

INVESTIGATING ENGLISH VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES: THE CASE OF TERMINALE A PUPILS AT GROUPE SCOLAIRE MOHAMED 5 OF BOUAKE

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Abstract: This study aims at investigating the Vocabulary Learning Strategies adopted by Terminale A pupils at Groupe Scolaire Mohamed5 of Bouaké. It specifically seeks to find out firstly the most and the least employed strategies to discover the meaning of new words and secondly the strategies used to learn these words. To achieve this goal, questionnaires were used to collect data from 40 pupils. For the data analysis, frequency, percentages and means were used. The results revealed that for the discovery of words' meaning, determination strategies are the most used whereas the social strategies are the least employed. Concerning strategies to learn new words, the cognitive and metacognitive strategies are the most employed. The memory strategies and social strategies were respectively the least employed. On the basis of these findings, some suggestions were made to both learners and English language teachers.

Key words: Vocabulary, Strategies, Memory, Cognitive, Metacognitive

Étude des stratégies d'apprentissage du vocabulaire anglais: le cas des élèves de Terminale A du Groupe Scolaire Mohamed 5 de Bouaké

Résumé : Le but de cette étude est d'étudier les stratégies de l'apprentissage du vocabulaire anglais utilisées par les élèves de Terminale au Groupe Scolaire Mohamed 5 de Bouaké. Plus particulièrement, cette étude se propose de rechercher les stratégies les plus utilisées et les moins utilisés pour découvrir le sens des nouveaux mots et aussi et deuxièmement les stratégies utilisées pour apprendre ces mots. Pour y parvenir, 40 élèves ont renseigné des questionnaires, ce qui nous a servi de données. L'analyse de celles-ci a pris en compte les fréquences, les pourcentages et les moyennes. Les résultats de l'étude ont révélé que pour découvrir le sens des mots, les stratégies de détermination sont les plus utilisés tandis que les stratégies sociales sont les moins utilisées. En ce qui concerne les stratégies utilisées pour apprendre les nouveaux mots, les stratégies cognitives et métacognitives sont les plus utilisées. Les stratégies liées à la mémoire et les stratégies sociales sont respectivement les moins employées. Sur la base des résultats obtenus, des suggestions ont été faites aux enseignants et apprenants.

Mots clés : Vocabulaire, Stratégies, Mémoire, Cognitives, Métacognitives

Introduction

Perceived as the poor relation of second language learning, vocabulary has always been relegated to second place after grammar. It was only with the help of some studies in psycholinguistics that vocabulary began to be rehabilitated. Since then, it has become the focus of interest in foreign language learning, insofar as almost all the approaches that have marked the history of foreign language teaching consider that lexical mastery is a consequence of communicative competence. This idea is supported by D. Laufer (1997, p. 140) in the following terms: “no matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of second language (or foreign language) are mastered, without words to express a wider range of meanings, communication (...) just cannot happen in any meaningful way”. Words are then of great importance to pass a message on others, understand theirs and also be proficient in any language. As a result, we have begun to take an interest in how learners learn vocabulary, especially after the disappointing results obtained with the old methods like grammar translation method, reading method, direct method, etc. which ensured that the learner memorised a list of a hundred words chosen at random by the teacher. So, at the cost of considerable effort, some linguists like O'Malley and Chamot, Oxford and Rubin (1983) have managed to draw up a number of taxonomies covering the different learning strategies that learners can use to learn vocabulary. A learner who wants to acquire sufficient words and communicate efficiently should employ those strategies.

