Omani EFL Learners` Vocabulary Learning Strategies

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Abstract

The knowledge of vocabulary can be considered the main factor of understanding the context in learning a foreign or second language process. This can be seen clearly in international exams such as TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and IELTS (International English Language Testing Sysytem). This research aims to analyze the vocabulary learning strategies of 42 Omani EFL learners and measure the effect of gender in strategy selection among them. To collect the information, a questionnaire regarding VLS (Vocabulary Learning Strategy) was distributed among college EFL learners, and the paper results revealed insignificant relation between gender with vocabulary learning strategies. Determination strategies, among all other strategies, received the highest ranking among the users, while social strategies were at the bottom of the list. Omani colleges and universities are using English as the medium of instruction, so the current study can help the syllabus designers and teachers deal with the psycholinguistic level of books, materials, teaching methods, and strategies appropriately. To gain a more comprehensive map of learning strategies all over Oman, it can be suggested that a network of researchers try to distribute the questionnaire among all Omani EFL learners through some random sampling, and results can be beneficial for future analysis of the psycholinguistics map of the education in Oman.

Keywords: Gender, EFL learners, Oman, Vocabulary learning strategies, Psycholinguistics

Introduction

The vocabulary as a word is always connected to a wordlist all over the globe. All languages of the world are associated with this wordlist verbally and non-verbally. Therefore, vocabulary is an essential part of the procedure in learning English language, and there are some debates and research studies based on the percentages of crucial vocabulary in this process (Avila & Sdoski, 1996). In learning a new language, learners will focus on the vocabulary list of the target language. In addition to it, the lack of this vocabulary knowledge causes some non-accurate and non-fluent communication channels. Those words necessary for the proper communication are the fundamentals of every language. If the number of learned relevant vocabulary increases, better communication will happen. Vocabulary can stand beside grammar and pronunciation as necessary tools of language dominance (Brown & Palinscar, 1982; Brown & Perry, 1991). Some researchers like Brown and Palinscar (1982), Cohen and Aphek (1981), and Craik and Tulving (1975) believe that vocabulary is as important as four other primary skills of language learning.

Before the preliminary introduction of learning vocabulary, which has received some attention during the 1980s, this area had never received any compelling study and research (Abid, 2012). In 1976, Richards stated that language development could be considered as one of the most necessary steps of learning, but unfortunately, it did not receive the proper attention in learning a new language; however, a decade later, more research studies were conducted on this topic, and plenty of scholars focused on publishing on this topic (Al-Hamdany, 2018). Schmitt and McCarthy (1997) stated that the primary studies regarding vocabulary learning and acquisition concentrated on a few numbers of language learning strategies.

In addition, Meara (1980) discussed that vocabulary learning had received very little attention in the past, but nowadays, a substantial number of researchers have focused on this area. The eagerness to work and enthusiasm to study the learning and teaching of vocabulary has increased fast (Allen, 1983; Carter, 1987; Carter & McCarthy, 1988; McCarthy, 1990; Nation, 1990; Taylor, 1990; Hatch & Brown, 1995; Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997; Schmitt, 2000; Read, 2000).

Sokman (1997) stated that the number of attempts sacrificed in the area of vocabulary learning could assist the learners in learning almost all the vocabulary needed in the class. Cunningsworth (1995) agreed that such methods could be very beneficial for the learners in the learning area to confirm such an idea. Such attempts started firstly with the focus on aspects of the target language or product and then continued to the direction of the process.

The term vocabulary, which is considered one of the main components of the learning process, is not effective when English is a subject to be learned inside the classroom (Al-Haysony, 2012). The procedures which some researchers have done to develop the English knowledge of students are mainly based on academic achievements and not vocabulary selection based on the suitability level during the teaching and learning processes. In such a situation, grammar is the main criterion to measure academic success and a reflective tool that shows the English proficiency level and measures academic achievement(Zhunag, 2008).

Laufer and Sim (1985) believed that one of the biggest problems of learning EFL could be seen in vocabulary learning because it is, indeed, one of the practical tools of learning another language. Nyikos and Fan (2007) stated that vocabulary learning is one of the critical tasks for language learners. Wilkins (1972) confirmed that little information could be transferred without any knowledge of grammar, but in that lack of vocabulary knowledge, almost no transfer of information would happen. In most places in the world, English learning emphasizes four primary skills: writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Between these, students can learn some random vocabulary with the definitions inside the text. Therefore, the learners will have more dependability on dictionaries to use the word (Hashemi & Hadavi, 2015).

