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Incidental Vocabulary Learning

The Case of Third Year Students in the Department of English at

Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou

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Dedications

We dedicate this work to

Our precious parents

Our dear brothers

Our adorable sisters

Our beloved ones

And all those who have always believed in us

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Abstract

The present research is concerned with incidental vocabulary learning by third-year students in the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. Our investigation aims at checking whether students learn vocabulary incidentally and in which language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) students are more involved to do so. This investigation is based on the theoretical framework of Hall (1992), Simcock (1993), Elley (1991) and Newton (1993). their theory of the occurrence of incidental vocabulary learning in the four language skills. To achieve the objectives mentioned, the study is based on a questionnaire as the research instrument which is distributed to 100 students. After the collection of information, we used The mixed method research combining both quantitative and qualitative methods, the quantitative method is used to collect and analyze the data obtained from the close-ended questions, therefore the rule of three is used. The qualitative content analysis is adopted to interpret and explain the results obtained from the open-ended questions. Therefore, the results reveal that students learn vocabulary incidentally and reading and listening are the receptive skills in which students have more opportunity to learn new word without any intention.

Key words: Vocabulary Learning, Incidental learning, Input, Output, Four Language Skills.

List of Abbreviations

FL: Foreign Language

IVL: Incidental Vocabulary Learning

L2: Second Language

QCA : Qualitative Content Analysis

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Statement of the Problem

As a result of the great political and technological development that the world is witnessing, the need of an international language has emerged. Thus, English is viewed as the most used language in the world. It is essential for international communicative aspects such as social and cultural exchange, international trade, and primarily academic purposes. This is why, learning English as a foreign language is important. For instance, in the field of education students are encouraged to learn English even in countries where it is not an official language such as Algeria.

Effective learning of English is based on vocabulary which is regarded as the key aspect in language learning. For many years, vocabulary has been a neglected area in the field of language learning, but recently gained a considerable interest from many scholars such as Nation (2001), Krashen (1982), and Huckin (1995). As a result of recent studies, it has been shown that vocabulary is learned in two different ways. Firstly, the intentional learning which refers to vocabulary learning in a conscious way. Secondly, the incidental learning which means learning vocabulary in an unconscious way. The latter has become a subject matter of many researchers about the way it occurs, its importance, and effectiveness in EFL/ESL learning

According to Hall (1992), Simcock (1993), Elley (1989), and Newton (1993), incidental vocabulary learning occurs in the four language skills, in terms of the Input learning which refers to the reception of language, and the Output learning that refers to the production of language.

To the best of our knowledge, as master two students in the department of English at MMUTO, the term incidental vocabulary learning has not yet received the attention that it deserves. In addition to that in teaching and learning process this subject is rarely mentioned in our department the reason that we have given much attention to the topic in order to show

its place as an important part in the field of English language learning this lack of studies enhances our interest to deal with this kind of learning in addition to student's exposure to the input learning. Regarding other studies there are many researchers who gave their attention to intentional learning such as Ellis (1994), Brown and Hutch (1995), Schmitt (2000) in term of explicit learning or output learning.

Aims and Significance of the Study

What motivated us to conduct this research is that we needed to get a deeper understanding of the term incidental vocabulary learning. And to show that student's exposure should not only based on the output learning in speaking and writing activities when they learn intentionally new words, therefore they should also be much exposed to the input learning where the reception of new words takes place in listening and reading activities incidentally. This dissertation will help us to improve that incidental vocabulary learning takes a great place among third year students in our department and best learning of vocabulary is not only based to the intentional learning.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The present research work seeks to answer the following questions:

Q1: Does incidental vocabulary learning take place among third year students in the psycholinguistics module? If yes, does it take place frequently or rarely?

Q2: In which language skill are the students more involved to learn English vocabulary incidentally?

To answer these questions, two working hypotheses are advanced:

H1: Incidental vocabulary learning takes place among third year students in the psycholinguistics module frequently.

H2: The language skill in which students are more involved to learn English vocabulary incidentally is reading.

Research Techniques and Methodology

In this investigation, we used data analysis tools and data collection tools. To conduct this research, we adopt the mixed method research. The qualitative method will be used to gather and analyse the qualitative data while the quantitative method is used to collect the numerical data. The students' questionnaire is used as a data collection tool. The research data are gathered from third-year students in the psycholinguistics module in the Department of English at MMUTO.

Structure of the Dissertation

Following the traditional complex model of writing an academic research work, this dissertation consists of a General Introduction, four chapters, and a General Conclusion. It begins with a General Introduction in which we introduce the topic of our investigation, the research questions, hypotheses and objectives. It is followed by the Review of the Literature which provides the theoretical background of the study and is divided in two sections. The first section is about vocabulary definition, its importance, difficulties, and types. The second section is about definition of incidental vocabulary learning and the theoretical framework about it. Then, Research Design provides a detailed description of the participants and the context of the investigation, and presents the procedures of data collection. Additionally, it explains the method of data analysis. The next chapter which is called Presentation of the Findings describes the results of the investigation. As regards the chapter four, it deals with the discussion of the findings. Our work ends with a General Conclusion which summarizes the main research findings.

Introduction

This chapter deals with the literature related to our investigation. It reviews the main concepts and terminology related to incidental vocabulary learning, in addition to the major works and previous studies that interested in the subject as an important part in the field of EFL/ESL learning. This chapter is divided into two sections. Section one is devoted to vocabulary definition, its main types, its importance and difficulties in L2 Learning. The second section deals with the approaches of vocabulary learning and the main strategies used by learners in their learning of English as a second language in classroom. In addition to, the main factors promoting incidental vocabulary learning. Finally, this chapter reviews the theoretical framework of Hall (1992), Simcock (1993), Elley (1991), and Newton (1993). (Cited in Coady & Huckin 1997: 242-243) the theory is based on the occurrence of incidental vocabulary learning through the four language skills (reading and writing, listening and speaking) as the basic topic of our investigation.

I. Vocabulary defined

1. Vocabulary

Second language vocabulary learning has become an important subject for many researchers. Therefore, a great deal of studies advocates that vocabulary is the key aspect in L2 learning. Vocabulary is defined by Hubbard (1983:67) as “*a powerful carrier of meaning*”. That is to say the comprehension of language depends on vocabulary. Similarly, Hutch and Brown (1995:2) consider vocabulary as: “*a list of words for a particular language or a set of words that an individual speaker of a language might use*”. This quotation means that vocabulary is the words existing in a language which are used by a student in order to communicate.

Additionally, Nation (2001:22) states that “*Vocabulary knowledge implies learning a word in the spoken form of word and the spokenform can be recognised and understood it in*

and out of context rather than guessed up". This definition means that learning a word should be based on its form and meaning. Therefore, learner should know not only the meaning of words but also the use of words in the appropriate context. In this respect, Schmitt(2000:05, quoted in Linglin Wu 2009:5-6) states that vocabulary is:

A list of words, usually, in alphabetical order with explanation of their meaning. A word is most linguistics analysis is described as a set of properties, or features. Word in the combination of its meaning, register, association, collocation grammatical behaviour, written form (spelling) spoken form (pronunciation) and frequency to master a word is not only to learn its meaning, but also to master seven other aspects, all those properties are called word knowledge.

This block quotation indicates that vocabulary is the knowledge of words with their meaning, types and forms, words can come in oral form such as those used in listening and speaking or can come in print form such as those words that we recognize and use in reading and writing. Vocabulary is defined by Camil and Herbert (2005: 2-3) as *"the knowledge of word meaning"*. This means that learning words should be based on their meaning at first. For instance, to learn a new word, learners should know its meaning because the meaning of word is the key to effective language learning and communication. In another way, Diamond and Guntohn (2006:1) define vocabulary as *"the knowledge of word and their meaning"*. That is to say, vocabulary refers to the words we use to communicate in oral and print language.

According to Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (1989:16) *"the vocabulary of a language is the total number of words"* and *"Someone's vocabulary is the total number of words in language that he or she knows"*. That is to say, vocabulary refers to a set of words that learners acquire and learn a given language.

Additionally, R. Lado (1994:76) defined vocabulary as: *"Words having meaning; these words are used by language speakers, and each words are a combination of sounds acting as a stimulus to bring into attention the experience to which it has become attached by use"*. This definition means that vocabulary is a set of words and each word in that set is used

to convey meaning. Similarly, Lewis (1993: 23) writes that “*vocabulary is the core task in SLA, and any language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing translation cannot exist without vocabulary*”. This implies that vocabulary is regarded as a very important means in enhancing the four language skills.

In this sense, Ur (1996:60) also defined vocabulary as “*the words that teachers teach in the foreign language*”. That is to say, vocabulary refers to the knowledge and meaning of words that teachers present to learners in classroom. Furthermore, Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2003:1423) defines vocabulary as “*all the words known and used by a particular person*” and as “*all the words which exist in a particular language or subject*”. This means that vocabulary is the knowledge and the use of words existing in a language. Different definitions are given to vocabulary but they have the common points for example vocabulary is the knowledge of words and their meaning.

