AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

The Usefulness of Vocabulary Learning Strategy Training-Teacher's Perspective

A thesis submitted in

partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

By

Gayane Barseghyan

Marina Dodigovic, adviser

Yerevan, Armenia

May, 2022

We hereby approve that this capstone

By

Gayane Barseghyan

Entitled

The Usefulness of Vocabulary Learning Strategy Training-Teacher's Perspective

Be accepted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the degree

Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Marina Dodigovic, adviser

Irshat Madyarov, Ph.D.

MA TEFL Program Chair

Yerevan, Armenia

May, 2022

DEDICATION

TO MY FAMILY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation, first and foremost, to my supervisor Dr. Marina Dodigovic, who has guided me through all the procedures of conducting research. Not only did she give me helpful guidance to my accomplishments, but also offered solutions to the problems I encountered. Her patience, encouragement and support enabled me to complete this wok.

Heartful thanks also go to the MA TEFL Program Chair, Dr. Irshat Madyarov, for giving priceless knowledge in SLA and skills of research methods, as well as for constant readiness to hear and offer assistance in any struggling point.

I also express my sincere gratitude to all the instructors: Prof. Irshat Madyarov, Prof. Rubina Gasparyan, Prof. Irena Galikyan, Ms. Talin Grigorian, and Anna Gevorgyan for their inspirational lectures in class, which motivated me to explore some interesting issues concerning English language teaching and learning.

I am grateful to all the participants of my study who agreed to take the responsibility to offer valuable insights to the study.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks to my family, which was the greatest support and encouragement for me to accomplish this work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Second Language acquisition –SLA

Language Learning Strategies –LLS

Vocabulary Learning Strategies –VLS

Abstract

The study is an attempt to investigate the teachers' beliefs regarding vocabulary learning strategies and explore the perceived importance of the vocabulary learning strategies effectiveness and their training to students. Further, the purpose is to find the most and the least frequently applied and trained strategies by the teachers based on their students' classroom learning experiences and comparing the results with existing empirical studies on the usefulness of VLS. Also, the purpose is to find out whether the teachers views on strategy training are affected by such factors as nationality, experience and school type. A mixed method sequential design was used in the study. The qualitative data was obtained through interviews and observations of 10 teacher-participants and analyzed through content analyses. Quantitative analyses were carried out on the basis of the survey results obtained from 136 teacher-respondents and analyzed descriptively through SPSS, and inferentially through ANOVA and t-Test. The survey was designed on the basis of Schmitt's VLS Taxonomy. Both the qualitative and quantitative findings of the study indicate that teachers' attribute great importance to vocabulary learning strategies usefulness and their training to students. The results also revealed that the most frequently reported strategy training was metacognitive strategy group, while cognitive strategy was the least frequent. Although nationality, years of experience and school type were responsible for some significance differences mainly related to strategy type preference, they proved to have less effect on the overall teachers' views on the strategy usefulness and training importance.

Keywords: vocabulary learning strategies, usefulness, training

CHAPTER ONE: introduction

In the past few decades, there has been a renewed recognition of the importance of vocabulary learning in another language (Schmitt, 2000; Dodigovic et al., 2020). Vocabulary learning is believed to depend on the use of various learning strategies, known as Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS). Such VLS can include, but are not restricted to, the use of mnemonic devices such as word cards or games (Schmitt, 2000). Literature on the subject even goes a step further by claiming that students should be specifically taught how to use VLS (Nation, 2013). Augustin Llach and Canga Alonso (2020) even prove that it is possible to teach students how to use VLS. What the research has not examined so far is the question to what extent it is profitable for teachers to devote considerable class time to strategy training of students.

Since research has so far only established that there might be some kind of relationship between strategy and vocabulary learning (Dodigovic et al., 2020), which may or may not be causal, it remains unclear whether it is a good idea to spend one fourth of the available class time on strategy training, as suggested by Nation (2013), when this time might be better spent learning the actual language.

Teachers have so far remained conspicuously absent from research involving VLS, which has so far mainly turned to students for insights. However, it has been recognised that teachers' beliefs shape what happens in the language classroom (Kim, 2021). It would be a significant step forward to include language teachers as participants in VLS research, for two main reasons. Firstly, they would have valuable insights into their students' use of strategy and secondly, they might also have some ideas on the effectiveness of teaching strategies. Their views would be in particular valuable, as they are the people expected to undertake VLS training of students

(Nation, 2013; Augustin Llach & Canga Alonso, 2020). For this reason, this study explores the following research questions:

1. What are the views of English language teachers regarding the vocabulary learning strategy use by their students?
2. What are the views of English language teachers regarding the strategy training of students?
3. How do such factors as nationality, teachers' experience and school type affect the teachers' views?

CHAPTER TWO: Literature review

Vocabulary learning strategies are believed to underly vocabulary learning, which in turn expands vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, this chapter first explores the literature discussing vocabulary knowledge as well as factors hindering vocabulary learning and acquisition. Next, the discussion progresses towards vocabulary learning strategies and focuses on reporting both theoretical and empirical studies. Similarly, it concerens itself with strategy training and its benefits. Finally, the chapter outlines the teachers' role and belief as an important factor in the language learning process.

Vocabulary knowledge

Vocabulary knowledge and its complexity have been extensively discussed in the literature on vocabulary from a number of perspectives. This includes studies addressing the aspects of form, meaning, and use, as well as the distinction between receptive and productive

vocabulary and learners' vocabulary size. Numerous studies, some of which have been reviewed here, attempted to explain their standpoints on the word knowledge.

Many researchers (Schmitt, 2000; Thornbury, 2002; Nation, 2010) agree on the idea that the lexical knowledge encompasses three dimensions: form, meaning, and use. However, word knowledge is more than just a link of form, meaning and use. There are further aspects of word knowledge such as lexical representation which includes orthography, morphology, semantics, syntax, which may not be all studied simultaneously (Schmitt, 2000; Takac, 2008; Dodigovic, Li, Chen & Guo, 2014). On the other hand, the functional knowledge is distinguished further as receptive and productive knowledge (Thornbury, 2002; Nation 2010). Receptive knowledge is associated with reading and listening, while productive knowledge refers to speaking and writing. In vocabulary knowledge, these two terms indicate to perceive the word form and to retrieve its meaning (Laufer & Goldstein, 2004).

Another convention in discussing the word knowledge is the differentiation between the breadth and depth of vocabulary (Milton, 2009). Breadth is the number of words the learner knows and depth is the quality of the word knowledge, i.e. how well the word is known in terms of its meaning and form. Such distinction allows categorizing the learners. One learner may know quite a large number of words but be unable to use them in speech, and another learner might be able to make new associations of already known words with the new ones. Alongside the discussion about the breadth and depth of the vocabulary, the existing research highlights the significance of the number of words the learner needs for effective communication. An abundance of studies claims that the number of words the L2 learners should possess highly depends on their needs and purposes (Schmitt, 2000; Thornbury, 2002). However, the generally accepted 2000 -3000 high-frequency words are an important milestone for the basic effective

communication. In addition, Nation's (2006) believed that the number of 8000 -9000 words is necessary to for the professional education.

Vocabulary learning and acquisition.

Unlike grammar which is restricted to a set of rules, vocabulary is unlimited and requires lifelong learning (Schmitt, 2000; Takac, 2008). Thus, the existing research on vocabulary perceives vocabulary acquisition and learning as incremental in nature, since learning of a lexical item is gradual and requires a number of exposures (Schmitt, 2000; Takac, 2008; Nation, 2005, Dodigovic et al., 2020). Though there are few studies reflecting the vocabulary acquisition stages and how the words are learned, the existing research helps draw a possible conclusion that some of the word components precede others in mastering vocabulary (Schmitt, 2000). For example, in his study, Schmitt (1998) focused on understanding the development of individual words over time, including their spelling, associations, grammatical information, and meaning. The study results have shown that students had fewer spelling problems, and it developed faster than other aspects such as grammatical knowledge. Moreover, the study revealed that some word categories such as nouns and verbs are acquired easier than adjectives and adverbs.

The role of memory and attrition is another important consideration in the literature. It is believed that 80 percent of the material is lost during 24 hours of the first learning, but then the level of forgetting decreases through multiple exposures (Thornbury, 2002). This is how the learning process occurs. After the first encounter with the unknown word, it is stored in the short-term memory, which has a low capacity. Unlike short-term memory, long-term memory is unlimited in its capacity, but the storage process is slow. Thus, the human memory is flexible,

and it is possible to transfer the newly learned lexical items to the long-term memory, but only if it is systemically organized (Takac, 2008) and techniques are properly used.

It is proven that long-term retention of words depends on the number of times learners see and review them (Nation, 2013). In other words, learners' ability to hold information in memory is highly dependent on the amount of exposure and a constant rehearsal (Schmitt, 2000), also defined as repetition of the lexical item. Memorizing through repetition includes mass repetition or spaced repetition. While massed learning involves ceaseless repetition over longer periods of time, spaced repetition involves less intense training (Nation, 1999). This means spacing the intervals of repetition across longer periods of times. Thus, the learner might study the word first for three minutes, then again three minutes after a couple of hours, another three minutes next day, then the same three minutes two days after and etc. After multiple repetitions over a period of time the rates of forgetting words slow down significantly.

