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ESL learners' vocabulary strategy use and learning perception

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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary is an important aspect of second language acquisition. It plays a vital role in language learning. However, it has become the highest challenge that ESL learners faced in the process of language learning. This can be specifically focused on second language learning. In the need of high vocabulary in the second language, vocabulary learning strategies are suggested to be introduced among ESL learners. This enlightens of vocabulary learning strategies among ESL learners believed to have an improvement in vocabulary learning. This study employed a qualitative research design. It is conducted in need of identifying strategies used by learners. This study examined a number of strategies used by pupils from schools located in suburban areas. Besides, the interest of pupils towards vocabulary learning also examined in this study. Furthermore, this research was conducted to test whether there is any significant difference between male and female ESL learners in vocabulary learning perception. A set-off adopted version questionnaire was given to 100 samples which consist of 50 males and 50 females to gather the results of this study. The samples for this study were selected based on a random sampling method. The findings of the study showed that both male and female students have positive perceptions towards vocabulary learning and they preferred social strategy highly in their vocabulary learning.

Keywords— Vocabulary, Language acquisition, Second language, Perception, Strategies

1. INTRODUCTION

Language plays important role in humans' life. It add function to deliver message or convey information to others. Without a language, it's hard for humans to express their ideas. At the same time, English language which known as second language in Malaysia plays a vital role. This is supported by Helena (2010) whom viewed English language as an access to the word. English language in Malaysia was taught in schools with various skill for the kids master the language from different aspects. The skills that given importance are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Not only mastering the skills of second language, it is also important to learn the component of the languages to use the language appropriately. Language components includes grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary.

In learning, vocabulary work as an important language element. This is discuss by an author called (Thornburry, 2002). He argued that a man can learn to convey little when he missed to learn correct grammar but the same man will not able to convey anything when he missed to learn adequate vocabulary. He added that interaction among human beings only can occur if there are sufficient vocabulary. Thus, it is clear from the statement above that although there are grammatical errors, humans able to guess the meaning of the delivery. But, insufficient of vocabulary will hinder the successful delivery of meaning in any kind of information delivery.

The National Reading Panel (2000) identified vocabulary as one of five major components of reading. However, vocabulary has a least role in classroom as only the language skills are given high consideration. Vocabulary is only taught in the classroom together with syllabus that should be covered. Less chances were given to the ESL learners to use the vocabulary outside classroom. (Essay UK, 2018) . Therefore, the use of learned vocabulary become lesser and ESL learners did not did not maximise the words in their daily life. It is important to reuse the words in various ways and reencounter them in different context to trigger the vocabularies that they have learnt. Likewise, pupils able to understand the vocabularies in depth as they repeatedly using the words.

There are many strategies and techniques that can be applied in the learning of vocabulary. Second language acquisition is well known in using language learning strategies and it has defined variously by different researchers. According to Oxford 1990, behaviours and actions of learner to make learning more successful, enjoyable and self-directed is known as language learning strategies. On the other hand Cohen (1998) argues that language learning strategies are process chosen by ESL learners to make their learning enhanced and progress in positive direction. It is believed that learning strategies allow the ESL learners to perform

well in their studies (Frankulin Guy, 2016). The mastery of appropriate vocabulary learning strategy motivate pupils to learn the vocabulary efficiently. These strategies are convenient to all the ESL learners as it consists different types and versions that can fit different interest and proficiency level.

1.1 Rationale of the study

Based on the language learning researches conducted, it is found that vocabulary mastery has been a big challenges for the ESL learners. This issue has arisen due to a leading factor which is traditional teaching techniques which considered vocabulary mastery at least level. The major complaint by ESL learners in the learning of vocabulary is, they tend to forget the word easily and often forget all of them right after their learning. This also effects on the perception of ESL learners towards the learning of vocabulary. ESL learners who faced difficulty in vocabulary learning loss interest towards learning and felt bored in the classroom (Riasati,2012). This will result in dull environment in the classroom which causes both teachers and ESL learners to lose their enthusiasm in learning. This cause in poor performance and less productivity among ESL learners.