2. Types of Vocabulary

Many authors such as Laufer (1998), Laufer &Paripakht (1998), Henriksen (1999), Nation (2001), Schmitt et all (2004) suggest that vocabulary consists of productive and receptive vocabulary. According to Neuman and Dwyer (2009:385) “*vocabulary is the words that we must know to communicate effectively: words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary)*”. In another part Palmer (1921 cited in Nation, 2001:118) states:

The validity of receptive and productive distinction as a way of distinguishing types of vocabulary knowledge in most cases depends on its resemblance to the distinction between the receptive skills of listening and reading, and also the productive skills of speaking and writing.

One can understand from this that receptive and productive vocabulary are both related to the four language skills. A distinction is made between listening and reading as receptive skills when students read texts or listen to stories they receive a set of new words. Therefore,

Nation considered writing and speaking as productive skills. That is to say, learners know how the word should be written and spelled and use it in their appropriate meaning.

2.1 Productive Vocabulary

According to Nation (2003:25) “*Productive vocabulary refers to the words that students can pronounce, spell and write*”. That is to say, speaking and writing are considered as productive vocabulary. Productive vocabulary is the words that the learners understand and can pronounce correctly and use constructively in speaking and writing. It involves the ability to speak or write at the appropriate time. Therefore, productive vocabulary can be considered as an active process, because the learners can produce the words to express their thoughts to others (Stuart Webb, 2006).

2.2. Receptive Vocabulary

Receptive vocabulary refers to words that learners recognize and understand when they are used, but which they cannot produce. It is the vocabulary that learners recognize in listening to texts, but do not use it in speaking and writing (Webb, 2009). This second type of vocabulary demonstrates that learners may receive different meaningful words that they are able to recognize through listening.

3.The Importance of Vocabulary in EFL Learning

In terms of English language learning, Nation (2001) claims that in English as a second language (ESL) and in English as a foreign language (EFL) learning vocabulary items plays a vital role in all language skills. Also Savington (1997:78) regards vocabulary as an essential factor in learning a language.

Many researchers have turned their attention to vocabulary such as Nation (1990), Coady & Huckin (1997), and (1997). For example, Schmitt (2000: 55) argues that “*lexical knowledge is central to communicative competence and to the acquisition of second*

language". That is to say, vocabulary is important to communicate and acquire the second language.

Furthermore, Swan and Walter (1984:7) claim that "*vocabulary acquisition is the largest and the most important task facing the language learner*". This illustrates that learners who are familiar with second or foreign language are able to use it or write it in a systematic way. In fact, without vocabulary communication is not possible in any way. In this sense, Allen (1983:5) explains that "*communication breaks down when the choice of words is not successful, so that, it is necessary to teach vocabulary*" That is to say, vocabulary is viewed as an important tool while students communicate with each other's.

In some studies, it is stated that vocabulary is even more important than grammar because communication does not break down if the speaker lacks grammatical instruction, but if he/she does not know the words and expression he /she cannot say anything. Furthermore, Wilkins (2000:111) says "*without grammar very little can be conveyed without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed*". This refers to the view that without establishing a strong basic vocabulary learner cannot communicate successfully while with the absence of grammar they can transmit messages among each other's.

Moreover, Dellar and Hocking argue that "*If you spend most of your time studying grammar, your English will not improve very much, you will see most improvement if you learn more words and expression, you can say very little with grammar, but you can say almost anything without words*". (Cited in Thornburg Scott, 2002:13). This refers to the view that words are the most powerful tools in building any piece of discourse. In the same view, Wilkins (1972:97) states that "*there is not much value in being able to produce grammatical sentence if one has not got the vocabulary that is needed to convey what one wishes to say...while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed*". This means that grammar knowledge is insufficient because it is impossible to

say anything without vocabulary, words are the most powerful tool to build any type of speech.

Additionally, according to Huckin (1995), second language readers rely heavily on vocabulary knowledge and the lack of that knowledge is the main and the largest obstacle for L2 readers to overcome. In production, when we have a meaning or concept that we wish to express, we need to have a store of words from which we can select to express this meaning or concept. *“When students travel, they don’t carry grammar books, they carry dictionaries”* (Krashen, as cited in Lewis, 1993: 25). In a similar view, Schmitt (2010:4) notes that *“learners carry around dictionaries and not grammar books”*. This illustrates that dictionaries have a great and powerful role that provides learners with the meaning of words, and help them to know and understand how they use words in real life situation.

Neither literature nor language exists without vocabulary. Laufer (1993) describes words as bricks with which the poetry and the literature of the world have been built. This means that we express our thought to others mainly through using words that we compose. According to Harmer (2002:153) *“if language structure made up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh”*. In a clear way, language is made up of words. So, in order to use language appropriately and effectively the language users must have a good mastery of vocabulary.

4. Difficulty of Learning and Remembering English Vocabulary

Learning and remembering English vocabulary cannot be easy for some students. Thus, there are many authors who discussed the aspects that make some words more difficult to learn. For example, Thornbury (2002: 27) mentions the main factors which cause difficulties in learning vocabulary, and these are: *“pronunciation, spelling, meaning, connotation and idiomacity of words (words used in wide context are easy to learn and remember)”*. In the same view, McCarthy (1990:86) proposed some reasons that cause

difficulty to learn vocabulary such as: “*phonology, close meaning of words, false friends, and cultural differences*”.

Later on, McCarthy & Schmitt (1997) developed this idea by proposing some other factors which affect vocabulary learning such as: “pronounceability”; which refers to the English sound system, “orthography”; which refers to the correct spelling of words, “morphology”; such as irregularity of plural and gender nouns, length of words, “synonymy”; which is the confusion about words that sound or look alike, “grammatical categories” like; adverbs, nouns, and adjectives, also the “semantic features” such as; idiomacity of meaning.

As regards the remembering of vocabulary learning, McCarthy (1990:86) assumes that “*the words that occur regularly are the most remembered ones*”. In this sense, Nation (1990:33) points out three conditions influencing the process of learning and remembering English vocabulary which are “*learner’s previous experience of English and their mother tongue, the way in which the word is learned or taught, and the intrinsic difficulty of the word*”. That is to say, remembering new words may be influenced by the students’ attitudes towards the English language and the impact of their mother tongue in addition to how students are familiar with new words.

I. Approaches to Vocabulary Learning

Learning vocabulary has two main approaches, therefore students have to follow two different ways in learning their vocabulary either in an intentional way that refers to the learning of words with a great intention and or in an incidental way which refers to the learning of words without any intention to learn.

1. Intentional Vocabulary Learning

Intentional learning is often used interchangeably with explicit learning. This is due to some opinions asserted by some scholars such as Schmitt (2000:120) who demonstrates that *“it can be called explicit learning of vocabulary and it focuses attention directly on the information to be learned”*. This definition means that learners learn their vocabulary with a great attention and in a direct way. According to Nation (1990) who states that in order to enrich their vocabulary learners may use dictionaries, vocabulary list and their translation, direct vocabulary explanation learning, learning affixes, and matching words with different definitions. That is to say learners use different tools to understand the meaning and the form of new words.

According to Ellis (1994: 1), the explicit or the intentional learning is regarded as *“the more conscious operation where the individual makes and tests hypothesis in a search for structure”*. This quotation means that learners acquire their vocabulary with a great deal of attention. Therefore, Ellis (1999) adds that intentional learning occurs when the learner’s primary attention is focused on learning L2 new words.

Additionally, explicit learning is defined by Brown and Hutch (1995:368) *“as being designed, planned for, or intended by teacher or students”*, This refers to the view that learning is acquired as a result of careful search for information and learners learn new words intentionally with great consciousness. In another way intentional learning is viewed *“as any activity geared at committing lexical information to memory”* (Hulstijn 2001:267). That is to say, learners memorise directly their new vocabulary items. For example, when a teacher asks his/her students read to find out the meaning of unknown words this is what is called intentional learning.

Involvement Load Hypothesis

Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) formulate the involvement load hypothesis which claims that incidental vocabulary learning can only take place when there is cognitive processing. Therefore, they divided “*involvement load*” into three components. The first one is the “*motivational component*” that refers to learner’s need to determine the meaning of new words. The second one is the “*cognitive component*” which refers to when learners search the meaning of new words. For instance, using a dictionary. The third component is “*evaluation*”. For example, whether the information is obtained from a dictionary applies to verbal and non-verbal context. As a result, the involvement load hypothesis consists of three important elements which are Need, Search, and Evaluate (Ibid).

1.2. Incidental Vocabulary Learning

Many scholars such as Hutch and Brown (1995:368), Nation (2000), Nation(2001), Ellis (1999), Krashen (1989), Laufer& Hulstijn (2001) and others were interested in incidental vocabulary learning. The latter is defined as a kind of learning method from reading, listening, speaking or writing to language use while learner’s main attention focuses on the information of passages or text. According to Nation(2001: 232) this method “*includes learning from extensive reading, taking part in conversation, listening to stories, watching English movies, listening to radio or other exposure of input and output both out and in classroom*”. That is to say, incidental vocabulary takes the most important place in vocabulary learning.

As it is stated by Hulstijn (2001:258) “*most of vocabulary items are acquired incidentally that is a by-product of the learner being engaged in listening, reading, speaking and writing activities*”. Also Ellis (1994: 3) defines incidental learning as “*acquisition of knowledge about the underlying structure of a complex stimulus environment by a process which takes place naturally, simply and without conscious operation*”. This refers to the view

that incidental vocabulary learning is a way of learning new vocabulary items without any intention. In some studies, the term incidental learning is also called implicit learning.

