicate better."

To find learners' attitudes towards VLST generally, we asked the semi-structured interview Q.7: 'How do you feel about the VLS training sessions? You are welcome to give any comments or suggestions about VLS training.'

The results show that all twenty subjects (100%) expressed positive or good attitudes towards the VLST, for instance, S.19 answered:

"I learned a lot of techniques like the word cards, because it's practical, we can have them anywhere in anytime. I think the whole strategy training brought me a vast word list, new vocabulary learning ways that I can use every time to learn English words and also other languages."

S.4 explained: "I learned new ways that I didn't know like: word cards, semantic maps and talking to other classmates and these new ways help me to learn new ways of learning especially when it comes to learning by senses like: viewing, listening, memorizing..."

S.17 explained: "I think that it is a good idea to teach a variety of vocabulary learning strategies to students in class. The strategies taught make vocabulary learning fun and enjoyable. In the past, I just simply learnt vocabulary items by using the 'repetition strategy', which was boring."

S.2 expressed the view: "the strategy training was very helpful, it makes our capacities of retaining vocabulary stronger than before and it's very good and useful."

S.11: the whole strategy training brought me a lot, it made me know how to discover and learn new words through the use of different strategies. I think it's very good and effective to practice all these methods because each one completes the other."

S.5 explained: "I learned that there are many ways to develop vocabulary and each of these strategies has proved to be helpful. The training helped me to develop my vocabulary and I feel that now I have a rich vocabulary to help me in any kind of situation."

In sum, all the twenty subjects of the experimental group showed positive attitudes towards the VLST.

As a final point, the learners' additional point of view from interview Q.8 was gathered: 'Do you have any suggestions/comments about vocabulary teaching, in general? What would you like to see in vocabulary teaching in the future?'

The twenty subjects (100%) shared similar ideas about existing vocabulary teaching and revealed how they wanted to see it develop in the future. Samples of interviewees' answers about this are presented below:

S.7: "Vocabulary teaching is not interesting at present. Learners are normally asked to memorize new vocabulary by repetition on their own. I would like teachers to add some vocabulary games, such as, hangman and crosswords to make the vocabulary learning more fun. It is another way which may improve memorizing vocabulary."

S. 15 “At present, there is no teaching of or introduction vocabulary learning strategies in class. I would like to know more techniques about vocabulary learning, as it would help me and other learners to learn vocabulary effectively.”

S. 3 “Some teachers do not teach vocabulary in class, they normally give a translation of the English definition; then the learners have to memorize the words in their own way. I would like to see more vocabulary learning strategies introduced to learners in classroom. This will make vocabulary learning more fun and enjoyable.”

In sum, the outcomes from Q.8 reveal that all twenty subjects (100%) gave four similar answers about the current trends of vocabulary teaching:

- Currently vocabulary teaching is rather tedious. Learners are normally asked to learn vocabulary by themselves outside class.
- ‘Repetition’ is the technique that is mostly used to memorize vocabulary.
- Teachers do not teach vocabulary. In fact, they only provide Arabic or French translations of the English definition of the words.
- Students have never been introduced to vocabulary learning strategies in the classroom.

About the subjects’ remarks and ideas concerning future trend of vocabulary teaching, eight subjects (40%) would like to see more of VLS introduced or taught in class, so that they could have a choice of more strategies. Nine subjects (45%) would like teachers to make vocabulary teaching enjoyable by new teaching materials. They would also like teachers to teach vocabulary by using vocabulary games, films, songs, and various vocabulary activities in class. They believed that stimulating and enjoyable vocabulary teaching would probably enhance their vocabulary retention.

Three subjects (15%) suggested other ways to help learners to memorize more effectively the words taught. Teachers should provide an opportunity for learners to practice the words taught in class. For instance, teachers might introduce a speaking task for the learners to use or practice the vocabulary previously taught in class. They also suggested that teachers give regular revision of the words taught.

One subject (5%) proposed teachers should teach vocabulary by using the dictionary work method. For example, teachers should give more useful explanations of the key vocabulary items, e.g. parts of speech, word families, synonyms, antonyms, various meanings of a word, and so forth. In addition, teachers should provide some examples of the words in English sentences. A summary of the most important qualitative results is presented in Table 3.

Research Instrument	Results
Semi-structured interview	The twenty interviewees (100%) of the experimental group answered ‘yes’ to Q.1: Did you use any of the VLS strategies trained to help you store/memorize vocabulary taught?
	Twenty interviewees (100%) showed positive attitudes toward the VLST in class.
	Fifteen interviewees (95%) answered that the most effective VLS is ‘GC’ followed by ‘WC’ (75%). Nineteen interviewees (95%) answered that ‘DW’ is the least effective VLS. Three interviewees (15%) said that every type of VLS was helpful or effective.

Table 3. Summary of the main results drawn from the qualitative data

IV. Discussion

This study focuses on learners’ attitudes towards vocabulary learning strategies and VLST. And tries to answer the question :

What are students’ attitudes towards the whole strategy training and which strategies are perceived as the most helpful?