Alavi and Kaivanpanah (2006) expressed that good vocabulary knowledge is necessary to communicate perfectly and efficiently in the second or foreign language context. In addition, following the recent research studies in the vocabulary learning area, language-learning strategies, which are applied appropriately, play functional roles in learning procedures (Bremner, 1999; Wharton, 2000). VLS or vocabulary learning strategies are considered the basis and essential element of language learning (Khatib, Hassanzadeh, & Rezaei, 2011). O'Malley and Chamot (1985) believed that learners rely heavily on vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) more often among all language learning strategies.

Alavi and Kaivanpanah (2006) justified the ignorance of vocabulary in syntax and phonology that were the focal point of teachers and researchers. Nowadays, vocabulary is one of the necessary fundamentals of ESL/EFL areas (Hashemi & Hadavi, 2015).

Due to the primary interest of exploring the practical strategies for language learners, researchers employed some tools to evaluate the impact of such approaches (Erten & Williams, 2008). It seems that some essential choices are available in this case. First, some research focused on strategies' impact on learning vocabulary (Cohen & Aphek, 1981; Lawson & Hogben, 1996; Erten, 1988). The second type focused on the correlation coefficient of word frequencies from self-report questionnaires and other variables like vocabulary breadth and language proficiency (Ahmed, 1989; Fan, 2003; Gu & Johnson, 1996).

It can be observed that there have been plenty of efforts in research studies for a long time based on vocabulary learning. Vocabulary learning in the Middle East, specifically, is essential because students studying at colleges or preparing themselves for international tests such as IELTS and TOEFL spend lots of budget and time learning the words. Still, they forget to use them correctly and wisely. The present investigators of the study are trying to investigate different variables that may have direct or indirect impacts on the vocabulary learning strategies that the learners select in the learning process. The researchers believe that some inaccessible areas like the relation between vocabulary learning strategies and gender will be focused on and analyzed in detail later in this study.

The present paper tries to find answers to the following research questions:
1. What types of strategies are employed by Omani EFL learners to learn vocabulary better?

2. What are the most and the least frequent vocabulary learning strategies among Omani EFL learners?
3. Is there any relationship between gender and VLS among Omani EFL learners?

Literature Review

These strategies indirectly fall under general language learning strategies such as memory and cognitive strategies (Al Shuweirekh, 2001). The following classification is simply a general review of some strategies by active scholars of this area.

Cohen's (1990) Classification of Vocabulary Learning Strategy (VLS)

The primary classification of VLS was developed by Cohen (1990). He classified the vocabulary strategies into three groups: remembering words, vocabulary learning, and practicing words.

A. The remembering words strategies consist of nine components as follows:
1. Creating a link between the word and the sound, whether in the native or a foreign language.
2. Explaining the word meaning.
3. Observing the word structure.
4. Relating the word to a topic.
5. Considering the occurrence of the word in isolation and among other words in text.
6. Relating the word to a context.
7. Relating the word to a mental image.
8. Relating a physical dimension to the word.
9. Having a keyword that represents the word.

B. The VLS include three components as follows:
1. Analyzing the word.
2. Learning about its derivatives.
3. Learning dictionary skills.

C. The practicing words strategies consist of three components as well:
1. Using flashcards.
2. Making groups.
3. Explaining the word and putting it in different contexts of occurrence.

Brown' and Payne's (1994) Classification System

According to Brown' and Payne's (1994) classification, there are five steps for vocabulary learning:

- The first step is creating opportunities for encountering new words to learn. This is achievable by listening to the radio, watching TV, reading books and newspapers in the target language, and talking with native speakers.
- The second step is to learn about the form of the words. This can be achieved by having groups of similar sounds and using phonetic symbols to differentiate the sounds. This can

also be true by relating the words to similar words in another language and searching for look-alike words from the words the learners know (cited in Hatch & Brown, 1995).

- The third step aims at checking the meaning of the words. This can be done through guessing, looking up the meaning in the dictionary, asking native speakers for the meaning, asking proficient speakers of the language (not necessarily being native) for the meaning, and providing a mental image for the words by relating them to pictures.
- The fourth step is to associate the word form and meaning to be part of the learner's memory. This can be realized through the various association and memory techniques (e.g., Oxford's memory strategies, 1990, and Cohen' & Aphek's association techniques, 1981).
- Finally comes the step of word use. This step requires using the new words in context. However, if the learning objective is only receptive, this step can be ignored since it is a productive step.