Apart from the exploring the inner workings of memory, the literature also considers the role of intention in learning, thus making a distinction between learning (intentional) and acquisition (unintentional) (Krashen, 1983; Odlin, 2003). Usually these two processes are associated with deliberate and incidental vocabulary learning, respectively.

In particular incidental learning is associated with contextualized learning of words (Nation, 2013). The term context implies learning from extensive reading and listening to stories, radio, films and conversations. However, according to Restrepo Ramos (2015), certain conditions have to be met in order for incidental vocabulary learning to be effective. These conditions include using dictionaries, making marginal glosses, repeated exposure to the word, recognition of most words accompanying the target word and similar. Some of these procedures simply reflect the features of the text being read, while a small number of them closely resemble

the so-called vocabulary learning strategies, which are usually perceived as the cornerstone of deliberate vocabulary learning (Schmitt, 2000). However, in incidental learning, they are used to facilitate the comprehension of texts being read (Restrepo Ramos, 2015), rather than deliberate retention of vocabulary. The following section deals with vocabulary learning strategies in the context of deliberate vocabulary learning.

Vocabulary learning strategies (VLS)

Language learning strategies (LLS)

Vocabulary learning strategies are a part of a broad concept known as language learning strategies (LLS). Due to the influential publications by Oxford (1990) and Chamot and O'Malley (1990) the commonly accepted definition for LLS is "learner's attempt to learn". However, further studies on LLS brought forth some new understanding of the concept of LLS, and consequently other interpretations. One example is Stern's model (1986) that made a distinction between LLS as an approach to learning and techniques as specific actions to learning (Stern, 1986).

Current approaches to defining LLS have shifted away from the dichotomy of strategies and techniques and offered to define strategies as behaviors. Ellis (1995) describes strategy as a behavioral activity of specific stages during the language use. Thus, the assumption based on some of the studies on LLS is that strategies are the tools with which learners are equipped to handle language learning process. During the course of L2 study learners showcase different individual approaches and choose to employ various strategies to make productive use of learning. Learners implement different behaviors, specific actions, or techniques to better their competence in the target language (Takac, 2008).

LLS categorization is also contingent upon researchers' approaches to defining LLS which was discussed earlier in this section, and different criteria they used to classify LLS. Some researchers distinguish between successful and unsuccessful learners (Griffits, 2006), whereas others attempt to analyze direct and indirect linkages of strategies to L2 learning (Oxford, 2000), when classifying the LLS. Therefore, each of them came up with their own taxonomy. However, the widely accepted taxonomy of LLS is a distinction between cognitive, metacognitive, social and affective strategies. All of them are predetermined for specific purposes of usage. Thus, for example, cognitive strategies refer to mental actions and steps which the learner employs to accomplish learning or solve problems, while metacognitive strategies are primarily focused on planning of learning, thinking, setting of goals, evaluating learners' own results. It contains a feature of consciousness, i.e. the learner is aware of their strategy use. In contrast, social strategies presuppose cooperation with teachers, learners or speakers of L2. Affective strategies are more focused on learners' feelings, stating clearly, they are the relaxation techniques which help students avoid negative emotions from L2.

Vocabulary learning strategies (VLS)

The most obvious use of language learning strategies appears to occur in L2 vocabulary learning (Takac, 2008). Catalan (2003) defined the VSL as " *knowledge about the mechanisms (processes, strategies) used in order to learn vocabulary as well as steps or actions taken by students (a) to find out the meaning of unknown words, (b) to retain them in long-term memory, (c) to recall them at will, and (d) to use them in oral or written mode"* (p.56).

Similarly to LLS classification, meticulous research conducted on VLS also tends to deliberate the issues of VLS typology. For example, Nation (2001) focused his VLS taxonomy division on different word knowledge aspects and the context. Accordingly, he classified VLS

into three big categories such as *"planning"*, *"source"* and *"processes"* with later subdivisions of strategies in each. In contrast, LLS taxonomy by Oxford (1990) served as the common ground for Schmitt's VLS classification. Drawing on previous research on LLS, Schmitt (2000) designed his taxonomy of VLS adopting some of the strategies from Oxford's (1990) classification with some modifications in it. His current taxonomy comprises 58 strategies including major groups and subgroups.

Strategies are divided into two main groups: *discovery strategies* which are aimed at initial discovery of a word's meaning, and *consolidation strategies* which are aligned to remember the words which have been encountered (Schmitt, 2000). These two strategy types are further classified into five subcategories. *Discovery strategies* include *determination strategies* which learners use to discover the unknown words individually with help of structure of the word, dictionaries, or guessing from context, and *social strategies* which presuppose interaction of people (student-teacher, or student-student). During interaction the answer for the word meaning is provided by a synonym, L1 or paraphrase. *Consolidation strategies*, in turn, comprise *memory, cognitive* and *metacognitive strategies*. *Memory strategies* which are traditionally known as mnemonics, involve connecting the newly learnt word to previous knowledge or experience by imagery or grouping. It has been discussed earlier in the previous chapter that one of the challenging tasks for L2 learners is to store the newly encountered word in the long-term memory. The memory strategies contain reinforcing mental processing to enable the long term–retention (Schmitt, 2000). This may seem time consuming, but if the words to learn are properly selected, they can guarantee the desired effect of the recall. Particularly, prioritized words here would be high-frequency vocabulary or technical words which are required for the specific professional field. *Cognitive strategies* share similar characteristics with memory strategies;

however, their cornerstone is the mechanical processing of words such as repetition, learning from the word list, or keeping a vocabulary notebook. *Metacognitive strategies* is the final subgroup of VLS and they include planning, monitoring and evaluating. These strategies help learners to decide the most useful approaches to study the words, as well as, to track learners' language improvement.

Having this discussion and recent studies on vocabulary learning strategies in mind, it is worth mentioning that the current study was desined on the basis of Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy, which proved to be more favored in the research on VLS (Dodigovic, 2017; 2020; Takac, 2008; Agustin Llach & Canga Alonso, 2020) due to its comprehensiveness.

Strategy usefulness

While prominent vocabulary experts claim that strategies contribute to the effectiveness of vocabulary learning (Schmitt, 2000; Nation, 2013), research investigating this issue has so far yielded mixed results. Whereas some studies find that there is a meaningful relationship between strategy use and evidence of learning (Ahmed, 1989; Graham, 1997, Huh, 2009), others find at best a weak relationship (Alemi & Tayebi, 2011; Dodigovic et al., 2020) between these two variables.

In a study conducted by Teng (2015), the correlation between direct and indirect vocabulary learning strategies in conjunction with the depth and the breadth of vocabulary was explored. The study was conducted with 145 low proficiency level students with English as a foreign language. The data was collected through a questionnaire on the strategy use, Vocabulary Level Test and Word Associates Test on measuring the depth and the breadth of vocabulary. The results have shown that participants more frequently used direct strategies than indirect

strategies. Also, there was evidence of positive correlation between the strategy use and breadth and depth of vocabulary test score, which means the strategies, might have a positive effect on the students' vocabulary.

Similarly, another study by Huh (2009), focusing on vocabulary learning strategy use and learners proficiency level, revealed that more proficient learners used strategies more actively. One hundred and forty one EFL public middle school participants in Korea completed the questionnaire on the strategy use and vocabulary proficiency test. According to the findings, the more frequently used strategy reported to be cognitive, while the social strategy was the least frequently used. It was also found that the participant with higher proficiency used metacognitive strategy more often while middle proficiency students tended to use cognitive strategies. Thus, proficiency level could have a significant impact on the strategy use.

On the other hand, a study by Alemi and Tayebi (2011), examined the effectiveness of VLS on learners' vocabulary knowledge improvement and concluded that VLS might not necessarily impact vocabulary growth. The study relied on 59 students from different majors taking general English course at Sharif university of Technology in Iran. Both genders were engaged in the study. The pre-test was given to students to measure their initial vocabulary knowledge, and post-test to check the progress of the vocabulary progress. Also, Likert-scale questionnaire on the strategy use with 1 to 4 response options was given. The results showed that there was to some extent a positive, but a weak correlation between learners' strategy use and their vocabulary learning. Thus, this study contradicts the views on the positive effects of strategy use and vocabulary learning as it was found in previous studies by Teng (2015) and Huh (2009).

Another contrasting finding was reported in a study by Dodigovic, Gasparyan, Torosyan and Karamonoukian (2020), in which the relationship between the vocabulary size and VLS use was examined. The study included 349 high-school and tertiary learners of English in educational settings, such as schools or universities in three different cities in Armenia. The participants represented both genders between 12 to 30 age ranges. The Vocabulary Size Test (VST) was used to measure participants vocabulary size (Berglar, 2010). Based on the data findings, there was a weak positive correlation at significant level between the strategy use and learners vocabulary size identified, which indicates that there might not be a strong relationship between the VLS use and vocabulary improvement.

