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**Investigating Students' Revision Strategies for the
Preparation of their Exams: The Case of Master One
Students in the Department of English at MMUTO**

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Dedications

To my beloved parents

To my sisters and all the members of my family

To all my best friends

AHDAD WASSILA

To my beloved mother Saliha and father Salah

To my sisters, their husbands and their children

To my brother and all the other members of my family

***To all my best friends with whom I shared the best
moments of my life***

IGHILKRIM SALIHA

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the different strategies used by Master One students at MMUTO in their revision for exams. It also seeks to check whether these strategies are effective and helpful for students to meet their needs and objectives in their learning process. To achieve this goal, the theoretical framework of Francis P. Robinson (Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Review) 1941 has been used. To carry out this study, a mixed method approach has been followed. Thus, a questionnaire has been distributed to Master One students. In order to analyze the data collected from the questionnaires, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences is used for the statistical data and for the qualitative data the Qualitative Content Analysis is adopted. From the results obtained, we have concluded that the use of strategies for the exams preparation is very important in the learning process of students. Moreover, using reading, repeating and reviewing strategies while doing revision for exams facilitates the task for students and this paves the way for them to know what, how, where and when to revise.

Key words: revision, strategies, Master one students, exams

List of Abbreviations

MMUTO: Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou

QCA: Qualitative Content Analysis

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

SQ3R: Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Review

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General Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The process of learning is followed by examinations presented generally in written forms. For that reason, students should follow effective strategies to prepare their exams. As examination is considered as a way to assess students, efforts should be made by students to reach success. Revision should be done for the sake of better understanding and refreshing the memory. It is not just a way of reviewing what has been studied in the classroom, but students should search for more information in the internet, books, and articles to improve their level and to be ready for exams. Revision is an inseparable part in the students' learning process. It allows them to be organized in their studies and be well prepared for exams.

Studying at university differs to a great extent from that of the middle and high school. The difference lies in the way lectures are presented, methods of teaching as well as the kinds of assessment. In fact, we cannot speak of learning without assessment, they are interrelated. Therefore, it is important to study students' strategies for preparing their exams; that is, their revision strategies.

Revision plays an important role in the process of learning. It has been the concern of many studies around the world, such "*Revising Translations: Corpus Investigation of Revision and self-revision*" conducted by Sunkova Jana from the university of Masaryk in her Master Dissertation in 2011. Her aim is to describe the process of revision and its main characteristics and investigated it in practice. She found that revision concerns relatively small portion of target texts, its share is higher in self-revision. The second work conducted in this regard, the thesis done by Li Juan from the Queen's university Kingston, Ontario, Canada in 1999 which is entitled: "*Revision Strategies in English Second Language*". The aims of the study is first, to examine what revision strategies are used in ESL academic writing by a selected group of

post graduate students. Second, to explore what factors appears to influence the participants' revision process. The findings of her study reveal that academic revision is complex and this complexity may enable ESL instructors and researchers to realize the great challenges that ESL revisers are confronted with in their academic writing. However, in the Algerian context no work has been conducted on the issue of students' revision strategies. This is what makes this research original and significant.

During our discussion with students at MMUTO, we noticed a lack of self-directed revision by most of them. In other words, there is a lack of awareness of which strategies to follow in order to revise and be prepared for their exams. For this reason, in this research, we will attempt to investigate the different revision strategies that are designed by Francis P. Robinson (1941) five-step approach for reading Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Review (SQ3R) to help students in their preparation for exams, and whether the students in the Department of English at MMUTO use them during their process of revision, and if these strategies are effective.

Aims and Significance of the Study

The main objectives of this study are first of all, to investigate the strategies that are used by Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO in their preparation for exams. Then, discover whether they are effective and finally, in case of lack of effectiveness, we attempt to propose new and alternative revision strategies that can effectively promote and help students to improve their revision.

Our research is conducted to make students aware of the use of different revision strategies while revising for exams. It also sheds light on the importance of these strategies in the learning process.

3- Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study addresses two main research questions:

Q1-Do Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO use any strategies for preparing their exams? If yes, what are the strategies ?

Q2-Are the revision strategies used by Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO effective?

In the present study, we advance the following hypotheses that will be confirmed/disconfirmed through this investigation.

H1-Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO use reading, repeating and reviewing strategies for preparing their exams.

H2-Master One Students in the Department of English at MMUTO do not use reading, repeating and reviewing strategies for preparing their exam.

H3-The strategies used by Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO for their exams preparation are not effective.

H4-The strategies used by Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO for their exams preparation are effective.

Research Techniques and Methodology

The present study adopts the mixed-method approach combining both qualitative and quantitative methods. The Quantitative method is used to get quantitative data, while the qualitative one is used for qualitative data. Then, to gather data, a questionnaire is used as the research tool that contains both close-ended and open-ended items which are designed for Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO in order to know which

strategies they use in their preparation for exams and to what extent these strategies are effective. The data gathered from the questionnaire are analyzed and interpreted using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS), and for the qualitative data the Qualitative Content Analysis(QCA) is adopted.

Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation is designed following the Traditional-complex Model which is suggested by Swales. This model includes four chapters in addition to the General Introduction which is designed to convince the reader about the purpose and the originality of the whole work, and the General Conclusion where we come to get answers to the research questions asked in the general introduction.

The first chapter is devoted to the literature review. In this part of the study, different works of scholars which are related to the topic are reviewed and the definitions of the key concepts needed in the research are provided. The second chapter delineates and presents our research methodology, information about the participants, setting, research tools used for data collection and the method used for data analysis is described. The third chapter is Presentation of the Findings, where the results of data analysis are stated. The last chapter includes the Discussion of the Results obtained from data analysis in order to draw a conclusion of the whole work and answer the research questions asked in General Introduction and confirm the hypotheses or refute them.

Chapter One: Review of the Literature

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to review and define the main concepts related to the topic of our research according to different scholars. As its title suggests, this work is about “the students’ strategies for the preparation of their exams”. The first section in this part is named “effective revision strategies”. The second section is called “assessment of students”. The third and the last one is “learning strategies”. So, in each section, the definitions of different notions related to our work are provided. As this chapter aims to review and define the main concepts, and different notions such as: test, assessment, note-making, paraphrasing, summarizing, strategy, learning strategy and other concepts related to the work. Finally, the chapter sheds light on the different strategies used by students while preparing their exams, namely SQ3R.

I. Effective Revision Strategies

In this first part of our review, we try to provide definitions of revision according to scholars and how to make it effective while revising for exams. Moreover, some revision strategies are suggested in this part in order to reach effectiveness.

1-Definitions of Revision

Revision is an important task that must be taken into consideration by students while preparing their exams. Many scholars defined revision. One of them is Harris (2003) who describes revision as a "knowable" and "*intellectual practice*" and he focuses on "Practice" and "*Consciousness*" of students which lead them to understand their lessons. In others words, students must be intelligent and use useful strategies that help them in their revision. He also stresses that students should be conscious and aware of what they are revising and insists on revision in which students are active.

The subject of revision is discussed by other authors such as, Horning (2002:10) states "*To fully understand revision, we must examine both awareness and skills*". This means that to really understand the process of revision and make it effective, we should be conscious and have necessary knowledge and skills to understand what we are revising. Sommers (1980:123) says: "*The evidence from my research suggests that it is not that students are unwilling to revise, but rather that they do what they have been taught to do in a consistently narrow and predictable way*". For her, the problem is not that students do not want to revise, but they do not know how to do it, so teachers should not neglect revision and help their students to revise effectively by providing them with strategies that can help them to revise. Both Sommers and Horning through their definitions would say that when students do not revise very much, or revise with limited success, it is because they do not know paths to follow in their revision. That is to say, students first, should have an objective through revising anything and then take a direction to follow because without having methods and objectives you cannot succeed.

Bishop (2004) speaks about writers when they revise what they have written before editing it. Yet, we can apply this to the case of revision for exams. She imagines the job of revision as "revising out" and "revising in". First, revising out consists of extending and developing ideas as much as possible, then revising in which consists of cutting and putting with the confidence that you have given yourself a lot to work with. Donald M. Murray discussed and contrasted "*internal*" and "*external*" revision (1978). For Murray in revision attention must be given to its both internal and external sides. First, internal refers to the forms, structure, and correctness of what we revise; Second external refers to the other persons who read what we have written, in the context of this study is the teacher.

2-Revising for Exams

Revising for exams is not an easy task. Students should learn how to revise effectively to succeed. Rull (2009) suggested effective strategies that help students in their revision:

2-1-Understanding the Purpose of Revision

Before starting revision, the first step that students should follow is to know what their objective through their revision is and what they want to understand. When they start revising any module, they should ask themselves what its aim is. This helps them to apply the information by knowing the different topics they need to revise, which ones are easy and which ones are difficult to determine those which need deep revision, as well as knowledge that they have acquired to specific questions (Ibid).

2-2- Selecting Areas for Revision

When doing revision, students focus on what they have learnt from the whole module as they have to take into account further sources to get more information. This can help them to enrich their knowledge to build up their final revision; for instance, reading for seminars, carrying out experiments to help themselves to answer the exams' questions easily (Ibid).

2-3-Gathering Materials together to create your 'Revision Pack'

Students should look to their lessons, their notes and not just rely only on what teachers give. They should be active by reading books, articles, essays related to their different modules, and search in the internet to understand better and to be well prepared for exams (Ibid).

2-4- Drawing up a Realistic Exam Timetable

For Rull (2009) drawing a timetable is important to make the revision works better. Students can write down what to revise, that is to say their modules, and how long they spend to revise each lesson. In brief, this is an effective strategy to be well organized and finish revision on time.

3-Tips of Revision for Exams

According to the University of Leicester (2010):

3-1-Revision must be Personal and Individual

When the process of revision is done individually by students, they can start this process by:

- Setting what they know and what they understand to find out their strengths and weaknesses.
- Find answers to know how to manage their stress while revising of exams.
- Find out which revision techniques that suit them to follow during their revision.

