

Brikena XHAFERI

Gëzim XHAFERI

**VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY
STUDENTS AT SEEU IN TERMS OF GENDER AND
TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD TEACHING
VOCABULARY**

In cooperation with:

Arta Toçi
Suzana Reka
Luiza Zeqiri

Abbreviations:

LLS- Language Learning Strategies

L1 - Native Language

L2- Foreign Language

SLA-Second Language Acquisition

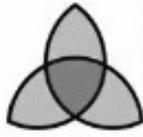
VLS-Vocabulary Learning Strategies

ESL/EFL-Learners of English as a Second/Foreign language

TOEFL- The Test of English as a Foreign Language



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**UNIVERSITETI I EJK
ЈИЕ УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ
SEE UNIVERSITY**

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B. XH. & G. XH.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Learning vocabulary is a neglected area in literature and there is a need for more research in this field. Learning vocabulary is a very complex issue. Nation (2001:9) emphasizes that "second language learners need to know very large numbers of words. While this may be useful in the long-term, it is not an essential short-term goal".

Vocabulary teaching and learning is an important part of the curriculum at the Language Center, at South East European University. As a teacher of English myself, I have found that a lot of students taking English courses have expressed problems with learning words in English. The students face difficulties when they communicate in English because they lack vocabulary in English especially high-frequency words. High-frequency words are encountered in a few occasions only. Vermer (1992:147) points out that "knowing words is the key to understanding and being understood. The bulk of learning new language consists of learning new words. Grammatical knowledge does not make for great proficiency in a language". Similarly McCarthy (1990:viii) 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).

Therefore it is beneficial to explore deeper their difficulties and offer some innovative ideas in order to improve learning and teaching vocabulary. The first goal is to look at the strategies that the students use to learn new English words and make them aware that there are many vocabulary learning strategies that they could use in learning new words. Language Learning Strategies are defined differently by many scholars. Strategies are ways and techniques that learners use to learn new information in English. Another goal of this study is to look at the strategies used by female and male students.

Language teachers on the other hand, can use the information they find more useful and use appropriate approaches in teaching vocabulary and preferably start a strategy training program in order to enhance vocabulary acquisition in their classes.

1.2. The Importance and Purpose of the Study

The principal objective of the present study is to investigate the usage of different vocabulary learning strategies used among female and male students at the university level. Vocabulary learning is considered by many teachers and students as an important factor in learning a foreign language.

Therefore, it is crucial to find effective ways of teaching vocabulary at this institution. The research of this type will help students' to choose the strategies that fit their learning styles and personalities and also offer a wide range of strategies to enhance vocabulary acquisition. In addition, it will help teachers to focus their instruction on the lexis more and also design more effective vocabulary learning activities.

It is crucial to find out if the students use the same vocabulary learning strategies in learning high-frequency and low-frequency words and what is the percentage of the students who have received strategy training session and how effective they were.

Further, the study will elicit some data on teacher's attitudes toward vocabulary teaching in order to design appropriate learning activities for successful teaching. It also aims to raise the students' awareness that there are many other vocabulary learning strategies and therefore the strategy training is necessary to be done by the teachers.

1.3 Organization of the project

This project is organized into seven chapters:

Chapter one introduces the research background, and explains the importance and the purpose of the present study.

Chapter two is a review of the most recent literature in the field of vocabulary learning. More importantly, it explains the importance of the mental lexicon in learning new English words and the difference between low-frequency and high - frequency words.

Chapter three discusses two different vocabulary leaning strategies taxonomies and their relevance in this study.

Chapter four presents and discusses the results of different studies relevant to the present study.

Chapter five discusses in detail the research questions, study participants, materials and procedures.

Chapter six presents study results from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Chapter seven draws some conclusions and suggestions for teaching and research.

References

Appendices

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Mental Lexicon

Learning words is one of the most important parts of any language and without words communication between people is impossible. Basically the organization of the mental lexicon is the organization of the words that people use to convey the meaning.

According to Elman (2004) "the knowledge of the word is usually thought to reside in the mental lexicon, a kind of dictionary that contains information regarding a word's knowledge". It is widely believed that a mental lexicon is a kind of dictionary that humans have where the words are stored and retrieved for later use. If there wasn't any mental lexicon, people wouldn't be able to read.

Singleton was among the first scholars who deeply explored the Second Language Mental Lexicon. He explains the role of the word-concept in our perception and the sense of this perception can be had from some of the ways in which language and language use are referred to in everyday English. A good example is the word "word" provided by Singleton (1999:8)

*I want a word with you.
That child never says a word.
I can't understand a word he says.
A word in the right ear will do the trick.
Her words are perfectly clear on this point.
There are some words on the back of the pocket.
The wording is all wrong.*

Similar patterns can be found in languages like: French, Spanish, German, Swedish, etc. The mental lexicon is organized by age at which the word is acquired, by frequency of use, by part of speech, by last sound, and orthographically.

2.1.1 L1 and L2 Lexicon

Infants learn the words of L1 that is of their mother tongue, naturally based on the everyday needs trying to make connections between such words and the meaning they intend to communicate. On the other hand, L2 or learning a foreign language occurs in instructional settings and the learner gets input about the meaning of the words. With this regard, it is very important to look at the L1 and L2 lexicon and whether the L2 is separated or not. With this regard, there is a difference between L1 and L2 lexicon because the distance in typological terms between the L1 and L2. Related to this, Lyon pointed out that because of the cultural overlap, some of the concepts which have been lexicalized during L1 acquisition will have the capacity to facilitate entry into the classification of reality offered by the L2 (Singleton 1999).

There is also evidence that L2 mental lexicon is structurally different than that of native speakers. Wolter (2000) conducted a research project with students at

Birmingham University. Two lists of 45 prompt words were constructed using word frequency information from the Bank of English corpus created by COBUILD at Birmingham University. The first word list (PWL 1) was administered to both a group of non-native speakers and a group of native speakers. The second list (PWL 2) was administered only to the group of native speakers. The result was that non-native speakers produce high proportions of syntagmatic responses to prompt words, on the other hand, native speakers produce primarily paradigmatic responses.

Data from this research was drawn from the results of word association tests. This led researchers to conclude that (a) the connections between words in the second language learners' mental lexicon are less stable, (b) phonology appears to play a much more prominent role in organizing the L2 mental lexicon, and (c) the semantic links between words tend to differ in a systematic way from those of native speakers. However, most of the comparable data for native speakers have been generated from a relatively small number of common prompt words that tend to elicit a similarly limited set of stable and predictable responses.

All in all, L1 learners struggle to isolate meaningful units and connect them with aspects of reality and to puzzle out and store their precise meanings.

2.1.2 Form and Meaning

Understanding the word means also knowing the form and the meaning of unknown words. Form refers to the spoken and written form which is pronunciation and spelling, on the other hand, meaning refers to referential, affective and pragmatic meanings.

The strength of the connection between the form and its meaning will determine how readily the learner can retrieve the meaning when seeing or hearing the word form, or retrieve the word form when wishes to express the meaning (Nation, 2001:44).

In contrast, Schmitt (2000:22) believes that "at the most basic level, meaning consists, of the relationship between a word and its referent (the person, the thing, action or condition). The words are usually labels for concepts which themselves capsule our limited personal experience of the actual word reality".

It is thus very important that the learners not only see the form and meaning together initially but have plenty of spaced repeated opportunities to make retrievals. A useful technique for making this connection easier is the keyword technique. This technique can be successfully used by second language learners in the way that they should put a first language link between the second language form and the meaning.

In English Language there are often cases when one form or word can have several meanings and one meaning can be presented by different forms. A good example would be the word search to look into, to uncover, find, to look or inquire carefully. These forms are called polyseme or a homonym. A homonym is one of a group of words that share the same pronunciation but have different meanings, and are usually spelt differently. Nevertheless, polysemes are words with the same spelling and distinct but related meanings.

Generally learners have problems with polysemy and homonymy. In a study conducted by Bensoussan and Laufer (1985) words with multiple meanings induced the

largest number of errors in comprehension of words. Learners who were familiar with one of the meanings of a polyseme/homonym did not abandon this meaning even though it did not make any sense in context.

Another group of multi-word item is a vocabulary item which consists of a sequence of two or more words. The most used are: COMPOUNDS, PHRASAL VERBS, IDIOMS.

" COMPOUNDS are the largest group but the least interesting. They cannot properly be separated out together. Examples: carpark, dining-chair, bedtime, thumbnail, newsstand, thumbtack.

" PHRASAL VERBS are combinations of verbs and adverbial or prepositional particles. The verbs are typically but by no means always monosyllabic, and of Germanic origin: come, get, go, put, and take. The commonest particles are up and out, followed by off, in, on and down.

" IDIOMS: are very complex group; not least because the term "idiom" frequently occurs in the literature with a variety of different meanings. Some examples are: as sound as bell (in good condition), to go like the wind (to move fast), a white lie (a small lie).

Whenever a learner encounters unknown words in English, he/she tries to guess the meaning from the context, or use other resources (dictionary or asking someone). On the other hand, there is a concern of psychologist of how the form is learned. Generally there is a belief that L1 influence makes learning a word in L2 more difficult but there is also a possibility when a learner's L1 background is to some extent similar to L2 background

and this in fact helps processing of English lexis. For example, a German learner learning English words such as: house (Haus), heart (Herz), book (Buch), hope (hoffen), etc. It is obvious that L1 background is useful in this case.

Schmitt (2000) explains that there is an assumption among teachers of English that if a word's meaning is learned, all other levels of lexical knowledge will follow in due course. I strongly believe that students might know the meaning of the unknown word but he/she fails to use a word correctly. Therefore, using a word part strategy (noun, verb, adjective) is very useful in guessing the meaning of the word from context.

In conclusion, learning a form and a meaning of a word is very important in learning words having in mind the fact that English is very rich with multiple-word items. These words do require considerable time and attention to study and use them in long-term occasions.

2.1.3 Vocabulary Acquisition

Language acquisition is a process when the learner picks up any component of a language in a natural setting. Second language acquisition occurs after the learners have acquired their mother tongue. Krashen's theory was widely known and well accepted theory of second language acquisition. There are two independent systems of second language performance: 'the acquired system' and 'the learned system'. The 'acquired system' or 'acquisition' is the product of a subconscious process very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. It requires meaningful interaction in

the target language - natural communication - in which speakers are concentrated not in the form of their utterances, but in the communicative act"(Krashen,1983).

Language acquisition or language learning differs among individuals and there are many predictors that determine the second language learning success. Many people believe that young learners acquire a second language more successfully than adult learners. Adult learners are better in learning grammar (syntax and morphology) because they analyze the structure and are likely to make fewer mistakes than young learners. Young learners, on the other hand, are better in pronunciation and in learning words more quickly but they are not able to analyze grammar structures. There are also opinions that extrovert learners seek for opportunities to practice and use a language in different occasions and therefore they are more successful than introvert learners who do not communicate a lot.