At Groupe Scolaire Mohamed 5 of Bouaké, it has been noticed that many pupils in Terminale have difficulties to perform well in English after at least six years of English learning experience. Some of these pupils manage to overcome the unknown words they encounter in texts while for many others, these words become a handicap. Furthermore, few students can use English words to speak, write, or comprehend a message during reading and listening sessions. Sometimes, in the course of English language learning sessions, some students add French words to their English sentences when they lack the needed vocabulary to express an idea. In fact, these problems are related to their poor lexical background. They do not possess the adequate amount of vocabulary to meet their learning requirements. The lexical problems these pupils encounter may be linked to the techniques they employ to discover the meaning of new words and the way they proceed to consolidate the new lexical items they meet. Researchers refer to these techniques as vocabulary learning strategies (VLS). Many studies have demonstrated that the use of appropriate VLS is an effective tool to enlarge one's vocabulary and gain language proficiency (R. Oxford, 1990; N. Schmitt, 2000; M. McCarthy, 1990; I. S. P. Nation, 2001; V.P. Takač, 2008). So, we wonder: What are the vocabulary learning strategies employed by Terminale pupils at Groupe Scolaire Mohamed 5? which strategies do Terminale pupils use the most and the least to discover the meaning of new words they meet? Which ones do they employ the most and the least to learn new words they meet? On the basis of the above research questions, we put forward the hypothesis that if the pupils' vocabulary learning strategies are identified, it will help find out the most and the least employed ones. Accordingly, the principal objective of this research paper is to identify the preference of VLS use in Terminale pupils' English language learning process. More specifically, this study firstly seeks to find out the strategies the pupils in Terminale use the most and the least to discover the meaning of new words. Secondly, it intends to discover the strategies they employ the most and the least to learn and retain new lexical items.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Defining vocabulary

Vocabulary has been defined different ways regarding viewpoints. S.B. Neuman and J. Dwyer for example define it as “words we must know to communicate effectively, words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary)” (S. B. Neuman and J. Dwyer 2009, p. 385). This definition gives a functional view to vocabulary is that it shows what these words are used for. Therefore, these words have practical, and communicative functions. Another definition is provided by M. Lessard-Clouston (2013, p. 9). He claims that vocabulary is “the words of a language including single items and phrases or chunks of several words which convey a particular meaning the way individual words do”. This definition seems more inclusive in the way it goes beyond single meaningful items. Indeed, it enlarges the field of what can be referred to as vocabulary. For him, vocabulary includes not only single words but also phrases, expressions, compound words. He adds that these items should be meaningful as one word would be. In sum, vocabulary refers to all the words, chunks, phrases in a language that are necessary to communicate and convey meaning.

1.2. Vocabulary learning strategies

Vocabulary learning strategies, a subcategory of learning strategies, are simply strategies chosen specifically to improve vocabulary knowledge. A vocabulary learning strategy could therefore be any strategy that influences vocabulary learning (Schmitt, 1997, p. 203). For example, using reference tools is a language learning strategy, using a bilingual dictionary to determine the meaning of a new word is a vocabulary strategy. Vocabulary learning strategies are defined differently among experts. For example, A. J. Sökmen (1997 as cited in V. P. Takač, 2008, p. 47) says VLS are basically actions carried out by the learners to help understand the meaning of a word, learn them and remember them later. This definition reveals three steps in the use of these strategies: firstly, the behaviour of the learner at the meeting of the word, secondly what is done when he/she wants to learn these words, and thirdly for the retrieval. R. Oxford (1990, p.8) extends and clarifies the role of VLS. For her, they are “any set of techniques or learning behaviours which a language learner uses (...) to extend one’s vocabulary”. Summing up, VLS are specific actions, techniques and behaviours used by the learners when learning words in the target language to be more efficient and more effective. Clearly, they are used to discover the meaning of newly-met words and to learn and retain them.

1.3. Studies related to vocabulary learning strategies

Several studies have been undertaken in order to investigate the vocabulary learning strategies of learners in general and particularly the preference of students in their strategy use. For example, J.M. O’Malley et al. (1990) carried a study most and least commonly used VLS. The study revealed that mechanical strategies (repetition is an example) is favoured over more complex ones with strategies involving deeper, more involved manipulation of information (that is to say, imagery, inferencing, keyword method) being much less frequent. O. A. Medani (as cited in M. McCarthy, 1990) carried out research on the vocabulary learning strategies of both good and poor Arabic learners of English. He has found out that there is considerable variation in what successful learners did and in what under-achievers did. Successful learners seem to use a wider variety of strategies than the under-achievers. For instance, the under-achieving learners seemed to practice new words considerably less than good learners. Successful learners practiced the new words when

they had an opportunity (for example: writing compositions). What is more, they asked questions to confirm their knowledge, and tested themselves by going through word lists. Another vocabulary learning strategy research has attempted to discover the preference of 'good' and 'poor' learners during lexical learning.