3-2- The Prominence of Quality over Quantity in Revision

According to Leicester University (2010) it is important that: Revision for exams must focus on quality not on quantity of revision. That is to say, students while revising they have to be sure that the time spent in revision is quality time and not spent to revise inappropriate things. Another worthy point to consider is that, they have to be sure that they concentrate on what they revise and that the method used is appropriate and fit their revision.

As it is mentioned in this guide, physical training sessions are necessary to optimize the effect of efforts. For this, during revision, breaks must be taken in each session of revision in

order to give the brain time to strengthen the process of learning. So, at each time of revision, students have to set a specific time to stop or to take a break to get the quality of revision because each session should be short in order to be sure that they give it their full attention.

3-3-Active Vs Passive Revision:

According to Leicester University (2010:03) active revision is much more effective than passive revision. Passive revision is associated with reading notes and copying the material and memorize it without making a lot of efforts whereas active revision is concerned with usage and organization of the material rather than copying and reading the material.

For the University of Leicester passive and active learning are compared with recognition and recall; for instance, it is better to recognize a part of the lesson rather than recall it without any clues (ibid).

The University of Edinburgh (2013:04) gives some suggestions for ways of making revision active. For it, active revision requires real efforts to understand what you are learning not just memorizing the material and even the exams require a lot of facts to remember. Among the suggestions made by the University of Edinburgh (2013:04-05), there are:

- Looking for underlying themes and principles.*
- Relating what you are learning to real life situations.*
- Thinking how one solution of one problem may help you to solve others.*
- Organizing material into hierarchical structures.*
- Creating diagrams or charts to represent the topic.*
- Looking for similarities and differences.*
- Looking for points for and against an argument.*
- Trying to really understand how formula works.*
- Critically evaluating what you are learning.*
- Discuss topics with a friend.*

- *Thinking about the interrelationship.*

3-4-Note-Making

Note-making is a necessary skill for university students since it helps them to revise more effectively when notes are well organized. Scholars have different views about the definition of note-making. Robertson and Smith(1987:36)defines note-making as "*a creative process with a greater degree of discretion as to what is to be included, what is to be excluded and what form the notes are to take*". The quotation denotes that note-making is an individual process where students select important and necessary information in inappropriate way, to help them in their revision for exams.

3-5-Paraphrasing and Summarizing

Paraphrasing and summarizing are necessary tasks for students while revising for exams because they help them to better understand and memorize.

a-Paraphrasing

Bowker (2007:13) defines paraphrasing as follows: "*paraphrasing is to restate information using different words. Unlike summarizing though, paraphrasing focuses less on shortening and condensing the information. Paraphrasing aims to rewrite information by drawing on different words and phrases*". This quotation denotes that paraphrasing is different from summarizing in the sense that its aim is not to reduce and make shorter the information but to rewrite information by using other words and phrases. That is to say use your own words by keeping the same meaning. In their revision, students use paraphrasing which means putting or reporting information and ideas of other authors using their words by keeping the meaning of the original source. Paraphrasing is an important tool for students to make their revision credible and valid, as it is claimed by Murphy (2009:06) who explains that paraphrasing is an important tool for student writers, that is to say paraphrasing is an

essential instrument that must be used by students in their writings. Moreover, Hacker (2011:401-402), advises: “*When you fully understand another writer’s meaning, you can more easily and accurately present those ideas in your own words*”. In short, paraphrasing becomes an easier task when you understand the author's meaning and ideas.

b- Summarizing

According to Bowker (2007:12), summarizing involves selecting out some key features and then using them to create a shortened version of the author’s prose. In other words, summarizing aims to select the main and important ideas in order to condense authors’ writing.

According to Hacker (20011:401-402), writers who choose not to quote a source directly have two options: they can summarize or they can paraphrase. Summarizing “*condenses information,*” but a paraphrase restates the source’s idea in “*roughly the same number of words.*” Whether summarizing or paraphrasing or quoting a source directly, for that matter Hacker warns the writer to cite the source. Otherwise, the result is plagiarism. In more precise words, Harker suggests two ways of including other works for writers who do not use quoting in their works either summarizing; by including only the most important parts of the information or paraphrasing; by expressing the same ideas and the same information with their own words with the same length as the original source. On the whole, she stresses the use of references at each time summarizing, paraphrasing or quoting are used to avoid plagiarism.

II. Assessment of Students

The second part in this review of literature is concerned with the assessment of students. In it, testing and assessment are defined as well as the types of assessment are mentioned.

1-Testing

Testing is important in the process of learning since we cannot speak of learning without testing. A test is viewed by Brown (2003:03) as "*a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain*". Through this definition we can understand that a test is a process or procedure which is clear and well organized designed by a teacher in order to evaluate and assess learners' different abilities: to check if students really acquire the skills needed. It evaluates the testis' capacities if they have understood previous lectures, and acquired knowledge needed about the domain in which he/she is being tested, or to know what he/she can do (perform): write, speak, read... in specific fields as science, literature.etc.

2-Assessment

Assessment is defined by Brown (2003:04) as an "*ongoing process that encompasses a much wider domain*". That is to say, assessment is a procedure, or a method which is continuous that covers many different fields. Both testing and assessment are related to the process of teaching. The subject of assessment is explained by many other authors like: Palomba et al (1999:04), they claim that "*Assessment is the systematic collection ,review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving learning and development*". That is to say, assessment is used in educational programs in order to improve learning, assessment should be planned and well organized to know if the goal of education is achieved.

3-Types of Assessment

3-1- Summative Assessment

This type of assessment is used by teachers to measure students' performance. It occurs at the end of a semester, units, the whole year, and the official exams to select students who will pass their exams. Brown (2003:06) asserts that "*Summative assessment aims to measure, or*

summarize what a student has grasped, and typically occurs at the end of a course or unit of instruction". So, summative assessment seeks to evaluate what students have acquired and learnt. It takes place mainly at the end of the whole year of study.

3-2- Formative Assessment

This type is very important in the process of learning in the sense that it is used to assess students regularly, it helps teachers to be aware of the skills acquired by students and where they need more explanation and practice. Kahl (2005:11) defines formative assessment as "*a tool that teachers use to measure student grasp of specific topics and skills they are teaching. It's a midstream tool to identify specific student misconceptions and mistakes while the material is being taught*". This type of assessment occurs during the process of learning used by teachers to be aware if students have understood and acquired different skills. Also, it is used to know what students have not understood to know their weaknesses.

III. Learning Strategies

The third and the last part in our review is devoted to learning strategies. The origin of strategy, the definitions as well as the description of learning strategies is mentioned. Furthermore, the definition of SQ3R and its importance are also provided.

1- Origin of Strategy

According to Nickols (2016), strategy is a term that comes from the Greek *strategia*, meaning "generalship". In the military field, strategy often refers to maneuvering troops into position before the enemy is actually engaged. In this sense, strategy refers to the deployment of troops. Once the enemy has been engaged, attention shifts to tactics.

2- Definitions of Strategy

Scholars have different views about the meaning of strategy. Hart (1967:333), defines strategy as” the art of the employment of battles as a means to gain the object of war”. In this sense, strategy is used in wars as tactics to win the war.

Porter, in his article called Harvard Business Review in 1996 and in his book Competitive Strategy[6]1986 argued that strategy is competitive and that competitive strategy is “*different about being.*” In (1986:64) he adds, “*it means deliberating choosing a different set of activities to deliver a unique mix of value*” In other words, competitive strategy is a tactic to be unique and valuing yourself through the use of different techniques from those used by other competitors. Brown (2007:119) defines strategy as “*specific method of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information*” That is to say, a strategy is a method used to solve tasks or problems by planning the information you need to achieve your goal. In the present study, we attempt to study how students prepare their exams. To do this, they need strategies which help them to understand the different information, be prepared to revise for the sake of achieving the goal of success.

3- Description of Learning Strategies

Learning strategies are the techniques used by students in order to help themselves to understand information, to acquire knowledge, and to improve their skills. Besides learning strategies are important for the learners to learn effectively, and reach success in their professional life.

The issue of learning strategies is not new, it has been the subject matter of many researchers and educators such as: Rubin (1975), Stern 1975, and Rigney (1978) and others.

Learning strategies are defined differently by many scholars. For instance, Rubin (1975:43) consider them as "*the techniques or devices which a learner may use to acquire knowledge* ". The quotation denotes that learning strategies are any techniques, or tools used by students to acquire knowledge, to study, to learn. Dansereau (1975), cited in Segal et al (1985:2210), also defines learning strategies as "*a set of processes or steps that facilitate the acquisition, storage and /or utilization of information* ". Through this definition, we can understand that learning strategies are methods or steps that make the process of learning and using the information easier. So, learning strategies are used by learners to facilitate learning and help them to acquire the most possible amount of knowledge, understand it, and remember it. This idea is supported by Rigney (1978:165) who defines learning strategies as "*steps taken by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, and retrieval information*". Oxford (2001:166), sees learning strategies as an:

operation employed by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval and use of information, specific action taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more efficient, and more transferable to new situation.

For Oxford (ibid), learning strategies are actions taken by the learners to help themselves to learn, to remember, and use this information in a practical way which help students to be independent and active to understand difficult situations during the process of learning.

4- Reading Strategies (SQ3R)

4-1-Definition of the SQ3R

The SQ3R (survey, question, read, recite, and review) is reading strategies developed by Francis P. Robinson in 1941 in order to help students to improve their understanding and achieve efficiency in reading. Reading in university is difficult for students and this is due to many reasons (Robinson, 1970).

- We have a lot of things to read.

-We don't have much time.

-The lesson can be difficult

To succeed in exams, it is not sufficient to have all the lessons related to the curriculum or attend all the courses, but students have to use different methods to achieve their goals. Students should find strategies and methods that fit them to prepare their exams well. Robinson (1961:01), supports this idea: "*Contrary to the opinion of many students, the way to achieve effective study is not by more study or more determined concentration, but by changing the quality of the study method*". The SQ3R is divided into five steps (survey, question, read, recite, and review). Brown (2000:315) defines SQ3R as follows:

Survey: skim the text for an over view of main ideas. Questioning: the reader asks question about what he or she wishes to get out of the text. Read: read the text while looking for answers to the previously formulating questions. Recite: reprocess the salient points of the text through oral. Review: assess the importance of what one has just read and incorporate it into long term association.