Schmitt`s (1997 a) Classification System

This type of classification covers a broader range of learning vocabulary (Al Shuwairekh, 2001). Schmitt (1997a) stated that VLS has two different types: discovery and consolidation strategies (cited in Al-Shuwairekh, 2001). Discovery is divided into determination and social strategies.

- Determination strategies work on determining the different pieces of information related to the new word's form, such as its part of speech, its derivatives, its image, and its related word lists. These strategies also discover the word's context and its dictionary meaning.
- Social strategies complement the discovery process of the new vocabulary by relating it to other individuals of the learner's society. The teacher plays a significant role in the social strategies. They may provide the word's translation in the learner's native language, explain its meaning in the target language, and put the new word in a sentence. Group work is also essential in this type of strategy, in which the meaning of the new word is discussed in groups.

The second type of vocabulary learning strategy is consolidation strategies. These strategies have four subcategories: social, memory, cognitive, and metacognitive strategies.

- Social strategies differ from those in the discovery strategies in that the main aim is practicing and consolidation and not exploring. Interaction with native speakers can be a technique of this strategy as well.
- Memory strategies aim to make memory associations learn the new vocabulary better and stick to the learner's mind. New words may be associated with pictures representing their meaning, personal experience, a story, an activity, a context, synonyms and antonyms, look-alikes, collocations, word lists, rhyming words, keywords, first letters, semantic features, formal features, derivatives, and parts of speech.
- Cognitive strategies complement mental memory strategies. They depend more on repetition, whether spoken or written, taking notes, labeling, and listening. Eventually,

the metacognitive strategy relies on multimedia (visual or auditory). Testing, evaluation, and follow-up are also important constituents of this type.

- Metacognitive strategies can be applied no matter the stage of vocabulary learning. Thus, the discovery and consolidation strategies are significant in vocabulary learning. The current study uses these strategies in its vocabulary learning strategies classification system (Schmitt, 1997, cited in Al Shuwairekh, 2001).

Methods

This section will present the method used to design the study and how to collect the required data. This study aimed at critically investigating the vocabulary learning strategies among Omani EFL Learners. To this end, a survey research method was used to collect data from the participants to gain information and insights on the vocabulary learning strategies used by Omani EFL learners. As follows, the lengthy procedure accommodating sampling, instrumentation, data collection and data analysis will be explained in the next sections.

Participants

The current research was conducted with some EFL learners in Oman in the year 2020. Through convenient sampling, a number of 42 male and female first-year college students with an age range of 18 to 19 were selected as the sample of the study. Convenient sampling is a type of sampling in which the easily accessible and available participants are chosen to participate in the study (Dornyei, 2007). All of the participants were from Oman and native speakers of Arabic with some English training.

The students had passed the General Foundation Program (GFP), which includes English general skills instruction for three consecutive semesters. This program aims to improve students' skills in English. Considering the placement test of the college and exams of the final educational semester, the students were at the intermediate level of language proficiency; therefore, it assured the homogeneity of the students.

Research Instruments

This study collected the required data via Vocabulary Learning Strategies Questionnaire (VLSQ) adapted from Schmitt (1997). In addition, the current questionnaire shared high relevancy with the learners' competence levels and their learning environments. VLSQ was used to discover the frequency of VLS used by the students. The written form of the questionnaire contained two parts. In the first part of the questionnaire, some personal information will be collected from the participants, including gender. The second part of the questionnaire will collect some information about the VLS of the participants based on a 44-items survey, including, i.e., Memory, Cognitive, Determination, Metacognitive and Social strategies. A Likert scale will be implemented to analyze the responses later.

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, the current questionnaire was piloted by 20 participants who were excluded from the main study. The pilot study results showed a 0.84 reliability rate, which emphasizes the suitability of the questionnaire to complete this study.

Findings
Findings

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 was used to analyze the data. To answer the first question of the study, mean and standard deviation were analyzed through descriptive statistics. Independent sample T-test and Spearman Correlation were run as well. To measure the high frequent (1-2.4), mid-frequent (2.4-3.5), and low frequent VLS among the participants of this study, Oxford's (2001) scoring system was implemented.

Table one depicts the descriptive statistics of the whole questionnaire. The mean and standard deviation of the questionnaire in total were 3.24 and .40, respectively.

