

The Use and Evaluation of Vocabulary Learning Strategies among Sudanese EFL Learners

Fatima Salaheldeen Ahmed Hamza

School of Language Studies and Linguistics
Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia (UKM)
Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

Mohamad Subakir Mohd Yasin

School of Language Studies and Linguistics
Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia (UKM)
Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

Ashinida Aladdin

School of Language Studies and Linguistics
Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia (UKM)
Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

Abstract

The learning of new vocabulary as a part of English for Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning has not been investigated thoroughly because its effectiveness has been questioned by various researchers in the past. However, in recent years, various studies have shown that proper strategies in acquiring new words could be one of the keys to effective language learning among EFL learners. This study investigates how Sudanese EFL learners at Khartoum University, Sudan use and evaluate vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs). The three selected categories of vocabulary learning strategies - metacognitive, discovery, and consolidation - were chosen according to taxonomies proposed by Al-Fuhaid (2004), Schmitt (1997) and Nation (2001). These VLSs were then evaluated using Han's *Information Processing Theory* and Craik and Lockhart's *Depth of Processing Theory* (1972) to meet the two objectives of this study. The first objective was to examine the most frequently used VLSs employing a set questionnaire designed to elicit the necessary data. The second objective was to evaluate the usefulness of each of these VLSs by conducting in-depth interviews with the respondents. The results showed that metacognitive strategies were the most frequently used VLS among the three. In-depth interview data revealed that respondents evaluated all three VLS positively and considered them very useful in acquiring as well as understanding words. These findings suggest that language learners in Sudan should be taught vocabulary enhancing techniques while language instructors should use and teach these VLS to learners explicitly.

Key words: English as a foreign language, vocabulary learning, vocabulary learning strategies

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