Strategy training

While research has yet to produce clear proof of the usefulness of strategy, influential vocabulary experts (Nation, 2013; Schmitt, 2000) work on the assumption of their usefulness when calling for teachers to make strategy training a part of their classroom routine. According to Nation (2013), strategy training is an integral part of the language learning process, and should be included in an English course.

In a study on indirect strategy trainability, Takac (2008) examines the impact of vocabulary teaching strategies (VTS) on the students' use of VLS which are expected to closely mirror them. The study was conducted in 8 primary schools in Croatia. Nine teachers and 17 6, 7, 8 grade classes were involved in the study. The questionnaire was one of ther main sources of measuring the frequency use of VLS. The use of VLS was also analyzed using video recordings of classes. The results of the study showed that the learners' VLS usage did not depend on the teachers' VTS use, i.e., the learners did not use the learning strategies that mirrored the teaching

strategies. To some extent, this study could be viewed as negative evidence of strategy trainability (Takac, 2008).

Agustin Llach and Canga Alonso (2020) therefore focus on direct strategy trainability. Their study was carried out in Spain with 97 EFL university learners majoring in various disciplines and 4 university lecturers with different educational and professional background. The learners-participants had B1 level of language proficiency. Learners' strategy use was measured with a questionnaire before the actual study. The same questionnaire was distributed after the end of the study. The teachers, as a part of the study, were given a chance to self-reflect on the strategies they trained. The class duration was 50 minutes, where 15 minutes was devoted to training. Overall, the training lasted for 8 weeks. The results have shown that the students' use of strategies increased after receiving training. However, this study does not examine the usefulness of strategy use before, during or after treatment. Hence it leaves the question regarding the justification for strategy training unanswered.

Very few studies actually examine any aspects of the usefulness of strategy training. An exception is a study conducted by Dodigovic (2013) with electronic word cards, which brings the usefulness of strategy training somewhat into question. The study involved 102 17-19 years old students from pre-university program in Qatar. Both genders were represented. Participants' prior knowledge was tested through a pre-test, and after that they were exposed to two different treatment types: teacher-designed and student-designed electronic word cards. The treatment procedures were supplemented by a control procedure consisting of students learning vocabulary using their usual styles. The study results demonstrated that students benefited from the teacher-designed cards more than from their own designed ones, but they were the most effective when using the strategies that have not been taught to them by the instructor.

Teacher's views

It is believed that teachers are primary sources of information on what is happening in the classroom (Borg, 2003; Dos Santos, 2018). Subsequently teachers' beliefs play a paramount role in guiding teaching (Basturkmen, 2012). However, the notion of a *"belief"* itself in the literature is regarded as a somewhat complex phenomenon. One reason for that are the views and definitions of a "belief" that vary among scholars. For instance, Borg (2003) and Nishino (2012) use the term *"teacher cognition"* to conceptualize teachers' knowledge, beliefs and thoughts, while others (Gatbonton, 1999) stress the association of the term *pedagogical knowledge*. Dos Santos (2018) defines teachers' beliefs as *"personal constructs that can provide understandings, judgments, and evaluations of teachers' practices"* (p.10), which is similar to Borg's definition. This study uses a term *"teachers' beliefs" and "views" interchangeably.*

Another confirmation of the notion of "teachers' belief" as being complex lies in the nature of the studies. It is proven, that "beliefs" are challenging to track since they are not subjected to direct observations (Borg, 2006, Basturkmen, 2012). Valid information on teachers' views and classroom practices and coherency between these two is obtainable only through implementation of indirect tools, and they depend on the way they are organized (Borg, 2012). For instance, the question asking about a belief "what is your belief" may create confusions and may not help to elicit the real views on an observed issue. The factors influencing teachers' views are also important since they shape teaching practices. They include teachers' language learning experiences, experiences outside the classroom, professional education and their teaching experiences. Teachers' views on VLS training, consequently, may be influenced by such factors as students' beliefs and their real practices during the classroom, the effectiveness and usefulness of VLS for vocabulary enrichment overall. Thus, examining teachers views on

vocabularies learning strategy use by their students can therefore provide valuable information on the how the strategy training could positively impact the students' vocabulary growth and language competence.

Research purpose and questions

Based on the preceding literature review, it becomes evident that there is strong advocacy for training EFL students in the use of vocabulary learning and other language learning strategies (Nation, 2013; Schmitt, 2000; Thornbury, 2002). However, the strength of advocacy is not matched with the strength of evidence regarding the usefulness of vocabulary learning strategies. Furthermore, the one group that could shed some light on this issue, i.e. English language teachers, have not frequently been included as participants in studies on the usefulness of VLS, although they have both first-hand access to trajectories of VLS training and the evidence of its outcomes. For this reason, it is the purpose of this study to examine English teachers' views on the usefulness of VLS. The research questions asked here are as follows:

1. What are the views of English language teachers regarding the vocabulary learning strategy use by their students?
2. What are the views of English language teachers regarding the strategy training of students?
3. How do such factors as nationality, teachers' experience and school type affect the teachers' views?

CHAPTER THREE: Methodology

This study is a descriptive or explanatory mixed-method design with a concurrent and sequential combination of quantitative and qualitative data analyses (QUAL+QUAN) (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015). This research method ensured the methodological and location triangulation of the study and validation of the results (Takac, 2008). Regarding this, the research involved three phases with different instruments in each. The first phase of the study employed interview with ten teachers from Armenia, the second phase employed observation with the same ten teachers form the interview phase and the third phase launched a survey to 136 teachers in different countries. The current study obtained qualitative data from interviews and observations concurrently, and then the quantitative approach followed for statistical analyses of the survey which was analyzed sequentially. To answer the first research question, interview and observations were conducted with ten teachers. To answer the second and the third research questions survey was designed and spread among 136 teachers from different teaching groups on "Facebook", "Telegram" and email.

Participants

The study targeted 136 in-service experienced and novice teachers in Armenia and abroad. In the qualitative phase of the study, ten in-service teachers around Armenia were asked to take part in one-to-one interview and the observation. The teachers were included from different teaching organisations including private and public schools sectors, language schools and etc. All of the ten participants were chosen based on the likelihood of familiarity with VLS in addition to teaching experience. The third survey stage involved the participation of 136

teachers around Armenia and abroad. No criterion was set to participate in the survey stage, thus they were chosen based on a snowballing method. The participants came with different years of experience, different school types, and the proficiency level of students they teach.

Sampling procedure

This study was based on purposive (typical cases) and snowball sampling for data collection. The purposive sampling was employed for the 10 teachers who participated in the initial interview and the second observation stages. However, the teachers were selected based on variables typical to the study, such as the level, organization, the age group they teach and their teaching experience (Takac, 2008). The new graduates or pre-service teachers were excluded. Snowball sampling was employed in the third stage. Since the sample size presumed the participation of a large number of teachers, snowball sampling was used to spread the survey since it is a good way to ensure this quantity (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015). Since the survey phase aimed to explore the extent to which the views on VLS effectiveness are represented among teachers, no criteria other than being an EFL teacher were used in the choice of 136 participants.

Data collection

Instruments

Griffiths (2003) claims that some vocabulary learning strategies may not be directly observable and their use is inferred from participants' behavior. To make the research easier, it is recommended apart from the self-report questionnaires, use some other tools such as simple interviews and observations. It is also worth mentioning that studies on teachers' beliefs also

consider beliefs as less observable and more inferable (Borg, 2012). The direct methodological approaches to elicit on teachers' beliefs do not work since teachers may not give a satisfactory answer. Proceeding from these assertions, the current study chose to employ three instruments recommended to obtain valid information about the study on the vocabulary learning strategies and teachers' beliefs. They are interviews, observations, and a survey questionnaire (Griffiths, 2003; Borg, 2006).

One-to-one interview

Face –to-face interview was carried out with ten teachers from Armenia from different teaching organizations. The purpose of the interview stage was to reveal teachers' perceptions and opinions of the vocabulary learning strategy use in the classroom and its success. The interview consists of open-ended questions and took up till 15 minutes of a teacher's time. Specifically, the questions were intended to identify whether the strategies their students use, the level of success if there is any, challenges they meet during VSL instruction and their views on VSL training importance. Schmitt's VLS taxonomy (Schmitt, 2000) served as the basis for the interview questions. The interview questions referred to teachers' beliefs and vocabulary teaching actions. The interview protocol is found in the Appendix A.

Observation

The second stage was the observation, where ten interviewed teachers were asked to take part. The purpose of the observation was to identify incongruences between teachers' beliefs and actual classroom practices. The observer was a non-participant (Borg, 2006). The observation was done based on Schmitt's VLS taxonomy as a check list (Schmitt, 2000). The stage was a follow-up to the interview thus, it was a dependent tool.