Table 1. *The overall descriptive statistics of VLS used by participants*

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	V
Overal_M	42	2.53	3.99	3.248	.406	.166
Valid N (listwise)	42					

Table 2. *The descriptive statistics of the five categories of VLS used by participants*

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	V
Memory	42	2.14	4.36	**3.1003**	.487	.237
Cognitive	42	2.20	5.00	**3.7952**	.794	.631
Determination	42	2.44	4.44	**3.2778**	.477	.228
Metacognitive	42	1.67	4.11	**3.0873**	.528	.280
Social	42	1.29	4.71	**2.9796**	.747	.559
Valid N (listwise)	42					

The descriptive statistics presented in Table two show that the highest mean was for the cognitive strategies (M= 3.79). The determination strategies ranked second, while the lowest mean was social strategies.

Table 3. *The descriptive statistics of the memory strategies*

	N	Min	Max	**Mean**	SD	V
make a pic in mind	42	1	5	**2.98**	1.179	1.390
spelling new word	42	2	5	**3.93**	.997	.995
study part of speech	42	2	5	**3.19**	.994	.987
connect to experience	42	1	5	**3.38**	1.168	1.364
paraphrase meaning	42	1	5	**3.24**	1.265	1.600
study sound of new word	42	1	5	**3.02**	1.370	1.877
grouping the words	42	1	5	**3.17**	.986	.972
new words coordinates	42	1	4	**2.38**	1.081	1.168
connect to synonym	42	1	4	**2.69**	1.070	1.146
use affixes and roots	42	1	4	**2.62**	1.081	1.168
make an image in mind	42	1	5	**3.07**	1.091	1.190
use semantic maps	42	1	5	**2.60**	1.251	1.564
use keyword method	42	1	5	**3.36**	1.008	1.016
new word in sentence	42	2	5	**3.79**	1.001	1.002
Valid N (listwise)	42					

Based on Table three above, studying the spelling of the new words had the highest mean (M = 3.93), and finding the new word in a sentence had the second highest mean (M = 3.79). Using affixes and roots was the second lowest (M = 2.62), and using semantic maps had the lowest mean score among all other items in the memory strategy (M = 2.60).

Table 4. *The descriptive statistics of the cognitive strategies*

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	V
over & over repetition	42	2	5	**3.88**	1.017	1.034
writing many times	42	2	5	**3.83**	1.034	1.069
make own list	42	1	5	**3.81**	1.234	1.524
keep a vocab notebook	42	1	5	**3.69**	1.316	1.731
take notes of new words	42	1	5	**3.76**	1.100	1.210
Valid N (listwise)	42					

Depicted in Table four above, over and over repetition had the highest mean (M = 3.88), and writing many times had the second highest mean (M = 3.83). Taking notes of new words was the second lowest (M = 3.76), and keeping a vocab notebook had the lowest mean score among all other items in the cognitive strategy (M = 3.69).

Table 5. *The descriptive statistics of the determination strategies*

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	V
identifying part of speech	42	1	5	**2.81**	.969	.938
break new vocab into parts	42	1	5	**2.88**	1.292	1.668
checking similar Arabic words	42	2	5	**3.90**	1.078	1.161
analyzing pics to understand	42	1	5	**2.60**	1.083	1.174
analyzing gestures to understand	42	1	5	**2.98**	1.115	1.243
bilingual dictionary Arab-Eng	42	2	5	**4.38**	1.011	1.022
bilingual dictionary Eng-Ara	42	1	5	**3.29**	1.486	2.209
monolingual Eng-Eng	42	1	5	**3.02**	1.220	1.487
guess meaning in context	42	2	5	**3.64**	.958	.918
Valid N (listwise)	42					

As shown in Table five above, using a bilingual dictionary (Arabic to English) had the highest mean (M = 4.38), and checking similar Arabic words had the second highest mean (M = 3.90). Identifying part of speech was the second lowest (M = 2.81), and analyzing pictures to understand new words had the lowest mean score among all other items in the determination strategy (M = 2.60).