1- Survey: it is the first step to get an overview of the full text and the general information about it. To get the main ideas look for:

-Titles and subtitles.

-Pictures, diagrams, tables, question.

-Introduction and conclusion.

2-Question: asking questions before to start reading is very important to make sense for your reading, for example; by turning titles, subtitles into questions.

3-Read: read carefully by underlining key words and try to answer the previous question that you have asked.

4-Recite: after reading, look to your notes and reproduce the answers of your questions orally, to know if you have really understood what you have read. Reciting can be also by summarizing or paraphrasing.

5-Reviewing: it is the last step which consists of repeating what you have read, to remember it and to be sure that you have understood and answered all the questions.

4-2-The Importance of the SQ3R for Students

SQ3R is a reading strategy, that has a great importance for students. Among its benefits:

-It improves students' reading and comprehension.

-It helps them to understand better.

-It makes students more active in their reading.

Artis (2008:133) stresses the importance of using SQ3R and states that *"Because students can independently learn the basics of the course via reading, it reduces the need for instructors monologue (passive learners) to cover that information"*. From this quotation, we understand that by using the SQ3R learners can understand and cover all information, it helps them to be more active, and more independent to understand by themselves.

Conclusion

To conclude, this section of our research has focused on the most important concepts related to our work. What is more is that, in it we attempted to shed light on the definition of different concepts related to the theme of our research "Students' Strategies for the Preparation of their Exams". These concepts are defined by making reference to different scholars. In addition we have mentioned in this part the theoretical framework of Francis P. Robinson (SQ3R) on which our research is based.

Chapter Two: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This chapter is methodological. It seeks to describe the research design used to investigate the issue that is related to the strategies used by Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO for the preparation of their exams. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section is called "Procedures of Data Collection". It describes participants, setting, method, and research tools used to collect data needed to accomplish the objectives of our research. The second section is named "Procedures of Data Analysis" which describes the procedures used to analyze and interpret the findings.

I. Procedures of Data Collection

1- Research Methods

We have adopted the mixed research method to carry out our research. It consists of both quantitative and qualitative methods. The Quantitative approach is used to collect numerical data and qualitative method is adopted to enrich our research with different answers provided by students.

Johnson et al (2007: 123), define the mixed research method as: *"the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combine elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration"*. In other words, when researchers use mixed research method, they join both the data found in quantitative and the qualitative research for the sake of reaching extensiveness as well as intensity of understanding and confirming the information.

2-Setting and Participants

The study takes place in the Department of English at MMUTO. The participants who are considered as the source of data of this research are Master One students. However, for the impossibility to deal with all Master One students, a sample is selected randomly to represent our research. So, in our work we have selected eighty (80) students to answer our questions.

3-Data Collection Instruments

For the sake of gathering data in our research, we have used a questionnaire as a main research tool. It is designed for Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO in order to investigate their strategies for revising for exams. The questionnaire contains eighteen items, the questions vary between close-ended and open-ended questions. Close-ended questions are used to get specific information; whereas open-ended questions are used to get students' opinions and attitudes about the subject.

3-1- Description of Students' Questionnaire

A questionnaire is defined by Brown (2001:6) as follows: "*Questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers*".

That is to say, a questionnaire is used as a data collection tool. It consists of a set of questions such as open-ended and close-ended questions where students are required to select appropriate answers from the different propositions which are suggested.

The questionnaire used in this study contains both open-ended and close-ended questions. It is divided into three sections.

Section one is called “students' use of reading strategies to prepare their exams”. It consists of six questions (06) which are composed of open-ended and close-ended Questions. Its purpose is to know if students use reading strategies while preparing their exams.

Section two is named “students strategies to revise for their exams”. It consists of nine questions (09) namely, open-ended questions to figure out the revision strategies used by students in their preparation for exams.

Section three which is called“ students' opinions and suggestions”, includes three (03) open-ended questions. The aim of these items is to allow students to give their views about the strategies used during revision to promote success in exams.

II. Procedures of Data Analysis

The data gathered from the questionnaires are analyzed and interpreted through using different procedures. The qualitative data are analyzed and interpreted by using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA), while the quantitative data are analyzed by using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS).

1- Qualitative Content Analysis

To describe, interpret, and analyze the qualitative data obtained from the open-ended questions of the students' questionnaire, the Qualitative Content Analysis is adopted. QCA is defined by Hsieh and Shannon(2005:1278)as: “*a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns*”. Through this definition we understand that QCA is a research method used to interpret and analyze texts to identify their meanings. In fact, the analysis of open-ended questions is based on the conventional approach. It gives the researcher the opportunity to get information directly from the sample without” *imposing*

preconceived categories or theoretical perspectives” (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005:1279).

Therefore, this method seeks to describe, explain and interpret the outcomes obtained from the open-ended questions.

2- Statistical Package for Social Sciences

According to Landau and Everitt (2004:11), SPSS is “*a package of programs for manipulating, analyzing, and presenting data; the package is widely used in the social and behavioral sciences*” In our study we use it to analyze the quantitative data gathered from the close-ended questions, and to present the findings into precise percentages by using different figures.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the research design and methodology used in this work. It is divided into two sections. The first section has dealt with procedures of data collection, participants and settings as well as the definition of the research tool used to collect data. The second section has presented the procedures of data analysis; it has explained the different methods used to analyze the gathered data. In this, study the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) has been used to interpret the statistical data obtained from the questionnaires, and Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) has been adopted to interpret and analyze the qualitative data.

Chapter three: Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter aims to present the findings of our study. It presents the results obtained from the questionnaire distributed to Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO. It aims to determine the strategies used by students for the preparation of their exams. The results are presented in percentages and shown in pie charts, tables and bar charts. This would facilitate the discussion of the results later in the next chapter. This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part presents the reading strategies used by students to prepare their exams; whereas the second presents the revision strategies used by students. The last part is devoted to the opinions and suggestions of students.

1- Students' Use of Reading Strategies to Prepare their Exams

Q1: How do you familiarize yourself with chapters before you start reading for exams?

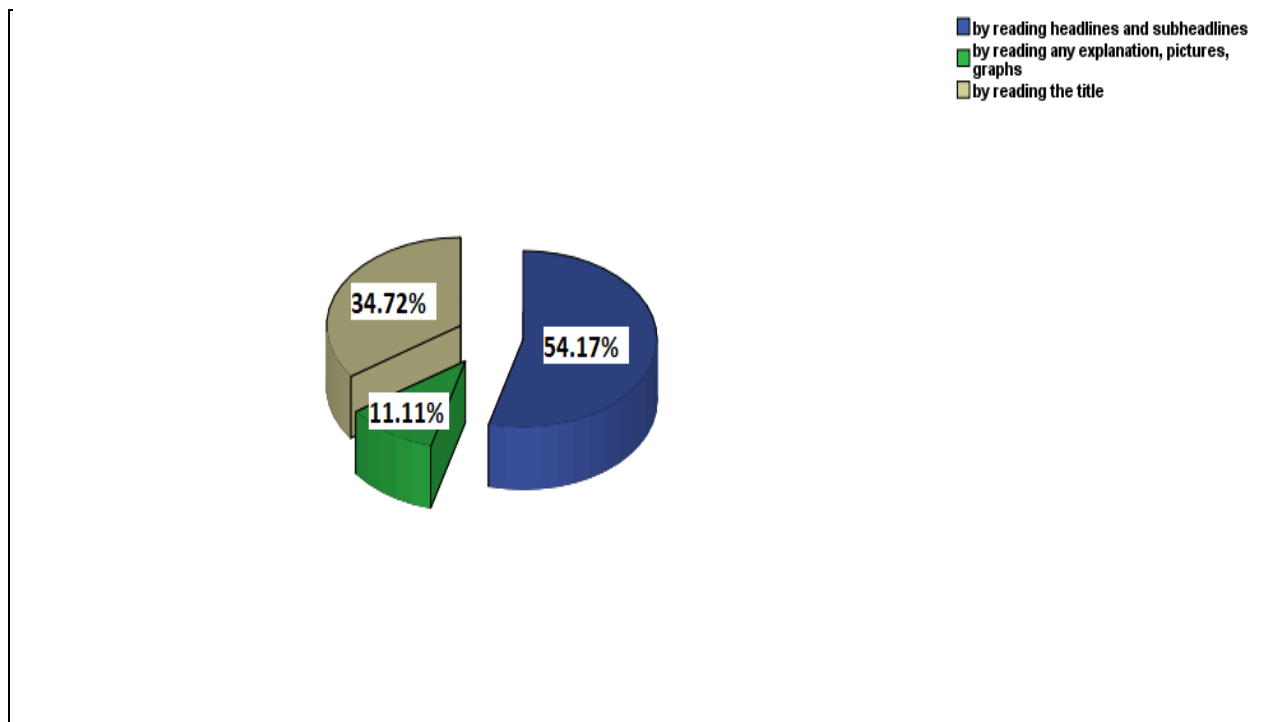


Diagram 01: Students' Familiarization with Reading Chapters for Exams

As it is shown in this pie chart, (54.17%) of students prefer to read headlines and sub-headlines before starting reading for exams whereas (34.72%) of them read the titles, and only (11.11) of them read explanation, pictures, and graphs.

Q2: Does reading help you in your preparation for exams?

	Yes	No	Total
Number of Participants	67	3	70
Percentages	95.714 %	4.286 %	100%

Table 01: The Help of Reading in the Preparation for Exams

From the results obtained to this question, we notice that the majority of students (95.71%) answered "yes" and only (4.29%) answered "no".

If yes, how?

On the basis of the gathered data, the majority of students (67) answered "yes", this is for many reasons. Reading provides them with background information to expand their ideas about the different modules. Some of them claim that reading helps them to improve their knowledge, spelling, pronunciation, and writing skill. According to their answers, it is the best way to refresh their memory and memorize better. So, this will help them to answer the questions of exams and develop their arguments.