Survey questionnaire

The survey questionnaire with 136 teachers was implemented after conducting the interviews and observations. The survey's primary purpose was to identify teachers' awareness of vocabulary learning strategies during vocabulary instruction and their opinion regarding its usefulness. The design of the survey highly depended on the results of the interview and observation results. Thus, the survey consisted of two parts. The first part included demographic questions such as nationality, teaching experience, what school type they teach. The second part involved 25 self-reported Likert-scale questions with “Strongly disagree,” “Disagree,” “Neither Agree nor Disagree,” “Agree,” and “Strongly agree” response types where 1-“Strongly disagree” and 5- “Strongly agree”. These statements addressed whether they train certain types of language learning strategies such as using dictionaries, asking for synonyms and etc. and if their students use the strategies. The survey questionnaire is found in the Appendix B.

Data analysis

This study was mixed-methods research; therefore, the data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively with the equal weighting. Such qualitative data as interviews and observations were recorded and transcribed. Then, the data was analyzed following the inductive approach by coding, finding themes, and categorizing the answers. The quantitative data from the survey questionnaire was analyzed with the help of computer-assisted software, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analyses identified descriptive statistics, such as mean, standard deviation, frequencies, and percentages. In addition, inferential statics such as t-test and ANOVA were used to compare the teachers' answers based on demographics.

Quality criteria

To enhance the trustworthiness of the results, quality criteria were used. The credibility of the qualitative research was met by different triangulation types such as data triangulation using multiple data sources, methodological, location and theory triangulation. The sampling strategy was based on the typical cases and it is described in details and the future qualitative findings and the context were analyzed in a thick description with the existing literature on the issue to ensure transferability. Qualitative data was analyzed concurrently (continuously) to inform the further data collection, thus contributing to the dependability of findings. The conformability of qualitative findings was achieved through searching literature which confirms or disconfirms the findings, also discussing the findings with the expert.

The study may be replicated which helps to meet the criteria of reliability. In order to reach objectivity and remove personal biases of the findings the respondents' identities were anonymized, the original data were safeguarded (Frambach et al., 2013).

Ethical considerations

Before conducting the study, the research protocol was vetted by the Ethics Committee of a professional TESOL organization, the Interrnational TESOL Union (ITU). Following these codes of research ethics the study participants were informed of the purpose of the study to ensure the transparency of the research. Since the participants were from different types of schools, the permission to conduct interview and observations was also obtained from schools and teachers through the consent forms. The interviews and observations were recorded only with the permission of teachers, and they were informed that the recordings would be used only by the researcher within the scope of the current study. To protect the participants anonymity, they were also notified that the names of the participants would not be mentioned anywhere in

the study. All the participants got the informed consent prior to actual participation in the research.

Limitations and delimitations

The limitation of this study mainly pertains to the social desirability bias, which means that respondents might provide the information that they thought the researcher expected to get from them. To counter that, some classroom observations have been done, in order to obtain at least some objective information. Another, limitation is observation itself, as not every event was observable (too short-lived to notice, or happening in private between students), and some had to be interpreted.

The delimitation of the study is the fact that it is anchored in Schmitt's taxonomy of VLS, which is common in the VLS studies (Schmitt, 1997), and did not include any other VLS taxonomies.

CHAPTER FOUR: Results

Qualitative results

Teachers' reported practices

To partly guide the design of the survey and answer the first research question which is "What are the views of English language teachers regarding the vocabulary learning strategy use by their students?" qualitative data was collected with the help of a semi-structured interview. Content analysis was carried out to analyze the qualitative data. The results of the qualitative data presented in accordance with interview questions.

The first interview question was "How do your students usually learn vocabulary?" intended to identify the strategy use by the students based on teachers' views and the classroom

practices. The purpose was to determine the ways in which students learn vocabulary and how effective this makes in their learning process. The teacher-respondents mostly were in agreement that their students learn vocabulary in different ways, and it depends on different aspects. One of the ways they have mentioned is skills such as reading, listening, speaking and writing. *"One of the best liked strategies to learn the words is using them in different skills: listening, speaking, and writing".* However, the views of teachers on the use of skill type by their students vary. Five teachers mentioned that their students accomplish learning through listening, speaking and writing. Three of them stated that the main two skills which the vocabulary is learned through are listening and speaking. While one teacher mentioned speaking and writing, another teacher stressed such skills as reading and listening. The second way of vocabulary learning which has been pointed out by teachers was through context. Specifically, half of the teachers mentioned that the context plays an important role in their students' vocabulary learning and this is what helps students to make the learning meaningful. Context promotes strategy use, such as guessing the meaning of words or association to previous knowledge. *"Students try to guess the meaning of the words from context and try to understand based on their previously learned words".* The third way of vocabulary learning was reported to be tasks and different activities offered by the textbooks. Almost all the teachers think that tasks and different exercises (activities) help students to recycle the newly learned words, and this way students use the encountered words a couple of times in different ways. As was stated by one of the teachers: *"It is difficult to remember the word at once, and once it was seen, it needs to be used everywhere. So, the tasks give the opportunity to use the same newly learned words many times for different purposes".*

Finally, such ways as memory games, miming and gestures used by students were reported only by one teacher, who states that these techniques are useful not only in vocabulary

enrichment but also increases student motivation to be an active learner. *"The students who are not very strong at English, or not very motivated, but have good memory, are motivated to learn by these strategies".*

Thus, based on teachers perception of their students' strategy practices, it is concluded that students make use of different ways of learning such as learning vocabulary through skills, context where they guess or associate the words with previous knowledge, tasks or exercises, and in rare cases memory games, miming or gestures.

The second question which was "What aids do your students use to learn vocabulary?" sought to obtain information on how students accomplish learning and what the preferred aids during their vocabulary learning experiences are. According to the teachers' statements, their students make use of such aids as bilingual dictionaries, visuals, vocabulary-notebooks, word lists, power point slides, flashcards, sticky notes, videos, telegram chat, online applications for games, quizzes, Kahoot, wordplay. However, teachers' opinions sometimes were diverse on the aids their students use justifying that not all of them work similarly for everyone. Moreover, teachers emphasized that the aid preference depends on a number of factors such as age, level, and even aptitude, culture or learning style. For example, according to one of the teachers' opinions, their students learn vocabulary better through visuals, pictures or flashcards because they are not so auditory and they need to see the image to memorize the word. *"Armenian students are visual students, they are not so auditory. Their listening skills are not so developed so they are more visual".* Meanwhile, some other group of teachers highlighted the factors of level and age in using visuals. Visuals provide effective learning for younger students and for students of lower levels such as elementary or beginners. Video and online dictionaries use as an aid was noted by teachers who teach students of higher levels such as intermediate and higher.

They stated that *"their level is higher and they benefit from videos and bilingual dictionaries more than other aids such as word list or visuals".* Half of the teachers pointed out that their students use online applications to consolidate the words irrespective of any factors.

The third question which was "How do you help your students learn vocabulary?" intended to determine whether teachers mediate and encourage their students to use other strategies apart from the habitual ones for better vocabulary learning. Thus, teachers mostly expressed that they encourage using aids such as online dictionaries, online applications, writing in the vocabulary notebook or the ones mentioned in their answers to the previous question. Apart from that, they try to make them categorize the words, practice words in sentences, use them in speaking such as role plays, or in writing assignments such as reports or essays, stories, making them guess from reading and listening.

To the question whether teachers feel that their students use the strategies they encourage, all of them responded positively saying that their students mainly use them based on their observations of classroom practices and completed homework assignments. Nevertheless, to some of teachers the strategy use depends on the students' learning styles, *"for example, there are students that use association method for association with Armenian language. I don't like this of course, but they are associating a word with Armenian, because this is easy for them to remember".* Similarly *"a traditional method of learning the words by heart through a word list is popular among learners, but this is what helps them learn words and I am not against that".* Another teacher believes that the majority of students use these strategies but it may also "*depend on how well the students perform during the classes and how motivated they are to learn. Students who are really willing to study do whatever has been assigned or advised to do including strategy use. They are usually stronger ones".*

Forth question which was “How much time do you dedicatee to strategy training?” was asked with a purpose to understand how much time teachers dedicate to vocabulary practice through various strategies. Mainly all of the teachers mentioned that the strategy training may depend on the purpose or the focus of the lesson. When there is a lot of vocabulary in target lesson training may even take a whole class time. If there is no much vocabulary to be taught, 10 or 15 minutes is dedicated to training. According to some teacher-respondents, the training is not taking place separately but is incorporated into the lesson. Some teachers share a common opinion that training should be done throughout the whole lesson without making them understand *consciously* that they are being trained.

The main purpose of the fifth question which was “How successful are the students with the strategies they use?” was to gain an overall sense of how successful students are using these strategies and what the impact of the strategies on the vocabulary improvement is. All ten teachers indicated that students are quite successful with the strategies they use because they help to develop vocabulary and improve their language. Most of them ascertain that the progress is obvious since every time they come to class *“they try to use these words specific activities during the class and it seems to be already active vocabulary”.* One of the teachers reported that the strategies they use help students to memorize words, and she tracks the improvement through tests, thus *“they stay in their passive vocabulary and just sometime later they appear in their actual work”.* Some of the teachers measure the impact of the strategy use though everyday repetitions and revisions assigning some tasks as essays or situations just after a couple days after the previous learning. *“I give them some essays or short individual work and ask them use the previously learned vocabulary”.* Another group of teachers believe that the strategy use positively impacts them and they can see it *“through group chats where they start*

communicating using the words on a specific topic". The online tools were also reported by some of the teachers as a way to observe their students success in vocabulary and language improvement.