Based on his own taxonomy of VLS, N. Schmitt (1997) conducted large-scale research in Japan. His survey included a number of 600 Japanese respondents. The result has revealed that the pattern of usage does change for Japanese learners as a whole. Indeed, it has been found that although written repetition is a basis of Japanese vocabulary learning, its use together with the use of paired associate words (second language - first language) on lists and cards decreases as Japanese learners mature. In addition, it has been found that many of the strategies reported by mature respondents as useful involve 'deeper' processing and greater cognitive effort, that is, mature learners seem to understand their assessment. The research carried out in this area has shown that culture is an important determiner regarding the effectiveness with which VLS can be taught and used by learners. P. L. Chin (2009) conducted a research in which they pointed out the frequency of vocabulary learning strategies used by the pupils in China. The participants were thirty-six (36) post-secondary students. The tool for data collection was a questionnaire. The result showed that the most useful VLS are arranged as follows: 1) spelling the word in the mind repeatedly; 2) analysing the word by breaking down the sound segments; 3) remembering words by doing a project; and 4) asking classmates for the meaning of the word.

In the same way, W. Askar (2013) attempted to explore the type of vocabulary learning strategies among students at Duhok University in Northern Iraq. The results of the study showed that Iraqi students were medium strategy users and the most popular strategies were cognitive strategies and the least frequent ones were social strategies. Another recent study was conducted by D.H. Mashhadi and M.H. Sadeghzadeh (2017). It aimed to find out the vocabulary learning strategies used by Iranian EFL learners and Marine Engineering students using Schmitt's (1997) categorization of VLS. The participants were thirty EFL learners and forty-three (43) marine students. A comparison was made between two groups in terms of their vocabulary learning strategies. The results revealed that both groups tended to use determination strategies more than social strategies. EFL learners also used memory strategies more than other types while marine engineering students preferred cognitive strategies.

2. Methodology

This section aims at describing our research participants (research subjects), the data collection instruments we used during our investigation and the procedures employed.

2.1. Target population of the study

In this study, forty (40) pupils were selected to take part in the study. The question of the representativeness was also addressed. At this level, the researcher decided to include a number of fifteen (15) female pupils in the sample and twenty-five (25) male students. The reason is that the class of Terminale was a heterogeneous classroom, that is, there were both boys and girls in the classroom. Concerning the number of boys and girls to include, the researcher made a deliberate choice because sex is not a main characteristic at stake in this study. The method of simple random sampling was applied. This method "involves selecting at random from a list of the population (a sampling frame) the required number of subjects for the sample" (L. Cohen et al., 2007, p. 111).

2.2. Instruments of data collection

As far as the data collection instruments are concerned, quantitative method has been used in order to elicit the data. A questionnaire was used to know the strategies that they use to learn vocabulary and most frequent used. Learners were given a copy of questionnaire. Thus, after describing the target population and the instruments that helped collect data as well as the procedure employed, it is important to present and comment on the data obtained from the questionnaire.

2.3. Method of data analysis

In educational research, data analysis is crucial to give value to the collected data. In the frame of the current research work, the data are quantitative. That is, the data were gathered by means of questionnaires using closed-ended questions. Then, in the analysis, numbers, frequency counts are converted into percentage. They are ranged in tables. As for the open part of the questionnaire, the analysis of the provided information will be focussed on content analysis. The statistical data analysis software 'Sphinx Lexica' was very useful in the analysis procedure since it helped efficiently in the calculation and presentation of data.

2.4. Data presentation and analysis

The questionnaire to the pupils is divided into two parts. On the one hand, the general information about the respondents, and on the other part the vocabulary learning strategies use. The charts below are the descriptive statistics of the results.

Part 1. Personal information

Chart 1: Students' sex distribution

Item 1: Pupils' sex		
Sex	Number of participants	Percentage (%)
Male	25	62.5
Female	15	37.5
TOTAL	40	100

The chart above shows the distribution of participants according to their sex. 25 pupils representing 62.5 % of the sample are male pupils. What is more, 37.5 %, that is 15 students are female pupils. Taken together, they constitute the respondents of the questionnaire that served as the data collection instrument.

Chart 2: Pupils' age

Item 2: Students' age		
Age intervals	Number of participants	
15-20	33	82.5
21 or more	7	17.5
TOTAL	40	100

As it is shown in the chart above, 82.5% of respondents including both male and female are between sixteen (16) to twenty (20) years ago. What is more only 17.5%, that is seven (7) pupils are twenty-one years or over. The pupils were asked to provide the number of years they have been learning the English language.