Table 6. *The descriptive statistics of the metacognitive strategies*

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	V
watching English TV channels	42	2	5	**4.00**	1.012	1.024
using computer programs	42	1	5	**3.14**	1.201	1.443
listening to English radio	42	1	5	**3.05**	1.229	1.510
reading English newspapers	42	1	5	**2.95**	1.209	1.461
revise the newly learned	42	1	5	**2.98**	.841	.707
continue to study	42	1	5	**3.24**	1.122	1.259

revise using spaced repetition	42	1	5	**2.88**	.942	.888
skip the new word	42	1	5	**2.31**	1.137	1.292
assess my vocab knowledge	42	1	5	**3.25**	.932	.869
Valid N (listwise)	42					

As shown in Table six above, watching English TV had the highest mean (M = 4), and assessing my vocabulary knowledge had the second highest mean (M = 3.25). Revising the newly learned word using repetition was the second lowest (M = 2.88), and skipping the new word had the lowest mean score among all other items in the metacognitive strategy (M = 2.31

Table 7. *The descriptive statistics of the social strategies*

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	V
ask teacher translate to Arabic	42	1	5	**2.64**	1.206	1.455
ask teacher paraphrase	42	1	5	**2.93**	1.156	1.336
ask teacher to make sentence	42	1	5	**2.90**	1.100	1.210
ask for accuracy of word list	42	1	4	**2.17**	.908	.825
ask classmate for meaning	42	2	5	**3.38**	.962	.925
find meaning via group work	42	1	5	**3.69**	1.047	1.097
study in group work	42	1	5	**3.14**	1.117	1.247
Valid N (listwise)	42					

As shown in Table seven above, finding meaning via group work had the highest mean (M = 3.69), and asking a classmate for the meaning had the second highest mean (M = 3.38). Asking the teacher to translate the word was the second lowest (M = 2.64), and asking for the accuracy of the wordlist had the lowest mean score among all other items in the social strategy (M = 2.17). The Third research question discovered the significant role of gender in vocabulary learning strategies among Omani EFL learners. As a result, an independent-samples T-Test for the gender and strategy use was run. The following table tests the hypothesis of the normal data distribution.

Table 8. *The result of the test of normality*

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]		
	Sex	Statistic	df	Sig.
MS	Male	.139	17	.200[*]
	Female	.203	25	.079
CS	Male	.153	17	.200[*]
	Female	.184	25	.128
DS	Male	.292	17	.132
	Female	.143	25	.197
MCS	Male	.181	17	.141
	Female	.120	25	.200[*]
SS	Male	.165	17	.200[*]
	Female	.169	25	.065

As indicated in Table eight, the normality of distribution was confirmed (P> .05). Therefore, the parametric Independent-Samples t-test was used for mean comparison.

Table 9. *The descriptive statistics for the gender and strategy use*

	Sex	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
MS	Male	17	3.214	.589	.142
	female	25	3.022	.398	.079
CS	Male	17	3.611	.597	.144
	female	25	3.920	.894	.178
DS	Male	17	3.281	.458	.111
	female	25	3.275	.499	.099
MCS	Male	17	3.111	.473	.114
	female	25	3.071	.572	.114
SS	Male	17	2.907	.900	.218
	female	25	3.028	.638	.127

As it can be seen in Table nine above, the mean scores for the male and female groups in memory, cognitive, determination, metacognitive, and social strategies are 3.21, 3.02; 3.61, 3.92; 3.28, 3.27; 3.11, 3.07; and 2.90, 3.02 respectively. Table 10 below shows the result of the inferential test.

Table 10. *Result of the Independent-Samples T-Test for the gender and strategy use*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
MS	Equal variances assumed	5.428	.025	1.259	40	.215	.191	.152
	Equal variances not assumed			1.170	25.805	.253	.191	.163
CS	Equal variances assumed	6.598	.014	-1.242	40	.221	-.308	.248
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.339	39.998	.188	-.308	.230
DS	Equal variances assumed	.005	.947	.036	40	.971	.005	.151
	Equal variances not assumed			.037	36.420	.971	.005	.149
MCS	Equal variances assumed	.145	.705	.238	40	.813	.040	.168
	Equal variances not assumed			.247	38.377	.806	.040	.162
SS	Equal variances assumed	.727	.399	-.510	40	.613	-.121	.237

Equal variances not assumed	-.478	26.737	.636	-.121	.253

As it can be seen in Table 10 above, there was no significant difference betwen the gender and the memory strategy, $P > .05$, = the cognitive strategy, $P > .05$, the determination strategy, $P > .05$, the metacognitive strategy, $P > .05$, and Lastly, the social strategy, $P > .05$.