Additionally, (Hulstijn 2001:267) defined incidental or implicit learning as “*the learning of vocabulary as the by-product of any activity not explicitly geared to vocabulary learning*”. That is to say, incidental learning is the consequence of activities that are not intended to vocabulary learning.

Schmidt (1994:168) states that “*implicit learning can be interpreted in two ways; firstly, meaning that implicit learning is unintentional and thus incidental, and secondly meaning that it involves induction without awareness*”. This definition means that incidental vocabulary learning occurs unconsciously. Also, without attentiveness to learn.

Furthermore, Gass(1999:319) considers incidental vocabulary learning to take place “*as a by-product of other cognitive exercises (e.g. reading, listening involving comprehension)*”. For instance, when a person reads for pleasure he or she doesn’t bother to look up a word he or she doesn’t know in a dictionary, but a few pages later realises what word means in this case incidental vocabulary learning is said to have taken place. Laufer & Hulstijn (2001:10) defined this type of learning as “*learning without intent to learn*”. Also, it is defined by Schmidt (1994) as the learning of vocabulary when the learner’s primary objective is to do something else. In this case, learners learn vocabulary item without any prior purposes to learn.

2. Strategies of Incidental Vocabulary Learning

Incidental Vocabulary Learning depends on the type of cognitive process in which the learner is engaged.

2.1. Incidental Vocabulary Learning through Extensive Reading

The effect of extensive reading on learning new second language vocabulary has been discussed by many researchers. Some L2 vocabulary researchers such as Krashen (1989)

maintain the idea that reading is the primary source of lexical development in the second language. According to Huckin and Coady (1999), this process of learning may give learners a richer sense of a word by offering various context in addition to making vocabulary learning and reading happen simultaneously, and this type of learning depends on the learners own choice of reading.

Moreover, Grabe and Stoller (2002: 259) state that “*extensive reading involves learners in reading “large quantities of materials within their linguistic competence”*”. That is to say, extensive reading develops learners’ unconscious knowledge of grammar and vocabulary that allows them to use language.

2.2. The Input Hypothesis

In Krashen’s theory another principle is the distinction between acquisition and learning as two distinctive processes. Acquisition is “*a subconscious process identical in all important ways to the process children utilize in acquiring their native language*”. In this sense, he describes language acquisition as subconscious because learners are generally not consciously aware of the rules of the languages they have acquired. In another way of defining acquisition (Krashen, 1985:10) states that “*acquisition includes implicit learning, informal learning, and natural learning in non-technical language, acquisition is picking-up a language*”. He this quotation means that acquisition incorporates incidental learning in an indirect way without any attention. Also, he defines learning as “*a conscious process results in knowing about the rules of language*”. (Ibid). That is to say, learning occurs in a direct way with a great attention to learn the language.

In terms of incidental vocabulary learning, Steven Krashen (1989) claims that Incidental Vocabulary Learning occurs through his “Input Hypothesis”, also called “The Natural Approach” with reading offering the Comprehensible Input that led naturally to language acquisition. Krashen (1989:440-464) that “*comprehensible input is the key aspect*

to acquire the second language". That is to say, without comprehension of vocabulary items acquisition will be impossible. He adds that interesting and relevant vocabulary input should be provided to language learners in order to help them achieve the mastery of language. Krashen's theory (1989:440-464) includes free vocabulary reading of one's own interest as this enhances incidental learning. Successful language acquisition depends on how much learners receive the comprehensible input. In this sense, Krashen stresses that comprehensible input helps students acquiring language, and that input should not be grammatically sequenced as such sequencing is not needed. Thus, students would be able to understand every class and will never stay behind.

Krashen (1982:20-21) took a very strong position on the importance of input, asserting that comprehensible input is all that is necessary for second language acquisition. The importance of the input was also strengthened by Ellis and Shintani (2014) in the sense that L2 learners need a great quantity of input in the form of listening and reading. In second language acquisition research input is said to provide opportunities for both incidental intentional learning. This means that learners needs reading and listening input to learn vocabulary

2.3. The Output Hypothesis

The Output Hypothesis is introduced by Merrill Swain (1985:235-256). She argues that the comprehensible input is necessary but it is not sufficient for language learning. Thus, the comprehensible output is that in understanding input, learners can ignore the syntactic system and go straight for meaning. That is to say, learners focus just on the meaning rather than the form and grammatical rules of language. Therefore, Swain (2005:471-474) suggests that the mastering of second language depends on output. She states that when students are speaking, they must modify their utterances in order to be understood especially when they are engaged in verbal production such as communication with other.

This is a great opportunity for them to learn vocabulary successfully and incidentally Swain (1985). In short, this hypothesis can be explained in this way, there is a student who has a lot of knowledge but he has not tested his ideas. Thus, he met another student who is a native speaker of English. The first student said “hi yesterday I go to class” the second answered him explanatively “Don’t you mean you went to class?” The first repeated “All right, yesterday I went to class”, so the native one said “Great! Now you have got it”. Through this short conversation, the first student has tested his knowledge of language in a successful way. He could only get there by producing output. The more output he produced, the more he tested what he knew and he did not know. He created the best conditions for learning.

3.The Key Factors Promoting Second Language Incidental Vocabulary Learning

There are three main factors that promoting second language incidental vocabulary learning which are; the exposure to incidental vocabulary learning, context is and incidental vocabulary learning, motivation in incidental vocabulary learning.

3.1. Exposure to Incidental Vocabulary Learning

The more learners are exposed to the second language, the more they learn vocabulary incidentally. This idea can be explained by Nation and Meister's study (1978:76). Their participants, who were native speakers of English, read the English novel, *A Clockwork Orange*, in which Russian slang words were embedded. The findings showed that the learners were able to acquire incidentally 75 percent of the Target words. They also found a connection between the number of encounters to the target words and whether they were acquired or not. The findings of this study also revealed how the amount of exposure to L2 words through reading passages could affect the incidental vocabulary learning. In the same idea, Ellis(2014:38)states that “*If learners do not receive exposure to the target language*

they cannot acquire it". This means that exposure is necessary for knowing and acquiring the target language.

3.2. Context and Incidental Vocabulary Learning

Incidental vocabulary learning theory suggests that learning from context is an effective strategy. In this sense, Stevick (1976:30) points out that *"Vocabulary is easier to learn in context than is isolated words lists such meaningful contexts permit this more complex and deeper cognitive processing, which enhance storage in the memory"*. Thus, words should not be taught out of context. In addition, (Fraser, 1999; Paribakht and Wesche (1999) assume that when reading, learners can learn vocabulary from using the "lexical inferencing" which refers to the process of guessing the unknown words by using their linguistics knowledge. In addition, Nation (2001:232) maintains that *"incidental learning via guessing from context is the most important of all sources of vocabulary learning"*. This suggests that, guessing meaning from context is a very important strategy for learning vocabulary incidentally.

3.3. Motivation in incidental vocabulary learning

Learners' attitudes towards the English language lead either to successful or unsuccessful incidental vocabulary learning. In this sense, Richards and Schmidt(2002) cited in Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching (2002:297) defines language attitudes as follow. *"Language attitudes may have an effect on second language or foreign language learning. The measurement of language attitudes provides information which is useful in language teaching and language learning."* That is to say, the way learner feel about a certain language has an impact on the way they learn it, if they have a positive attitude toward language they learn it with a great motivation if they have a negative attitude their learning will be unsuccessful.

In addition, learners' attitudes towards a language, speakers, and a particular culture may also affect their memory. In this sense, Brown (2000:180) states that

“Attitudes ... develop early in childhood and are the results of parents' and peers' attitudes, of contact with people who are different in any number of ways These attitudes form a part of one's perception of self, of others, and of the culture in which one is living”.

In other words, Brown considers that positive attitudes toward self, the native and the target language group enhance motivation for learning, and that negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation. Furthermore, attitudes are considered to be an important component of motivation in second language learning incidentally. Gardner (1985:10) claims that *“motivation refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes toward learning the language”*. This quotation suggests that, in terms of language learning, motivation is both wanting and making efforts to learn.

In addition, according to Dörnyei (1998:117) *“motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning”*. That is to say, motivation gives the principal stimulation for second language learning to begin. Thus, motivation is considered to be a key aspect that influences the success of L2 acquisition Dörnyei(1998), Mori (2002). Likewise, Schmitt (2008:338) states that *“even the best materials are little good if students do not engage with them”*. This means that when students do not have the desire to learn a language, even the best tools such as dictionaries and books seem insufficient.

4. The occurrence of incidental vocabulary learning in the four language skills

Historically, the term incidental vocabulary learning goes back to the middle of the 20th century, in terms of stimulus-response psychology. Later on, many researchers came to claim that incidental vocabulary learning occurs depending on the Input learning and the Output learning. In terms of second language learning, the notion of the Input refers to the

process of receipting and understanding language; whereas, the Output refers to the production and expression of language. In other words, second language learners need much exposure to language for successful incidental vocabulary learning. Thus, this exposure refers to the four language skills.