What is most important is that language learners differ in many aspects when they learn a foreign language and these individual differences influence the route of second language acquisition a lot. Brown (1980:80) suggests that "SLA involves cognitive processes that consist of many types of learning, and every individual utilizes a variety of strategies and styles in order to master the language".

According to many researchers (Elli 1985, Lightbown and Spada 1994, Dörnyei and Skehan 2005) in addition to personality characteristics, factors that are relevant in learning a language are: motivation, aptitude, age (the critical period that is the age at which learning begins), learning strategies and personality. The same is for vocabulary acquisition.

As Read points out after a lengthy period of being preoccupied with the development of grammatical competence, language teachers and applied linguistic researchers now generally recognize the importance of vocabulary learning and exploring ways of promoting it more effectively"(Read, 2000:1).

When we deal with native speakers of English, vocabulary acquisition grows rapidly in childhood; however vocabulary knowledge continues to develop in adult life through experiences, concepts and opportunities for learning. The second language learner on the other hand, sees vocabulary acquisition as a matter of learning vocabulary. Therefore, they spend a considerable amount of time in learning words by memorizing word lists of L2 words or simply by checking the dictionary.

Vocabulary acquisition is incremental in nature and this means that words are not learned instantaneously but they are learned over a period of time. The number of words learned depends on numerous exposures to a particular word. Another way of helping students acquire vocabulary is through direct study. Direct study is the more efficient, particularly for high-risk students with poor vocabularies.

SEEU students do better in producing vocabulary after reading a text than in producing words in the same context. Similarly, a study carried out by Paribakht & Wesche (1990 and Zimmerman 1997 cited in Folse 2006: 273), shows that L2 vocabulary retention is higher for students who complete written vocabulary activities after a reading task than for students who complete another reading assignments (with the same target vocabulary) after the reading task.

Native Albanian students often meet spelling problems like foggy for foggy, carton for cartoon, funny for funny. This is probably due the fact that the learners have memorized the word meaning but not the correct spelling. According to Laufer, and Nation (1995:311) "words that are not used correctly cannot be regarded as part of the learners' lexical knowledge".

The phrasal words like look into (investigate), look around (be careful), look after (take care) and look through (read quickly) cause confusion when the learners use them in a written or a spoken language. The learners focus only on the first part look and do not pay careful attention to the preposition part which changes the meaning of the whole phrase. This is probably an error where the collocations are used incorrectly.

A vocabulary quiz was given to the students of Communication Science in English for IT purposes classes. First, they students were given a reading text on "The Case for Home Computers" (New Proficiency Book, Fowler 1985:88) and then they were asked to do an extra vocabulary activity. They were required to create correct sentences using words like: alive (synonym living), living (synonym alive), requisite (synonym essential), and vital (synonym essential). Vital usually means 'indispensable, absolutely necessary, but it can also mean 'full of life'. The confusion was caused because the Albanian language has fewer names for some concepts than are found in English. So, they failed to associate the meaning of the word with the word existing in the mind.

Another difficulty observed from the quiz was the section where the learners had to choose the word given in the word list that best completes the sentences. Examples are these words: bellies-which means stom-

achs, broth-which means soup, pinnacles-means what sort of point and stirring-means moving. However, in the sentences that follow they have different meaning.

1. All the coins were nestling in the bellies of the video games.

2. The development of video games is seen as equivalent as mankind's slow crawl from the primal broth of creation.

3. The computer is one of the pinnacles of Western rational thought.

4. The predictions of the video egg-heads are grand and stirring.

It seems that the Multiple-meaning words can be difficult for students because they had the same spelling and/or pronunciation can have different meanings, depending on their context. They see a number of different definitions listed, and they often have a difficult time deciding which definition fits the context.

Many researchers assume that exercises like writing original sentences with the given list of target words require a deeper level of processing. Words like brave, foggy, engaged, miracle and tent are given and the students wrote sentences using them. The results showed that the students used them correctly because they had practiced the words beforehand as part of the reading text. It is known that the teacher elicitation, explanation and negotiation (explicit learning) of the vocabulary increased learners' use of target vocabulary.

It is widely believed that reading is the major source of vocabulary growth in L1. Students with strong reading skills who read a variety of texts may realize substantial gains in their vocabulary without direct instruction.

These students may also realize some incidental vocabulary gains through independent reading, however. Teachers should neither ignore nor rely solely upon incidental acquisition but rather seek to enhance its effectiveness with vocabulary logs, word walls and other techniques.

2.1.4 *Knowing a Word*

Knowing and learning a word means knowing a word receptively and productively. Being able to understand a word while listening to a text is known as receptive knowledge on the other hand, being able to use a word in spoken and written form is understood as productive knowledge.

It is widely believed that people learn words receptively first and later achieve productive knowledge (Schmitt 2000). He further proposes the following list of the different kinds of knowledge that a person must master in order to know a word:

- " The meaning of the word*
- " The written form of a word*
- " The spoken form of the word*
- " The grammatical behavior of the word*
- " The collocations of the word*
- " The register of the word*
- " The associations of the word*
- " The frequency of the word*

Nation (2001) suggests other aspects that are involved in knowing a word completely; Form- spoken, written and word parts, meaning-from and meaning, concepts and references, associations, Use- grammatical function, collocations and constraints on use.

Based on aforementioned aspects of knowing a word, we can say that a word is a complex item and the learner needs more than one exposure to learn and remember it. The different forms of word knowledge need to be learned gradually over a long period of time. Each exposure to a word is a chance to accumulate the different types of lexical knowledge.

Nation (2001) also presents Levelt's model of speech production. Schmitt explains that the knowledge of the word is declarative. Secondly, it is consciously known and can be built up through both incidental and formal study. It is a choice of particular word that determines the grammar and phonology of sentences and other important components of what it means to know. Thirdly, this model underlines the importance of meeting words in use as a way of developing vocabulary knowledge and the decontextualised learning vocabulary is not sufficient, although it might be useful for "knowing a word".

There is no doubt that attention to form and meaning of the unknown lead to a word retention. In some case this may involve memorization of units that will later be analyzed and in other cases may involve learning a rule or pattern that is subsequently practiced and used.

2.1.5 High-Frequency Words

In any reading text, the large portions of words occur only once or more than once. The words that occur very often are high-frequency words. These words are very important because these words cover a very large proportion of the running words in spoken and written texts and occur in all kinds of uses of the language.

Some of the high-frequency words are: a, some, two, because and too (See Appendix 6). In this group of words belong academic and technical words. Academic words include words like (policy, phase, adjusted and sustained) and make about 9% of the running words in the text. Technical words are closely related to the topic and subject area of a text. These words include indigenous, podocarp, beech, rimu etc.

Teaching these words is very important. Both teachers' and students' should spend considerable time in teaching/learning them. Table 2.1 offers some ways of learning and teaching high-frequency words.

2.1.6 Low-Frequency Words

<i>Direct teaching</i>	Teacher explanation Peer editing
<i>Direct learning</i>	Study from word cards Dictionary use
<i>Incidental learning</i>	Guessing from context in extensive reading Use in communication activities
<i>Planned encounters</i>	Graded reading Vocabulary exercises

Table 2.1 Ways of Learning and Teaching High – Frequency Words (Nation 2001:16)

Low-frequency words are all words that are not academic, not technical and not high-frequency words. In this group of words belong words like zoned, pioneering, perpetuity, aired and pastoral and make about 5% of the running words in the text. There are thousands of low-frequency words and is the biggest group.

Nation (2001) points out that the boundary between high-frequency and low-frequency vocabulary is an arbitrary one. Many low-frequency words are proper names and approximately 4% of the running words in the Brown Corpus are words like Carl, Johnson and Ohio.

Among the strategies recommended to each these words are guessing in context. However, this strategy is not without problems. Hulstijn (1992) points out that guessing in context is strictly speaking, a reading strategy, not primarily a vocabulary acquisition strategy, although its use involves semantic treatment of the input and therefore may facilitate incidental learning. What is more, experimental results do not unanimously show such an effect of guessing on vocabulary retention.

He further states that teaching and learning low-frequency words, for learners whose first language is closely related to the second language, the learning burden of most words will be light. Generally, teachers can help reduce the learning burden of words by drawing attention to systematic patterns and analogies within the second language and by pointing out connections between the second and the first.

2.1.7 Testing Vocabulary

Vocabulary assessment is an important component in testing the student knowledge. There are different tests made by teachers themselves to test vocabulary however the test should involve elements that are relevant to vocabulary assessment. There are some important details that we should take into consideration when we test vocabulary.

That involves the format of the test and in particular the role of the non-words; the selection of the words to be tested and the scoring of the test. The latest literature on vocabulary acquisition also raises the issue of testing vocabulary and it is the main concern of test-designers how to design tools that best assess vocabulary learning. Unfortunately, there isn't much research done in distinguishing the vocabulary tests and grammar tests.

Language testing has been defined differently by many educators throughout the last decades. Some of them see testing as a measurement instrument for obtaining specific examples of behaviors and others see it as an instrument for collecting data about test taker's language performance in the language he or she is tested. Nowadays, the most commonly used tests are objective tests in which the material is divided and tested into parts (reading skill, writing skill, listening skill vocabulary and grammar).

Also, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is a standardized test, which measures the level of English Language proficiency of non-native speakers of English and it is an admission requirement at over 2,400 colleges and Universities in the United States and other

parts of the world. The vocabulary part is included in the reading section.

Furthermore, the exercises designed to test the vocabulary knowledge are multiple choice and matching. However, Wesche and Paribakht (1996, cited in Read 2000) criticize these items by saying that because of the difficulty in constructing and requiring laborious field-testing analysis and refinement, and because of the learner who might know another meaning for the word, but not the one sought.

According to Read (2000:81) "there should be a distinction between the terms breadth and depth. Another way to label the two dimensions is the vocabulary size and quality of vocabulary knowledge respectively."

Test designers should be very careful in designing the vocabulary exercises simply because not everything can be tested and measured regarding the word knowledge. For this reason, they have usually settled for measuring knowledge of a single meaning. Schmitt and McCarthy (1997) suggest "a number of knowledge dimensions which would have to be incorporated in any vocabulary test which aspires to capture a testee's true knowledge of the word. They further point out that it involves, receptive and productive knowledge of the vocabulary, automaticity and organization of the lexicon.

Furthermore, in order to expand the conventional ideas about what a vocabulary test is and include a wider range of lexical assessment procedures, Read (2000) suggests three dimensions of Vocabulary assessment.