Finally, the last question which was "How important is it to train students to become better language learners?" was asked to ascertain the perceived importance of the strategy training among teachers. With the exception of one teacher, all teacher-respondents perceive strategy training to be an important aspect in vocabulary learning. Teachers' formulations of the importance of the learning strategy training are diverse. Some of them explain the importance of training because they *"want to make their students to be responsible for their learning and make them independent learners",* meanwhile others highlight that *"we as teachers, need to give them guidance how to learn the words properly",* some of the students, specifically, when they come from different educational organizations *"might not even have vocabulary learning experiences, consequently may not be aware of the strategies to make learning easier",* thus it is important to teach them the strategies to learn vocabulary. On the other hand, teachers also do not deny that some students adopted their strategies which they use to learn vocabulary. Thus, based on this observation, only one respondent found learning strategy training "*not so important, the strategies should be just introduced and students need to understand themselves which one works for them".*

Though teachers' views were formulated differently, the teachers seemed to be well aware of their students' strategy use and majority found strategy training useful and important. This is summed up in the idea that teachers should be facilitators and direct student learning.

To obtain reliable data and avoid misinterpretations of the teachers' beliefs and practices, observation was carried out. The observation was based on a Schmitt's VLS taxonomy as a

checklist. The observation seeks to obtain qualitative data in support of the interview in order to refine the answer to the same research question which is “What are the views of English language teachers regarding the vocabulary learning strategy use by their students?”, also to answer the second research question which was “What are the views of English language teachers regarding the strategy training of students?”

The qualitative data is presented in accordance with the strategy checklist.

The observation referred only to the vocabulary part of the whole lesson which was intended to show the strategies the teacher uses or encourages during the actual vocabulary instruction. According to the strategy checklist based on Schmitt’s taxonomy, the teacher-participants used the following strategies: Analyzing parts of speech of the unknown word-5 cases, using online dictionaries – 1 case, analyzing pictures to discover the unknown words -5 cases, guessing the new words from the context- 10 cases, checking for L1 cognate of the unknown word- 3 cases, asking the teacher or friends the meaning of the unknown words- 3 cases, using synonyms, paraphrase of the word-8 cases, associating the new words with their coordinates-4 cases, relating the new words to familiar words or concepts- 3 cases, studying the spelling of unknown words- 1 case, repeating the unknown word to remember-2 cases, putting English labels on the objects to remember the unknown words -1 case, using the new words in speaking and writing – 10 cases, learning the words in different vocabulary tasks-10 cases, testing their word knowledge by online quizzes, vocabulary games – 8 case, using English-language media (songs, videos, textbook listening, movies) to study new words -8 cases.

In regard to student learning experiences, it was observed that students learned through different skills such as listening and reading, where the teachers made them guess the words,

take notes, find and highlight the words and phrases, as well as writing, and speaking based on which the teachers had them write short reports, essays, make sentence, create dialogues, perform role plays, and conduct discussions. Students also made use of the provided contexts and various tasks presented in the textbook.

Regarding the aids the teachers made them use, they were online dictionaries, note taking, videos, listening, visuals such as pictures and cards.

The observation helped to understand also the time dedicated to vocabulary learning and strategy use. Teachers were mainly trying to incorporate the learning through different activities during the whole lesson, thus making the strategy training more implicitly than explicitly.

Overall, teachers' presentation of the new vocabulary was in many cases accompanied by the board where they were writing the target vocabulary list, elicitations of the word meaning from students, sometimes explanations were helped via pictures, and in rare cases through the use of physical actions however they are all attributed to be teaching techniques rather than learning strategies. It was also noticeable that students were active participants in vocabulary learning practices initiated by teachers and many of them even were writing down the words in their vocabulary notebooks, taking notes, using technologies, asking the teacher the word meaning in English without the teachers' encouragement. This indicates that some students had their own adopted strategies to learn the words.

Thus, observation confirmed the interview results that the students make use of skills and contextualized learning, guessing as well as learning through different vocabulary tasks offered by the textbook. There is also a confirmation found of the aids the students used such as vocabulary notebooks use, pictures, and media. However, there was less evidence for the instruction on the dictionary use, testing word knowledge through various games, flashcards.

Observation also showed that teachers taught more strategies than what was reported in the interview. Among them were asking other students meaning of the word, analyzing parts of speech of the unknown word, checking for L1 cognate of the unknown word, asking the teacher or friends the meaning of the unknown words, using synonyms, paraphrase of the word, associating the new words with their coordinates, relating the new words to familiar words or concepts, studying the spelling of unknown words, repeating the unknown word to remember.

Quantitative results

In order to answer all three research questions, quantitative data was collected though a survey questionnaire. The first step of quantitative data analysis was to determine the perceived level of responsibility for students' learning, which was attempted to identify through the statement *"It is my job to teach students how to learn".*

Table 1

Descriptive statistics for the statement "It is my job to teach students how to learn"

	N	M	SD
	136	4.610	0.669

Note. N= number of participants, M= mean, SD = standard deviation

The Table 1 shows that the mean score of the question on the level of responsibility to teach how to learn among teachers is 4.610, while SD is 0.669. This indicates a strong belief in a mandate to teach students learning strategies.

The next step was to identify the overall strategy use of the sample. Table 2 displays the overall strategy training of the teachers.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics of overall vocabulary learning strategies training

N	M	SD
136	4.18	0.26

Note. N= number of participants, M= mean, SD = standard deviation

As displayed in Table 2, the mean score of the teachers 'overall strategy use is 4.18 (*SD*=0.26), which indicates strong strategy use.

The next step was to find out the most and least frequently trained strategies among five vocabulary learning strategies categories. Table 3 displays the result of descriptive statistics of the five categories of vocabulary learning strategies based on the Schmitt's VLS taxonomy.

Table 3

Descriptive statistics of five categories of vocabulary learning strategy training

Strategy category	M	SD
Determination strategies	4.145	0.159
Social strategies	4.074	0.564
Memory strategies	4.279	0.247
Cognitive strategies	3.853	0.076
Metacognitive strategies	4.576	0.207

According to the table, the most frequently used strategy group is reported to be metacognitive strategy with the mean of 4.576 and SD -0.207, while the least frequent strategy was reported to be cognitive strategy group with the mean of 3.853 and SD – 0.076. The memory strategy group was reported to be the second most frequently trained strategy, followed by determination strategy group to be the third most frequently trained and the social strategies is the fourth among frequently trained strategies.

Further, each strategy statement based on the five VLS categories was analyzed to find out the most and least frequently taught strategy items employed by the teacher-participants. Table 4 indicates the results for each item of cognitive strategies utilized by the participants.

Table 4

Descriptive statistics of teachers' determination strategy training

Strategy training	M	SD
I teach my students to analyze parts of speech of the unknown word.	4.118	0.959
I teach my students to use online dictionaries to look up unknown words.	4.022	1.105
I teach my students to analyze pictures to discover the unknown words.	4.110	0.956
I teach my students to guess the new words from the context.	4.691	0.661
I teach my students to check for L1 cognate of the unknown word.	3.647	1.085
I teach my students to connect the words and pictures to discover the new words.	4.279	0.940

The table results indicate that the most frequently trained strategies to discover the new words are guessing meaning from context and connecting pictures and words, while the least frequently item is checking for L1 cognate of the word.

Table 5 shows the results for each item of social strategy group

Table 5

Descriptive statistics of teachers' social strategy training

Strategy training	M	SD
I teach my students to ask the teacher or friends the meaning of the unknown words.	3.382	1.288
I teach my students to use the new words in speaking and writing (including sentences and expressions)	4.765	0.490

According the table, the most frequently trained strategy consolidation purposes is teaching students to use the words in speaking and writing, while the least frequent is asking a teacher or friend the meaning of unknown words.

Table 6 describes the results the items for memory strategy training.

Table 6

Descriptive statistics of teachers' memory strategy training

Strategy training	M	SD
I teach my students to use for synonyms, paraphrase of the word.	4.684	0.580
I teach my students to group the unknown words to study them together.	3.853	1.183

I teach my students to associate the new words with their coordinates.	4.257	0.903
I teach my students to relate the new words to familiar words or concepts.	4.529	0.677
I teach my students to study the spelling of unknown words.	4.074	1.023

As Table 6 shows, the most frequently trained strategies were teaching to use synonyms, paraphrase of the word as well as teaching to relate the words to familiar concepts or words, as well as associating the word to their coordinates, while the least frequently strategies were teaching spelling the words and teaching to group the unknown words.

Table 7 indicates the results of items for cognitive strategies training.