Q3: Do you set objectives before reading while preparing your exam?

	Yes	No	Total
Number of Participants	55	15	70
Percentages	78.571 %	21.429 %	100%

Table 02: Setting Objectives before Preparing for Exams

From this table, we see that (78.57%) of students set objectives before reading, while (21.43%) do not.

Q4: Which strategies do you follow during your revision for exams?

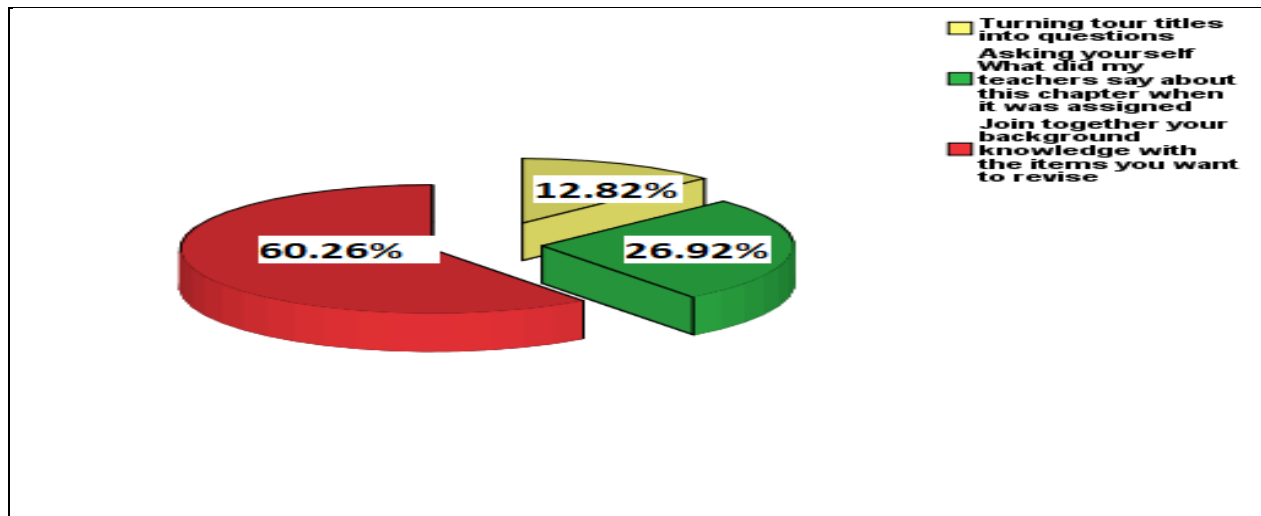


Diagram 02: Strategy Followed by Students during their Revision for Exams

On the basis of the gathered data, the majority of students (60.26%) prefer to join together their background knowledge and the items they want to revise, (26.92%) prefer to remember what their teachers say about the subject when it is assigned, and (12.82) prefer to turn the titles into different questions.

Q5: How do you proceed in your reading for exams?

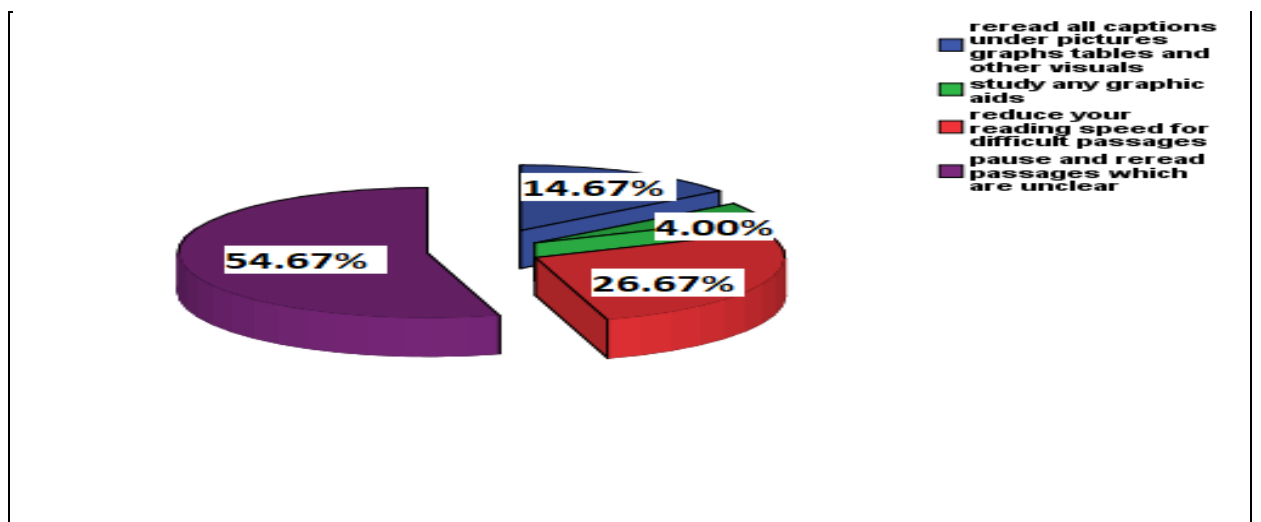


Diagram 03: Procedure of Reading for Exams

From this chart, we notice that the most used strategy by students is rereading passages which are unclear with (54.67%). Whereas (26.67%) of students prefer to read slowly difficult passages, and (14.67%) of them reread all captions under pictures, graphs, tables and other visuals, and only (4.00%)of students claimed that they study graphical aids.

Q6: Rereading ideas, details of a given chapter helps you to remember your lessons better.

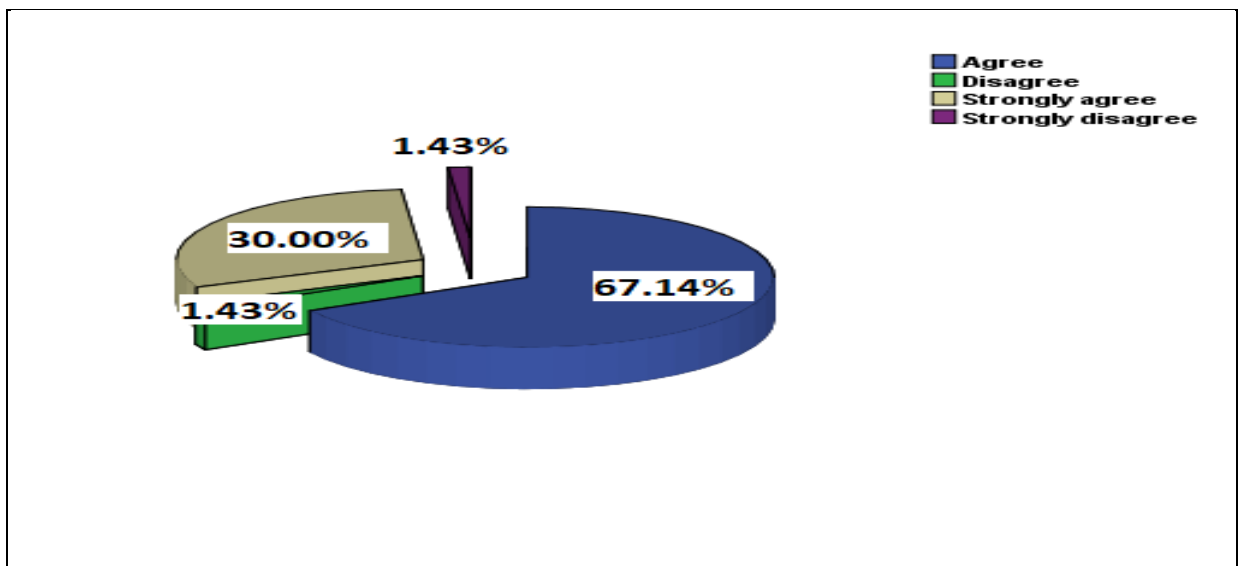


Diagram 04: The help of Rereading Materials for better Remembering the Lessons

From the observation of this diagram, we notice that most students strongly agree that, rereading ideas, details of a given chapter helps them to remember their lessons better with the percentage of (67.14%)while (30.00%) of them answered with agree. Only one student (1.43) answered with disagree and another one (1.43%) with strongly disagree.

2-Students' Strategies to Revise for their Exams

Q7: To whom do you ask help to understand unclear items when preparing your exams?

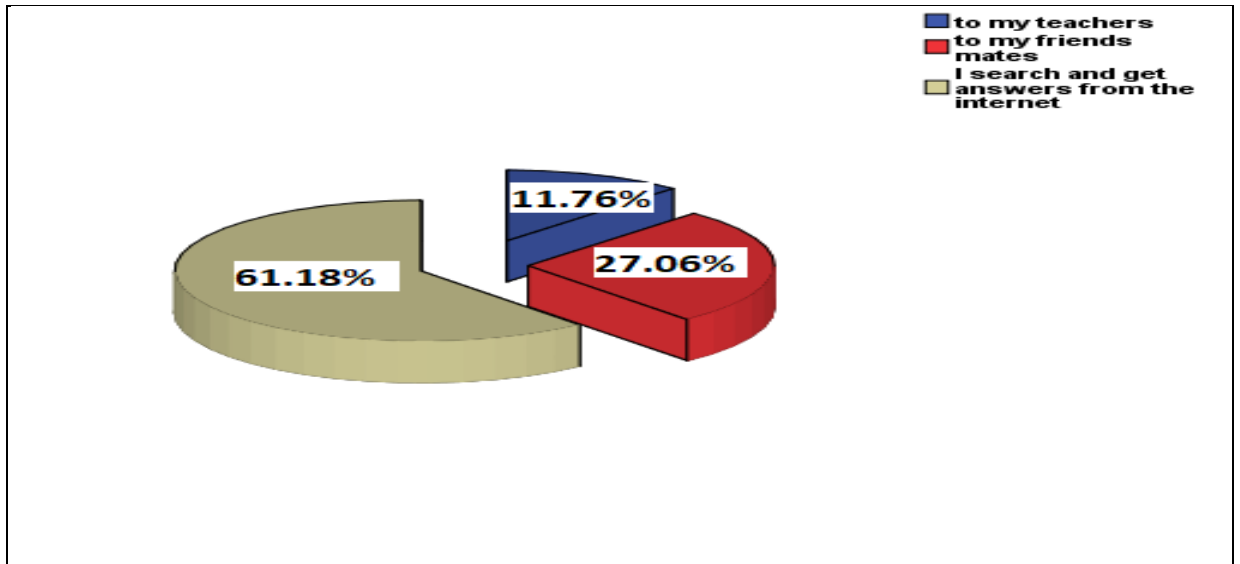


Diagram05: Asking for Help to Understand Unclear Lessons

From this diagram, we notice that a great number of students (61.18%) prefer to search and get information from the internet while (27.06%) of them ask their friends. Only (11.76%) of them ask help from their teachers.