Discrete	Embedded
A measure of vocabulary knowledge or use as an independent instrument	A measure of vocabulary which forms part of the assessment of some other, larger construct
Selective	Comprehensive
A measure in which specific vocabulary items are the focus of the assessment	A measure which takes account of the whole vocabulary content of the input material (reading/ listening, tasks) or the test-taker's response (writing/speaking tasks)
Context-independent	Context-dependant
A vocabulary measure in which the test-taker can produce the expected response without referring to any context	A vocabulary measure which assesses the test-taker's ability to take account of contextual information in order to produce the expected response

Table 2.2: Dimensions of Vocabulary assessment (source Read 2000:8)

The first dimension, a discrete test aims to measure a vocabulary knowledge separated from the other language competences. In contrast, an embedded vocabulary test aims to measure vocabulary knowledge of a larger construct for example in the reading comprehension question. The questions are not particularly designed to measure the vocabulary knowledge separately but the learners' reading comprehension ability.

Furthermore, the second dimension, selective test aims to measure the vocabulary knowledge based on the selected words and then incorporated into separate test items. On the other hand, the comprehensive test measures the vocabulary content of a written and spoken text.

Finally, the third dimension, a context-independent

test aims to measure the vocabulary knowledge on the basis of the learners' ability to use the contextual information and then give the right answer to the task. However, the context-dependant text measures the vocabulary knowledge by cloze test. This means that there are given passages with few deleted words and the test-taker has to write a suitable word. All in all, Read's work in the vocabulary testing is very valuable.

2.2. Concluding Remarks

It can be concluded that vocabulary acquisition is a new area of research. The words are not stored at the random in the mind but the mental lexicon is a kind of dictionary that humans have where the words are stored and retrieved for later use.

Knowing a word involves more than knowing the meaning and the form but it entails having mastery over various kinds of lexical knowledge. The words can be learned from numerous exposures to the same word and a person must be able to perceive or produce words in verbal or written.

Nevertheless, not all learners learn a language or its components in the same way. The characteristics that influence learning are: factors that are relevant in learning a language are: motivation, aptitude, age (the critical period that is the age at which learning begins), learning strategies and personality.

What is more important, English has many multi-words items that is words with more than one meaning. The most used are: compounds, phrasal verbs and idioms.

Finally, English learners encounter words that occur more often or high-frequency words and words that occur less often or low-frequency words. It is the teacher's responsibility to use different methods of teaching and help the learners learn those words.

3. TAXONOMIES OF VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES

Learning strategies are steps that the learners take in order to accomplish learning tasks. They are used for learning grammar, vocabulary, literature, etc. Some strategies are "shallow" and some strategies are "deep". Shallow strategies are used by learners who read a lot and learn fast, and ignore many unknown words. These strategies are; guessing from the context, repeating a word several times and lead to poor retention of the words. On the other hand, deep strategies are used by the learners who learn slowly but lead to a greater retention. These strategies are; dictionary usage, associations and keyword method.

The researchers in the past gave efforts in trying to determine if there were differences between effective and ineffective learners and their awareness of the strategy use. Nunan (1999) and O'Malley & Chamot (1990) found out that more effective learners used the variety of strategies which helped them grasp the language while the less effective learners used a small number of strategies. According to Rubin and Thomson (1982), the good language learners possess the following features:

1. Good language learners find their own way and

take charge of their learning. They determine the methods that are best for them as individual learners. They learn from others and experiment with different methods.

2. Good language learners organize their study of the language, and they organize information about the language they study.

3. Good language learners are creative. They understand that language is creative. They experiment with the language and play with grammar, words, and sounds.

4. Good language learners make their own opportunities for practicing the language inside and outside of the classroom.

5. Good language learners learn to live with uncertainty by focusing on the meaning of what they can understand, by not getting flustered, and by continuing to talk or listen without necessarily understanding every word.

6. Good language learners use mnemonics and other memory strategies to recall what they are learning.

7. Good language learners make errors work for them and not against them.

8. Good language learners use linguistic knowledge, including knowledge of their first language, in learning a second language.

9. Good language learners use contextual clues to aid their comprehension of the language. They maximize use of all potential contexts around the language attended to for enhancing comprehension.

10. Good language learners learn to make intelligent guesses.

11. Good language learners learn chunks of language as wholes and formalized routines to help them perform beyond their competence. For example, they may learn idioms, proverbs, or other phrases knowing what the whole phrase means without necessarily understanding each individual part.

12. Good language learners learn certain tricks that keep conversations going.

13. Good language learners learn certain production techniques that also fill in the gaps in their own competence.

14. Good language learners learn differently to the formality of the situation.

Basically good learners use a variety of strategies and are willing to experiment with new strategies on the other hand poor learners use only a few strategies and heavily rely on a teacher. The same case is with learning new words where the strategies are used a lot.

3.1 Schmitt's Taxonomy

Schmitt's taxonomy is considered most appropriate taxonomy developed so far for learning words in English. He developed the taxonomy based on the research that he did with Japanese learners, teachers' recommendations and also Oxford's taxonomy. The list contains 55 strategies and there are DETERMINATION strategies (DET), SOCIAL strategies (SOC), MEMORY strategies (MEM), COGNITIVE strategies (COG), and METACOGNITIVE strategies (MET).

Many scholars used this list as a basis for different studies but it was adapted based on the needs of study participants. Table 3.1 presents the taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies.

Even though, this taxonomy offers too many strategies for learning words, it has not been used for the present study.

3.2 Oxford's Taxonomy

Oxford is one of the most famous scholars who provided different lists of many strategies. Language learning strategies (LLS) are described by Oxford (1990) as "actions taken by second and foreign language learners to control and improve their own learning and are keys to greater autonomy and more meaningful learning" (pg.ix).

On the other hand, Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary and Robbins (1998) define LLS as "procedures and techniques that learners can use to facilitate a learning task. They point out that some learning strategies such as:

<i>Strategies for the discovery of a new word's meaning</i> DET	<i>Strategies for consolidating a word once it has been encountered</i> SOC	<i>Memory strategies for relating the word with some previously learned words</i> MEM	<i>Cognitive strategies to repeat and use mechanical means to study vocabulary</i> COG	<i>Metacognitive strategies to control and evaluate own learning</i> MET
Analyze part of speech	Ask teacher for an L1 Translation	Study word with a pictorial representation of its meaning	Verbal repetition	Use English-language media
Analyze affixes and roots	Ask teacher for paraphrase or synonym of new word	Image word's meaning	Written repetition	Testing oneself with word tests
Check for L1 cognate	Ask teacher for a sentence including the new word	Connect word to a personal experiences	Flash cards	Use spaced word practice
Analyze any available pictures or gestures	Ask classmates for meaning	Use semantic maps	Word lists	Skip or pass new word
Guess from textual context	Discover new meaning through group work activity	User scales for gradable adjectives	Take notes in class	Continue to study word over time
Bilingual Dictionary	Study and practice meaning in a group	Peg Method	Use the vocabulary section in your textbook	
Monolingual Dictionary	Teacher checks students' flash cards or word lists for accuracy	Loci Method	Listen to tape of word lists	
Word lists	Interact with native-teachers	Group words together to study them	Put English labels on physical objects	
Flash Cards		Group words together spatially on a page	Keep a vocabulary notebook	
		Use new words in sentences		
		Group words together within a storyline		
		Study the spelling of a word		
		Saw new word aloud when studying it		
		Image word form		
		Underline initial letter of the word		
		Configuration		
		Use Keyword Method		
		Affixes and roots (remembering)		
		Parts of speech (remembering)		
		Paraphrase the word's meaning		
		Use cognates in study		
		Learn the words of an idiom together		
		Use physical action when learning a word		
		Use semantic feature grids		

Table 3.1: Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (Adopted from Schmitt 1997:207)

note taking and making graphic organizers are observable but most strategies are mental processes that are not directly observable" (pg.2).

Additionally, the language learning strategies support learning in all parts of the language. Oxford (1990) emphasizes that "analytic strategies are directly related to the learning end of the continuum, while strategies involving naturalistic practice facilitate the acquisition of language skills, and guessing and memory strategies are equally useful to both learning and acquisition." (pg.5).

Features of Language Learning Strategies

(Adopted from Oxford 1990)

- *Contribute to the main goal, communicative competence*
- *Allow learners to become more self-directed*
- *Expand the role of teachers*
- *Are problem-oriented*
- *Are specific actions taken by the learner*
- *Involve many aspects of the learner, not just the cognitive*
- *Support learning both directly and indirectly*
- *Are not always observable*
- *Are often conscious*
- *Can be taught*
- *Are flexible*
- *Are influenced by a variety factors*

Direct strategies are used directly to learn a target language and to this group belong -memory strategies that help the learners to store and retrieve new information; cognitive strategies that help the learners to produce new language by different tools; and compensation

<i>Memory strategies</i>
Creating mental linkage
Applying images and sounds
Reviewing well
Employing action
<i>Cognitive strategies</i>
Practicing
Receiving and sending messages
Analyzing and reasoning
Creating structure for input and output
<i>Compensation strategies</i>
Guessing intelligently
Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing

**Table 3.2: Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning S strategies
(Adopted from Oxford 1990)**

strategies that help the learners to use the language regardless that there are many gaps.

Indirect strategies are used indirectly and support learning without involving the target language directly. In this group are included: metacognitive strategies that help the learners to control their own learning, affective strategies that help the learners to arrange their emotions and motivation, and social strategies that help the learners to cooperate and learn with their peers.

<i>Metacognitive strategies</i>
Centering your learning
Arranging and planning your learning
Evaluating your learning
<i>Affective strategies</i>
Lowering your anxiety
Encouraging yourself
Taking your emotional temperature
<i>Social strategies</i>
Asking questions
Cooperating with others
Empathizing with others

Table 3.3: Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning S strategies (Adopted from Oxford 1990)

In our opinion, her taxonomy is very broad there is no clear division between memory and cognitive strategies. Therefore, it is unclear which group of strategies is used for accomplishing different learning tasks. What is more, Oxford does not take the steps in vocabulary learning into consideration. Nonetheless, Oxford's model was taken as a model for developing a vocabulary learning taxonomy that has been used for the purpose of this study. Gu and Johnson (1996) have developed a vocabulary learning questionnaire containing a considerable number of strategies, divided into the following major categories: beliefs about vocabulary learning, metacognitive regulation, guessing strategies, dictionary strategies, note-taking strategies, memory strategies (rehearsal and encoding), and activation strategies. Schmitt's taxonomy is probably the most extensive but the Oxford model is more suitable for the participants of this study.

4. RECENT STUDIES ON VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

A number of studies have been done on vocabulary acquisition and strategies that learners use to learn new English words.

4.1 Gu and Johnson (1996)

Gu and Johnson in their study focused on relationship between strategies, vocabulary size and language proficiency. They used a questionnaire to study the vocabulary learning strategies of 850 non-English major Chinese students at the University of Beijing. After data analysis they found that self-initiation and selective attention are two metacognitive strategies that emerged as positive predictors for participants' proficiency.

Other used strategies were, guessing from the context, using dictionary, paying attention to a word formation, and using newly learned word in sentences seemed to be useful to the learners. The study suggests that it would have been useful if the learners learned language skills rather than just remembering Chinese equivalents.