Based on the researches that have conducted, vocabulary strategies which widely used among ESL learners are introduced by (Gu& Johnson 1996). Gu and Johnson taxonomy encompasses four strategies such as metacognitive, cognitive, memory and activation. There are also various vocabulary learning techniques introduced by other researchers. These strategies which works as a remedy for the ESL learners somehow have different impact on different ESL learners. Therefore, this research aimed to identify level of strategy used by ESL learners.

Well-designed strategies offers a solution for vocabulary learning challenges. Besides creating fun learning environment, it lowers anxiety and motivate ESL learners to perform better in vocabulary learning. Different strategies able to reach different level ESL learners and enable them to perform effectively towards their learning. Vocabulary learning strategies which work as main key factor that ensure effectiveness of this solution highly depends on the perception ESL learners about using them.

1.2 Problem statement

Research on pupil's perception towards vocabulary learning able to reveal pupil's own idea about language learning. The perceptions of second language ESL learners are important to take into counter to provide them with appropriate learning method and help in successful vocabulary learning. The first purpose of this study was to examine the perception of ESL learners in using the vocabulary learning strategies in their learning.

Research on learner's perception influence the level of vocabulary strategy use by ESL learners. But, little research has done to find relationship between the perceptions of ESL learners to the level of vocabulary learning strategy level. It is important to bridge this gap in ensuring the ESL learners mastery in vocabulary learning. The second purpose of this research was aimed to measure levels of vocabulary strategy use by ESL learners.

On the other hand, the majority studies on the perception of learning vocabulary and vocabulary learning strategies conducted as a whole without looking differences among male and female learners. Thus, this research also aimed to study on significant difference between males and females with respect to vocabulary learning perceptions.

1.3 Research Questions

In order to obtain information about vocabulary learning perception and strategies use by ESL learners, this study attempted to find an answer for the following questions:

- What are the vocabulary learning perceptions of ESL learners?
- Which learning strategy highly preferred by ESL learners?
- Is there a significant difference between males and females towards vocabulary learning perceptions

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual framework

2.1.1 Second language vocabulary acquisition: Vocabulary acquisition known as complex process for the learners. Students need to learn form, meaning and grammatical function of words in order to acquire a new words (Nation,2013). Over these processes, students may often feel hard to use the word learnt in their language skills. Folse (2004) supports this statement by stating that vocabulary is not just learning a word. Whereas, it includes word families and phrases. According to Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom,1956), knowledge of learning a word starts from the basic rules remembering until highest level which can achieve the utterances.

Figure 1 shows six phases a students go through when acquiring new knowledge. While go through this stages in learning, students able to feel the complexity and it is not an easy process. Therefore, vocabulary learning classified as a challenging process for the learners. Despite these challenges, vocabulary learning known as fundamental subject which help students to work at the deepest level of language.