Q8: How do you help yourself to remember your lessons while preparing your exams?

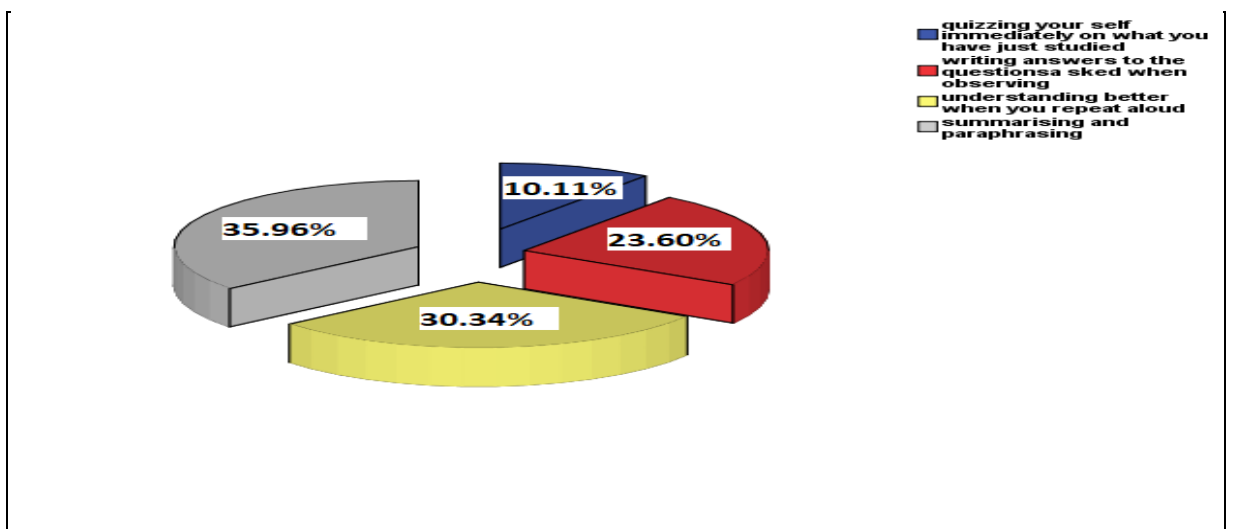


Diagram 06: Remembering Lessons for Exams

From the results of the questionnaire, we notice that (35.96%) of students summarize and paraphrase their lessons to remember better. (30.4%) asserted that they understand better when they repeat aloud, and (23.60%) of students use the strategy of writing answers to the questions that they come up with when observing and questioning. Only 09 students quiz themselves immediately on what they have just studied with the percentage of (10.11%).

Q9: When do you review your lessons?

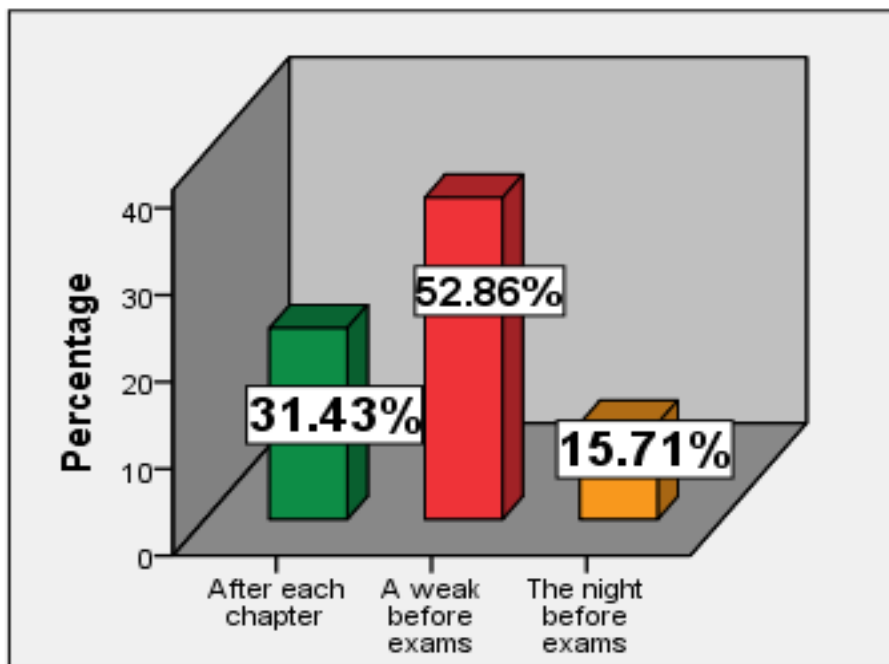


Diagram 07: The Time when Students Review their Lessons

As it is shown in this pie chart, (52.86%) of students review their lessons a week before exams, while (31.43%) of them review their lessons after each chapter. We also notice that some students review their lessons the night before exams with the percentage of (15.71%).

Q10: How often do you review your lessons?

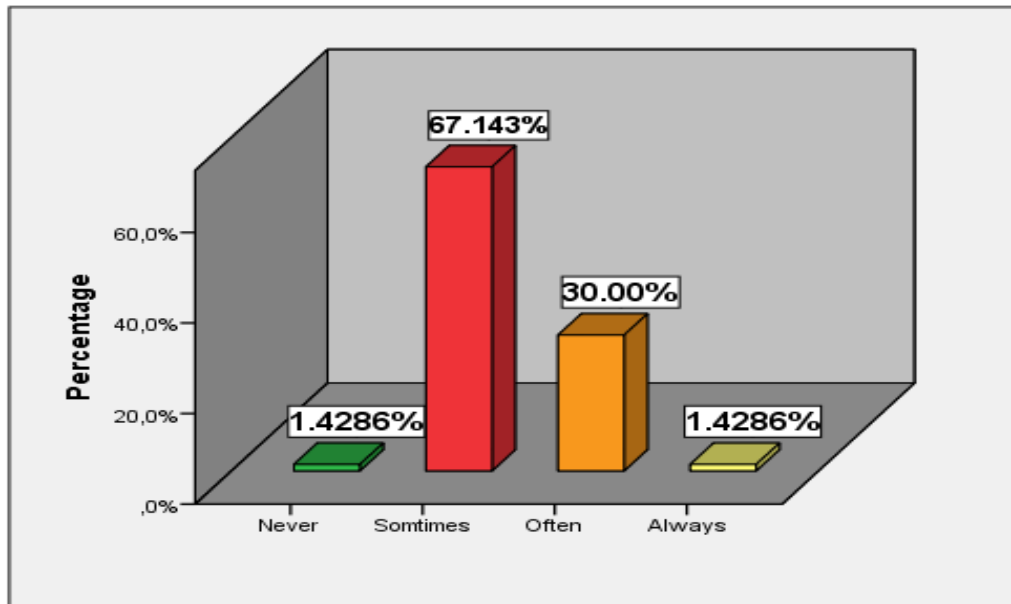


Diagram 08 :Frequency of Students' Review of their Lessons

From this diagram, we see that the great percentage of students that represents (67.14%) answered with "sometimes" and (30%) of them answered with "often". One student (1.43%) answered with "always" and another one answered by "never".

Q11: How do you select topics to revise for exams?

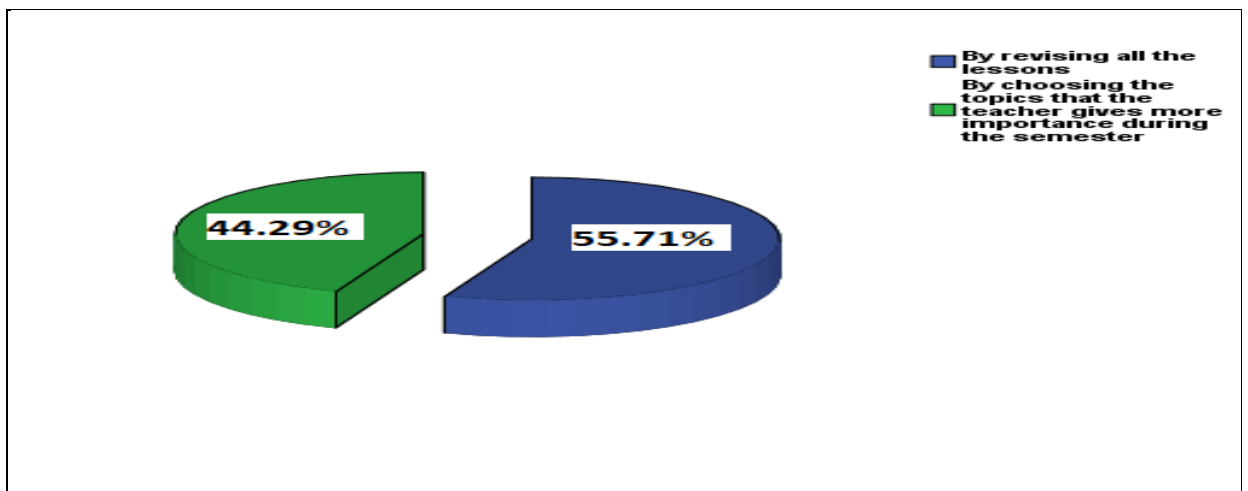


Diagram 09: Students' Selection of Topics to Revise for Exams

From students' answers, we notice that most of them revise all the lessons with the percentage that represents (55.71%), and (44.29%) of them revise more the topics that the teacher gives much importance during the semester.