4.2 Schmitt (1997)

Schmitt (1997) conducted his study in Japan with a large sample (600 subjects). There were around 40 strategies included in the survey. All subjects had taken English classes. The questionnaires were given to four different groups belonging to lower, medium, and higher proficiency levels and they were in different towns. Each class had at least 50 students and the surveys were distributed to them by English teachers.

The goal of this survey was to provide a variety of results which could be compared and to find out which strategies the learners used and were trained to use.

The results showed that the most commonly used strategies are: Discover meaning: bilingual dictionary = 95%, asking teacher for a paraphrase (synonym) = 86% analyzing pictures/gestures = 84 % or consolidate meaning: say new word aloud = 91 %, written repetition = 91%, connect words with synonyms/antonyms 88%, continue over time 87%, study spelling 87%, take notes in class 84%, verbal repetition 84%. The least helpful strategies were: skip or pass new word 16%, imagine word's meaning 38%, use cognates in study 34%, keyword method 31%, and imagine word form 22%.

It seems that the most preferred strategy among the Japanese students was the usage of the bilingual dictionary but it was questionable whether the monolingual or the bilingual dictionary was more helpful.

4.3 Sahbazian (2004)

Sahbazian (2004) conducted a study with Turkish students studying at the University in Turkey. The purpose of the study was to understand the vocabulary learning strategies and the steps that the students take themselves to learn new English words.

The survey method was used for collecting data in order to include a large number of participants. The students were asked to fill out a 35-item survey questionnaire in order to find out about the reported Vocabulary Learning Strategies.

This study showed that overall Turkish university students perceive to using VLSs either medium or low frequency. Nevertheless, strategies such the key word method, mnemonics, and semantic mapping were not among the most popular strategies. Memory strategies were among the strategies that learner perceived to use with high frequency and mnemonic strategies especially the ones which require cognitively deeper processing such as the keyword method were perceived to be used with low frequency.

The most significant and popular way of mastering new words is by using memory, direct and simple cognitive strategies. This is mainly because the traditional teaching in Turkish education system encourages rote learning not only in foreign language classes but also in all subject areas.

4.4 Mason (2004)

Mason attempted to confirm that listening to stories leads to the acquisition of vocabulary, and also attempt to determine how efficient this acquisition is, that is, how it compares to direct instruction. The 60 participants were first year English majors at a four- year-private college in Osaka, Japan. All students participated in both treatments.

The results showed that hearing stories results in vocabulary development. The results appear to be consistent with the Comprehension Hypothesis, which claims that language development is the result of the comprehension of messages. The story-telling method used here, however, used some focus on form: subjects knew that vocabulary development was the goal of the story and they were directed to pay attention to the new words. The Story-Only groups, however, did no language production and did not have their errors corrected, which confirms an important aspect of the Comprehension Hypothesis: Production and feedback are not necessary for language development to occur. Stories are far more pleasant and engaging than traditional instruction, and students can gain other aspects of language from stories, as well as knowledge

4.5 Pigada and Schmitt (2006)

Pigada and Schmitt conducted a case study with a French learner. The study attempted to investigate whether an extensive reading program can enhance lexical knowledge. There were 133 words given to the learner and it was examined whether one month of extensive

reading enhanced knowledge of these target words' spelling, meaning, and grammatical characteristics. The method used was a one-on-one interview which shows that it was a good indicator if learning occurred or not.

The study results showed that knowledge of 65% of the target words was enhanced in some way, for a pickup rate of about 1 of every 1.5 words tested. Spelling was strongly enhanced, even from a small number of exposures. Meaning and grammatical knowledge were also enhanced, but not to the same extent. Overall, the study indicates that more vocabulary acquisition is possible from extensive reading than previous studies have suggested.

4.6 Yoshi and Flaitz (2002)

This study examined the effectiveness of annotations on incidental vocabulary learning (retention) in an L2 reading program for adult ESL students. The term Incidental is defined here as learners' acquisition of the meanings of words as they engage in other tasks such as comprehension of reading and listening passages.

Three annotation types were compared: text-only, picture-only, and a combination of the two. The participants were 151 adult ESL learners at beginning and intermediate language proficiency levels. The participants read a story for comprehension purposes using the Internet. Three types of instruments were used for vocabulary retention assessment: Picture recognition, Word recognition, and Definition Supply tests. The results ANOVA analyses indicate that the Combination group (annotations with text and picture) outperformed the Text-only and Picture-only groups on the immediate

tests. The Combination group also outperformed the other two groups on the delayed tests, however, the differences were smaller than those for the immediate tests. There was no significant interaction between annotation type and proficiency level for either the immediate or the delayed tests. Repeated measure ANOVAs revealed no significant differences among the groups in the rate of change between the immediate test scores and delayed test scores. The participants' scores on the delayed tests, regardless of the group to which they were assigned, declined equally from those of the immediate tests.

Concluding Remarks

It can be concluded that all the aforementioned studies dealt with vocabulary acquisition and vocabulary learning strategies used by different learners. The results of the study conducted by Gu and Johnson (1996) showed that the most used strategies were: guessing from the context, using dictionary, paying attention to a word formation, and using the newly learned word in sentences seemed to be useful to the learners.

Nevertheless, Schmitt's (1997) study showed that the most used strategies were: bilingual dictionary, asking teacher for a paraphrase, and analyzing pictures/gestures. Sahbazian (2004) also conducted a study with Turkish students. The results showed that the most significant and popular way of mastering new words is by using memory, direct and simple cognitive strategies. However, strategies such the key word method, mnemonics, and semantic mapping were not among the most popular strategies.

In contrast to these studies, Mason (2004) and Pigada and Schmitt (2006) attempted to find out whether language skills such as reading and listening to stories enhance vocabulary acquisition. Both studies suggest that hearing stories lead in vocabulary development and also, vocabulary acquisition is possible from extensive reading than previous studies have suggested.

Finally, a study conducted by Yoshi and Flaitz (2002) showed that annotations with text and picture enhanced vocabulary acquisition.

5. RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

5.1 The Purpose of the study

Learning words in a foreign language is very important and it is known that people cannot communicate effectively 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 purpose of the present study is to find out what types of vocabulary learning strategies are used by female and male students at South East European University in learning high-frequency and low-frequency words. This is an attempt to provide some insights in the strategy use among female and male students studying at SEEU and to find out if the students who have received any strategy training are more effective users than those who did not.

The study also aims to investigate the teachers' attitude towards teaching vocabulary in their regular instruction and what approaches they use with students in their classes. This could enable the researchers and teachers to find out if there is any difference in strategy use between learners of different genders and the data

drawn from the research will enable teachers to find out more about the preferred strategies used by their students and help them design more attractive vocabulary activities.

This chapter gives a detailed description of the pilot study and the results. It also describes the research methods of the main study. The first instrument is a background questionnaire, which aims to obtain some background information about the participants and their English learning experiences (Appendix 1).

The second instrument is a student survey which includes thirty vocabulary learning strategies, and to add four more if they use but they are not included in the list (see Appendix 2). The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information about the techniques they use and how often do they use to learn new English words.

The third instrument is a teacher questionnaire and the aim is to find more information about the teachers' attitudes that they hold about teaching vocabulary and what techniques they use (see Appendix 3).

This chapter also describes the study in detail including the study participants, the setting, the materials and the procedure. In the end, the processes of data collection and data analysis are presented in detail.

5.2 Research Questions

The study employs empirical type of research and it aims to answer the following questions:

- 1) Are there any differences in the use of strate-

gies among SEEU students relating to gender?

2) What are some of the most commonly used Vocabulary Learning Strategies of among these students in learning low-frequency and high-frequency words?

3) How do teachers of English as a foreign language feel about teaching vocabulary and their approach to teaching it?

I trust that the results drawn from this research will serve both teachers and learners to effectively learn and teach vocabulary at the University level.

5.3. Pilot Study

Before conducting the present study, a pilot study was done with the same sample. The aim was to test the reliability of the research instrument questionnaire. Validity and reliability of the study instruments is the most important idea to consider.

A vocabulary learning questionnaire was distributed to twenty students belonging to levels A1, A2 and B1 and B2 respectively (Common European Framework of Reference) of the general English course. The participants in the current study were asked to rate how often they used the strategy to learn new words by circling a number from 1 (below average) to 5(excellent). The procedure lasted for one week and it was done in the classroom in the Language Center building. This questionnaire was administered in a team and we made sure that we explained the instructions carefully.

The questionnaire was the same version used for the main study and it contained 31 questions and four more questions should have been added by the participants.

The main idea was to test if the students knew all strategies mentioned in the questionnaire that is if the students were aware of the existence of so many vocabulary learning strategies. It was important to find out how do the females and males learn high-frequency and low-frequency words when they encounter them in reading an academic text.

5.3.1 Pilot Study Results

After one week the data were analyzed and some interesting results were drawn from the pilot study. It seemed that the participants used many strategies but they did not know how to name them. Table 5.1 shows six most used vocabulary learning strategies which were indicated with five.

<i>Vocabulary Learning Strategy items</i>	<i>Number of students using the strategies</i>	<i>Rating</i>
11. I try to learn the new word by repeating it out loud several times	6	5
29. I use bilingual dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word	4	5
28. I use monolingual dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word	4	5
31. I ask my teacher for a meaning of a new word	3	5
30. I use online dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word	2	5
12. I make a list of new words with Albanian translation and memorize them.	1	5

Table 5.1: Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by the Pilot Study Participants

The first most used strategy I try to learn the new word by repeating it out loud several times was used by 6 participants and was rated with 5. It seems that this mechanical strategy is popular among participants and has its roots in the previous teacher-centered education. This strategy is criticized by many researchers in this field as being too difficult and not leading to a complete word retention.

The second most used strategy I use a bilingual dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word was used by 4 participants rated with 5. It seems that the participants use a bilingual dictionary (Albanian-English) with a high frequency and this metacognitive strategy was shown useful in most previous conducted studies (Schmitt 1996).

The social strategy I ask my teacher for a meaning of a new word was also used a lot. This definitely shows that the participants rely on a teacher and ask questions. In my opinion, the learners should not use this strategy a lot since it limits the learners in becoming independent learners.

Another vocabulary strategy used with a relatively high frequency was I use online dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word. This finding is not surprising either as the number of students using these kinds of strategies can be expected to increase in the future because of the role of modern technology in learners' life. Especially in the last few years the number of people, mainly the young generation, use computers.

The sixth used strategy was I make a list of new words with Albanian translation and memorize them. This finding supports Schmitt's (1997) study of Japanese

EFL learners in which learning the meanings of the words using a word list was among the most popular VLS among this particular group of learners. Generally, Macedonian school system favors memorization not only in language learning but also in other subject areas as well.