Table 7

Descriptive statistics of teachers' cognitive strategy training

Strategy training	M	SD
I teach my students to write the new words in their vocabulary notebooks.	4.132	1.153
I teach my students to learn the unknown words from the word list.	3.654	1.307
I teach my students to repeat the unknown word to remember.	4.147	1.158
I teach my students to put English labels on the objects to remember the unknown words.	3.478	1.259

The table 7 illustrates that the most frequently trained items in the cognitive strategies were repeating the words to remember and writing in the vocabulary notebooks. The least frequently trained items occurred to be putting the English labels on objects to remember and learning from the word list.

Table 8 describes the results of the items for metacognitive strategy training.

Table 8

Descriptive statistics of teachers' metacognitive strategy training

Strategy training	M	SD
I teach my students to learn the words in different vocabulary tasks	4.676	0.582
I teach my students to test their word knowledge by online quizzes, vocabulary games, matching definitions and etc.	4.338	0.929
I teach my students to use English-language media (songs, videos, textbook listening, movies) to study new words.	4.713	0.583

According to the table 8, training to use English media (songs, videos and etc.) reported to be the most frequently used item, followed by using the word in different vocabulary tasks, while the least frequent was testing the word knowledge by online quizzes, games and etc.

The responses are further analyzed by category. Since demographics, such as nationality, years of experience and type of school taught are explored in other survey based studies on vocabulary, the data is broken down along these categories. This breakdown is reflected in tables 9-13 below.

Table 9

T-test for the variable of nationality

		Group Statistics			t-test for Equality of Means		
Nationality		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Determination strategy	Armenian	104	4.17	0.60	.841	134	.402
	International	32	4.07	0.55			
Social	Armenian	104	4.08	0.64	.260	134	.795
	International	32	4.05	0.73			
Memory	Armenian	104	4.34	0.57	2.222	134	.028
	International	32	4.09	0.52			
Cognitive	Armenian	104	3.93	0.83	1.861	134	.065
	International	32	3.61	0.90			
Metacognitive	Armenian	104	4.60	0.53	1.003	134	.317
	International	32	4.49	0.63			
It is my job to teach students how to learn.	Armenian	104	4.67	0.65	1.996	134	.048
	International	32	4.41	0.71			
My students use the above strategies that I teach them.	Armenian	104	4.28	0.73	2.094	134	.038
	International	32	3.97	0.74			
These strategies help them learn vocabulary more effectively.	Armenian	104	4.75	0.52	3.530	134	.001
	International	32	4.38	0.55			

Table 10

Descriptive statistics for the variable of experience

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation

Determination strategy	0 - 2	28	4.0179	.56536
	3 - 5	26	4.1474	.64347
	6 - 10	29	3.9713	.62372
	11 or more	53	4.3050	.52880
	Total	136	4.1446	.59067
Social	0 - 2	28	3.8929	.71177
	3 - 5	26	4.1538	.64450
	6 - 10	29	4.0172	.68768
	11 or more	53	4.1604	.61842
	Total	136	4.0735	.65977
Memory	0 - 2	28	4.1071	.60732
	3 - 5	26	4.2154	.54236
	6 - 10	29	4.2000	.53984
	11 or more	53	4.4453	.54299
	Total	136	4.2794	.56688
Cognitive	0 - 2	28	3.9643	.65868
	3 - 5	26	3.9615	.80216
	6 - 10	29	3.3448	.93878
	11 or more	53	4.0189	.83759
	Total	136	3.8529	.85444
Metacognitive	0 - 2	28	4.4524	.66799
	3 - 5	26	4.4744	.59009
	6 - 10	29	4.5172	.64603
	11 or more	53	4.7233	.37970
	Total	136	4.5760	.55699
My students use the above strategies that I teach them.	0 - 2	28	4.0357	.88117
	3 - 5	26	3.9615	.66216
	6 - 10	29	4.1034	.72431
	11 or more	53	4.4717	.63862
	Total	136	4.2059	.74155
These strategies help them learn vocabulary more effectively.	0 - 2	28	4.4643	.63725
	3 - 5	26	4.6538	.56159
	6 - 10	29	4.6552	.55265
	11 or more	53	4.7736	.46581
	Total	136	4.6618	.54732
It is my job to teach students how to learn.	0 - 2	28	4.4643	.79266
	3 - 5	26	4.5769	.57779
	6 - 10	29	4.6207	.62185
	11 or more	53	4.6981	.66751
	Total	136	4.6103	.66858

Table 11

ANOVA for the variable teacher's experience

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Determination strategy	Between Groups	2.685	3	.895	2.660	.051
	Within Groups	44.415	132	.336		
	Total	47.100	135			
Social	Between Groups	1.573	3	.524	1.210	.309
	Within Groups	57.191	132	.433		
	Total	58.765	135			
Memory	Between Groups	2.579	3	.860	2.781	.044
	Within Groups	40.804	132	.309		
	Total	43.382	135			
Cognitive	Between Groups	9.600	3	3.200	4.748	.004
	Within Groups	88.959	132	.674		
	Total	98.559	135			
Metacognitive	Between Groups	1.946	3	.649	2.144	.098
	Within Groups	39.935	132	.303		
	Total	41.882	135			
My students use the above strategies that I teach them.	Between Groups	6.412	3	2.137	4.160	.007
	Within Groups	67.823	132	.514		
	Total	74.235	135			
These strategies help them learn vocabulary more effectively.	Between Groups	1.758	3	.586	1.999	.117
	Within Groups	38.684	132	.293		
	Total	40.441	135			
It is my job to teach students how to learn.	Between Groups	1.038	3	.346	.770	.513
	Within Groups	59.308	132	.449		

	Total	60.346	135			

Table 12

Descriptive statistics for the variable school type

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Determination strategy	Public School	31	4.4570	.48870
	Private School	14	3.9405	.73846
	Language School	33	4.2020	.52168
	University	18	4.1759	.53159
	Other	40	3.9125	.58712
	Total	136	4.1446	.59067
Social	Public School	31	4.2097	.62947
	Private School	14	4.1429	.56936
	Language School	33	4.1515	.66714
	University	18	3.9444	.76483
	Other	40	3.9375	.65229
	Total	136	4.0735	.65977
Memory	Public School	31	4.6000	.44121
	Private School	14	4.2143	.62000
	Language School	33	4.0727	.58698
	University	18	4.4333	.48142
	Other	40	4.1550	.55190
	Total	136	4.2794	.56688
Cognitive	Public School	31	4.3710	.62873
	Private School	14	3.7679	.79942
	Language School	33	3.6894	.81975
	University	18	3.6389	1.05099
	Other	40	3.7125	.83503
	Total	136	3.8529	.85444
Metacognitive	Public School	31	4.5806	.56416
	Private School	14	4.7143	.52064
	Language School	33	4.5859	.54665
	University	18	4.6111	.60768
	Other	40	4.5000	.56488
	Total	136	4.5760	.55699
My students use the above strategies that I teach them.	Public School	31	4.3226	.70176
	Private School	14	4.0714	.82874
	Language School	33	4.0000	.86603

	University	18	4.3333	.48507
	Other	40	4.2750	.71567
	Total	136	4.2059	.74155
These strategies help them learn vocabulary more effectively.	Public School	31	4.7742	.49730
	Private School	14	4.6429	.63332
	Language School	33	4.7273	.45227
	University	18	4.5556	.61570
	Other	40	4.5750	.59431
	Total	136	4.6618	.54732
It is my job to teach students how to learn.	Public School	31	4.7419	.51431
	Private School	14	4.6429	.63332
	Language School	33	4.6364	.60302
	University	18	4.6111	.84984
	Other	40	4.4750	.75064
	Total	136	4.6103	.66858

Table 13

ANOVA for the variable school type

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Determination strategy	Between Groups	5.890	4	1.472	4.681	.001
	Within Groups	41.211	131	.315		
	Total	47.100	135			
Social	Between Groups	1.883	4	.471	1.084	.367
	Within Groups	56.882	131	.434		
	Total	58.765	135			
Memory	Between Groups	5.701	4	1.425	4.955	.001
	Within Groups	37.682	131	.288		
	Total	43.382	135			
Cognitive	Between Groups	10.917	4	2.729	4.079	.004
	Within Groups	87.642	131	.669		

	Total	98.559	135			
Metacognitive	Between Groups	.525	4	.131	.416	.797
	Within Groups	41.357	131	.316		
	Total	41.882	135			
My students use the above strategies that I teach them.	Between Groups	2.558	4	.639	1.169	.328
	Within Groups	71.678	131	.547		
	Total	74.235	135			
These strategies help them learn vocabulary more effectively.	Between Groups	1.043	4	.261	.867	.486
	Within Groups	39.399	131	.301		
	Total	40.441	135			
It is my job to teach students how to learn.	Between Groups	1.307	4	.327	.725	.576
	Within Groups	59.039	131	.451		
	Total	60.346	135			

The tables 9 and 13 above represent the differences between strategy categories based on demographics. At $p < .05$, significant differences were noted among strategy categories between Armenian and international teachers, teachers with different years of experience as well as between teachers teaching at different school types. Red colour above signalizes areas where the differences are of significance. The two strategy groups that do not vary significantly in any of the scenarios are the social and metacognitive strategy groups. Also, the results of t-Test and ANOVA by nationality, years of experience depicted significant differences at $p < .05$ for the statements *"It is my job to teach how to learn"*, *"These strategies help learners to learn vocabulary more effectively",* and *"My students use the strategies I teach".* There were no significant differences found on any of the above statements based on the school type variable.