Q12: It is important to understand the purpose of revision before starting it.

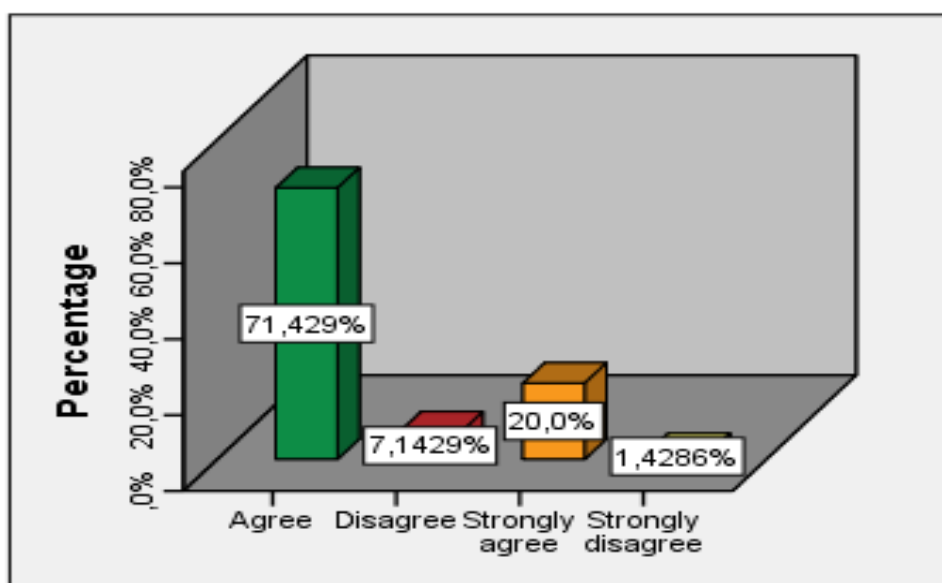


Diagram 10: The Importance of Understanding the Purpose of Revision before starting it.

As it is shown in this diagram, the majority of students (71.43%) agree that it is important to understand the purpose of revision before starting it. In addition, (20%) of them answered with strongly agree, and (7.14%) of them answered with disagree. Only one student answered with strongly disagree.

Q13: Do you draw a timetable for your revision?

	Yes	No	Total
Number of Participants	35	35	70
Percentages	50%	50%	100%

Table 03: The Use of Timetable for Revision

This table shows that half students (50%) draws a timetable and half of them (50%) do not draw it.

Q14: Do you respect the timetable

	Yes	No	Total
Number of Participants	25	45	70
Percentages	25.714 %	64.286 %	100%

Table 04: Students' Respect of Timetable

This table shows that the majority of students (64.29%) do not respect their timetable and only (35.71%) of them respect it.

-If no, why?

From the answers provided by students to this question, we notice that students who answered that they do not draw timetable; most of them do not respect it because the modules are difficult and long, and some modules need more time to revise. So, students do not finish revision on time. Others say that they do not revise regularly their lessons, even if they draw a timetable, they will never respect it. One student claimed that he feels as a programmed machine, so, he prefers to revise without a timetable.

Q15: Revision for exams works better by:

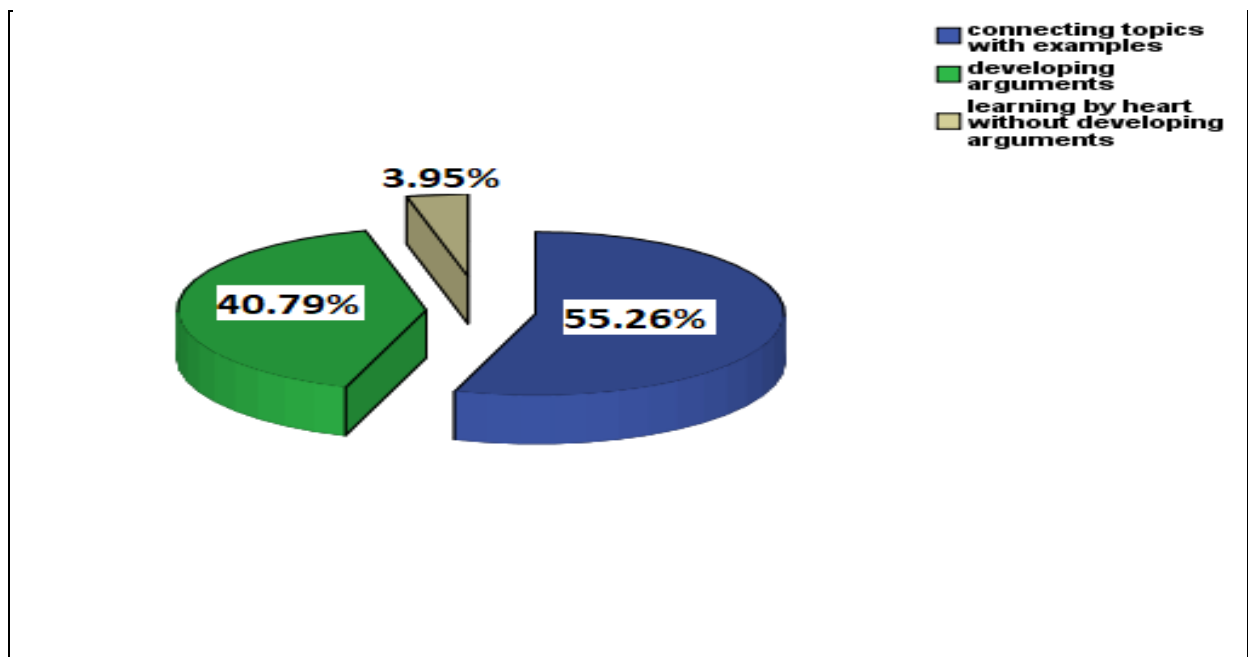


Diagram 11 : Students' Opinions about the ways in which Revision Works Better

From the results obtained to this question, we notice that (55.26%) of students revise by connecting topics with examples, while (40.49%) of them revise by developing arguments, and only 2 students answered with learning by heart without developing arguments with the percentage of (3.95%).

3- Students' Opinions and Suggestions

Q16: Being updated is very important to be ready for exams, how does this influence students' performance?

From students' answers, we see that all of them agree that being updated is very important and influences their performance. For some of them, it is the real atmosphere for learning, learners will be organized, to find more time to get knowledge instead of learning by heart. Others say that being updated helps to understand, develop arguments, and be ready for exams. So, revision will be easy and this will reduce stress during exams. The majority claims that revising regularly facilitates the process of revision because every lesson is related to the next one.

Q17: What do you think about using different strategies for preparing exams?

From the results, we see that for many students using different revision strategies is helpful to organize ideas, understand and memorize lessons better; it is useful for the preparation of their exams. Some of them claim that it is better to use one good strategy, because using many revision strategies can disturb the students, as everyone should choose the strategy that fits his/her abilities in order to succeed in their exams.

Q18: What is your advice for students in order to succeed in their exams?

From the results obtained in this question, we notice that students have suggested to be updated by revising the lessons regularly, drawing timetable, organize the lessons, summarizing and paraphrasing and be motivated to revise. One important point is not to limit

yourself on what the teachers give, students should search for more explanations, examples, develop ideas, and work hard in order to understand and to succeed.

Conclusion

The chapter provides us with the results obtained from the students' questionnaire about the strategies they use to prepare their exams. The results obtained from the participants indicate that students use reading, repeating and reviewing for preparing their exams. The findings are presented in the form of pie charts, tables and bar charts. After the presentation of the findings obtained from the students' questionnaire, they will be discussed in detail in the next chapter which is called the discussion of the findings.

Chapter four: Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings obtained from the questionnaire distributed to Master One Students in the Department of English at MMUTO. The results are going to be interpreted according to the theoretical framework of Robinson (1941) and will be interpreted and discussed in relation to the research questions and hypotheses advanced in the General Introduction.

1-Students' Use of Reading Strategies to Prepare their Exams

This part is concerned with the use of reading strategies by students in their preparation for exams. Thus, from the gathered data, it seems that most students (54.17%) affirm that they read headlines and sub-headlines to be familiar with topics. Students use or prefer this strategy since it helps them to know what the lessons or chapters are about. This way can motivate them and increase their interest for revision; for instance, when students are familiar with a given topic, they will be interested, motivated, and curious to continue reading it. This strategy is important. It makes the areas of revision easier for students as it facilitates reading for them; because, by reading headlines and sub-headlines students will have an overview, general ideas about the topics, and determine how the lessons or chapters are organized. It does not take much time but it is a helpful strategy before starting reading, to facilitate for students the process of reading and revision. In addition, (34.72%) of students prefer to read the titles. However, the minority of them (11.11%) prefer to read any explanation, pictures, and graphs. This indicates that students are aware of the importance of these strategies which are related to the first step in the SQ3R approach to reading (surveying) developed by Robinson in 1941 and adopted by Brown in 2000. For Brown(2000:315), it is the first step before you start reading, he asserts that "*Survey: skim the text for an overview of main ideas*".

For instance, when students read headlines and sub-headlines they can predict the areas of difficulties of each lesson; and in this way they understand the difficult points of each lesson or each chapter. As a concrete example, students at university, when they come to revise for a given exam, they take the handouts of the module ; for instance, ESP and see its chapters to know what are the lessons included in each chapter. Then, they read headlines of each lesson to get the main ideas about it. After doing this, students can select just the most important points of each lesson and revise them. These students will get a general idea about each chapter and understand the lessons.

The results of the survey demonstrate that the majority of the participants (95.71%) claim that reading is helpful to prepare their exams. Reading is very important while revising for exams because it is not sufficient to read just what teachers gave during lectures. That is, reading provides students with background information to expand their ideas and improve their knowledge, spelling, pronunciation, and writing skill. For them, it is the best way to refresh their memories. Then, according to students reading helps them to answer the exam's questions and develop their arguments. From reading, they get further information and ideas about their topics of revision, as well as the understanding of their lessons in a short period of time.