It is not uncommon for language teachers to ask their students to memorize a given list of words and later give written/oral tests exams to assess students' vocabulary knowledge. According to Schmitt and McCarthy (1997) learning words from lists is only an initial stage and there should be extra exposure to the words with other VLSs.

Out of 20 participants, 3 of them have added the strategies either watching English movies or reading English magazines/newspapers. Using materials that involve authentic language use are strategies that should be used more by the learners since authentic materials are undoubtedly good for learning new words in context. This finding is congruent with Bada and Okan's (2000) study with Turkish EFL learners where powerful media (television and video) received a high percentage of preference.

All in all, the pilot study was useful because it was noticed that learners were willing to support the project and they enjoyed learning more about vocabulary learning strategies. Definitely, the list of the strategies should remain the same for the main study but it will involve more participants and the results will be analyzed in more detail.

5.4 The Design of the Main Study

This present study is an empirical research project carried out at SEEU during a two-semester period from Fall 2007-Spring 2008. There were totally 100 students involved in the study. They were taking Basic English courses levels A1, A2, B1, B2 (Common European Framework). The population of this study included both male and female students. The research used three instruments: a background questionnaire, a student survey and a teacher questionnaire. The main purpose of this research was to add to the existing knowledge about vocabulary learning strategies used by the university students and to better understand the use of vocabulary strategies with emphasis on gender differences.

5.4.1 Participants

The participants in this study are current students enrolled at SEEU. General English courses are the requirement in syllabi. They are between 19 to 25 years old; they have different ethnic background (Albanians, Macedonians, and Turkish); and are males and females. The total sample of students involved in the study is 100 and were chosen randomly.

It was of particular interest to see whether the female students used the same strategies as the male students when they attempt to learn high-frequency and low-frequency words.

In addition, twenty English language teachers expressed their attitudes that they hold about teaching vocabulary and what techniques they use to teach vocab-

ulary. This part of the research will give some important data and will help teachers design more useful vocabulary activities. The participants were informed about the project and they were asked to cooperate.

5.4.2 Materials

The first instrument is a ten-item background questionnaire in order to get some background information about students' English learning experiences. The instructions were read to the participants very carefully and were translated into students' native languages: Albanian, Macedonian and Turkish.

The second instrument is a student survey which includes thirty vocabulary learning strategies, and four more strategies should have been added by the participants. The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information about the strategies male and female students use when they learn high-frequency and low-frequency in English language and generally most-used strategies.

The third instrument is a ten-item teacher questionnaire and the aim was to find more information about the teacher's attitudes toward teaching vocabulary and what teaching techniques they used.

5.4.3 Procedures

The procedure started with the background questionnaire filled out by the participants. The members of the research team distributed the questionnaires to the participants and explained everything in detail. This part

of the research was done during the regular class times in the classrooms and it lasted 10 minutes.

Afterwards, 100 participants (50 female and 50 male students) filled out the vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire. Again they were explained the purpose of the project and the participants were given 20 minutes to give their responses.

Finally, English language teachers were willing to participate in the project and filled out the teacher questionnaire. This questionnaire was done in teachers' offices and lasted 10 minutes.

5.5 Detailed Description of the Instruments

5.5.1 Background Questionnaire

The first instrument used in this study was the background questionnaire and it was compiled by the research team. The questionnaire contains 10 questions which are related to the participants' personal information and English language knowledge. Questions 8 and 9 are related to vocabulary learning.

All participants were informed for the purpose of the project and were asked if they are ready to cooperate and support this project. The background questionnaire was given to 8 different sections, Levels A1 -B2, to a large sample of 100 students. They completed it at different times during their regular class hours and the duration was 10 minutes. There was not any instruction for the questionnaire because the researchers explained everything very carefully to the learners. The procedure lasted around 10 working days and all data were analyzed in detail.

1. BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name _____

2. Date _____

3. Age _____

4. Gender _____

5. How long have you been studying English?

6. Do you enjoy learning English? (Circle one)

YES NO

7. How do you rate your English proficiency?

1. poor

2. good

3. very good

8. How important do you think vocabulary learning is in learning English?

Not important at all

Very important

1 2 3 4 5 6

9. Have you ever had any instructions (either by book or instructor) on different strategies to learn English vocabulary? (Circle one)

YES NO

10. What other languages have you studied?

Figure 1: Background Questionnaire

This questionnaire will give an overview of the participants regarding their English language learning experience.

5.5.2 VLS Questionnaire

Vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire is the second instrument used in the study. It was modified based on the Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (1990) and contains 31 strategies. The participants should include four more strategies that they use but are not included in the list.

The instructions explained the purpose of the survey and prior to the procedure, the researchers discussed with the respondents vocabulary learning strategies and made sure that they understood what learning strategies are.

The respondents were asked to circle numbers next to each strategy. For example, to circle 1 for never or almost never used this strategy, 2 for occasionally used the strategy, 3 for sometimes used this strategy, 4 for usually use this strategy and 5 for always used this strategy.

1. I think of relationship between what I already know and new things I learn in English.

2. I use new English in a sentence so I can remember them.

3. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.

4. I use rhymes to remember new English words.

5. I use flashcards to remember new English words

6. I physically act out new English words

7. I review English lessons often
8. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page
9. I keep a vocabulary notebook to jot down new words I want to learn.
10. I try to make use of prefixes and suffixes when learning a word.
11. I try to learn the new word by repeating it out loud several times.
12. I make a list of new words with Albanian translation and memorize them.
13. I think of cognate words to understand the meaning of a word.
14. I write new English words several times
15. I try to talk like native speakers
16. I use the English words I know in different ways
17. I start conversation in English
18. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English
19. I read for pleasure in English.
20. I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English
21. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English

22. I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand

23. I try not to translate word-by-word

24. To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses

25. I read English without looking up every new word

26. I translate passages from English to my native language and vice versa

27. I study new words later in order to remember them

28. I use monolingual dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word

29. I use bilingual dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word

30. I use online dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word

31. I ask my teacher for a meaning of a new word

Figure 2: Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) 1990

This survey was completed at different times and lasted 20 minutes and all responses were kept anonymous.

5.5.3 Teachers' Questionnaire

The third instrument used in the study was the teachers' questionnaire completed by 20 English language teachers teaching at SEEU. The aim of the questionnaire was to find out teachers' attitude towards teaching vocabulary and approaches they use.

1. How long have you been teaching English as a foreign language?

2. What is the most difficult aspect of teaching? Please, circle your answer.

- a. Grammar
- b. reading
- c. writing
- d. vocabulary

3. Is vocabulary teaching a part of your everyday instruction? Please circle you answer.

YES

NO

4. What approaches do you use to teach vocabulary? Please, list two.

- a.
- b.

5. Does reading any text enhance vocabulary acquisition? If, yes please explain how?

6. How do you help students to remember new English words?

7. Do you give students training in using strategies for learning vocabulary?

8. When do you think it is necessary to use students' native languages in explaining new English words?

9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The lesson should focus mainly on vocabulary development. Please, circle your answer.

YES

NO

10. Do you think that the teacher should be the only source for helping students to learn new English words? If yes, please explain why.

YES

NO

Table 6: Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire contains 10 questions where 3 questions require only yes and no responses. The teachers were willing to support the project because they knew the importance of teaching vocabulary at the Institution.

6. STUDY RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the results of the research study outlined in chapter 4. The first section, the student background questionnaire reports what is the English learning background of the participant and what they feel about learning vocabulary. The second section, vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire reports the learning strategies used by female and male learners and the impact of gender in strategy choice. Finally, the third section, summarizes teachers responses about teaching vocabulary and the techniques they use with their students. Discussion is focused on the learning and teaching vocabulary at this Institution.

6.1 Background Questionnaire

6.1.2 The Discussion of the Student Background at SEEU

In the first phase of the research, a 10-item questionnaire was given to the respondents. The background questionnaire collected data on a variety of background categories. The participants have indicated their name, age, gender and English language experience. It mainly served three purposes; to provide personal data on participants, to get an overview of the English learning experience and to elicit the opinions about learning vocabulary. The questionnaire was administered in a written manner. The respondents were given ten minutes to

complete the background questions. Table 6.1 shows the results for 5 questions.

There were 60 female and 40 male learners included

Gender	Age	# of years studying English	English proficiency	Other languages studied
Female=60	19-22	8-10	Poor= 10 Good=15 Very good=35	German, French and Italian
Males=40	19-22	7-9	Poor=15 Good=15 Very good=10	German and French

Table 6.1: Personal Information of the Study Participants

in the study. This shows that there are more females studying foreign languages than males. The overall number of studying English is from 8-10 years of learning experience and this a good indicator that the study participants are good at learning English. In fact 45% of the participants have very good proficiency in English, 30 % of the participants are good in learning English and 25% have poor proficiency in English. It has been observed that more and more freshmen are coming to study English at SEEU with very good knowledge in English.

This is probably due to the fact that young people in Macedonia are attending private schools of foreign languages and they prepare themselves for further studies. English proficiency has a direct impact on strategy choice because good students usually choose good strategies and are more independent learners.

Lawson and Hogben (1996) divided the students as good and poor based on their recall scores. They later compared the strategy use of these students. The results clearly showed that the single feature distinguishing the two groups were the total number of strategies used. The

high scoring group i.e. the group in which the high proficiency students were, used twice as many strategies. Besides, the good students employed more procedures and used them more consistently than their less successful peers.

On contrast, Lessard-Clouston (1988) did a study which showed that there was no correlation between students' approach to vocabulary learning and students' proficiency level. He investigated and compared the vocabulary learning strategies of five non-native and six native speaking graduate students of theology in a core course. The non-native speakers of English were all native speakers of Cantonese or Mandarin Chinese. The purpose of the research was to find out whether a particular approach or strategy (consulting a dictionary) predicts success in learning vocabulary. The results showed that most students did not use structured vocabulary learning strategies, and did not predict success in developing vocabulary.

Furthermore, German, French and Italian are languages studied by the female learners whereas German and French are languages studied by male students.

Regarding question 1 related to the importance of learning vocabulary, 90% of the participants feel that vocabulary is very important in learning English. This was expected because the adult learners know that vocabulary development is a critical aspect of fluent communication.

Question 9 elicited some disappointed responses because out of 100 participants only 10% were taught what learning strategies are and the course instructors have taught them how to learn vocabulary. Strategy

training is crucial in learning new words because strategies are key to success. Rasekh and Ranjbary (2003) did a study with two groups of EFL language learners at intermediate language proficiency level were randomly assigned to a control and an experimental group. Both groups received instruction on vocabulary learning strategies through a 10-week period of instruction. However, only the experimental group received metacognitive strategy training during the course of the semester. The result of the study showed that explicit metacognitive strategy training has a significant positive effect on the vocabulary learning of EFL students. I definitely believe that an appropriate training program would be very useful for the study participants as well.