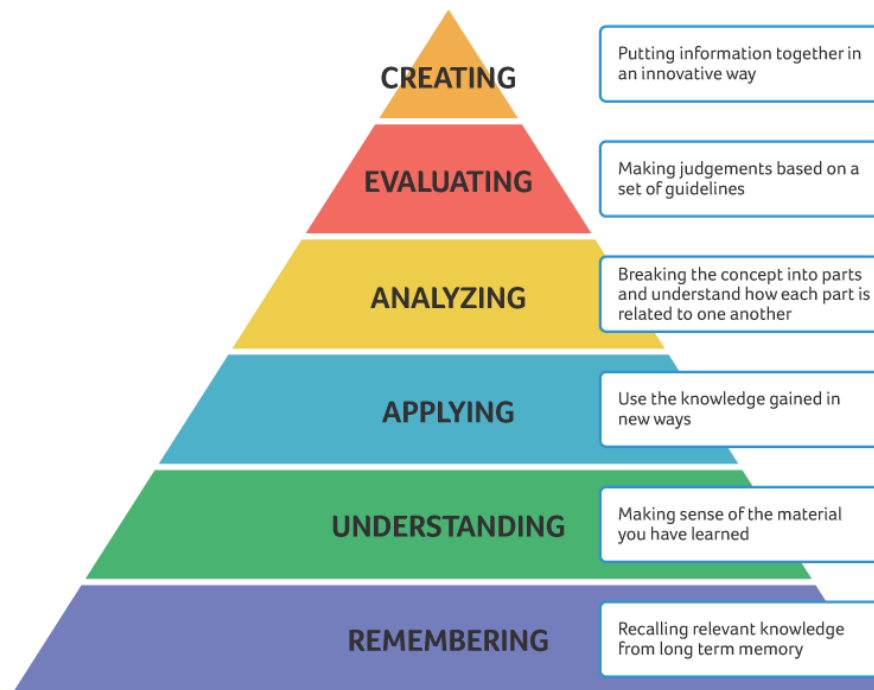


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework

2.2 Theoretical perspectives

2.2.1 Language learning strategies: Teaching and acquisition of language is well known task in language learning strategies as it involves widely in it. Language learning strategies attracts scholars and researchers broadly as it become catalyst for successful learning. In old years, the most popular method has been used is grammar -translation method, audio-lingual method and the communicative approach. Although these approaches has different purposes, none of them proved in guiding the learners to enhance their language knowledge.

Chomsky (1965) proposed generative linguistic theory which has different view from other theories. It proposed language acquisition as a separate knowledge system and also investigates about internal language system in a mind. This theory also explains that an individual's native language appears trough the Universal Grammar in the mind and not created consciously. Many generative linguists have same view as this and they did not allow language learning strategies in this theory. On the other hand, Krashen (1987) whom view about language learning strategies, states that an individual could not acquire language consciously unless they exposed to comprehensible input and natural communication.

Learning strategies introduced in the field of second language acquisition by cognitive theory. Learning in cognitive theory defined as an active process which allow the learners to encode the gained information and relate to their previous experience to store them with input they have constructed on their own (Atkinson, 1975). In this view on learning, it can be conclude that learners direct their own learning and they are assist by learning strategies which can help them to enhance their learning.

Interlanguage theory Selinker (1972) viewed language acquisition from different perspective which not only discuss about linguistic perspective but also about cognitive. The scholar also discuss that this two distinguished theories known as the product of cognitive process such as learning strategies, communication strategies overgeneralization of linguistic material and many more. Moreover, Takac (2008) matches cognitive process happens in language learning as strategies which work to improve learning. This supported by Griffiths (2003) who said that interlanguage and cognitive theory have encouraged number of researches in the discovery of language learning strategies.

Apart from that, learning strategies have high demand on cognitive theory as it belief that learners acquire second language as the same way they acquire complex cognitive language skills. Previous study by Ellis (1995) suggested that language is stored and retrieved one and this principle guide all type of learning despite of complexity. Since cognitivists interested in individual learning approach, most of their studies are widely on the attention of learners, individual differences, and learning strategies. Another cognitive model by Anderson (1983), states that there are three procedural stages which begins as declarative knowledge at earlier level. These stages initiate at cognitive process which followed by associative and ended in procedural. This theory considered learning strategies as cognitive skill which proceduralized and automatically used in the process of learning.

It can be seen that cognitivists who suggested in cognitive approach takes learning strategies as an important element in the language acquisition process. As stated above, all the cognivist scholars belief that language learning strategies partially involve in the successful language acquisition by ESL learners. However, scholar of sociocultural theory Vygotsky (1978) argues that only cognitive process alone could not able to for language acquisition process. It must cater by the process of socialization where learners acquire knowledge by interacting to particular learning communities. The development of learning strategies closely related to the socialization process takes place in learners learning process.

All of the scholars proposed the idea of language learning strategies in their researches and studies. They believed that, of all the approaches and techniques used by ESL learners, language learning strategies supports their learning extensively.