Finally, here is a summary of the responses to the only fully open-ended question of the survey, namely the one regarding any additional strategies taught to students. While a number of responses mimicked some of the strategies proposed in Likert scale questions, such as using word cards, identifying synonyms and antonyms, guessing from context, using the target vocabulary in speaking and writing, analysing pictures, some are unique. Some of the latter are teaching students self-confidence, encouraging the use of different perceptual preferences, share a newly discovered word with the peers, use a new word in collocations and learn vocabulary by listening to songs.

Discussion

This chapter attempts to answer the three research questions. It subsequently discusses the results and their interpretation in light of the reviewed literature. By doing so, it places this study in the context of other studies related to the effectiveness of VLS and strategy training.

Students' vocabulary learning strategy use

Thus, regarding the first research question which was "What are the views of English language teachers regarding the vocabulary learning strategy use by their students?", it was found that teachers first of all were well aware of the strategies which their students use and how they help them acquire vocabulary. One of the most interesting things teachers were all in agreement with was the common perception of the *contextualized* approach by their students, i.e. incorporating all the four skills including speaking, writing, reading, and listening to learn vocabulary. In this respect, it is to note that students give prominence to *guessing* based on *their previous knowledge or experience* which they consider to be one of the most useful strategies to apply. However, it is undeniable that students also make use of the *decontextualized* learning

strategies as well. It is mainly linked with textbook tasks and activities it offers which help to consolidate the word once it has been encountered (Schmitt, 2000). The consolidation of the word meaning through these tasks provides opportunities to practice one and the same word for several times in different contexts. It is indicated that, students are exposed to repetition and multiple exposure of the word which is conducive long-term retention of the word (Nation, 1999).

Apart from textbook tasks and activities, some other strategies such as dictionaries, flashcard, visuals, media are favored among students and encouraged by teachers to enable independent and autonomous vocabulary learning outside of the classroom so that they become aware of on how to learn the vocabulary on their own. However, it was also mentioned that the strategy preference and use highly depends on various factors such as age, proficiency level, learning style.

Usefulness of vocabulary learning strategies

According to the findings elicited from the interviews and a survey, it was revealed that teachers attribute great importance to the effectiveness of vocabulary learning strategies. The results of the interview responses suggest that students demonstrate success during the lessons when using VLS. According to the teachers, using strategies develops students' vocabulary learning skills and facilitates their communicative abilities. Not only do the learners develop vocabulary knowledge, but they also motivate more passive learners to be engaged in the vocabulary learning process.

Findings from the survey also provide a valuable insight into the teachers' perspective of the VLS usefulness. The mean being 4.206 and SD with 0.7516 indicates a strong perception of the strategy being useful during the vocabulary learning practices. This means that the teachers

mainly showed consistency in their beliefs on the strategy effectiveness on a larger scale. Overall, the majority of teachers would seem to fairly strongly believe in the value of vocabulary learning strategies.

Vocabulary learning strategy training

Finally, when all the findings from the interview, observation and survey are put together, we come to reflect on the second research question which is "What are the views of English language teachers regarding the strategy training of students?". In this respect, it is foremost to focus the attention to the responses for the direct self-reported question which was *"it is my job to teach how to learn"*. Based on the analyses with the mean being 4.610 and SD 0.669 it is concluded that teachers are in agreement that much of the students' learning burden falls onto the teacher, since they are the primary source of obtaining information even in case of vocabulary learning strategies. Comparing the survey results with findings of the interview, it can be concluded that teachers highly value skills-based strategy training, the use of context which sets the bases for guessing of unknown words, vocabulary tasks, media use depending on students' levels, age and the like in vocabulary learning.

With respect to pedagogical strategy applications, the survey results were consistent with observations. Analyzing different strategy groups, it appears that the teachers have a preference for the metacognitive strategy group, which seems to be the most frequently trained one, followed by memory strategy group in the second, place. While determination strategies came out third, social strategies placed fourth, with cognitive strategies being the fifth and the least favored strategy group to train to the students.

However, the picture is different with individual item analyses within the separate strategy groups. In this respect, it was revealed such frequently trained individual strategies as

guessing from context, using the words in speech and writing, using synonyms, paraphrase of the word, learning words in different vocabulary tasks, learning words through media, testing the word knowledge, connecting pictures. Surprisingly, the divergence between the survey and observations relates mainly to *relating words to familiar concepts, word association, repeating the words which were observed to be used by only 1 to 3 teachers.* There was also found no evidence of frequent instructions on *writing down the words in the notebooks,* or on *how to use dictionaries.* However, students took the initiative by applying these strategies without explicitly being told so. It is possible that some students had been familiarized with some of the VLS before the observed class, whether in the classroom or in another learning context.

The impact of demographics

This section attempts to answer the third research question "How do such factors as nationality, teachers' experience and school type affect the teachers' views?" There were some notable differences in the teachers' responses to survey questions, based on nationality, teachers' experience, and school type. With respect to these factors, significant differences at $p< 0.5$ level were established in the strategy groups such as determination, memory and cognitive. It indicates that these strategies are more frequently used by the Armenians, public school sector and teachers with eleven or more years of experience. The results also showed significant difference for the statements *"It is my job to teach students how to learn", "My students use the above strategies that I teach them"* and *"These strategies help the learn vocabulary more effectively"* based only on variables of nationality and experience and no significant difference was found for the variable of the school type. The results clearly indicate that the Armenian teachers and more experienced teachers tend to believe more strongly in strategy usefulness and train their students strategies more often than international and less experienced teachers.

Hence, the overall conclusion is that teachers' views of the strategy effectiveness and the strategy choice of training vary depending not only on the students' needs and analysis, but also nationality, teachers' experience and school type.

Context of previous research

The responses of the teachers are not only overly positive regarding both perceived usefulness of strategies, but also strategy training. Both are consistent with a number of sources which strongly support both strategy use and training. Some of these are Nation (2013), Takac (2008) and Augustin Llach and Canga Alonso (2020). However, when broken down into individual strategies and strategy groups, according to Schmitt (1997; 2000), the teachers' self-reported commitment to strategy training and student use of trained strategies is only reflected by Mirioglu (2020), where the students' enthusiasm for strategy use is higher than in most other VLS studies, but still lower than the use perceived by teachers in this study. In fact, it differs considerably from what a number of studies have reported on the student use of strategies (Takac, 2008; Manukyan, 2020; Augustin Llach and Canga Alonso, 2020).

According to the findings elicited from the survey, metacognitive strategy (4.576), memory strategy group (4.279), and determination being the third (4.145) had been given greater prominence as the most useful and frequently used strategies. This finding is partially supported by Manukyan's study (2020), in which, memory strategy (2.53) was identified to be the least important strategy, while determination strategy group (2.66) was reported to be frequently used. As to the least used employed strategies of this study, which were found out to be social (4.074) and cognitive ones (3.853), Manukyan's study results pointed at social (2.84) and cognitive ones (2.57) being the most commonly applied ones by students. Hence, the comparison of these two studies makes the ground to conclude that the overall strategy use perception is different in both

cases. Such commonly used strategies as memory appear to be less practiced among students, than what the teachers perceive them to be in this study. Not less important to note here is that the metacognitive strategy group which was listed as a frequently used strategy in this study, surprisingly, was totally left out of the investigation in the study by Manukyan (2020). One reason for that most probably is that students were not well familiar with the techniques of this strategy group such as using media and songs, word tests. Students might be more accustomed to simpler strategies. In support of that, it can be said that the study by Manukyan (2020), included only elementary level participants, while in the current study teachers' strategy choices were determined by students' different proficiency levels which were mainly fluctuating between pre-intermediate (80.9%) and intermediate (76.5%).

On the other hand, the findings of the present study are consistent with the findings by Takac (2008), where the strategies used to teach vocabulary are not necessarily reflected in the student use of strategy. Moreover, Augustin Llach and Canga Alonso (2020) refer to Oxford's (1994) postulates in their discussion of strategy learnability. According to both these sources, in order to be successful, in addition to being long-term and supported with abundant adequate materials and practice, strategy training should be based on students' beliefs, consider affective issues and be sufficiently individualized. All of the above conditions would require some needs analysis, which is not likely to have been conducted by the teachers already under significant pressure for a number of reasons.

Research has yet to confirm the effectiveness of strategy training. In other words, strategy training, much as it is believed in by teachers or recommended by sources, may not necessarily result in better learning outcomes, especially if student learning styles and affective factors are not considered. Therefore, before more of teacher and classroom time is invested in strategy

training, more research into its effectiveness should be conducted. In addition, such studies should be based on an analysis of students' needs, learning styles, affective factors and beliefs.