6.1.3 VLS Questionnaire

It is widely believed that certain characteristics influence the choice of vocabulary strategy. One of these characteristics is gender. Many studies have shown that female learners use more strategies than male learners do and females are more persistent in accomplishing different learning tasks. There were 100 participants included in this part of the research.

Nyikos (1987) conducted a study with 135 students in beginning level German classes to find out the impact of gender on VLSs. Three treatment groups received written instructions along with examples of three types of memory strategies respectively. The first group, the color-only group, associated certain colors with grammatical gender of the noun to be learned. The second group, the picture only group, associated each item with a drawing. The last group used both color and drawing. Rote memorization was used in the control group. Nyikos' study

showed that the color only strategy was more effective for women, while the color plus picture was very advantageous for men which, according to Nyikos, caused by the different perceptions of grades by the two genders. For female learners grades were a sign of social approval whereas for male learners grades were rewards.

The variable which the study aims to investigate is gender. Table 6.2 introduces 10 most-used strategies reported by females and males. All data from 100 participants are reported in percentage.

<i>Ran king</i>	<i>Vocabulary learning strategies</i>	<i>Number of participants using the strategy</i>	<i>Total %</i>
1	I ask my teacher for a meaning of a new word	55	55%
2	To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses	48	48%
3	I make a list of new words with Albanian translation and memorize them	38	38%
4	I use bilingual dictionary	33	33%
5	I use monolingual dictionary	32	32 %
6	I use online dictionary	30	30 %
7	I watch English language TV shows in English or watch English movies	30	30 %
8	I keep a vocabulary notebook to jot down new words I want to learn	28	28 %
9	I read for pleasure in English	25	25 %
10	I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand	20	20 %

Table 6.2: The Most-Used Strategies Reported by Females and Males

The first most-used strategy by female students is "I ask my teacher for a meaning of a new word". This social strategy seems to be very popular among participants and out of 100 participants, 55% use this strategy. It is used to discover the meaning of the unknown word. Usually learners ask teachers for help in variety ways; giving the L1 translation, giving a synonym, giving a definition by paraphrase, using the new word in a sentence, or any combination of these.

The disadvantages are that the teacher must know the learners' mother tongue, and the most translation pairs are not exact equivalents, so that some erroneous knowledge may be transferred.(Schmitt 1997)

The second most-used strategy used is "To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses". This discovery strategy seems to be used more by female than male students and it used by 48% of the participants. This strategy should be encouraged more and the main reason is the enormous number of words in the English language, the size of the average adult's working vocabulary, and the number of words one needs to know to recognize a reasonably high percentage of words on the average written page.

Nation (1985) emphasizes the role of teaching guessing. It encourages readers to make and test predictions, which is a useful generalized reading skill. But the evidence discussed above dictates a selective approach, by the reader and the teacher. Instruction should include training in what contexts provide the best opportunities for successful guessing, and must avoid urging use of the guessing strategy in all cases where readers encounter unknown words.

The third most -used strategy by the learners with frequency of 38% is "I make a list of new words with Albanian translation and memorize them". Word lists are very popular among EFL learners because it is made by the learners themselves based on their needs and their interests. Again this strategy emphasizes the role of the mother tongue in learning new words.

Regarding the fourth most-used strategy, there is a slight difference between female and male learners with 33% use the strategy "I use bilingual dictionary". Bilingual dictionaries are used by ESL/EFL learners but the learners should be instructed how to use them correctly. Using bilingual dictionaries requires more than just looking up a word in one language and picking the first translation you see. Many words in English have more than one possible equivalent in the other language, including synonyms, varying registers, and different parts of speech.

Most studies on the effectiveness of dictionaries in vocabulary learning have been conducted in L1 settings, and most have compared dictionary definitions with contextual guessing. The studies suggest that a combination of strategies dictionary usage and contextual guessing lead to vocabulary learning.

The fifth most -used strategy "I use monolingual dictionary" is used by 32% of the participants. Monolingual dictionaries are used by advanced learners at most but in English there are ones for elementary and intermediate users too. This tool I based on a presumption that learners must move from a bilingual dictionary to a monolingual one as they advance in their study of the target language. Learners' (or learner's) dictionaries include a lot of information on grammar, usage, common errors, false

friends, collocations, and so on, which a native speaker knows intuitively.

'I use online dictionary' is the sixth most-used strategy by the study participants. 30% of the participants use the strategy. Dictionaries provide translators with valuable information. However, if we want our students to be efficient users of this reference material, we need to understand how they use these sources of vocabulary in their work. There was an empirical study conducted at University Jaume I (Castellon, Spain), conducted with translation students in order to establish how they use different types of dictionaries. The main objectives of our research and findings regarding the types of dictionary used the frequency of use, the main reasons for consultation, etc. The conclusion is that our students do not take advantage of the different dictionaries available. In addition, the results suggest that they are not familiar with electronic dictionaries-CD-ROM dictionaries and online dictionaries.

Similarly, 30% of the participants use the strategy 'I watch English language TV shows in English or watch English movies' as well. I strongly believe that this strategy is very useful in learning new words because I have used it personally. This strategy helps the learner to read the subscript and at the same time listen to the word pronunciation.

'I keep a vocabulary notebook to jot down new words I want to learn' is the eight most-used strategy and it is used 28% by the participants. This strategy first of all helps a learner know the word pronunciation, spelling, part of speech, definition and usage. What is more important, making a vocabulary notebook requires one to consult the dictionary, which enables him to use all-English

dictionaries and it is known that a combination of strategies leads to a better word retention. The only disadvantage is that making a vocabulary notebook requires a learner to consult the dictionary, so it takes a lot of time but the learner will get used to it.

The ninth most-used strategy 'I read for pleasure in English' is used by 25% study participants. I believe that this strategy should be used more often by the participants since it is widely believed that reading enhance vocabulary learning. The reason is that the students encounter the same word many times while reading a book and it leads to incidental learning. The key to an incidental learning approach is to make sure that learners get maximum exposure to language. The most effective way to do this is to transplant the learner into a country or situation where the L2 is the primary language (Schmitt 2000). Graded readers (books written with a controlled vocabulary and limited range of grammatical structure) are very suitable books and even beginning students with a limited vocabulary can benefit from reading.

The tenth strategy used by 20% study participants is 'I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts'. This strategy is very useful however not much used by the participants. The teachers should encourage students to ask them to identify the part of speech (frequently a function of the suffix) and to write the definition.

Lawson and Hogben (2006) conducted a study with 15 university students in Australia with experience in Italian as they attempted to learn the meanings of new foreign language (Italian) words. The great majority of the procedures they used involved some form of repetition of

the new words and their meanings-mostly a simple reading of the dictionary-like entries provided, or repetitions of the word-meaning complexes. They gave relatively little attention to the physical or grammatical features of words, nor did they commonly use elaborative acquisition procedures. The lack of association between use of context and recall of word meaning is of major interest, given the stress placed on context by many researchers and commentators. Even when students did use the cues in the sentences to generate possible meanings for the target words, this did not help them establish representations for the meanings of the words. Consideration of the use of context in vocabulary acquisition suggests a need to distinguish between the use of context for generation of meaning of a new word and the use of context for acquisition of the meaning for subsequent recall.

Learners will benefit from combining strategies and it is worth considering adding a vocabulary learning strategies component to our vocabulary program. Students will eventually need to effectively control their own vocabulary learning and become more independent learners. It is very reasonable to introduce the students to a variety of strategies and let them decide which ones are right for them.

In conclusion, it seems that the participants use some good strategies such as asking the teacher, using all types of dictionaries, vocabulary notebooks, reading for pleasure and dividing the word into parts. Based on the data results, both males and females use approximately the same strategies with slight differences. Unfortunately, associations are not used at all and this strategy should be encouraged among the students. Using associations is a deep strategy which leads to word retention.

6.1.3.1 The Strategies Used by Female Participants

It is widely believed that certain characteristics influence the choice of vocabulary strategy. One of these characteristics is gender. Many studies have shown that female learners use more strategies than male learners and females are more persistent in accomplishing different learning tasks. Table 6.4 reports the use of strategies by female participants.

Ranking	Vocabulary learning strategies	Number of Females using the strategy	Total %
1	I ask my teacher for a meaning of a new word	41	41 %
2	I use monolingual dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word	38	38%
3	I review English lessons often	37	37%
4	I study new words later in order to remember them	35	35%
5	I use online dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word	31	31%
6	To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses	25	25%
7	I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English	23	23%
8	I try to learn the new word by repeating it out loud several times	20	20%
9	I keep a vocabulary notebook to jot down new words I want to learn	20	20%
10	I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page	15	15%

Table 6.3: The Use of Strategies by Female P articipants

1. 41% of total 50 female participants reported to use the strategy "I ask my teacher for a meaning of a new word". It is obvious that females prefer social strategy and they heavily rely on a teacher.

This strategy is also the most-used by all study participants and this is probable due to the fact that the previous educational system favored the teacher-centered methodology of teaching. However, as a language teacher myself I believe that this is a characteristic of a good language learner.

2. 38% of total 50 female participants reported to use the strategy "I use monolingual dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word". Monolingual dictionary seems to be a useful strategy for females. This tool helps the learners to learn even more words because every item in a dictionary is explained or illustrated.

3. 37% of total 50 female participants use the strategy "I review English lessons often".

This strategy is the third most-used strategy by females however it is not included in the list of ten most-used strategies by all study participants. This shows that females find the revision of material more useful than males.

4. 35% of total 50 female participants use the strategy "I study new words later in order to remember them. This retention strategy is frequently used by females but it is rarely used by males. Studying the word later helps in revising them by rewriting a word over and over again and practicing pronunciation. A good practice would be also using a word in a sentence.

5. 31% of total 50 female participants use the strategy "I use online dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word". The high percentage of the strategy shows that females use technology a lot. The online dictionary is a very rich resource because it contains: thesaurus, acronyms, idioms, etc. Similarly, to the previous results this is also the sixth used strategy by all participants.

6. 23% of the participants use the strategy "I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English". This strategy is used by females only.

7. 25% of the participants use the strategy "To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses". It seems that females do not use guessing a lot and I think that it should be used more. Laufer's (1996) emphasize that "L2 learners tend to rely heavily on words as landmarks of meaning in text, less so on background knowledge, and to virtually ignore syntax.

Vocabulary knowledge has been consistently shown to be more strongly related to reading comprehension than other components of reading. Even if a reader has and uses good metacognitive strategies in L1, they will not be of use in the L2 until the reader develops a solid language base.

8. 20% of the participants use the strategy "I try to learn the new word by repeating it out loud several times". Words need to be repeated in order to be studied. Usually, books provide a context that helps learners figure out the meaning of words they do not know. This contextualized learning deepens learners' understanding of words they are learning, and they learn which words go together.

9. 20% of the participants use the strategy "I keep a vocabulary notebook to jot down new words I want to learn". It seems that females prefer writing down the information which I consider useful because all information is remembered better when it is written as well.