4.1. The Spoken Output

The notion of the Spoken Output has been proposed by Hall (1992, cited in Coady & Huckin, 1997:242). Hall shades light on the importance of interactive activities in learning vocabulary. He considers that split information activities *'can provide opportunities for talk ... which increase both language knowledge and content knowledge'*. In other words, second language learners can gain knowledge and learn information by doing activities where they share information in order to solve a problem like completing a diagram or a table. Hall also suggests that the implementation of the Output in “new context and new structures” leads to vocabulary learning. In this sense, spoken output activities allow students to practice the language in and interact in different contexts and real situations.

4.2. The Reading Input

Simcock (1993, cited in Coady & Huckin 1997:242) suggests the ask-and-answer activities where students read a story in pairs and then answer to their partner's questions about the events of the story as they were in it. The results of this study revealed that the new vocabulary incidentally learned during this reading input was used by learners in a productive way even they were not being asked by their partners. In this sense, in the reading input learners focus more on meaning and this leads to the occurrence of incidental vocabulary learning. The more learners *read*; the more *input* their brain gets about the second language, and learn its vocabulary.

4.3. The Listening input

Second language learners have a great opportunity to check up a new word when they engage in listening activities such as listening to stories such as a dialogue or conversation in the target language. This makes students learn new vocabulary words incidentally. According to Elley (1989, cited in Coady & Huckin, 1997: 242), the language vocabulary acquisition is successful when attention is focused more on meaningful communication rather than on language itself. She argues that new vocabulary encountered in the listening output yet she proved the empirical evidence of incidental vocabulary learning for seven to eight-year-olds involved in the listening to stories in which there was a repetition of new words, This repetition, illustration and the explanation of new words and redundancy through context. Elley recorded gains of (15%) where there was no explanation of new words and (40%) gain where explanation occurred. This result relates largely to the role of listening activities.

In another empirical evidence of incidental vocabulary learning Elley (1991) launched the experiment of “book flood”, which lasted a long time, from 12 months to 36 months. The participants, ranged from six to twelve years old, were asked to read some books which were required to read in English-speaking countries. After two years, the participants’ oral expression, reading comprehension, and writing abilities are improved as well as their size of vocabulary.

Additionally, Newton (1995, cited in Coady & Huckin, 1997:243) conducted an experiment of vocabulary acquisition through speaking he took a number of words about 111 words, 35% of this words were familiar by all the participants and 54% were known by just one or two participant and 11%-word meaning were unknown by all participants then all the words appeared in the text. Thus, participants were divided into groups to discuss the theme of the text through this pre-test. The study showed that the words which are mentioned yet

were easy and better acquired by the learners than words that never talked about and this short pre-test argues that vocabulary could be acquired through listening.

4.4. The Writing output

In second language learning, learners have opportunities to learn new words when they are engaged in writing task. There are some studies of incidental vocabulary acquisition through writing tasks for example Hulstijn and Trompeter (1998) found that it was more effective to use the new words looked up in an L1/ L2 dictionary to write a composition than use the words to do comprehension tasks. Also, the notion of text-input (writing) has been proposed by Jonathan Newton (1993, cited in Coady & Huckin, 1997:243) where he provided an empirical evidence of incidental vocabulary learning by giving two split information tasks and shared information activities to two groups of four learners, the learners recognition of vocabulary in the task was pre-and post-tested and full transcripts to analyse the negotiation of this vocabulary during task performances, so he took 111 words for testing the participants in pre-test and post-test. This study revealed three findings. The first one is that some learners within this group have recognised the meaning of words and the majority of the participants did not recognize it. As results, the learners who recognised the words can be considered as the learning resource for those who didn't know the words.

Secondly, this recognition of unknown words by learners helps them to learn and use vocabulary. Thirdly, this study showed that learners recognition of vocabulary and providing its meaning, they made an important step to acquire new vocabulary and this, by performing the four languages skills.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the literature related to incidental vocabulary learning in EFL/ESL. It is divided into two parts. The first part has started by the definition of vocabulary given by authors, then the kinds of vocabulary. It has shown how vocabulary

plays the most important part in language learning. In addition to, its main approaches intentional and incidental vocabulary. In the second part, this chapter has dealt with the main strategies used by learners through which they learn their vocabulary incidentally. Then, it has discussed the factors promoting incidental vocabulary learning which are context, exposure, motivation and learners 'attitudes towards English vocabulary learning. In addition to that, it has focused on the basic theory of our investigation which has shown how incidental vocabulary learning occurs in the four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking).The next chapter will deal with research design.

Introduction

This chapter deals with the research design of the study. It is designed to present the methods and materials through which data are collected and analysed. It is divided into two sections: The first section deals with collecting information about incidental vocabulary learning of the population sample and with the description of the questionnaire. The second section is concerned with the tools through which the data are analysed. We have adopted the mixed method (quantitative by using the rule of three, and qualitative methods by using the qualitative content analysis) to analyse the data gathered from the questionnaire.

1. Context and Subject of Investigation

The investigation is carried out in the Department of English at MMUTO. The study is concerned with one hundred “Third year” students responding to the questionnaire.

2. Procedures of Data Collection Tool

In order to get answers to the research questions and check hypotheses stated in the General Introduction, a questionnaire has been used as a research instrument for the sake of collecting data.

2.1 Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a tool through which we collect data. It is an instrument which includes a number of questions that require a complete answer or selecting one among the existing answers. Anderson (1990: 207) claims that the questionnaire “*allows the gathering of reliable and valid data, relatively, in a short time*”. That is to say, it is a means through which the researcher collects information about his or her research. In this sense, Wilson and Mc Lean (1994 cited in Cohen et al., 2007:317) also write that “*the questionnaire is a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information, providing structured, often numerical data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher...*” This means that a questionnaire is a tool to get information from participants, and the presence of the

researcher is not needed as in interviews or classroom observation. In addition, Dornyei (2007: 101) states that: *The popularity of questionnaires is due to the fact that they are relatively easy to construct, extremely versatile and uniquely capable of gathering a large amount of information quickly in a form that is readily accessible*". In other words, a questionnaire is a data gathering tool designed to meet specific, needed information; it contains a set of questions that are addressed to the participants for data collection purposes.

The questionnaire contains two types of questions: close and open-ended questions. As regards the close-ended questions, the researcher suggests a list of answers to the participants and they choose the appropriate ones. In the open-ended questions, the researcher asks the participants a set of questions where they can argue and answer in their own way.

2.1.1 The students' questionnaire

The students' questionnaire aims to gather information about third-year students' English vocabulary learning in the Department of English at MMUTO. In the introduction we have explained to the learners the objective of the questionnaire. We proposed to them a set of questions where they were requested to answer by ticking the appropriate box and making full statements whenever required. We asked them fourteen questions and they gave us the appropriate answers which permitted us to get information about our investigation. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. The first section deals with students' opinions towards English vocabulary learning, and the second section deals with incidental vocabulary learning.

3. Procedures of Data Analysis

In this part of our research, we used the mixed method research to analyse the data collected by using the questionnaire. We adopted the quantitative method by using the rule of three to interpret the numerical data gathered from the close-ended questions of the

questionnaire, and the qualitative method by using the qualitative content analysis to analyse and interpret the opinions of students gathered from the open-ended questions.

3.1 The Mixed Method

The mixed method is that kind of research which combines both qualitative and quantitative method to collect and analyse more descriptive and reliable data that obtained from each method alone. In this sense, Greene Jennifer (cited in, Jhonson et al (2007:19) states that “*Mixed method ... involves more than one methodological tradition ... along with more than one kind of technique for gathering, analysing, and representing human phenomena*”. In other words, the mixed method is an approach which combines more than one method to investigate social phenomena, and this by gathering and analysing information through different techniques. In the same view, Creswell (2003:12) states that “*Mixed methods researchers look to many approaches to collecting and analyzing data rather than subscribing to only one way... using both quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide the best understanding of a research problem.*”. This means that the mixed method is the combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods. It provides the researcher with a more complete and comprehensive understanding of the research problem than using either quantitative or qualitative approaches alone.

3.2 The Qualitative Method

According to Nkwi, Nyamongo and Ryan(2001:1) “*Qualitative research involves any research that uses data that do not indicate ordinal values*”. This means that the qualitative method is not used for collecting numerical and statistical data, but for collecting, analysing, and interpreting words, experiences and opinions of the participants in the investigation. In addition, Punch (1998:4) claims that “*Qualitative research is empirical research where data are not in the form of numbers*”. The qualitative method deals with results obtained from open-ended questions. In the same view, Denzin & Lincoln (1994: 2) state that “*Qualitative*

research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter". That is to say, the qualitative method is interested in analyzing people's perceptions of naturalistic phenomena. An important advantage of qualitative research is the ability to deeply obtain great descriptive data about social phenomena.

3.3 The Quantitative Method

According to Best and Khan (1989:89-90) "*Quantitative research consists of those studies in which the data concerned can be analyzed in terms of numbers*". In this sense, the quantitative method is used by a researcher to collect numerical data such as statistics, numbers, and percentages. In Addition, (Kowalczyk, 2016) considers that quantitative research methods are those methods in which the researchers use numbers to explain the results of their investigation. In the same idea, Creswell (1994) considers that quantitative method is a type of method which explains a phenomenon by collecting numbers and analysing them by using mathematics. Quantitative research is advantageous for studies that involve numbers because the results are valid and reliable.