Chart 3: Pupils' learning experience

Item 3: Learning experience		
English learning experience	Number of participants	Percentage (%)
5 -7 years old	21	52.5
More than 7	19	47.5
TOTAL	40	100

Among the respondents, the majority (52.5%) have been learning English between five (5) to seven years whereas the minority has been learning for more than seven (7) years. It was also suggested to pupils to give any other English learning experience duration that has not been mentioned in options. But obviously, the options covered the answers of respondents. That's why no other learning experience duration was provided.

Part 2. Vocabulary learning strategies

Section A: Discovery strategies

Chart 4: Discovering word meaning through parts of speech

Item 4: I divide the new word into its parts of speech					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
8	6	9	17	40	2.12
20%	15%	22.5%	42.5%	100%	

The results from the chart above show that seventeen of respondents (42.7%) said they never divide words into its parts of speech to know the meaning, eight participants (20%) replied they always use it, they always use it, six other pupils (15%) answered they seldom employ it and nine among them (22.5%) rarely use this strategy. The main frequency of this item is 2.12.

Chart 5: Discovering a word through context

Item 5: I guess the meaning of the new words in context					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
23	9	6	2	40	3.32
57.5%	22.5%	15%	5%	100%	

As indicated in the above chart, guessing for the context is a favoured discovery technique of pupils since the majority of respondents that is twenty-three respondents (57.5%) always use it, nine among the respondents (22.5%) sometimes use it, six other (15%) participants said they rarely and only two participants (5%) never use this strategy. Concerning the mean frequency, it is 3.32.

Chart 6: Discovering word meaning through bilingual dictionary use

Item 6: I use a bilingual dictionary to discover the meaning of new words					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
21	14	5	00	40	3.40
52.5%	35%	12.5%	0%	100%	

As shown in this chart, more than half of the pupils: 21 pupils have recourse to bilingual dictionaries. They represent (52.5%) of the sample and answered they always use it, fourteen (14) other respondents (35%) replied they sometimes use it. The other five respondents (12.5%) said they rarely use this strategy. None of them answered s/he never used a bilingual dictionary. This item got the mean frequency of 3.40.

Chart 7: Discovering words meaning through unilingual dictionary use

Item 7: I use a unilingual dictionary to discover the meaning of new words					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
8	9	12	11	40	2.35
20%	22.5%	30%	27.5%	100%	

This chart reveals that for unilingual dictionary use, only 8 respondents show constant interest to this category is representing 20% of respondents. Their answer is then that they always use it, 9 other students (22.5%) among say they them sometimes use this strategy. 12 pupils representing 30% rarely use it, and eleven participants (27.5%) replied they never use a unilingual dictionary. These answers are summarised in the mean frequency which is 2.35.

Chart 8: Discovering words meaning through asking the teacher

Item 8: I ask its meaning to my English teacher					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
4	6	14	16	40	1.95
10 %	15 %	35 %	40 %	100 %	

Asking question to the teacher about the meaning of a word is not very common among the pupils. According to the above chart, only 10% of respondents answered they always use it. Six other respondents (15%) said they sometimes use this strategy, 35% answered they rarely use it and the majority of respondents (40%) opted for never use it. The mean frequency of using this strategy is 1.95.

Chart 9: Discovering word meaning through mates and friends

Item 9: I ask its meaning to my friends or other people					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
16	14	8	2	40	3.10
40 %	35 %	20 %	5 %	100 %	

In the above chart, the larger part of respondents (40%) said they usually ask the meaning of unknown words to their mates and friends, 35% answered they sometimes use it, 20% replied they rarely use it and 5% of participants said they never use this strategy. So, the mean frequency of social strategy for discovery is 3.10.

As concerns the open-ended asking students to provide any other strategy not mentioned, only five pupils listed some strategies. This represents 12.5% of the sample. These strategies can be summarised as follows:

- Use of electronic dictionaries to discover the meaning of new words
- Using the word list at the end of the book

Section B: Consolidation strategies

The actions and techniques learners use to memorise new words are consolidation strategies. In this second section of VLS, the findings of consolidation strategies are presented.

Chart 10: Learning vocabulary through discussions with classmates or other friends

Item 10: I discuss with classmates and friends in English					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
22	6	8	4	40	3.15
55 %	15%	20%	10%	100%	

As seen in the chart above, discussing with their mates to learn words are widely used in TA classroom. 55% of participants said they always use this strategy. 15% said they sometimes use it, 20% rarely employ this strategy and the remaining 10% answered they never use this strategy. This item has the highest mean frequency among the social strategy for discovery (3.15).