Conclusion

As interest in vocabulary learning strategies is growing, it is important to deepen the understanding of the usefulness of vocabulary learning strategies and the value of their training to students. Accordingly, the present study aimed at investigating the under researched area of the teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding vocabulary learning strategy usefulness and training. Teachers are an indispensable part of the learning process and are well aware of their students' learning experiences, based on which teaching techniques and strategies are developed. However, it is proven that beliefs are one of the most difficult areas of research since mismatches with real practices may hinder obtaining objective information (Borg, 2003). Hence, to ensure the trustworthiness of the results, the study employed three instruments: interview, observation and a survey.

The findings of the current research showed that teachers were well aware of their students' vocabulary learning experiences and a range of strategies their students tend to use. What emerges is a preference for contextualized learning, skills based and task based learning. Findings also revealed that teachers are overall in agreement that strategies are effective in the vocabulary learning, based on the evidence encountered in the class. Hence, they highly valued strategy training. In this regard, metacognitive strategies appeared to be the most useful and frequently trained, while cognitive strategies were deemed to be the least useful and employed. The factor analyses also shed the light on the fact that teachers' views on strategy usefulness and

training may vary depending on nationality, years of experience or what type of school they teach at.

Nevertheless, the conclusion of this study, is that there is a clear perception of the importance of strategy and strategy training in the classroom instruction. This is justified by the need for the students to become self-regulated, autonomous and effective learners. These views seem sufficiently consistent with the views expressed in Nation (2013) and Augustin Llach and Canga Alonso (2020). On the other hand, this study has heavily drawn on the views and experiences of teachers, which when compared with those of students' have shown varying perception of the strategy usefulness (Manukyan, 2020; Augustin Llach and Canga Alonso, 2020). It seems that students' perception of the value of the strategy use to some extent differ from the teachers' perceived strategy use by their students, which was evidenced in the strategy choice of students based on the previous studies on VLS. In the Armenian context, for example, the students appear to be only moderate users of strategies, while in this study, their teachers perceive them to be strong strategy users. One explanation for this difference could be that the teachers only see the learning that happens in the classroom, while they may have less insight in the kind of learning that happens outside the classroom. In the international context, some studies previously conducted to examine the students' views are in agreement with the results presented here, while others are not. Most of all, the issue of the overall strategy usefulness is still being debated.

Therefore, before more of teacher and classroom time is invested in strategy training, more research into its effectiveness should be conducted. In addition, such studies should be based on an analysis of students' needs, learning styles, affective factors and beliefs.

References

Agustín Llach, M. P., & Canga Alonso, A. (2020). Vocabulary Strategy Training to Enhance Second Language Acquisition in English as a Foreign Language.

Ahmed, M.O. (1989) Vocabulary learning strategies. In P. Meara (ed.) Beyond Words (pp. 3_14). London: BAAL/CILT.

Alemi, M. & A. Tayebi (2011). The Influence of Incidental and Intentional Vocabulary Acquisition and Vocabulary Strategy Use on Learning L2 Vocabularies. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2, (1), 81-98.

Basturkmen, H. (2012). Review of research into the correspondence between language teachers' stated beliefs and practices. *System*, *40*(2), 282-295.

Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do. *Language teaching*, *36*(2), 81-109.

Borg, S., & Al-Busaidi, S. (2012). Learner autonomy: English language teachers' beliefs and practices. *ELT journal*, *12*(7), 1-45.

Catalán, R. M. J. (2003). Sex differences in L2 vocabulary learning strategies. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *13*(1), 54-77.

Dodigovic, M., Li, H., Chen, Y., & Guo, D. (2014). The use of academic English vocabulary in the writing of Chinese students. *English Teaching in China*, *5*, 13-20.

Dodigovic, M. (2013). Vocabulary learning: an electronic word card study, *Perspectives*, 20 (1), 13 – 21.

Dodigovic, M., Gasparyan, R., Torosyan, S., & Karamanoukian, M. A. (2020). Vocabulary Size and Strategies of English Learners in Armenia: What the Research Says. In *Vocabulary in Curriculum Planning* (pp. 77-101). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Santos, D., & Miguel, L. (2019). The Relationship between Teachers' Beliefs, Teachers' Behaviors, and Teachers' Professional Development: A Literature Review. *International Journal of Education and Practice, 7*(1), 10-18.

Ellis, R. (1995). *The study of second language acquisition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Graham, S. (1997). Effective Language Learning: Positive Strategies for Advanced Level Language Learning. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Griffiths, C. (2006). Language learning strategies: Theory and research. Iran. ILI Language Teaching Journal 2, 1.

Huh, J. H. (2009). Vocabulary learning strategy use and vocabulary proficiency. *English Language & Literature Teaching*, *15*(4), 37-54.

Krashen, S. D. (1983). Second language acquisition theory and the preparation of teachers: Toward a rationale. *Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics*, 255-263.

Laufer, B., & Goldstein, Z. (2004). Testing Vocabulary Knowledge: Size, Strength, and Computer Adaptiveness. *Language Learning*, *54*, 399-436.

Manukyan, H. (2020). Vocabulary learning strategies used by Armenian EFL students. In *Vocabulary in Curriculum Planning* (pp. 103-120). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Milton, J. (2009). *Measuring Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition*. Multilingual Matters.

Nation, I. S. P. (1999). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Victoria University in Wellington – occasional publication 19.

Nation, I. S. P. (2006). Language education—Vocabulary. In K. Brown (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of language and linguisti*cs (Vol. 6, 2nd ed., pp. 494-499). Oxford: Elsevier.

Nation, I. S. P. (2013). *Learning vocabulary in another language. 2nd edition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Nishino, T. (2012). Modeling teacher beliefs and practices in context: A multimethods approach. *The Modern Language Journal*, *96*(3), 380-399.

Odlin, T. (2003). Cross-linguistic influence. *The handbook of second language acquisition*, 436-486.

O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge University Press, 1-88. Retrieved from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524490.

Oxford, R. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Paltridge, B., & Phakiti, A. (Eds.). (2015). *Research methods in applied linguistics: A practical resource*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Pavicic Takac, V. (2008). *Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Foreign Language Acquisition.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters

Ramos, R., & Dario, F. (2015). Incidental vocabulary learning in second language acquisition: A literature review. *Profile Issues in Teachers Professional Development*, *17*(1), 157-166.

Schmitt, N. (1997). Vocabulary learning strategies. In Schmitt & McCarthy (Eds.) *Description, Acquisition and Pedagogy*. (pp. 199 – 227) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schmitt, N. (1998). Tracking the incremental acquisition of second language vocabulary: A longitudinal study. *Language learning*, *48*(2), 281-317.

Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stern, H.H. (1986) *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thornbury, S. (2002). *How to Teach Vocabulary.*Harlow: Longman.

Teng, F. (2015). Assessing the relationship between vocabulary learning strategy use and vocabulary knowledge. *PASAA: Journal of Language Teaching and Learning in Thailand*, 4939-65.

Yolcu, M., & Mirioglu, M. (2020). Investigating the Importance Level and Utilization of Vocabulary Learning Strategies among Turkish EFL Learners. *Asian Journal of University Education*, *16*(1), 32-45.

Appendix A

Interview protocol

1. How do your students usually learn/study vocabulary?

2. What aides do they use to accomplish this (e.g. dictionaries, vocabulary note-books, vocabulary cards, other)?

3. How successful are they with the strategies they use?

4. How do you help them better learn vocabulary? What training, if any, do you give them to make them better vocabulary learners?

5. How much class time, if any, do you dedicate to such training?

6. What impact does that training that you provide have on their vocabulary learning success?

7. How important is it to train students to become better language learners? Who should do it? Parents? Language teachers? Other?

Appendix B

Vocabulary training survey

What nationality are you?

How many years of teaching experience do you have?

What educational organization do you teach at?

It is my job to teach students how to learn.

I teach my students to analyze parts of speech of the unknown word.

I teach my students to use online dictionaries to look up unknown words.

I teach my students to analyze pictures to discover the unknown words.

I teach my students to guess the new words from the context.

I teach my students to check for L1 cognate of the unknown word.

I teach my students to ask the teacher or friends the meaning of the unknown words.

I teach my students to use synonyms, paraphrase of the word.

I teach my students to group the unknown words to study them together.

I teach my students to associate the new words with their coordinates.

I teach my students to relate the new words to familiar words or concepts.

I teach my students to study the spelling of unknown words.

I teach my students to connect the words and pictures to discover the new words.

I teach my students to write the new words in their vocabulary notebooks.

I teach my students to learn the unknown words from the word list.

I teach my students to repeat the unknown word to remember.

I teach my students to put English labels on the objects to remember the unknown words.

I teach my students to use the new words in speaking and writing.

I teach my students to learn the words in different vocabulary tasks.

I teach my students to test their word knowledge by online quizzes, vocabulary games, matching definitions and etc.

I teach my students to use English-language media (songs, videos, textbook listening, movies) to study new words.

I teach my students ... (enter any other learning strategies you teach your students to use)

My students use the above strategies that I teach them.

These strategies help them learn vocabulary more effectively.