Conclusion

This chapter has put its focus on the research design of the study. It consists of research, the context and subject of investigation which explains where the investigation took place. Then, it has dealt also with the procedures of data collection tool in which we have given the different definitions of the questionnaire and describe the students' questionnaire. Finally, it has dealt with the procedures of data analysis where we have defined the mixed method, qualitative, and quantitative methods. In the following chapter we will present the findings of our investigation.

Introduction

This chapter aims at presenting the results of the questionnaire that we have addressed to 100 third year students at the department of English at MMUTO. The main objective of this chapter is to show the importance of incidental vocabulary learning and how it occurs in the four language skills. The findings of the questionnaire are presented in percentages and shown in the form sections. The first section gives students' answers about the importance of vocabulary learning and its difficulty. The second section contains answers taken by students about incidental vocabulary learning, and the third section gives students' answers about incidental vocabulary learning in the four language skills.

Presentation of the Students' Questionnaires' Results

1.1. Section One: Students' opinions towards English vocabulary learning

Q1: How important is vocabulary learning?

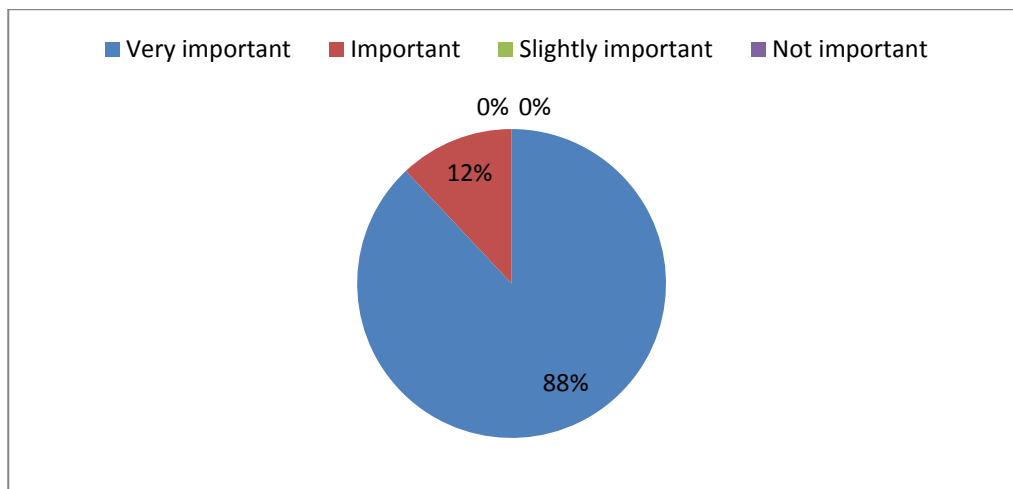


Figure1: Student's opinions Towards the Importance of English Vocabulary Learning

As it is shown in figure 1, the majority of students (88%) consider that vocabulary is very important in English language learning, and only (12%) of them say that it is important, and no one of them denied the importance of vocabulary learning.

Q2: How difficult is vocabulary learning in English?

	Participants	Percentages
Very difficult	8	8%
Difficult	26	26%
Slightly difficult	56	56%
Easy	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Table 1: Students' Attitude Towards the Difficulty of Vocabulary Learning in English

Table 1 shows that the majority of students (56%) answered that vocabulary learning is slightly difficult and (26%) of them answered that it is difficult. Only (10%) say that it is easy and the minority (8%) of them answered that it is very difficult.

1.2. Section2: Incidental Vocabulary Learning

Q3-In the classroom, how often do you learn new words?

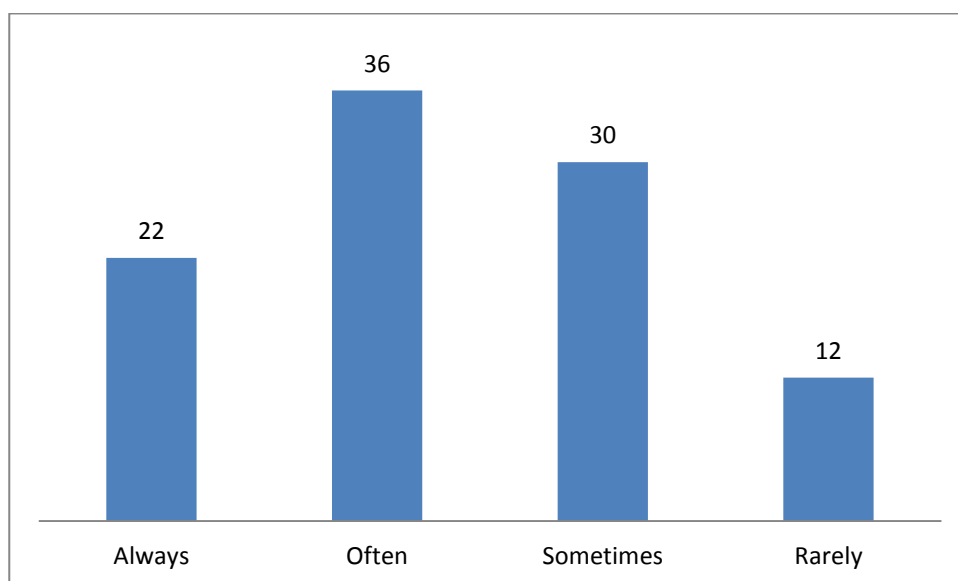


Figure2: Student's Learning New words in the Classroom

As it is indicated in figure 2, (36%) of students said that they learn new words often and 30 % answered that they learn new words sometimes. (22%) of students answered that they always learn new words during the lesson and (12%) say that they do that rarely.

Q4: When you do not understand a given word, do you rely on context to understand it?

	Participants	Percentages
Yes	90	90%
No	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Table2: Students' Reliance on Context when they do not Understand a Given Word

As table 2 indicates, the majority of students (90%) rely on context when they do not understand a given word and (10%) of students do not rely on context.

Q5: Where do you usually learn new words?

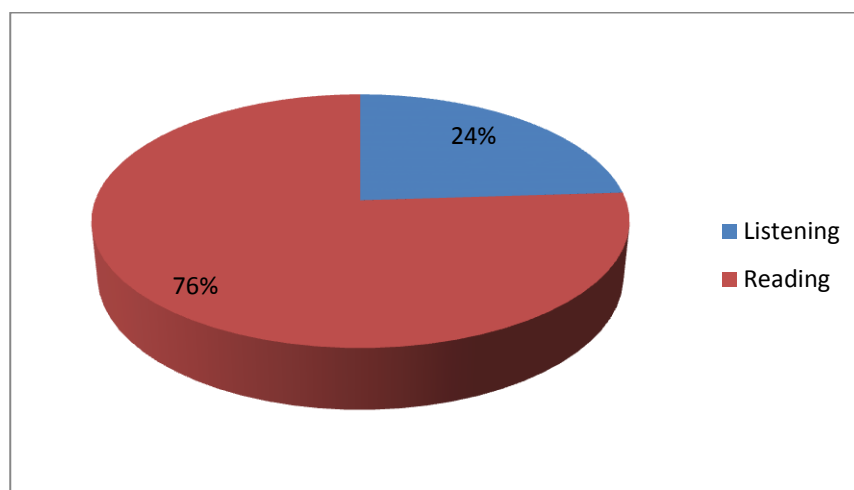


Figure3: Students' Learning New Words in Listening and Reading

The findings in figure 3 show that most of the students (76%) usually learn new words in reading and only (24%) learn new words in listening.

Q6: Learning new vocabulary is more effective through reading

	Participants	Percentages
Strongly agree	24	24%
Agree	66	66%
Slightly agree	10	10%
Disagree	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Table3: The Effectiveness of Vocabulary Learning Through Reading

As table 3 indicates the rate of students who agree about the fact that vocabulary learning is more effective through reading is (66%). In addition, (24%) strongly agree about it. However, (10%) of them slightly agree and no one disagrees.

Q7: How do you usually learn new words?

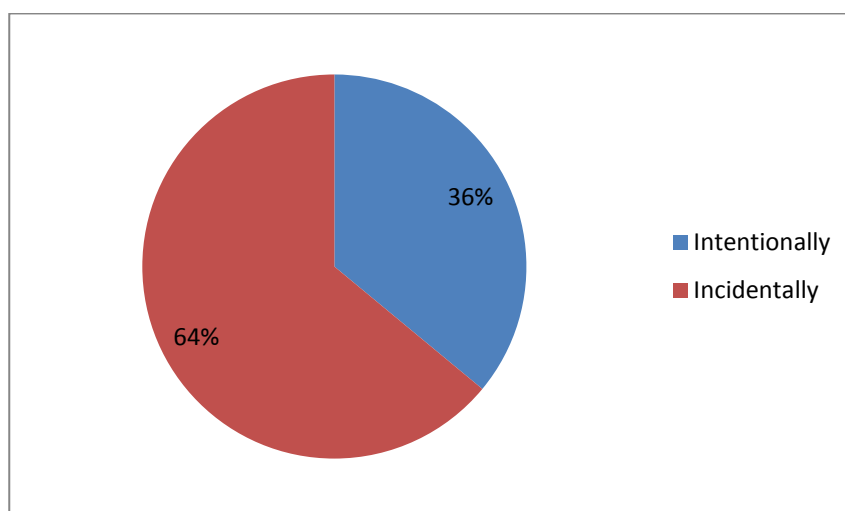


Figure4: The Way Students Learn New Words

Table 4 shows that the majority of students (64%) usually learn new words in an incidental way and (36%) of them usually learn new words in an intentional way.