Among the benefits of reading, it has an influence on students' written performance. To understand more this point, let's take the following example: in exams students who read more will get more vocabulary to use in order to strengthen their arguments and ideas in written production. So, with further reading students will get more information about the different topics . This confirms what Artis (2008:133) says about reading. He argues "*Because students can independently learn the basics of the course via reading, it reduces the need for instructors monologue (passive learners) to cover that information*". For him, students can learn and get information about the lessons through reading. This will help them to be

independent and active learners. By doing this they can understand better the lesson and develop arguments. In this regard, after the discussion of the results, the hypothesis that states that master one students in the Department of English at MMUTO use reading, repeating and reviewing strategies for preparing their exams is confirmed.

The findings of this work show that most of Master One students in the Department of English (78.57%) affirm that they set objectives before starting to read while preparing exams because it allows them to understand and succeed. It is important for students to set objectives to know what to revise, how to revise, and the goals of their revision. This confirms what Marzano et al (2001:93) say about goal setting where they claim that:

goal setting is the process of establishing an outcome (a goal) to serve as the aim of one's action in educational setting, the ultimate outcome is usually some form of learning as operationalized by the instructor and/ or the students.

However, the minority, (21.43%) of students claim that they do not set objectives. This is due to the fact that they are not aware of the importance of the goal setting before starting revision and that it is the first path that students take to achieve success. The first thing that students must think about when starting revision is objectives. That is to say, at each time they revise, students have to ask themselves what is the lesson about? What are the outcomes to achieve? What are the objectives of this lesson? By doing so, students reach success and as they set objectives they must relate them to the real life situations to understand more what they revise. For example, when students study the past simple tense, it is not sufficient to memorize the rules but they should know how to use them in real situations.

From the results displayed in the previous chapter, (60.26%) of students claim that they join together their background knowledge and the items they want to revise. When they revise for exams, they do not only revise what the teacher says or provides, but they try to join both what they know about the topic either by reading the previous years' lessons of students, or

by reading any related information to the subject found in the internet with what is taught in class to get a full understanding. This strategy helps them to find out their weaknesses, what they know and what they need to know about the subject. Furthermore (26.92%) of them prefer to ask questions about what their teachers said about the subject. However, It is up to students to search more and develop the ideas given by teachers during lectures to succeed and the most important thing to understand. As a concrete example, students can be ill or have a lack of sleep so, they can have a lack of concentration during the lecture, if they rely only on what they have received, they cannot understand, as a result revision will be difficult. Therefore, it is important for them to use different sources.

As for students' procedure in their reading for exams, (54.67%) of Master One students affirm that they reread passages which are unclear. This strategy helps students to make the ideas and information which are ambiguous clearer. While revising, if there is a passage which is unclear, students can lose interest to continue revision and sometimes, students can feel stressed because they cannot understand. So, by rereading the ambiguous passages, they will understand better because most of the time students cannot understand in the first reading. Rereading is a useful strategy that is really recommended to students when preparing for examinations. For Brown (2000:315) reading is: "*read the text while looking for answers to the previously formulating questions*". So while reading, students should read carefully the text in order to understand and answer the questions asked before to start reading.

The findings show that the majority (70.00%) of Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO agree that rereading ideas, details of a given chapter helps them to remember the lessons better because details and ideas provide students with more information about the lessons to promote understanding. For instance, at university students who pay attention to the details of the lessons will not find any difficulties in answering the questions

of exams and those who neglect them will find difficulties to answer. Moreover, (28.57%) of students strongly agree that details are very important in their revision to get specific information about the lessons, rereading refreshes their memory and helps them to remember well the lessons the day of the exam. Just one student claims that he strongly disagrees. This shows the importance of rereading details of a given chapter. Some teachers give more importance and consideration to the details while designing the exams' questions to detect if really the students revise well and if they have understood their lessons. In this regard Robinson 1941 five-step approach for reading (Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Review) SQ3R stressed the importance of reading details because they help to understand lessons.

Students' Strategies to Revise for their Exams

This part is concerned with the different strategies used by students to prepare their exams. When students are asked to whom do they ask help to understand unclear items when preparing their exams, we notice that (61.18%) of them prefer to search from the internet to get precise information and this allows them to be active and more responsible for their learning. In this regard, the university of Leicester (2010) argues that students are required to be active in their revision and to avoid being passive, and suggested that active revision consists of understanding the lessons by reading, searching for example, developing arguments and not just read the lessons and memorize them. This shows that students are conscious about the importance of being active and motivated in order to acquire knowledge by themselves. The University of Edinburg (2013) supports this point of being active in learning and suggests some ways to realize this as creating diagrams or charts to represent the topic, relate what you are learning to real life situations. These ways and others are suggested by Edinburg University to help students to be active in their revision to achieve the goal of success. (27.06%) of students prefer to ask their friends (mates), and the minority of students

(11.76%) prefer to ask their teachers to provide them with more information to make unclear items clear.

As regards the strategy that students use to remember their lessons, (35.96%) of students summarize and paraphrase. This strategy is very important in the sense that when students arrive to paraphrase and summarize this indicates that they understand and get the information. This point is supported by many scholars like Hacker (2011:401-402) where she argues that summarizing “*condenses the information*”, but paraphrase restates the source’s idea” *roughly the same number of words*”. In other words, in summarizing only the most important parts of the information are included, however in paraphrasing the ideas of the same information are expressed using the students’ own words with the same length as the original source. This point also is supported by Bowker (2007:13), for him summarizing is to reduce and make shorter the information but paraphrasing is to rewrite information by using one’s words and phrases by keeping the same meaning of the original source, therefore during revision students should use either paraphrasing or summarizing or both to make their revision effective. These outcomes confirm the hypothesis that states, Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO use reading, repeating and reviewing strategies for preparing their exams.

The results also show that (30.34%) of students understand better when they repeat aloud; (23.60%) of them write answers to the questions that they come up with when observing and questioning, and only (10.11%) of them quiz themselves immediately on what they have just studied to know if they have understood. For instance, some students read the lesson once or twice, then they start to ask themselves questions and try to answer them, if they can answer them immediately so, they have understood, if not they have to read their lesson again and try to understand it more. From the discussion of the results, we come to disconfirm the

hypothesis that states, Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO do not use reading, repeating and reviewing strategies for preparing their exams.

For to the question when they review their lessons, we notice that (52.86%) of students review their lessons a week before exams. This confirms what Brown (2000:315) say about review in his definition of SQ3R where he argues that " *review: assess the importance of what one has just read and incorporate it into long term association*". In addition, (31.43%) of students review their lessons after each chapter and not only before exams. This shows that there are students who revise regularly and as the results show that the big number of them review their lessons when the exams are nearer. This indicates that students are conscious about the importance of doing revision to achieve success. From the results of these question, the hypothesis which states that, Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO use reading, repeating and reviewing strategies for preparing their exams is confirmed.

The results presented in the diagram 10 in the previous chapter show that (67.14%) of our participants state that they sometimes revise their lessons and (30.00%) of them answered with often and only one student said that he always revises his lessons. This shows that students do not revise daily and only one student said that he has never revised his lessons. In this regard, we conclude that students do not wait till the exams to revise, but they revise from time to time when the exams are nearer. Many scholars have dealt with this subject of revision and its necessity. One of them is Harris (2003), he stresses that students should use appropriate strategies that help them in their revision and be aware of what they revise. Also Bishop (2004), gives importance to extend, develop ideas and search for examples. He argues that, once the necessary information are found, students organize them following different strategies as; paraphrasing and summarizing in order to facilitate revision.

According to the results displayed in diagram 11, the majority of students (55.71%) affirm that they revise all the lessons. This means that they give importance to all the lessons. A big number of students (44.29%) chooses the topics that the teacher gives more importance and no one had answered with selecting the easiest one. Revising all the lessons is very important, this indicates that students revise not only for exams but they want to understand all the lessons and acquire as much as possible knowledge which help them not only to succeed in exams but in professional life. This validates what is mentioned in Rull (2009) where she suggests that students during their revision should focus on the whole module by knowing the different topics they need to revise, the easiest and difficult ones to determine those which need deep revision.

The results of the previous chapter demonstrate that the majority of students (71.43%) agree about the importance of understanding the purpose of revision before doing it, since by knowing the purpose of revision, students will know the outcomes needed to achieve their goal of success . This idea is also supported by Rull 2009. It is very important to understand the purpose of revision and only (20%) of students strongly disagree, because it is impossible to understand the purpose of everything before to start doing it. However, setting the purpose of revision is an important step that helps students in their studies.

The diagram 13 shows that (50%) of students draw a timetable and the same percentage of them do not do it. Rull (2009) gives importance to timetable which will help students in their process of revision; it is a helpful strategy to organize one's revision and finish on time. Most of the participants (64.29%) state that they do not respect the timetable because there are lessons which need much time. So, sometimes it is really difficult to respect it. Some participants state that the reason behind not respecting it is that, during their revision they face unpredictable situations which make them forget about the time table. only (35.71%) respect

it because as they say they like organize their revision and state that drawing a timetable is the only way to be organized and avoid any form of stress.

The findings also demonstrate that (55.26%) of our participants affirm that revision works better by connecting topics with examples since by using this strategy students will promote full understanding. As a concrete example, when students read just a lesson and find difficulties to understand it, they will reread it again but it still not understood, but if they revise it and try to relate it to concrete examples, they will understand better the lesson. By relating what is taught to real-life situations and examples students will not forget what is learnt because real understanding manifests itself if really we can apply it to real situations; for instance, when students are taught the effects of smoking in class, such as the increased number of death, students may sensitize people about the danger of this phenomenon. Additionally, (40.79%) of students say that revision works better by developing arguments. They just take arguments and develop them.