Discussion

The analysis of collected data revealed that Omani EFL college students used the mid-frequent VLS by the mean score of 3.247. It showed that Omani students did not employ various types of VLS. This study has some similarities with the one conducted by Saran and Kafipour in 2008. They vividly stated that Iranian learners were the mid-frequent users of VLS because of their little awareness of various types of such strategies.

The findings of this study to measure the first research questions indicated cognitive, and after that determination strategies were highly employed by Omani EFL learners in learning process. As Gu and Johnson (1996) stated, cognitive strategies could be a positive indicator of language proficiency; therefore, it can be claimed that Omani EFL students were using the cognitive strategies more than the other ones due to higher level of general English. The findings are in contrast with the one found in Sahbazian (2004). She discussed that Turkish students preferred to follow some sort of traditional strategies such as memorization and mnemonic techniques to learn vocabulary.

The measurements of second research question revelaed that determination strategies were found as the second frequent VLS in this study. EFL learners in Muscat used more VLS, such as using a bilingual dictionary (Arabic to English) and checking similar Arabic words that were simple, direct, and engaged lower-level mental or mechanical processing compared to the cognitive, memory, and metacognitive strategies. It can be inferred that EFL learners were familiar with determination strategies more than memory and metacognitive strategies. The findings are similar to the ones reported by Sahbazian (2004), where the learners mainly employed determination and memory strategies to elicit the meaning.

The third frequently used strategies are memory strategies placed in the center of all other employed strategies. Consequently, the frequency of this strategy is less than cognitive and determination one; however, it shows a higher frequency than social and metacognitive ones. The reason why memory strategies are located in this place might be because of lack of popularity among Omani EFL learners. The results of this part are in contrast with the one carried out by Bennett (2006). He (2006) used a questionnaire to investigate the vocabulary teaching aspect of an intensive English language-learning program for students who wanted to enter the undergraduate level in the USA. The results of his study revealed that metacognitive strategies are located in the center of all other available strategies.

Metacognitive strategies got the fourth ranking among all the VLS among Omani EFL students. In this category, there was a high-frequency level for watching English TV channels in this category, while the other VLSs were at medium and low use. The least employed VLS was

skipping the new word. The results of this study are not congruent with the previous study carried out by Rasekh and Ranjbry (2003), who show that metacognitive strategies positively affect EFL learners' vocabulary learning.

Social strategies were revealed as the low-frequent VLS with the means core of 2.97. Since vocabulary learning is an individual activity, whenever the students are in contact with new words, they might not request the help of other people. In addition, learning a vocabulary is not in need of social interactions with others. The findings are the same as the research studies conducted by Liao (2002) and Sahbazian (2004).

The analysis of data to find an answer for the third research question found out that there was an insignificant difference between gender in all five categories of VLSs.

Conclusion

The current paper was looking to find answers to the research questions mentioned earlier in the paper. The focal point of curiosity was on the relationships among some variables such as the type of the vocabulary learning strategies, gender and VLS, common strategies among Omani EFL learners, and finally, the least -frequent vocabulary learning strategies among all. To run the study, 42 Omani EFL learners at the college level were selected based on convenient sampling and a questionnaire regarding VLS was distributed among them. The study revealed that Omani EFL learners are medium users of learning vocabulary strategies. Determination and cognitive strategies were observed to be to most commonly employed strategies by these learners. Social strategies received a minor ranking among all other strategies. The findings also revealed that there were no significant relations among age and VLS, proficiency level and VLS, and finally, gender and VLS.

Pedagogical Implication

The study can have implications for higher education lecturers and syllabus designers. Lecturers are implementing various strategies to teach the lessons effectively and engage students in several activities. It can be observed that such methods are not working correctly with the students, so the teacher should not always look for the problem in the training or engagement level of the students, but by reading this paper and many other similar ones, he can design and implement methods and techniques that are appropriate with the students' vocabulary learning strategies. In addition, this paper can be beneficial for the syllabus designers to design materials that engag students effectively and adequately with prioritizing the most frequent learning strategies to the least frequent one in the same context, which is here the Omani EFL context.

Recommendations for Further Research

Considering this study, some suggestions can be made for further researchers or those interested in studying in this area.
- The number of students who were participated in this study was a very small sample of Omani EFL learners, which demands more studies with a bigger number of participants all over Oman.

- This study employed a type of quantitative method to explain the results. If another study focuses on the qualitative side of the research, then more comprehensive viewpoints toward vocabulary learning strategies by Omani EFL learners can be available.

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