Q8: Do you still remember the new words you learned during your lessons?

	Participants	Percentages
Yes	76	76%
No	24	24%
Total	100	100%

Table4: Remembering of New Words During the Lesson

Table 4 indicates that the majority of students (76%) remember new words they learn during the lesson and (24%) answered that they do not remember them.

Q9: Do you think that when you are exposed to the English language you learn more vocabulary?

	Participants	Percentages
Yes	97	97%
No	3	3%
Total	100	100%

Table5: The Exposure to the English Language and Learning Vocabulary

Table 5 shows that the great majority of students (97%) think that when they are much exposed to the English language they learn more vocabulary, while only (3%) answered no.

1.3. Incidental Vocabulary Learning in the Four Language Skills

Q10: In your opinion, which of the following language skills is more appropriate to learn vocabulary incidentally?

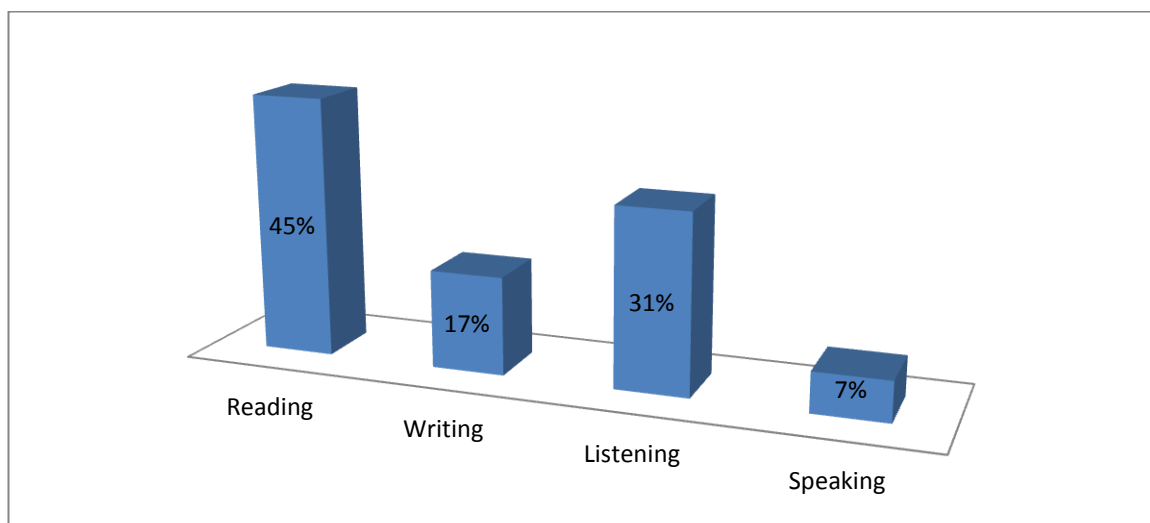


Figure6: The Appropriate Language Skill to Learn Vocabulary Incidentally

The statistics gathered from figure 6 indicates that most of students (45%) think that the appropriate activity to learn vocabulary incidentally is reading, and (31%) think that listening is the appropriate language skill. However, (17%) of students answered with writing, and only (7%) think that speaking is the language skill to learn vocabulary incidentally.

Q11: Which of the following tasks do teachers use in the classroom to teach you vocabulary?

	Participants	Percentages
Role playing	8	8%
Filling the gap	5	5%
Problem solving activities	7	7%
Discussion and presentation	15	15%
Listening to video recordings	27	27%
Extensive reading	38	38%
Total	100	100%

Table6: The Tasks Used by Teachers to Teach Students Vocabulary

Table 6 displays the frequency of the tasks used by teachers to teach vocabulary in the classroom. According to students, the results revealed that extensive reading is the most used task (38%), in addition to listening to video recordings. Then, discussion and presentation with (15%), role playing (8%), problem solving activities (7%), and filling the gap (5%).

Q12: Which of the tasks used by your teachers do you find more appropriate to learn vocabulary incidentally?

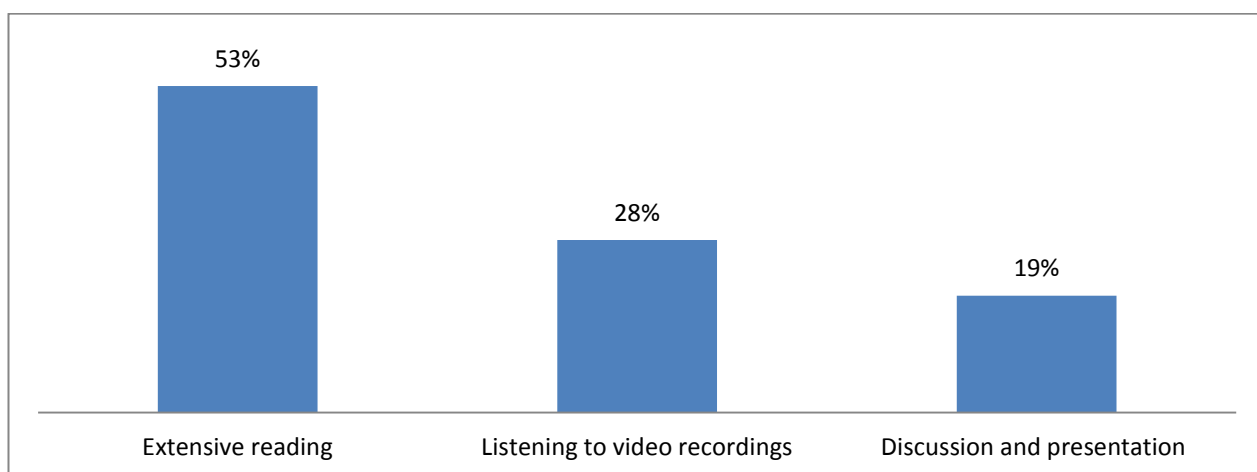


Figure6: The Appropriate Tasks to Learn Vocabulary Incidentally According to Students

Figure 6 shows that most of students (53%) think the appropriate task to learn vocabulary incidentally is the extensive reading. (28%) of them answered with listening to video recordings, and only (19%) think that discussion and presentation are the appropriate tasks to learn vocabulary incidentally.

Q13: Successful incidental vocabulary learning is based on the four language skills

	Participants	Percentages
Strongly agree	64	64%
Agree	33	33%
Slightly agree	3	3%
Disagree	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Table7: Students' Opinion about the Fact that Success of Incidental Vocabulary Learning is based on the Four Language Skills

Table 7 reveals that most of students (64%) strongly agree about the idea of success incidental vocabulary learning is based on the four language skills, (33%) of them agree, only (3%) slightly agree, and no one disagree on that.

Conclusion

The results of the student's questionnaire have reported that vocabulary learning plays the most important place in language learning. In addition to that, learning vocabulary is slightly difficult. In fact, the results have revealed that learning vocabulary happens more through incidental way. Also, the four language skills are helpful to students to learn vocabulary incidentally. Through the questionnaire which was addressed to third-year students we have noticed that learning incidentally is really effective in language learning.

Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss the results of our study. The findings will be discussed, analysed, and interpreted in relation to the review of literature and the theory that we have already developed in the first chapter about how incidental vocabulary learning occurs in the four language skills. In this discussion section, answers will be provided to the research questions, and hypotheses will be confirmed or not.

Discussion of the Findings of the Students' Questionnaire

1. Students' Opinions Towards English Vocabulary Learning

The results obtained from the questionnaire demonstrate that the majority of students (88%) consider that vocabulary is very important in learning English and (12%) of them consider it important and no one of them denied its importance. These results make reference to Swan and Walter (1984: 7) who claim that “*vocabulary acquisition is the largest and the most important task facing the language learner*”. The findings show that students' opinions towards English vocabulary learning are positive. The fact that none of the students denied the importance of vocabulary reveals that they are aware of its role in second language learning. In this sense, Nation (2001) considers that learning English items plays an essential role in all language skills. As it is mentioned in the first chapter of our dissertation some studies consider vocabulary more important than grammar. This is in the accordance with Wilkins (1972: 97) who states that “*there is not much value in being able to produce grammatical sentence if one has not got the vocabulary that is needed to convey what one wishes to say...while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed*”. This definition has shown that vocabulary takes a significant place than grammar. Our findings also go in tune with Schmitt (2010: 4) who notes that “*learners carry around dictionaries and not grammar book*”. This statement shows that vocabulary has a great role in language learning.