10. 15% of the participants use the strategy "I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page". Generally, this cognitive strategy is rarely used but many female students find it useful.

In conclusion, female learners use strategies different from those that male students use. It seems that repeating and writing down words are two characteristics that females have. Dictionary is also a tool that females use to study the words and their meaning. Remembering location of words on the page is a rare strategy used but for the female study participants is useful which I probably followed by illustrations on that page. Basically, the females use all types of strategies: social, metacognitive and cognitive strategies.

6.1.3 Teachers' Questionnaire

The aim of the teacher questionnaire is to gather data on teacher training, instructional practices and more precisely approaches to teaching vocabulary. Teaching vocabulary is an area of a great interest for the researchers. One of the main approaches to teach vocabulary is the lexical approach devised by Lewis. The central issue of the lexical approach is that vocabulary is the main component of any language.

There is no right or wrong way to teach vocabulary. Schmitt (2000:142) suggests that "the best practice in any situation will depend on the type of student, the words that are target, the school system and curriculum, and many other factors". However, with beginners it would be useful to start making use of the unknown words they meet in context.

Sokmen (1997) suggests a number of key principles such as: build a large sight vocabulary, integrate new words with old, provide a number of encounters with a word, promote a deep level of processing, facilitate imagining, make new words "real" by connecting them to the students' world in some way, use a variety of strategies and encourage independent learning strategies. In my opinion, providing a number of encounters with a word promotes word retention and particularly if the word is learned using different strategies.

Language teachers have the biggest responsibility and in teaching vocabulary it is quite useful to have some idea of what makes words relatively easy or difficult to learn. Teachers can improve their students' vocabulary by deepening their quality of knowledge about words already partially known, even if no new words are introduced (Schmitt 2000).

Personally, teaching vocabulary is a very important part of my instruction. Both teachers and students should strive to make vocabulary learning more effective and use the new words creatively. Nevertheless, some kinds of word knowledge such as collocations, register constraints, and frequency can only be fully grasped through numerous exposures. Therefore, both explicit and incidental approaches are both necessary in the course of learning vocabulary, each with its own strength and weaknesses (Schmitt 2000).

Generally, teachers of English at SEEU use different approaches in teaching both low-frequency and high-frequency words. The teachers participating in this part of the research have been teaching English for 2-18 years. Three teachers with two years teaching experiences have finished their BA studies at SEEU.

1. How long have you been teaching English?

Four teachers with 15 teaching experiences have Masters Degree. Five teachers have been teaching English for 8 years. Five teachers have 5 years of teaching experience and two teachers have been teaching English for 10 years. All teacher participants are teaching at the Language Center, SEEU.

2. What is the most difficult aspect of teaching?

Data from this question show that 15 participants are of the opinion that writing is the most difficult aspect to teach. 5 participants believe that grammar is the most difficult aspect to teach. It is surprising that none of the teachers believe that reading and vocabulary are difficult to teach.

3. Is vocabulary teaching a part of your everyday instruction?

All participants gave a unanimous response and that is for 20 participants vocabulary teaching is a part of their instruction. This shows that vocabulary teaching is emphasized and learning new words is vital to progressing as a reader. Lessons on prefixes, suffixes, and roots for example, will help students recognize unfamiliar words when they see them.

4. What approaches do you use to teach vocabulary?

Generally, teachers use different approaches to teach vocabulary in their classes. The most - used approaches listed by the teacher are: guessing from the context, flashcards, and demonstrations of unknown words, pictures and illustrations, using reading texts to enrich vocabulary. Word games and puzzles also help learners to learn new words.

5. Does reading any text enhance vocabulary acquisition? If, yes please explain how?

All teachers agreed that reading enhances vocabulary acquisition because students learn words in context as they are repeated many times. Guessing words in a context is a very good strategy but it is not very suitable for low level of students because a learner should know around 95% of the running words to guess correctly. Teachers can help learners in developing this strategy by combining it with other strategies such as analyzing affixes and roots.

6. How do you help students remember new words?

Retention strategies are used to commit the words to their memories. It seems that teachers help students to remember the meaning of the words. Four teachers reported that that they use the strategy "repeating the word many times". It seems that this strategy is preferable both by teachers and students. Four teachers use the strategy "word cards".

Five other teachers use the strategy "using new words in a sentence". Finally, three teachers use the strategy "using associations". Four teachers use the strategy "memorizing the meaning of a word".

7. Do you give students training in using strategies for learning vocabulary?

Out of 20 teachers only three teachers reported that they regularly train students in using different strategies. Two teachers reported that they rarely train students in vocabulary strategies and fifteen teachers never include strategy training in their classes. Based on the data results, strategy training is needed and all teachers should plan the training program based on their students' needs and interests.

8. When do you think it is necessary to use students' native languages in explaining new English words?

Two teachers use translations in their classes when the other strategies don't work the other eighteen avoid using translations. It is my belief that teachers should explain words in their native languages especially with low levels of students. Learning target words through native language has proven to be effective according to many researchers.

9. Do you agree or disagree that lesson should focus on vocabulary development?

Two teachers out of twenty teachers believe that the lesson should focus on vocabulary development only. The other eighteen disagree that vocabulary is the main component of their lessons.

10. Do you believe that the teacher should be the only source for helping students to learn new English words?

Seventeen out of 20 teachers disagree with the statement other three teachers agree with it. This shows that

teachers of English suggest focusing their lessons on the other skills not only on vocabulary. I personally believe that vocabulary should be developed through reading and practiced through writing skills. Basically, using the words in a sentence shows how well the students have mastered understanding of a word.

6.1.5 Comparison of Results

Data results from phases 2 and 3 show that both females and males employ different strategies to discover the meaning of unknown words and to remember the meaning. A study conducted on sex differences in Spain. A questionnaire was administered to 581 Spanish-speaking students learning Basque and English as L2 (279 and 302) in order to answer the question: the number and the range of vocabulary strategies they use. The results show that they differ significantly in the number of strategies used. Regarding the range of vocabulary strategies, 8 out of the 10 most frequent strategies are shared by females and males. However, a close analysis of the data also reveals differences, such as females' greater use of formal use strategies, input elicitation strategies, rehearsal strategies and planning strategies and males' greater use of image vocabulary learning strategies. In addition, the females' total strategy usage percentages are higher than the males', which points to either different perceptions of vocabulary learning behaviors or different patterns of vocabulary strategy usage for males and females.

Data results show that both females and males use the strategy "I ask my teacher for a meaning of a new word" frequently and they heavily rely on teachers. Guessing strategy on the other hand is used more frequently by males than females. This definitively means

that female students should practice the strategy and develop it more. This can be achieved by reading different academic texts.

All three types of dictionaries monolingual, bilingual and online dictionaries are tools that are used by learners a lot. Nevertheless, female students write more when they learn new words because they prefer writing notes, messages, and keeping a vocabulary notebook. Males read for pleasure in English and in this way they enrich their vocabulary.

Finally, the most interesting strategy used by the females is "remembering the location on the page". It seems that many females are visual learners and they prefer to see where the word is located.

Gu (2003) reviews empirical research on vocabulary learning strategies and suggests that a model of person, task, context, and strategies is first proposed to foreground the review. The review emphasizes the importance of task-dependent guessing strategies, dictionary strategies, note-taking strategies, rote rehearsal strategies, and encoding strategies. The author believes that the choice, use, and effectiveness of vocabulary learning strategies depend on the task, the learner, and the learning context.

Regarding the results obtained from teachers' responses, different approaches are used by them. The most-used teaching approaches are: developing guessing strategy, using flashcards, using pictures and illustrations, doing word games and puzzles, and using different texts to enrich students' vocabulary. Vocabulary is a regular part of the instruction and it is believed that reading enhances vocabulary acquisition. It has been suggested by many authors that reading itself does not lead to

vocabulary learning but it might be the first step the learners take to learn new words. It would be more useful if the students encode the new word together with the context which means remembering the word together with the surrounding sentence). Or, as the final students the students should create a sentence using the new word and thus put it back into context (Sanaoui, 1995).

Unfortunately, strategy training is not included in the instruction and teachers of English should design a training program and teach learners a skill, strategies, of learning vocabulary. Teaching high-frequency words is more difficult than teaching low-frequency words. High-frequency words are hard for the students to remember because they tend to be abstract. Folse (2004) points out that "vocabulary acquisition is a source of problems and it is not dealt sufficiently. Some teachers cover some vocabulary, but this is hardly ever done very systematically. Vocabulary is something that everyone assumes that learners will somehow pick up, much the same way everyone assumes that students will just pick up good pronunciation. Based on my teaching experience, I try to teach vocabulary systematically. Whenever I teach a lesson, I predict which words might be unknown to the students and prepare class activities. Graves (2000) suggests four components of an effective vocabulary program: wide or extensive independent reading to expand word knowledge, instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of texts containing those words, instruction in independent word-learning strategies, and word consciousness and word-play activities to motivate and enhance learning. Some teachers on the other hand take advantage of students' first language, teach the meaning of basic words, review and reinforcement.

7. Conclusion and Suggestions for Teaching and Research

The research scrutinizes in detail the vocabulary learning strategies used by female and male students at SEEU. It presents the techniques that students use to learn high-frequency and low-frequency words in English. It was demonstrated that learning new words is a complex process and the students need to use many strategies in order to remember the meaning of the words. However, the teachers' greatest concern is helping students to learn new words and Gu (1992) points out that "It is only the number of strategies and the frequencies of strategy use that deprive the poor of improvement, providing them with more alternatives obtained from the strategically rich and telling them to use their strategies more often would easily solve the problem".

In Macedonia, a typical EFL environment, teachers teach words through decontextualized activities in English classes. Teachers spend a considerable amount of instructional time in presenting, explaining, and defining terms. In addition, students are usually expected to learn vocabulary on their own, without teaching them how. Little effort has been made to teach students strategies to improve their vocabulary learning. However, merely giving students lists of words to learn does not result in effective learning, despite the growing awareness on the part of learners of the importance of enhancing their communicative competence of the target language and the recognition that a much larger vocabulary is needed to this end. Therefore, the implications for teaching derived from the present research are that; teachers themselves should have a good command of language and vocabulary learning strategies. This means that

teachers should go through different methodological trainings themselves and learn new teaching techniques that can support learning. Learning strategies are one of the main component of the training.

Then, language teachers need to develop in learners awareness of combining different learning strategies. It is known that learners learn differently and they should be encouraged to use the strategies that suit their learning styles. The program designers should take into consideration students' cultural background because I deeply believe that culture and gender influence strategy choice. Language learning strategies are good indicators of how learners approach tasks or problems encountered during the process of language learning.