Chart 11: Learning vocabulary through discussions with a native speaker

Item 11: I discuss with friends coming from Anglophone countries					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never u	Total	The mean frequency
6	11	8	15	40	1.63
15%	27.5%	20%	37.5%	100%	

Taking part in English club activities to learn vocabulary is addressed in this section. The mean frequency obtained is 1.63. However, answers are ranged as follows: never use it (37.5%) followed by those who sometimes use it (27.5%). After, respondents that answered they rarely use it come and finally those who always use it (15%).

Chart 12: Learning vocabulary through English club activities

Item 12: I take part in the English-speaking club activities					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
4	5	8	23	40	1.75
10 %	12.5 %	20 %	57.5 %	100%	

The third and last item of this category sought to discover if respondents try and consolidate the words they encounter by discussing with Anglophone friends. 57.5% of respondents said they never use this strategy. 20% of participants rarely employ this strategy, 12.5% among them sometimes use it and the remaining 10% always use it with a mean frequency of 1.75.

Chart 13: Learning vocabulary through connecting new words to experiences

Item 13: I connect the words with those I already know					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
10	13	10	7	40	2.65
25%	32.5%	25%	17.5%	100%	

In this chart, the statement aimed to collect the frequency at which pupils make use of link between new words and already know words to retain them. 25% answered they always make use of this strategy, 32.5% of respondents sometimes use this strategy, 25% sometimes use it and only 17.5% of respondents never use it. The mean frequency of use in this item is 2.65.

Chart 14: Learning vocabulary through gestures

Item 14: I make gestures to learn new vocabulary					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
4	6	7	23	40	1.77
10%	15%	17.5%	57.5%	100%	

This chart shows the result of physical actions use when learning words. The mean frequency was 1.77. Specifically, this strategy was usually employed by 10% of respondents, 15% among them said they sometimes use it, 17.5% opted for rarely and the majority of respondents (57.5%) answered they never make use of this strategy.

Chart 15: Learning vocabulary through sticking sheets

Item15: I write the words on a sheet and stick them at home for revising					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
6	3	7	24	40	1.77
15%	7.5%	17.5%	60%	100%	

In the above chart, the percentage of pupils who always learn vocabulary through sticking sheets is just 15% of respondents that is to say 6 students among the 40 respondents use it. The majority (60%) of participants answered they never use it, 7.5% among them sometimes use it and 20% rarely employ it. The mean frequency was similar to the previous item (1.77).

Chart 16: Learning vocabulary through repeated spelling

Item 16: I spell the words several times					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
10	10	8	12	40	2.45
25%	25%	20%	30%	100%	

Results in the chart above show that the majority (30%) spell words many times to memorise them. 25% among them said they always use it, 25% answered they sometimes resort to this strategy and 20% among them rarely have recourse to this strategy. All these frequencies generated a mean frequency of 2.45.

Chart 17: Learning vocabulary by heart

Item 17: I learn these words by heart					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
22	9	5	4	40	3.22
55%	22.5%	12.5	10%	100%	

Learning words by heart is very common strategy among pupils. 22 students, that is (55%) of the respondents, always employ this strategy whereas 9 pupils representing 22.5% sometimes use this strategy. Other 5 students (12.5 %) say they rarely employ it and 4 students representing a percentage of 10% answered that never make use of it. After the calculation of the mean frequency, it was realised that 3.22.

Chart 18: Learning vocabulary through loud repetition

Item 18: I pronounce the words loudly several times					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
11	12	9	8	40	2.65
27.5%	30%	22.5%	20%	100%	

The second item of this category is the loud repetition as a strategy to learn words. 27.5% of respondents answered they usually use it, 30% said they sometimes employ this strategy, 22.5% rarely have recourse to this strategy and 20% among them never employ loud repetition to memorise words. Concerning the mean frequency, it is 2.65.

Chart 19: Learning vocabulary through repeated writing

Item 19: I write the words several times on a sheet of paper					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
13	8	3	16	40	2.45
32.5%	20%	7.5%	40%	100%	

In the chart above, sixteen (16) students representing the majority (40%) of participants never learn words by writing them several times. 13 other pupils (32.5%) answered they always employ this strategy to learn words. 8 pupils representing 20% of the participants replied they sometimes use it. As for the 3 remaining pupils which represent 7.5 % of the sample under study, they say they rarely use this strategy. The mean frequency of this strategy is therefore 2.45.