Additionally, successful communication in second language cannot happen without a rich lexical knowledge. Therefore, the students' view can be explained by making reference to Allen (1983:5) who claims that "*communication breaks down when the choice of words is not successful, so that, it is necessary to teach vocabulary*". In addition to that, these results are confirmed by many researchers who consider that language is made of words, and in order to communicate effectively, second language learners should not only know grammar rules, but should also have a good command of vocabulary. (Nation 2001; Coady & Huckin 1997; Walter 1984; Wilkins 1972; and Harmer 2002)

The results also reveal that (56%) of students consider that learning vocabulary in English as a second language is "slightly difficult" and (26 %) of them find it "difficult" whereas (10%) answered that it is "very difficult" and (8%) "easy". This demonstrates that the level of how much is English vocabulary learning difficult differs from one student to another; it goes from the easy to the very difficult. These difficulties may be explained by the set of factors proposed by Thornbury (2002: 27) that learners can face in their learning such as: pronunciation of words because some words contain silent letters which are difficult and it makes the pronunciation difficult. There is also the problem of connotation which means that there are some words which are easy to learn and remember only in specific contexts and in real-life situations. The results obtained are also interpreted relying on the factors affecting word learning set by Schmitt & McCarthy (1997). That is, students who answered that vocabulary is difficult may have a problem of pronounceability, which means they do not know the English sound system. They may have a problem of orthography which means that they ignore the correct spelling of words; grammar can also affect students' learning which means when they do not make a difference between adverbs, nouns, and adjectives, words will be difficult to learn. Another important factor which affects the vocabulary learning is the

semantic features; For instance, the idiomaticity of meaning which means that some words are only learned in a specific cultural context.

These findings are interpreted by The Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching (2002) which considers that learner's attitudes towards a language may affect the degree of importance of vocabulary. Learners who have positive attitudes towards a language have an increased motivation which facilitates the learning process, but the learners who have negative attitudes towards a language, have a decreased motivation which makes the learning of vocabulary too difficult. Relying on Laufer & Hulstijn's study (2011) where they consider that incidental vocabulary learning occurs not only through the cognitive aspect, but also through the motivational aspect which can be strong or moderate, it is noticed that the majority of students who are strongly self-motivated to learn a language, find its vocabulary easy, and those who have forced by others to learn a language, have a moderate motivation which makes the vocabulary learning difficult. In a clear way, the desire to learn a second language makes its vocabulary learning process easier.

2. Incidental Vocabulary Learning

This section is concerned with students' views about the Incidental vocabulary learning in English as a second language. From the results, it is noted that when we asked students about how often they learn new words in the classroom, (36%) of them said they often learn new words, (30%) of them said sometimes, and there is (22%) of the respondents who answered that they learn always while the minority (12%) of them said that they rarely learn new words in the classroom. This is explained by the fact that students who 'often' and 'always' learn new words are those who find that learning vocabulary is not difficult and give it much importance, whereas the students who consider learning vocabulary being very difficult and do not give it much importance, their learning of second language vocabulary will be unsuccessful. These results are explained by Nation's claim (1990: 33) that "*learner's*

previous experience of English and their mother tongue, the way in which the word is learned or taught, and the intrinsic difficulty of the word” may influence the learning of vocabulary. In other words, students who do often learn new words in the classroom may have a positive view concerning English and their mother tongue does not have an impact on their learning.

These findings are interpreted by Schmitt’s claim (2008: 338) that *“even the best materials are little good if students do not engage with them”*. That is to say, when students are not interested in learning a language, even the best language tools will be considered as insufficient. Successful incidental vocabulary learning may happen when learners are strongly motivated and completely engaged in the learning process. In this sense, Dörnyei, (1998) considers that motivation gives learners the stimulus for language learning to begin and to be maintained longer through time.

Our findings also demonstrate that when we asked students if they rely on context when they do not understand a given word, the majority of students (90%) answered yes, they do rely on context; whereas the minority (10%) of them said they do not. These results may be interpreted by the fact that the context helps students to guess the general idea of a sentence, and then understand the meaning of a given word. It goes hand in hand with Stevick’s claim (1976:30) that *“Vocabulary is easier to learn in context than in isolated words lists such meaningful contexts permit this more complex and deeper cognitive processing, which enhance storage in the memory”*. That is to say, successful incidental vocabulary learning may occur through guessing unknown words from context rather than in isolation. It may be noticed that the majority of students who said they rely on context when they do not understand a given word are aware of its importance as a strategy to learn vocabulary, and those who do not rely on context, seem not to notice its usefulness. These results may be confirmed by Nation’s claim (2001: 232) *“incidental learning via guessing from context is the*

most important of all sources of vocabulary learning". Finally, from these results, it may be noticed that relying on context is a strategy for effective learning.

When asking students about where they usually learn new words, either in reading or listening. The majority of students 74% argue that they learn new words in reading, whereas (26%) of them learn new words in listening. These results make reference to Krashen (1989: 440-464) who proposed the Input Hypothesis and claimed that "*comprehensible input is the key aspect to acquire the second language*". Also, Ellis & Shintani (2014) gave much importance to the input by considering that L2 learners need a great quantity of input in the form of listening and reading. The fact that the majority of students learn more vocabulary through reading may be explained by Krashen's claim that free vocabulary reading of one's own interest enhances incidental vocabulary learning, and that successful language acquisition depends on how much learners receive the comprehensible input. In a clear way, words learned both from reading and listening are considered as receptive vocabulary, but reading has more impact on students than listening. That is to say, the reading input learners focus more on meaning and this leads to the occurrence of incidental vocabulary learning.

After that, we proposed to students the following statement "*Learning new vocabulary is more effective through reading*" and the results show that (66%) of the students agree with it, (24%) strongly agree, (10%) slightly agree, and no one disagree with it. This fact is interpreted by what Krashen (1989) said about reading as being the primary source of lexical development. These results are interpreted in relation to the previous question asked to students, where the majority of them answered that they learn new words more in reading rather than listening, they agree about the fact that reading is more effective to learn vocabulary. These findings are confirmed by Grabe & Stoller's claim (2002:259) that "*extensive reading involves learners in reading "large quantities of materials within their*

linguistic competence". That is to say, linguistic competence which refers to the knowledge of grammar rules and vocabulary is enhanced by extensive reading.

Furthermore, the outcomes of our investigation demonstrate the way students learn new vocabulary. The majority of students (64%) said that they learn vocabulary incidentally, whereas (26%) of them learn vocabulary intentionally. These results are explained by the fact that there are two predominant views about learning vocabulary. As it is mentioned in the review of literature, some scholars believe that learning vocabulary means years and years of intentional learning, and some others believe that vocabulary learning can be facilitated by incidental learning which is learning vocabulary without intention. The results obtained from the questionnaire indicate that much intention is given to incidental vocabulary learning than intentional one. This illustrates that the students care about the role of the incidental learning.

The results also can be explained by Hulstijn's (2001:258) claim that "*most of vocabulary items are acquired incidentally that is a by-product of the learner*". Furthermore, Schmidt (1994:168) who states that "*implicit learning can be interpreted in two ways; firstly, meaning that implicit learning is unintentional and thus incidental, and secondly meaning that it involves induction without awareness*". This quotation means that incidental vocabulary learning occurs without any attention or any awareness to do so. Regarding what Schmidt claims and what students have answered we can infer that the majority of students give much importance to incidental vocabulary learning. Moreover, the findings show that vocabulary learning differs among students; The minority of students tend to learn English language vocabulary items through the traditional method, which means they acquire language with a great deal of attention using dictionaries or vocabulary lists which lead them to a direct contact with words and meaning, while most of students prefer to learn vocabulary incidentally. This means in a subconscious way or an indirect way.

When we asked the students the eighth question if they still remember the new words that they learned during lesson their answers show that the majority (76%) of students remember the new words learned during the lesson, whereas (24%) do not remember. These findings are interpreted by McCarthy's claim (1990: 86) that "*the words that occur regularly are the most remembered ones*". That is to say, the more students are exposed to words, the more they remember them. This may be explained by the fact that the rate of remembering new words differs from a student to another, according to the importance they give to vocabulary, its difficulty, and the way of learning it. In other words, students who are motivated to learn English language vocabulary, remember the new words learned in the classroom, but students who have negative attitudes towards English learning and have moderate motivation, do not remember the new words learned during the lesson.

Then, the results relative to the question nine "Do you think that when you are much exposed to the English language, you learn more vocabulary?" indicate that the majority of students (97%) said yes and confirmed that the more they are exposed to the English language, the more they learn its vocabulary. Whereas, only (3%) answered they do not think that exposure to the language leads to learning its vocabulary. These findings are interpreted by Nation & Meister's (1978: 76) study who found a connection between the number of encounters to the target words and whether they were acquired or not. In this sense, Ellis (2014: 38) stated that "*If learners do not receive exposure to the target language they cannot acquire it*". That is to say, the amounts of receptive vocabulary and exposure to the second language acquisition the learners get increase their vocabulary learning.

3. Incidental Vocabulary Learning in the Four Language Skills

The findings also show that when we asked students which of the four languages skills is more appropriate to learn vocabulary incidentally, (45%) of them answered that the reading skill is appropriate, while (31%) of them chose listening, and the other respondents (17%)

answered 'writing' and the minority (7%) of them said 'speaking'. These results are interpreted by the fact that all language skills are important. However, reading and listening (receptive skills) are more effective to learn vocabulary incidentally. These results can be explained by Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1989: 440-464) who states that "*comprehensible input is the key aspect to acquire the second language*". According to Krashen the reading skill has an important role in enhancing students' incidental vocabulary learning. That is; students' understanding of the meaning of new words in reading skill is more appropriate for their learning incidentally. From the students' answers also, it is noticed that the listening skill is important. These results are also explained by Elley's idea that (1998 cited in Coady & Huckin 1997:242) the listening skills plays a great role in vocabulary learning. These findings show that the listening skill is important, but the reading skill is the most important.