3- Students' Opinions and Suggestions

This part is devoted to discuss the gathered data obtained from the questionnaire disseminated to Master One Students in the Department of English at MMUTO about their opinions and suggestions about how to revise for exams to achieve success. The first question in this section is concerned with students' views about how being updated influences students' performance. The results obtained show that students all agree that being regular is very important to be prepared for exams and that this really has a positive influence on their performance. Some students claim that being regular puts students in a real atmosphere for learning since it allows them to be organized and have more time to get knowledge and understand well rather than learning by heart the day before the exam. For example, when students receive a lesson from their teacher, they have to revise it just after coming home;

they have not to wait till the day or few days before the exams to start learning all the lessons by heart. This is not helpful for them since they can forget all the information of the lessons the day of the exams. They can retain some of them but not all and this may lead them to failure. Sometimes, teachers ask questions related only to students' understanding and in this case students who used to learn lessons by heart find themselves lost.

Others claim that being updated helps to understand more the lessons during revision and develop their notes and arguments and be ready for exams. For instance, regular students during their revision can know lessons which are difficult to understand. Then, they can ask for more clarification from their teacher, mates and even they may use the internet to get more explanations and examples. This way allows students to understand the difficult points of the lessons and develop the notes given by their teacher. Moreover, students will feel at ease, get self confidence and reduce their stress the day of the exams. As it is the case with students after the exam, some of them say that the exam is easy and the questions are manageable. These are the students who revise regularly and who do not learn by heart because they feel self-confident about what they revise. Furthermore, others say that the questions are not clear or they were not related to the lessons studied, they are not aware that their problem lies in the way they revised. These students after the exam feel themselves stressed and disappointed. For the majority of students, daily revision facilitates the memorization of information since each lesson is related to another. For example in the module of civilization, students are required to do regular revision because of the events and the dates which are interrelated, students may be lost if they are not updated.

A lot of students fail because they lack awareness about the importance of being updated during their revision, they let all lessons to the day before exams and this will cause them stress. It is the case of some students, they do not revise their lessons and sometimes they do not even attend lectures, then, they wait till a week before exams they collect handouts from

their mates and sometimes even their notes. After this, they start making summaries of the lessons, but most of the time they find themselves unable to do it since at each time they face unclear and difficult points. As a result, they become stressed and find themselves lost because they do not know what to include in their summaries. Even students who are always present and revise regularly face difficulties during their revision. So, it is necessary to revise regularly to achieve success.

As for the second question in this section which is concerned with students' views about using different strategies for the exams' preparation, the results obtained show that for most students using different revision strategies is very helpful to organize ideas, understand and memorize the lessons. For some students, it is better to choose one revision strategy because using many strategies may not be helpful as this can disturb them. So, they suggest that it is better for each student to choose one strategy that fits his/her abilities to achieve success. However, using different revision strategies is good for students to know all the areas of revision, the different ways of revision, how to manage their time of revision, how to select topics for revision and how to deal with stress and reduce it. For example, students at University where lessons are long, it is better to use dissimilar strategies to do revision to know which lessons to revise and how much time needed for each one because some lessons need much time. So, students have to manage their time to avoid confusion and stress the day of the exam. In brief, it is better to use diverse strategies since one strategy can not include all the steps to follow during revision. This is supported by Brown(2007:119) in his definition of strategy where he claims that strategy is a "*specific method of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information*".

For the last question of this section which is concerned with students' advice for students to succeed in their exams, the results show that students suggest many things such as regular

revision, revising lessons after receiving them from the teacher, and drawing a timetable in order to manage time during revision. They also advise students to take breaks after each lesson since this helps them to memorize better. Also, organizing the lessons according to their topics and their difficulties. In addition, students suggest the use of paraphrasing or summarizing of lessons to facilitate learning. As they advise students not to limit themselves to only what the teacher says or gives but students should search for further sources to get further information and more explanations, examples and work better to reach success. For instance, students have to be responsible for their learning and do not limit their learning just on what the instructor provides during the lecture, but students should use further sources to get further knowledge and relate them to those given by the teacher. In doing so, students will be independent from their teacher and at the same time responsible for their learning, so students should search for more information. Students' suggestions for revision are really beneficial since students cannot succeed in exams without making efforts and working hard. From the discussion of the results of these three questions, the hypothesis which states that The strategies used by Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO for their exams' preparation are effective is confirmed and the one which states that the strategies used by Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO for their exams' preparation are not effective is disconfirmed .

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed and interpreted the results obtained from the students' questionnaire for the sake of answering the two research questions, refute or confirm the hypotheses that are stated in the General Introduction. From the questionnaire, we come to answer to the first research question in this research which states that: do Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO use any strategy for preparing their exams? if yes what are the strategies? The results reveal that Master One students at MMUTO use strategies

in their preparation for exams. Among these strategies: Reading, Reciting, Reviewing. So, the first hypothesis which states that Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO use reading strategies for preparing their exams is confirmed, and the second hypothesis which states that Master One students in the Department of English do not use reading strategies in preparing their exams is refuted. From the discussed results, we also come to answer the second research question of our work which is that revision strategies used by Master One students in MMUTO are effective. So, the hypothesis which states that the strategies used by Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO for their exams' preparation are not effective is refuted and the hypothesis which states that the strategies used by Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO for their exams' preparation are effective is conformed.

General Conclusion

This dissertation has investigated students' strategies for the preparation of their exams. The research was conducted on the basis of Robinson (1941) five-step approach for reading SQ3R (Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Review) which has been reinforced by many authors.

The study has attempted to investigate the different strategies used by Master One Students in the Department of English at MMUTO while revising their lessons for preparing their exams. Dealing with this topic is very important because this subject is new and has not been conducted before in the Algerian context, to show the importance of revision strategies and to what extent they are effective.

This dissertation assigns three major objectives. First, to identify the strategies that are used by Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO for their exams preparation. Then, to discover whether they are effective and help them really in their revision. Finally, in case of lack of effectiveness, we attempt to suggest alternative and different revision strategies that can help students to develop and organize their revision such as; Mnemonics, Rhymes and songs, Posters/ Diagrams/ Colours and Audio materials suggested by Rull (2009).

This work is conducted as a case study. To complete our investigation, the mixed research method has been adopted, by combining both qualitative and quantitative methods for the data collection. Close-ended questions are used to get statistical information, and Open-ended questions are used to know students' opinions about the different revision strategies used in exams' preparation. To answer the research questions and test the hypotheses advanced in the general introduction. In fact, the data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to eighty (80) Master One students in the Department of English at MMUTO.

Relying on data analysis, and from the results obtained from students' questionnaire we come to provide answers to the research questions advanced in the general introduction. The outcomes of the questionnaire confirm that Master One students use reading, repeating, and reviewing for preparing their exams and the strategies used are effective.

From the results reached in our dissertation, we conclude that using different strategies for the preparation of exams is important and helpful to understand better, and to be well prepared to take different exams. The strategies proposed in the SQ3R are interesting if students apply them during their revision and respect them. These strategies helps students to succeed in their exams, to acquire knowledge and to improve different skills.

We hope that this work has contributed in some ways to investigate the strategies used by Master One students in the Department of English to prepare their exams. In this work, we have explored the strategies used by Master One students in their revision. However, further research on the same issue in the same setting can be conducted but with different levels (first year and second year). This may allow us to see whether we can generalize our outcomes from our study or not. In addition, this topic can be investigated by using further research tools like interview with students.

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Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is designed for Master I degree students in the Department of English at MMUTO for the sake of gathering data about the strategies used by students in their revision for exams. You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire, we promise that your answers will be used only for academic purposes. Thank you very much for your help.

I-Section One: Students' Use of Reading Strategies to Prepare their Exams

1-How do you familiarize yourself with chapters before you start reading for exams?

-By reading headlines and sub-headlines

-By reading the title

-By Reading any explanation, pictures, graphs

Others.....

2-Does reading help you in your preparation for exams?

Yes

No

If yes, how?.....

3-Do you set objectives before reading while preparing your exams?

Yes

No

4-Which strategies do you follow during your reading for exams?

- Turning your titles into questions
- Asking yourself what did my teachers say about this chapter when it was assigned?
- Join together your background knowledge and the items you want to revise

5-How do you proceed in your reading for exams?

- Reread all captions under pictures, graphs, tables, and other visuals.
- Study any graphic aids.
- Reduce your reading speed for difficult passages.
- Pause and reread passages which are unclear.

6-Rereading ideas, details of a given chapter helps you to remember your lessons better.

- Agree Disagree Strongly agree Strongly disagree

II-Section Two: Students' Strategies to revise for their Exams

7-To whom do you ask help to understand unclear items when preparing your exams?

- To my teachers
- To my friends (mates)
- I search and get answers from the internet

8- How do you help yourself to remember your lessons while preparing your exams?

- Quizzing yourself immediately on what you have studied.
- Writing answers to the questions that you came up with when observing and questioning.

- Understanding better when you repeat aloud.

- Summarizing and paraphrasing.

9-When do you review your lessons?

-After each chapter.

-A week before exams.

-The night before exams.

10-How often do you review your lessons?

Never sometimes often Always

11-How do you select topics to revise for exams?

-By revising all the lessons.

-By selecting the easiest ones.

-By choosing the topics that the teacher gives more importance during the semester.

12-It is important to understand the purpose of revision before starting it.

-Agree Disagree Strongly agree Strongly disagree

13-Do you draw a timetable for your revision?

-Yes No

14-Do you respect the timetable?

-Yes No

-If no, why?

.....

15-Revision for exams works better by:

- Connecting topics with examples.
- Developing arguments.
- Learning by heart without developing arguments.

Section Three: Students' Opinions and Suggestions

16-Being updated is very important to be ready for exams, how does this influence students' performance?

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17-What do you think about using different strategies for preparing exams?

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18-What is your advice for students in order to succeed in their exams?

.....

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General Introduction

Chapter 01: Review of the Literature

*Chapter 02: Research Design and
Methodology*

*Chapter 03: Presentation of the
Findings*

*Chapter 04: Discussion of the
Findings*

General Conclusion

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Appendix