2.2.2 Defining Language Learning Strategies: The term strategy comes from ancient Greece, as pointed out by Oxford (1990). Gu (2005) states a modern definition for language learning strategies as planning and implementation of actions to achieve desired goals. In educational psychology, this term is defined as techniques and tricks that developed to tackle a difficult language task (Oxford 1990). Hismanoglu (2000) declares that learners tend to use language learning strategies because classroom performs problem solving environment. When the learners attempt in finding fastest and quickest way to find solution usage of learning strategies become inseparable.

Although learning strategies has introduced previously, the controversial and different view from various scholars cause us to have different opinion on language learning strategies. Cohen (1998) defines language learning strategies as conscious and unconscious learning. The scholar argues that learning that take place in conscious statement only can refer as strategic compared to unconscious one. Besides, Nation (2001) categorize four features to define language learning strategies. They are (1) chosen by the learners, (2) complex and consist of several steps, (3) require knowledge from training and (4) increase the efficiency of learning. However, O'Malley and Chamot (1996) review language learning strategies as ways of processing information such as comprehension, acquisition, organizing and storing information fruitfully.

On the other hand, thoughts, beliefs and emotions are elements that included in the concept of language learning strategies by some of the scholars. Weinstein and Mayer (1986) proposed that intentional part of the learner highly influence learning strategies as it affects learners' motivational and affective state. Of all the definition of learning strategies, they are also grouped differently. Some researches like Ellis (1995) and Tarone (1981) differentiate learning strategies into learning perception strategies, production strategies, and communication strategies. However, Ellis (1995) and Cohen (1998) segregate them as language learning strategies and language use strategies. But, Oxford (2011) rejects the separation view on language learning strategies because she said that language learning strategies promoting the use language and also foster second language learning.

2.2.3 Classifications of language learning strategies: Over the year, number of researches have done on language learning strategies and attempted in creating variation of learning strategy taxonomies. Scholars have done number of researches to measure the effectiveness of language learning strategy to identify best fit one to the learners. A wide variety of language learning strategy organised in order by Oxford (1990), and it is a well-known taxonomy. The strategies discuss in this taxonomy divided into two categories which are direct and indirect according to their impact on learners' successful language acquisition. Both direct and indirect strategies of Oxford taxonomy divided more into three group which the whole system encompasses 62 individual strategies. The classification of Oxford taxonomy is the first one which organised in the form of hierarchy. It clearly describe in the table below.

Table 1: Language Learning Strategy by Oxford (1990)

Memory strategies	Creating mental linkages: Group the words Elaborating words Insert word into context Use picture and sounds: Pictures Mind maps Highlight important words Play sound in mind to recall Revising words Organised rereading Engaging actions 1. Use gestures Use techniques
Cognitive strategies	Performing Repeat the action Practice with words and sound Use formulas and shapes Rejoining Working realistically Receiving and sending message Get the idea quicker Using tools to get message Analysing and reasoning Find the best reason Evaluating expressions Converting Transmitting Creating structure for input and output

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take some notes Simplify Underline keyword
Compensation strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guessing intelligently Use clues to find. Utilise prompts Solving problems in speaking and writing Use mother tongue Get peer coaching Action and expressions Avoiding talking Choosing title Try to find nearest meaning. Creating words Use words with same meaning
Metacognitive strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focussing knowledge Connect current with prior knowledge Focusing Listening before speaks Organised learning tasks Looking for information Arranging Aims Find objective of task Sequence the work Do rehearsal Assessing knowledge Observing own task Appraising own work
Affective strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be confident Relaxing activity Music therapy Fun and jokes Motivate own self Talk positiveely Think wisely Give reward to self Calculating emotions Check changes in body Asses using checklist Write own diary Share feelings with closed one
Social strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probing queries Clarify by asking from people Make correction by getting feedback Have more friends Peer coaching Join with leaders Make friends Understand differences Realise feelings of others

The classification of Language learning strategies by Oxford (1990) has been widely accept in inculcate in present studies. This is well known taxonomy which includes major elements such as cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social. Cognitive strategies highlights on the process of language in the mind while metacognitive strategies concerns on knowledge about language learning involve planning, arranging, and evaluation of learning tasks. On the other hand, affective strategies help learners to promote relaxation and cope with anxiety while social strategies allow learners to have cooperation while learning.