After that, we proposed to the students a set of tasks asking them to choose which of this tasks teachers use in the classroom to teach them vocabulary. The results report that 38% of students choose extensive reading, and (27%) of them choose listening to video recordings, (15%) of the participants prefer discussion and presentation activities, whereas (8%) answered role playing task, (7%) of them choose problem solving activities, and (5%) choose fill in the gap task. These findings show that there is diversity in presenting lessons and the extensive reading is highly strengthened by teachers. It is noticed that teachers are aware of the importance of all kind of activities (productive and receptive) that may enhance learners' vocabulary, and primarily the extensive reading.

Then, we asked students to choose from the tasks used by their teacher which one is the appropriate to learn vocabulary incidentally. The majority of the participants (53%) find that extensive reading is more appropriate, (28%) of them choose listening to video recordings, and (19%) chose discussion and presentation. The results obtained from the questionnaire are interpreted by the fact that incidental vocabulary learning is more effective

through extensive reading. The findings are explained by Simcock's reading input (19%) who argues that learners focus more on meaning and this leads to the occurrence of incidental vocabulary learning in reading skill. Additionally, the results go hand in hand with Grabe & Stoller's (2002) claim "*extensive reading involves learners in reading "large quantities of materials within their linguistic competence"*". In other words, the extensive reading tasks permit students to develop their linguistic competence which refers to the knowledge of grammar rules and vocabulary. The findings also show that students care about extensive reading as a good and the appropriate activity for learning vocabulary; the more students are engaged in extensive reading task the more they have opportunities to get more new words knowledge.

Finally, we proposed to the participants this statement "successful incidental vocabulary learning is based on the four languages skill". The results suggest that the majority of students (64%) strongly agree, and (33%) of them agree. However, the minority of students (3%) slightly agree. Therefore, the results demonstrate students' awareness about their successful learning incidentally that based on the four language activities. This means that none of the students denied the essential role played by reading and writing, listening and speaking skills. This is explained through Hulstijn's (2001:258) claim that "*most of vocabulary items are acquired incidentally that is a by-product of the learner being engaged in listening, reading, speaking, and writing activities*". This quotation supports the issue that we have proposed to students.

The findings are also confirmed by the theory of the occurrence of incidental vocabulary learning in the four languages skills. The speaking skill is proposed by Hall (1992 cited in Coady & Huckin 1997:242) in term of "the spoken output". According to Hall, spoken output activities allow students to practice the language in different contextual and real situations. Therefore, he mentions the importance and the role of interactive activities by

considering that split information activities *'can provide opportunities for talk ... which increase both language knowledge and content knowledge'*. That is to say, when learners are engaged in speaking skill they will learn new words incidentally. This is due to the exchange of ideas or the interaction that occurs among students, the reason that they have opportunity to learn more new words incidentally and successfully.

These results are confirmed by the work of Simcock (1993 cited in Coady & Huckin 1997:242) who proposed the reading skill in term of the reading input. Simcock suggests the ask-and-answer activities where students read a story in pairs, then answer to their partner's questions about the events of the story as they were in it. The result of his study revealed that the new vocabulary incidentally learned during this reading input was used by learners. Therefore, reading is considered as one of the four skills which lead to successful incidental vocabulary learning. According to Simcock, the more students read; the more they learn new word incidentally.

Additionally, the results of question thirteen explained previously also can be confirmed by the work of Elley (1989, cited in Coady & Huckin, 1997 242), who states the importance of the listening skill in term of the listening output. She claims that incidental vocabulary acquisition is successful when attention is focused more on meaningful communication rather than on language itself. She argues that when students are engaged in listening skill they have a great opportunity to learn more word incidentally. In her empirical study mentioned in the first chapter of our dissertation, Elley argues that listening skill plays an essential role in successful incidental vocabulary learning.

Finally, the findings obtained from the questionnaire corroborate with Jonathan Newton's work (1993, cited in Coady & Huckin, 1997:243) who provided an empirical evidence of incidental vocabulary learning by giving two split information tasks and shared information activities to two groups of four learners. Therefore, Newton argues that students

who are engaged in writing activities have more opportunity to learn new words incidentally. This is due to their recognition of the meaning of the new words. In relation to the previous works which have been already mentioned in the review of literature and the results obtained from the questionnaire, the statement of “successful incidental vocabulary learning is based on the four languages skills” is confirmed.

Conclusion

In short, the discussion of the findings obtained from the students’ questionnaire about “Incidental vocabulary learning” have answered the research questions and confirmed the hypotheses set in the General Introduction. It has shown that third-year students at the Department of English at MOULOUD MAMMERRI University of Tizi-Ouzou give much importance to vocabulary learning in English. The majority of students learn and remember vocabulary incidentally rather than intentionally. In addition, they assert that when they are much exposed to the English language, they learn more vocabulary. Furthermore, the majority of students confirm that effective incidental vocabulary learning occurs in the four language skills and primarily in the extensive reading. Finally, the outcomes of our investigation have answered all the research questions and have confirmed the hypotheses set in the General Introduction.

Conclusion

The present study has investigated Incidental Vocabulary Learning and its occurrence in the four language skills. The case study is third year students in the Department of English in MMUTO. This investigation is also based on the skill in which students are more involved and motivated in their learning incidentally. Regarding the major works and the previous studies about our research, it has shown that a great deal of interest is given to incidental vocabulary learning. This theoretical framework is considered as the key that helps to develop the theory of how incidental vocabulary learning occurs in languages skills in order to rich the objective of this study.

To check the hypotheses and answer the research questions which are stated in the General Introduction of the study. The mixed method approach was used, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and data analysis. The data were collected through the questionnaire that has been addressed to 100 participants. For the quantitative data analysis, description of statistical methods was used to analyse the close-ended questions; whereas the QCA was used to interpret the data gathered from the open-ended questions.

The findings reached from the questionnaire have answered our research questions and confirmed the hypotheses suggested in the General Introduction. Therefore, the outcomes of the questionnaire have shown that incidental vocabulary learning takes place among third year students in the Department of English in MMUTO. In addition to that, students answered that when they are engaged in the reading skill, they learn a great number of words in an incidental way. Therefore, reading is the skill through which they are more involved to learn new word incidentally.

Any academic work be subject to shortcomings and weaknesses either in content or in methodology through it achieved prominent results. Thus, the research at hand also comprises the limitation of the data collection tool. The questionnaire is the main data collection tool that this research was depended on. Therefore, the results will be clear if the research is also based on another data collection tool such as interviews that helps us to at gathering clear information about incidental learning.

It is hoped that this humble work will open opportunities for further investigation in this area of research. Incidental vocabulary learning takes a great place among third-year students frequently in reading skill. This modest work is not complete since it was restricted to only one data collection tool. Therefore, it is hoped that further researches around the same topic would attempt to use interviews in order to collect data. For further investigations, students may also aim at comparing incidental and intentional vocabulary learning.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Students' questionnaire

Dear participants,

We are conducting a research to find out how third year students in the Department of English at MMUTO learn vocabulary incidentally. This questionnaire is a part of our investigation, we will be very grateful if you answer it. Your responses will remain anonymous and confidential. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Section 1: Students' Attitudes towards English Vocabulary Learning

1- How important is vocabulary learning in English?

- a) Very important
- b) Important
- c) Slightly important
- d) Unimportant

2- How difficult is vocabulary learning in English?

- a) Very difficult
- b) Difficult
- c) Slightly difficult
- d) Easy

Section 2: Incidental Vocabulary Learning

3 - In the classroom, how often do you learn new words?

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely

4 - When you do not understand a given word, do you rely on context to understand it?

Yes No

5 - Where do you usually meet new words?

a) In listening

b) In reading

6 - Learning new vocabulary is more effective through reading.

a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Slightly agree

d) Disagree

7- How do you usually learn new words?

a) Intentionally (Consciously)

b) Incidentally (Unconsciously)

8- Do you still remember the new words you learned during your lessons?

Yes No

9- Do you think that when you are much exposed to the English language you learn more vocabulary?

Yes No

Argue

.....
.....

Section 3: Incidental Vocabulary Learning in the Four Language Skills

10- In your opinion, which of the following language skills is/are more appropriate to learn vocabulary incidentally (Unconsciously)?

a) Reading

b) Writing

c) Listening

d) Speaking

11- Which of the following tasks do teachers use in the classroom to teach you vocabulary?

- a) Role playing
- b) Filling the gap
- c) Problem solving activities
- d) Discussion and presentation
- e) Listening to video recording
- f) Extensive reading

12- Which of the tasks used by your teachers do you find more appropriate to learn vocabulary incidentally (Unconsciously)? (Select from question 11 above).

.....
.....

13- Successful incidental vocabulary learning is based on the four language skills.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Slightly agree
- d) Disagree

Thank You.