Chart 20: Learning vocabulary through notebooks

Item 20: I write the words in a notebook and I learn them					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
23	8	4	5	40	3.22
57.5%	20%	10%	12.5%	100%	

The results in the above chart indicate that more than half of respondents, 23 students (57.5%) of the sample always make use of notebooks. 8 pupils (20%) of participants answered they sometimes use it. For other 4 pupils (10%), the use of this strategy rare whereas 5 pupils 12.5% among them answered they never use this strategy. The mean frequency of use is therefore 3.22 as the first item in this category.

Chart 21: Learning vocabulary through media in English

Item 21: I use the media in English					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
8	9	15	8	40	2.42
20%	22%	37.5%	20%	100%	

This chart shows that English media is not widely used to learn vocabulary. 20% among respondents said they always use it, 22% answered they sometimes use it, the majority (37.5%) rarely employ it and 20% never resort to this strategy. The mean frequency in this strategy is 2.42.

Chart 22: Learning vocabulary through English texts reading

Item 22: I read English texts					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean
12	14	9	5	40	
30%	35%	22.5%	12.5%	100%	

The above chart shows the results related to texts reading in English 30% of respondents said they always do it, 35.5% said they sometimes take time to read texts, 22.5% answered they rarely use it and 12.5% selected 'never use it'. At this level, the mean score of 2.82 has been obtained.

Chart 23: Learning vocabulary through vocabulary exercises

Item 23: I do vocabulary exercises to enrich my vocabulary					
Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	The mean frequency
19	8	11	2	40	3.10

In this chart, 47.5% of respondents said they usually do vocabulary exercises whereas only 5% never use it, 20% sometimes employ this strategy and 27.5% rarely employ this strategy. The highest mean of frequency in this last category belongs to this last item (3.10). These results are discussed in the next section.

As for the open-ended statement asking pupils to describe any other strategy they use to learn new words, 12, 5% of the sample, that is only five pupils replied. They say they sometimes use these strategies. Their answers can be summarised as follows:

- Writing the new words on a sheet of paper and associating them with their synonyms or opposites.
- I tell a friend to ask me questions after I have learned these words
- I write them on a sheet and put them in my English copybook to learn

To see the most used strategies of discovery and consolidation and the least employed strategies in these groups, the findings from the different strategies are gathered and synthesized in the table below.

Chart 24: Summary of strategies according to their groups

STRATEGY GROUPS	Strategy Categories	Maximum Mean	Minimum Mean	Category Mean
Discovery	Determination	3.40	2.12	2.88
	Social	3.10	1.95	2.52
Consolidation	Social	3.15	1.63	1.98
	Memory	2.65	1.77	2.16
	Cognitive	3.22	2.45	2.87
	Metacognitive	3.10	2.42	2.78

As it can be observed in the chart above, in the discovery group, determination got the maximum mean of 3.40 and the minimum mean of 2.12. For this category, the mean is 2.88. Concerning the social strategy of discovery, the highest mean is 3.10 and the lowest is 1.95. This category has the mean of 2.52. Concerning consolidation strategies, the first category is social. In this category the minimum mean is 3.15 and the maximum mean is 1.63. On the whole, the strategy got the mean of 1.98. The memory strategies are the second strategy of this group. They have the minimum mean of 2.65 and the maximum of 1.77. The category then gives the main of 2.16. Cognitive strategies have a minimum mean frequency of 2.42 and the maximum of 3.22. Then the cognitive category has the mean of 2.87. The last category of consolidation group. The minimum mean frequency in this category is 2.42 and the maximum is 3.10. The metacognitive category then has the main frequency of 2.78.

3. Discussion of the results

Taking into account the results of this study, the strategies preferred by students when they need to discover the meaning of new words are respectively: looking up the meaning in a bilingual dictionary followed by guessing from the context of occurrence and asking the meaning to classmates. The two first strategies belong to the determination strategies. As for the third one, it is a social strategy for discovery. As for the least used strategies among learners, they are respectively: asking help from the teacher, separating words into parts of speech and using monolingual dictionaries. These findings about the most employed discovery strategies are congruent with the study by N. Schmitt (1993) in Japan. The findings in his study revealed that the most frequent strategy was the use of a bilingual dictionary followed by guessing a word meaning from the textual context and asking the meaning to the mates. The same finding about the preference of bilingual dictionaries is reported in a number of studies conducted by many other researchers (S. W. Lee and M. O. Min, 2006, S. Sahbazian, 2004).