2.2.4 Classification of vocabulary learning strategies: Vocabulary learning strategies is a component which comes in language learning strategies. Prime research was done by scholars named Porte (1988) and Ahmed (1989) to investigate on how second language learners apply vocabulary learning strategies. These scholars have divided these strategies into two set which are macro and micro. Macro strategies encompasses memorization, note taking, practicing and using different information sources while Micro strategies includes specific behaviours.

Besides, Gu and Johnson (1996) developed comprehend vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire which consisting 108 items. Although these questionnaires based on research done by Oxford (1990) it has expanded by including three sections which are vocabulary learning belief, metacognitive strategies and cognitive strategies.

Table 2: Vocabulary learning strategies listed by Gu& Johnson (1996)

Vocabulary learning beliefs	1. Vocabulary should be memorized (8 items) 2. Vocabulary should picked up naturally (4 items) 3. Vocabulary should be studied and used (5 items)
Metacognitive strategies	1. Selective attention (7 items) 2. Self-initiation (5 items)
Cognitive strategies	1. Guessing strategies (12 items) 2. Dictionary strategies (17 items) 3. Note-taking strategies (9 items) 4. Memory strategies: rehearsal (12 items) 5. Memory strategies: encoding (24 items) 6. Activation strategies (5 items)

Another well-known scholar Schmitt (1997) presented a different vocabulary classification strategy which can be also divided into two groups. These comprises finding of new word meaning and usage of the word after the meaning has been learnt. The table below describe well on Schmitt 1997's vocabulary learning strategies.

Table 3: Vocabulary learning strategies listed by Schmitt (1997)

Discovery of new words meaning	Consolidating a word once it has been encountered
Determination strategies (9 items) Social strategies (5 items)	Social strategies (3 items) Memory strategies (27 items) Cognitive strategies (9 items) Metacognitive strategies (5 items)

Ma (2009) introduced process-oriented approach as an alternative to the other vocabulary learning strategies. She proposed that acquisition of vocabulary follows few steps as below:

- A new word is encountered from difficult context
- The meaning of the word is found out
- Meaning and the form of word studied from various aspects
- The information about the word is recorded or organised
- Some strategies were used to memorise the word
- The word is reviewed to ensure retention
- The word is retrieved when it meets again
- The word is consolidating to its acquisition

She suggested that second language learners may use strategies from more than one categories which are cognitive, social, memory and metacognitive. She discuss further that the words go through all the stages able to learn effectively by the learners as it is a cyclic process.

Of all the researches on vocabulary learning strategies, most of them viewed vocabulary learning strategies as discrete phenomena (Schmitt, 2010). He suggested that more researches should focus on the quality of applying strategies by learners to evaluate the strategies effectiveness.

2.2.5 Studies on vocabulary learning strategies: Takac (2008) believed learners tend to use learning strategies often in vocabulary acquisition. Although limited study has looked into vocabulary learning strategies, some of them have reviewed in this section. Ahmed (1989), did research on application of vocabulary learning strategies among poor learners. After the data collection process based on procedure, observations, questionnaires and interviews he conclude that poor and good student largely use same macro-strategies. These macro strategies include note-taking, memorization, practice, dictionaries and other information sources. The researcher also indicate that good pupils tend to use more macro strategy whereby the use the words in context while testing.

Another study done by Gu and Johnson (1996). The research was done using comprehensive questionnaire with 108 items which includes vocabulary learning beliefs, metacognitive strategies and cognitive strategies. The researcher amazed with the result where the respondents combined different strategies in vocabulary learning and it hugely affects language proficiency of second language learners. Schmitt (1997) in his questionnaires discovered pupils' vocabulary learning strategies which they use more often and they feel helpful. Although there are many researches has conducted to investigate individual vocabulary learning strategies, only few of them are investigated in depth. Schmitt (1977) highlights that memory- based and inferencing vocabulary strategies are studied broadly.