Finally, explicit vocabulary strategy instruction should be embedded into regular courses especially in English programmers. The learners could understand the language learning process what language learning resources are available to them, and what specific vocabulary learning strategies they might use in order to improve their own vocabulary use. The suggestion that derives from this research is that an appropriate training program should include all university students. Cohen (2002) suggest that strategy training should be integrated into the language curriculum under the guidance of the teacher and should be implemented into the language lessons in forms of various activities and tasks where a wide range of strategies are practiced. Oxford (1999) is of the opinion that training should be integrated into regular L2 activities over a long period of time rather than taught as a separate, short intervention. On the other hand, Read (2000) points out that most people operate with strategies without being aware of it.

It is only when we have to undertake unfamiliar or cognitively demanding communication tasks that the strategies become more conscious. For example, I am choosing my words as I write this chapter, trying both to express the ideas clearly and to get achieve the level of formality than the editors seem to be looking for (Read, 200:33).

Read is of the opinion that a strategy training is needed especially for in communication situations because they have to overcome the lack of vocabulary knowledge in order to function effectively.

A strategy training program at SEEU should be planned and carefully prepared beforehand and then implemented into regular language lessons and teachers should not ignore it. It is my belief, that first teachers themselves should be trained in strategy instruction and assessment.

Both teachers and learners need to become aware of learning styles and strategies through strategy instruction and finally introduce strategies that help students use the target language more effectively and thus improve performance

Definitely training program should contain few steps such as: identifying student population and their needs, introducing strategies, practicing using different strategies and designing appropriate classroom activities.

8. Limitations

This was an empirical study that only included a small number of participants and a small number of teachers teaching English as a foreign language. A larger sample from different institutions would definitely yield more generalizable findings. As other studies, the data were collected by using only three instruments which do not reflect a reality because students could have not read the questions carefully but only circled them.

This study definitely will not be the only one in this field and does not offer any conclusive findings about vocabulary learning and teaching at SEEU. What is more important, its intention is to be part of a discussion on the complex construct of vocabulary learning, particularly in EFL contexts and in a new environment like SEEU. Hopefully, this will lead to more thorough investigations in the field and both students and teacher will benefit from these findings.

APPENDIX 1

1. BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name _____

2. Date _____

3. Age _____

4. Gender _____

5. How long have you been studying English?

6. Do you enjoy learning English? (Circle one)

YES NO

7. How do you rate your English proficiency?

1. poor

2. good

3. very good

8. How important do you think vocabulary learning is in learning English?

Not important at all

Very important

1

2

3

4

5

6

9. Have you ever had any instructions (either by book or instructor) on different strategies to learn English vocabulary? (Circle one)

YES

NO

10. What other languages have you studied?

2. QUESTIONNAIRE 2-Student's survey

Instructions

The purpose of this survey is to collect information about the techniques you use when you learn English words, that is what you do to learn unknown words. All the items below refer to different ways students use when learning English vocabulary.

Each statement is followed by five numbers, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, that you have to circle. For items 32, 33, 34 and 35 add any other strategy that you use but are not included in the taxonomy.

Key: 1 =never or almost never use this strategy
 2=I occasionally use the strategy
 3= I sometimes use this strategy
 4= I usually use this strategy
 5= I always use this strategy

Please read each statement carefully and then circle the answer that applies for you. There are no right or wrong answer responses to any of the items on this survey and for this reason it is very important that you express your true opinion in this survey.

1. I think of relationship between what I already know and new things I learn in English.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I use new English in a sentence so I can remember them.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I use rhymes to remember new English words.

1 2 3 4 5

5. I use flashcards to remember new English words

1 2 3 4 5

6. I physically act out new English words

1 2 3 4 5

7. I review English lessons often

1 2 3 4 5

8. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page

1 2 3 4 5

9. I keep a vocabulary notebook to jot down new words I want to learn.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I try to make use of prefixes and suffixes when learning a word

1 2 3 4 5

11. I try to learn the new word by repeating it out loud several times

1 2 3 4 5

12. I make a list of new words with Albanian translation and memorize them.

1 2 3 4 5

13. I think of cognate words to understand the meaning of a word.

1 2 3 4 5

14. I write new English words several times

1 2 3 4 5

15. I try to talk like native speakers

1 2 3 4 5

16. I use the English words I know in different ways

1 2 3 4 5

17. I start conversation in English

1 2 3 4 5

18. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English

1 2 3 4 5

19. I read for pleasure in English

1 2 3 4 5

20. I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English

1 2 3 4 5

21. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English

1 2 3 4 5

22. I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand

1 2 3 4 5

23. I try not to translate word-by-word

1 2 3 4 5

24. To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses

1 2 3 4 5

25. I read English without looking up every new word

1 2 3 4 5

26. I translate passages from English to my native language and vice versa

1 2 3 4 5

27. I study new words later in order to remember them.

1 2 3 4 5

28. I use monolingual dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word

1 2 3 4 5

29. I use bilingual dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word

1 2 3 4 5

30. I use online dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word

1 2 3 4 5

31. I ask my teacher for a meaning of a new word

1 2 3 4 5

32. 1 2 3 4 5

33. 1 2 3 4 5

34. 1 2 3 4 5

35. 1 2 3 4 5

(Modified based on Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, SILL 1990)

APPENDIX 3

Teacher Questionnaire

Please, take few minutes and answer the following questions. The aim of this questionnaire is to find out your attitude towards teaching vocabulary in your classes and approaches that you use

11. How long have you been teaching English as a foreign language?

12. What is the most difficult aspect of teaching? Please, circle your answer.

- a. Grammar
- b. reading
- c. writing
- d. vocabulary

13. Is vocabulary teaching a part of your everyday instruction? Please circle you answer.

YES

NO

14. What approaches do you use to teach vocabulary? Please, list two.

a.

b.

15. Does reading any text enhance vocabulary acquisition? If, yes please explain how?

16. How do you help students to remember new English words?

17. Do you give students training in using strategies for learning vocabulary?

18. When do you think it is necessary to use students' native languages in explaining new English words?

19. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The lesson should focus mainly on vocabulary development. Please, circle your answer.

YES

NO

20. Do you think that the teacher should be the only source for helping students to learn new English words? If yes, please explain why.

YES

NO

APPENDIX 4

Most Frequent Words of the Academic Word List by
Sub list

Sublist 1

analysis

approach

area

assessment

assume

authority

available

benefit

concept

consistent

constitutional

context

contract

create

data

definition

derived

distribution

economic

environment

established
estimate
evidence
export
factors
financial
formula
function
identified
income
indicate
individual
interpretation
involved
issues
labour
legal
legislation
major
method
occur
percent
period
policy
principle
procedure
process
required
research
response
role
section
sector
significant
similar
source

*specific
structure
theory
variables*

Sublist 2

*achieve
acquisition
administration
affect
appropriate
aspects
assistance
categories
chapter
commission
community
complex
computer
conclusion
conduct
consequences
construction
consumer
credit
cultural
design
distinction
elements
equation
evaluation
features
final
focus*

impact
injury
institute
investment
items
journal
maintenance
normal
obtained
participation
perceived
positive
potential
previous
primary
purchase
range
region
regulations
relevant
resident
resources
restricted
security
sought
select
site
strategies
survey
text
traditional
transfer

Sublist 3

alternative
circumstances
comments
compensation
components
consent
considerable
constant
constraints
contribution
convention
coordination
core
corporate
corresponding
criteria
deduction
demonstrate
document
dominant
emphasis
ensure
excluded
framework
funds
illustrated
immigration
implies
initial
instance
interaction
justification

layer
link
location
maximum
minorities
negative
outcomes
partnership
philosophy
physical
proportion
published
reaction
registered
reliance
removed
scheme
sequence
sex
shift
specified
sufficient
task
technical
techniques
technology
validity
volume

Sublist 4

This sublist contains the fourth most frequent words of the Academic Word List in the Academic Corpus.

*access
adequate
annual
apparent
approximated
attitudes
attributed
civil
code
commitment
communication
concentration
conference
contrast
cycle
debate
despite
dimensions
domestic
emerged
error
ethnic
goals
granted
hence
hypothesis
implementation
implications
imposed*

integration
internal
investigation
job
label
mechanism
obvious
occupational
option
output
overall
parallel
parameters
phase
predicted
principal
prior
professional
project
promote
regime
resolution
retained
series
statistics
status
stress
subsequent
sum
summary
undertaken

Sublist 5

academic
adjustment
alter
amendment
aware
capacity
challenge
clause
compounds
conflict
consultation
contact
decline
discretion
draft
enable
energy
enforcement
entities
equivalent
evolution
expansion
exposure
external
facilitate
fundamental
generated
generation
image
liberal
licence
logic

marginal
medical
mental
modified
monitoring
network
notion
objective
orientation
perspective
precise

Sublist 6

abstract
accurate
acknowledged
aggregate
allocation
assigned
attached
author
bond
brief
capable
cited
cooperative
discrimination
display
diversity
domain
edition
enhanced
estate
exceed

expert
explicit
federal
fees
flexibility
furthermore
gender
ignored
incentive
incidence
incorporated
index
inhibition
initiatives
input
instructions
intelligence
interval
lecture
migration
minimum
ministry
motivation
neutral
nevertheless
overseas
preceding
presumption
rational
recovery
revealed
scope
subsidiary
tapes
trace
transformation

transport
underlying
utility

Sublist 7

adaptation
adults
advocate
aid
channel
Chemical
classical
comprehensive
comprise
confirmed
contrary
converted
couple
decades
Definite
deny
differentiation
disposal
dynamic
eliminate
empirical
equipment
extract
file
finite
foundation
global
grade
guarantee

hierarchical
identical
ideology
inferred
innovation
insert
intervention
isolated
media
mode
paradigm
phenomenon
priority
prohibited
publication
quotation
release
reverse
simulation
solely
somewhat
submitted
successive
survive
thesis
topic
transmission
ultimately
unique
visible
voluntary

Sublist 8

abandon
accompanied
accumulation
ambiguous
appendix
appreciation
arbitrary
automatically
bias
chart
Clarity
conformity
commodity
complement
contemporary
contradiction
crucial
currency
denote
detected
deviation
displacement
dramatic
eventually
exhibit
exploitation
fluctuations
guidelines
highlighted
implicit
induced
inevitably

infrastructure
inspection
intensity
manipulation
minimised
nuclear
offset
paragraph
plus
practitioners
predominantly
prospect
radical
random
reinforced
restore
revision
schedule
tension
termination
theme
thereby
uniform
vehicle
via
virtually
widespread
visual

Sublist 9

accommodation
analogous
anticipated
assurance

attained
behalf
bulk
ceases
coherence
coincide
commenced
incompatible
concurrent
confined
controversy
conversely
device
devoted
diminished
distorted/ distortion - equal figures
duration
erosion
ethical
format
founded
inherent
insights
integral
intermediate
manual
mature
mediation
medium
military
minimal
mutual
norms
overlap
passive
portion

preliminary
protocol
qualitative
refine
relaxed
restraints
revolution
rigid
route
scenario
sphere
subordinate
supplementary
suspended
team
temporary
trigger
unified
violation
vision

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