In addition, the strategy of asking the meaning of a new word to the peers is a frequently used strategy among the students. They prefer not 'bothering' the English teacher. Asking their mates the meaning of a new words meaning seems to be more comfortable for them. According to the findings of J. McComish (1990), collaboration between students might be of great help to the development of the lexical knowledge of students. For this researcher, if the students exchange their ideas or support each other in the target language (English in our case), this can help them increase their vocabulary. Furthermore, guessing the words meaning in context is one of the most employed strategies. The frequency of use of this strategy is also echoed in the study completed by R. Day, C. Omura and M. Hiramatsu (1991) in Japan. They discovered that high school and University groups used this strategy to come across lexical difficulties in their reading texts. Students' preference for this strategy may be justified by the fact that when dealing with a reading text in class or at home, they may not have direct access to a bilingual dictionary. In this case, guessing the meaning according to the context becomes one possible option.

As for the strategies employed by students to learn words, the most used according to results from the questionnaire are respectively learning by heart, using vocabulary notebooks, discussing with friends in English. The finding about learning by heart seems to be parallel with an experiment by A.D. Cohen and E. Apeh (1981). They found that students simply try to memorise words they do not know. To do that, they have recourse to many other strategies. As J. M. O'Malley et al. (1983) point it out, repetition of the word is the commonly mentioned strategies to memorise a word. What is more, the vocabulary notebook is very useful. This may be the reason why students why students have a particular preference for vocabulary notebooks. The preference students have for repetition in their learning is echoed in a study by L. Peter (2003). In his study, repetition the most used strategy by students that want to learn a new word. This helps the learner better place the word into his/her long-term memory.

The three least employed strategies are among the memory and cognitive strategies. Students do not devote particular attention to study aids (physical action, writing and sticking words on the wall.) This finding is congruent with the study carried out C. H. Yeh and Y. H. Wang (2004) in Japan. Their results also revealed that strategies such as physical actions and sticking words on the wall for studying were the least employed. This may be attributed to the fact that learners have not been introduced to such strategies they may find elementary and childish. In addition, they do not like speaking loud the words when studying. This strategy is overlooked by students, otherwise in some researchers, this strategy was found frequently employed and useful. For instance, a study by L.

C. Seibert (1927). In his study, the results showed that if learners studied words aloud, they performed well than just studying lexical items in a low voice.

The findings in this study have revealed that some social strategies and metacognitive strategies are not given much attention by the majority of students. This fact may sometimes due students' lack of initiatives. Students may not know the efficiency of both cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Another fact is that students don't devote time to the English club. They may think it is not necessary since they sometimes practice in group. But the thing is that taking part in the English club can be helpful additively helpful to their simple group English conversation because "students can be a useful vocabulary resource for one another" (J. Newton as cited in N. Schmitt, 2000, p. 145).

Conclusion

The results of this study have revealed that Terminale A pupils at Groupe Scolaire Mohamed 5 use different strategies to learn English vocabulary. In fact, the most frequently used strategies when they face new words are determination strategies such as: using a bilingual dictionary and guessing from the context. In addition, the metacognitive strategies such as doing vocabulary exercises were also frequently used. As for the least employed discovery strategies, they are social ones namely asking the meaning of words to the teacher and friends. We have also the memory strategies among which the strategy using physical actions and sticking words on the wall, the social strategy of consolidation such as taking part in English club activities are among the least frequently employed by the students. With reference to the results mentioned above, I can ascertain that my purpose is achieved.

All in all, the identification of the pupils' vocabulary learning strategies has permitted to discover that even if many pupils do not have a consistent vocabulary, they make efforts to overcome the new words they encounter and they employ different strategies to learn words. Then, they need pieces of advice and orientations in the use of VLS. In other words, students need training about the ways to learn vocabulary efficiently. This can make them be more independent and develop their lexical competence both in the classrooms and outside so that they can take control of their own learning. Vocabulary learning should be stressed by English teachers and they should encourage them to practice extensive reading and learn words at home.

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