2.2.6 Vocabulary learning perception: Perception is well known aspect in the fields of psychology. However, research on vocabulary learning perception is not widely discussed. Some of the studies on vocabulary learning perception shows that vocabulary teaching and learning have not been considered importantly by the teachers and learners of ESL classroom. (Berne &Blachowicz, 2008 as cited in Alqahtani, 2015). This statement supported by Kebiel (2012) in a research that he has done to investigate teachers and students perception towards vocabulary learning strategies. The result of the study shows that high number of teachers and pupils do not aware or adequate with vocabulary learning strategies knowledge. The researcher further discussed that importance of vocabulary and vocabulary learning strategies did not highlighted in the English curriculum.

However the perception of vocabulary learning above contradictive to the fact that vocabulary should teach by applying effective strategies. Vocabulary teaching is generally taught to allow the learners to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words and have the knowledge of voluminous words to be apply in their communicative skills (Cahyono and Widiati, 2008). Meanwhile, Intaraprasert (2014) explains that vocabulary learning have 3 main goal such as discovering new words meaning, retain the knowledge with newly learned words and expand the English vocabulary. Thus, integration of affective strategy in teaching and learning will contribute positively to students' vocabulary growth and improve their language skills.

Al-Darayseh (2014) applied both implicit and explicit teaching strategies to investigate the impact of combination of vocabulary learning strategies. The findings revealed that students performed better and it has improve pupils' vocabulary size. This result support extensively by Yali (2010) whose findings demonstrate that incidental and instructional vocabulary teaching method gains receptive vocabulary knowledge. On the other hand, Zarin and Khan (2014) identified that students highly prefer to use memory strategy and least number of people are using meta-cognitive strategy. However, Kafipour and Naveh (2011) have contradict idea whose research discovered that students highly use meta-cognitive strategy and use social strategy at the least.

These studies discussed above shows that there are variation in the perception of students towards learning vocabulary strategies. It enable them to choose their best fit strategies for their own vocabulary learning. It can be inferred that perception of students towards vocabulary learning strategies crucial for them to make a choice for their learning. However, there are only few researches tackled on this concept of vocabulary learning perception as well as vocabulary learning strategies.

2.2.7 Language learning strategies and gender: There are studies conducted to investigate correlation between language learning strategies and gender. The studies shows significant differences between these two elements. A research by Green and Oxford (1995) found that female learners highly prefer social and affective strategies. This result supported by another researcher who gained the same result from research that she has done with Japanese EFL students.

However, the results are not consistent when the researches are compared to each other. Research conducted in Baptist University Hong Kong reported significant differences for five of six categories except memory strategies (Ghadessy,1998). On contrary, Rahimi, Riazi and Saif (2008) argue that there were no relationship between gender differences and language learning strategies used. This claim supported by Nisbet, Tindall, Arroyo (2005) who have done research in Hanan University in China. Therefore, previous studies suggested to have further investigation to identify relation between gender differences and language learning strategies. (Bremner 1999; Dreyer & Oxford 1996; Foong& Goh 1997; Green & Oxford 1995).

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes on the methodology which divided into few sections: 1) Survey design ; 2) Site ; 3) Subjects ; 4) Instrument; 5) Data collection procedure ; 6) Data analysis.

3.1 Survey design

This research predominantly done with quantitative research method. Descriptive study followed by the data collection selected to explain the factual and systematic statements of the study (Isaac & Michael, 1981). A set of questionnaire with Likert scale responses used in order to get collect quantitative data. Perry (2005) suggested that questionnaires allow the researcher to gather responses from large number of group.

3.2 Site

This research conducted in SekolahKebangsaan located in sub-urban area in Jengka, Pahang. Enrolment of this school is about 230 including Year 1 until Year 6. This school is 100% with Malay ethnicity students. Family background of the students in term of income and lifestyle are largely similar as the parents are largely from local. English language is learnt as second language in this school. English language highly given importance in this school with many activities.