The study arrived at the result that the introduction of VLS use among undergraduate EFL Moroccan students positively and significantly influenced their perceptions about the usefulness of the VLS. It seems that all twenty interviewees (100%) regard the VLST as very useful to improve their lexical skills. The more often a learner uses a strategy, the more useful he/she will find it for learning vocabulary. As such the data from the semi-structured interview rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternative hypothesis stated in RQ 4. It suggests that VLST did indeed have a positive effect on the attitudes of the learners in the experimental group. The study has also answered questions related to the students’ preferences and found that the most useful vocabulary strategies in the perceptions of the participants in this study are as follows: 1) guessing from context; 2) word cards; 3) semantic mapping; 4) word parts; 5) dictionary work. The tendency of the students in this study to favour the use of some strategies over others may be explained by the answers they provided in the semi-structured interview or by the educational system influence.

The strategies preferred by most of the twenty learners were the 'GC' (95%) and the 'WC' (75%) method. This result is based on the learners' answers to the question about which strategy they thought more effective in learning and remembering vocabulary. The finding which shows that guessing from context strategy is one of the preferred vocabulary learning strategies is consistent with other findings of previous studies (Rodriguez & Sadoski, 2000; Fan, 2003; Redouane, 2004 and Alesweed, 2005). The reasons behind the preference of the 'GC' strategy may be due to different reasons. Of all the VLS commonly recognized today, arguably the most widely encouraged is guessing of the meaning of unknown words from context or referred to as "guessing strategy". Guessing strategy has a long history of research with the great majority of studies demonstrating its value. One of the claims in support of the guessing strategy is that it involves generalizable skills of interpreting surrounding text, predicting and testing predictions while reading which enhance reading skills as a whole (Nation & Coady, 1988). In addition, guessing has been advocated instead of dictionary use because stopping to use a dictionary interrupts the flow of reading (Brown, 1973). Nevertheless, the 'GC' strategy can be used mainly to discover, not to memorize, the meaning of new words. To consolidate their lexical knowledge and remember their vocabulary, the interviewees preferred the 'WC' strategy for all the benefits it offers. The reason that was reiterated by most of the learners was the practicality of the word cards and the possibility of using them for self-study. Also, when used in pairs, word cards can make vocabulary learning 'funny' and motivating for learners. Besides, it develops learners' autonomy by making them responsible of their own learning.

With regard to the interviewees' responses about which type of strategy they thought less effective in memorizing vocabulary, nineteen learners (95%) mentioned the 'DW' strategy. Other strategies, such as, 'WP', and 'SM', were also commented as being less effective by some interviewees. For example, a student in the experimental group explained the reasons behind judging 'SM' as being the least effective: *"The strategy is very complicated because there are too many interrelated words on the map. It is rather difficult for me to come up with the words and memorize them effectively at one time."* Additionally, there are some comments about the downside of 'DW'. It is commented as a less effective strategy by some interviewees who feel that 'DW', especially using a monolingual dictionary, was rather hard for them because they think that sometimes the English explanation and the definitions were rather difficult for them to understand. Besides, they believe that they not master the reading of phonetic transcription.

Even though some strategies were commented as less effective, the learners used them to memorize some words. Three interviewees (15%) expressed the opinion that there were no less effective or ineffective VLS. They said that every VLS is useful and to some extent each one can help them either to learn or memorize L2 vocabulary.

To recap, the responses gained from the semi-structured interview indicate that the twenty interviewees (100%) showed positive attitudes towards the VLST. These findings are in line with O'Malley and Chamot's view (1990) on learners' attitudes towards learning strategy training: *"Once students begin to experience some success in using strategies, their attitudes about their own abilities may change, thus increasing their motivation."* O'Malley and Chamot (op. cit.), citing Jones et al. (1987:56), state that a fundamental aim of strategy instruction should be to change students' attitudes about their own linguistic capacities by, *"...teaching them that their failures can be attributed to the lack of effective strategies rather than to the lack of ability or to laziness"*. In terms of unsuccessful language learners, it appears that the change in learner attitude should be taken into account, as it probably leads to the enhancement of their motivation to deal with their L2 learning successfully.

Simply put, learners' positive attitude towards the successful use of the VLS taught and the VLST possibly increases in learners' motivation. Therefore, it is likely to lead to the successful outcome in their use of vocabulary learning strategies and more specifically to better vocabulary knowledge.

V. Conclusion

By and large, teachers should definitely think of ways to provide less successful learners with vocabulary learning strategies. This should be done by making them aware of the need to become independent learners by recognizing the strategies they possess and those they lack. Learner's attention should also be directed toward the strategies successful learners benefit from. EFL teachers should make learners practice a wide range of vocabulary learning strategies ranging from decontextualized and mechanical strategies to contextualized ones. This enables learners to deal with any unknown vocabulary they may encounter both in and out of class context. Teachers need to bear in mind that individual learners may vary on the basis of which strategies they consider more useful and they apply more frequently. Thus, teachers may first need to have an appraisal of learner's belief regarding vocabulary learning strategies and then try to help them gradually realize the value of other types of strategies.

Learning new vocabulary is a challenge to EFL students but they can overcome by having access to a wide range of vocabulary learning strategies. Learners should then be trained in strategies they lack. For this

purpose, teachers should consider the learners' willingness and readiness to receive trainings and think of the most appropriate way to introduce the strategies.

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