3.3 Subjects

Convenient sampling method used in this research to choose subjects who can answer the questionnaires of this research. Perry (2005) describe convenient sampling method as an access of participants from a population that is available. 100 subjects chose consisting 50 girls and 50 boys for this research. These subjects were from year 4, 5 and 6. Particularly this year's chosen because these group of students having examination for English subject. These subjects learnt English as second language in their schools. Therefore, the importance of vocabulary and its strategies expected to be more important for this age groups. Since the subject for this research chosen based on convenient sampling method, brief explanation given prior to enlighten the objective of the research and also about confidentiality of the information.

3.4 Instrument

There was one instrument used in this research to get responses from the participants of the study. The questionnaire used in this research is an adapted version from Schmitt (1997).The items in thequestionnaire were divided into three parts. The first part is about subjects' information. In the second part, subjects gave responses for perceptions about vocabulary learning. It consists of 10 items with 5 Likert scale options responses like strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. Finally, part 3 consists of 23 items to get responses for vocabulary learning strategies. The choice of responses for part 3 items given in frequency of adverbs such as always, usually, sometimes, rarely, and never.

3.5 Data collection procedure

Data collection done by distributing questionnaires to 100 subjects and collecting responses from them. It was distributed in regular class time after obtain permission from subject teachers. Subjects were informed to answer the questionnaires honestly and independently in given minutes. They were informed about the objective of the research and importance of their honest responses to questionnaires.

3.6 Data analysis

The result gained from Likert scale responses in the questionnaire analysed through Statistical Package for Social Studies (SPSS). Since SPSS allows graphical presentations of data, it is ideal in describing the result of the study about perception of vocabulary learning and vocabulary learning strategies.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research questions of the study answered by the responses given by subjects in the form of questionnaire. The data gained were analysed and the findings are further discussed below. The first research questions of the study tries to reveal perception of ESL learners towards vocabulary learning. 10 items were asked to find the perception of ESL learners. To ensure the more effective responses, 3 of the items were asked reversely. In the analysis of data, value of responses for particular items were reset to determine the accurate reading. Respondents who answered ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ believed to have positive perception compared to those who answer ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’. Whereas, those who answered ‘not sure’ are also considered to have negative perception since the respondents were unsure with the items asked in questionnaire. The tables below answer research question 1.

Research Question 1: What are the vocabulary learning perceptions of ESL learners?

Table 1:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SA	60	60.0	60.0	60.0
	A	31	31.0	31.0	91.0
	NS	7	7.0	7.0	98.0
	DA	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The analysis of data indicates that 60% and 31% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed that vocabulary is very important for their academic study.

Table 2:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SA	70	70.0	70.0	70.0
	A	24	24.0	24.0	94.0
	NS	5	5.0	5.0	99.0
	DA	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Similarly, 70% of respondents strongly agreed that vocabulary help them to develop their English language skills like reading, speaking, listening and writing.

Table 3:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SA	31	31.0	31.0	31.0
	A	40	40.0	40.0	71.0
	NS	28	28.0	28.0	99.0
	SDA	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Furthermore, 31% and 40% strongly agreed and agreed that vocabulary learning need regular practice.

Table 4:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SA	27	27.0	27.0	27.0
	A	12	12.0	12.0	39.0

NS	4	4.0	4.0	43.0
DA	15	15.0	15.0	58.0
SDA	42	42.0	42.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Concerning the importance of vocabulary in academic study, only 4% of respondents were answered not sure. It means that most of the respondents are aware on the importance of vocabulary learning in their study.

Table 5:

P5

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SA	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
	A	25	25.0	25.0	34.0
	NS	45	45.0	45.0	79.0
	DA	16	16.0	16.0	95.0
	SDA	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Apart from that, 9% of respondents which are only smaller group of respondents strongly agree that vocabulary learning is difficult compare to other skills.

Table 6:

P6

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SA	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
	A	22	22.0	22.0	31.0
	NS	63	63.0	63.0	94.0
	DA	6	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Based on the findings, it shows that highest percentage of people 63% not sure on the amount of effort needed in vocabulary learning.

Table 7:

P7

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SA	13	13.0	13.0	13.0
	A	34	34.0	34.0	47.0
	NS	23	23.0	23.0	70.0
	DA	18	18.0	18.0	88.0
	SDA	12	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The findings also shows that 34% of respondents believes critical thinking is an element which all the learners should possessed to have good vocabulary learning.

Table 8:

P8

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SA	61	61.0	61.0	61.0
	A	27	27.0	27.0	88.0
	NS	7	7.0	7.0	95.0
	DA	1	1.0	1.0	96.0
	SDA	4	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Positively, 61% and 27.0% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed that vocabulary is interesting.

Table 9:

P9

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid	SA	15	15.0	15.0	15.0
	A	17	17.0	17.0	32.0
	NS	21	21.0	21.0	53.0
	DA	20	20.0	20.0	73.0
	SDA	27	27.0	27.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Concerning item number 9, 27% and 20% respondents strongly disagree and disagree. This shows that higher number of respondents are interested in learning vocabulary.

Table 10:

P10

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SA	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
	NS	13	13.0	13.0	14.0
	DA	20	20.0	20.0	34.0
	SDA	66	66.0	66.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Related to last item, highest 66% which is highest percentage of respondents answered strongly disagree, 20% answered disagree and 7.5% answered not sure respectively and believed that vocabulary is more learned and not in born.

Table 11:

Statistics		
Sumperc		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		25.8900
Median		27.0000
Mode		28.00
Std. Deviation		4.10935
Variance		16.887
Sum		2589.00

Generally, the mean value of perception obtained as 25.89 . It can be concluded that respondents highly respond to ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’. Through that it can be decided, ESL learners have more positive perception in the vocabulary learning.

Research Question 2: Which learning strategy highly preferred by ESL learners?

Table 12: Statistics

		SumMeta	SumCog	SumMemory	SumDeter	SumSocial
N	Valid	100	100	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		14.2100	9.7300	17.7200	14.3500	9.5100
Median		14.0000	10.0000	17.0000	15.0000	9.0000
Mode		14.00	10.00	18.00	15.00	8.00
Std. Deviation		2.66020	2.23767	5.65164	2.86171	3.03679
Variance		7.077	5.007	31.941	8.189	9.222
Sum		1421.00	973.00	1772.00	1435.00	951.00

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference between males and females towards vocabulary learning perceptions?

There were 5 domain of strategies in the questionnaire asked. Each domain analysed to identify highly preferred strategy by ESL learners. The findings shows that mean value for memory strategy is 17.7 which is ESL learners preferred this strategy at least level. Then for metacognitive and determination strategy the mean values are 14.2 and 14.3 respectively. It shows that, pupils preferred to use this strategy at similar level. However, it stills below the level of other strategies. Of 5 strategies used, Social strategy obtained the mean value of 9.51. This social strategy are widely in use among ESL leaners preferred to be use in their vocabulary learning. These findings provide evidence that ESL learners make conscious effort in using different vocabulary leaning strategies to achieve better outcomes in their learning.

Table 13: Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Sumpe Equal variances assumed	8.321	.005	.509	98	.612	.42000	.82496	-1.21711	2.05711
Equal variances not assumed			.509	91.246	.612	.42000	.82496	-1.21863	2.05863

Independent sample T-test conducted to find out whether there is any significant differences between males and females with respect to vocabulary learning practice. The P value obtained is 0.61 which is more than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that there are no significant differences between male and female respondents towards vocabulary learning perception.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The purpose of this study was to assess vocabulary learning perception among ESL learners and to identify their highly preferred vocabulary strategy. The results gained from the questionnaire answered by respondents revealed that most of the respondents have positive perception towards vocabulary learning. It also resulted that both male and female respondents have similar perception without any significant differences towards vocabulary learning. Besides, large number of learners agreed that vocabulary learning as an important skill in their language learning. They also perceived that learning of vocabulary together help them in learning other language skills as listening, speaking, reading and writing. The result obtained order the vocabulary learning strategy domains from the most to the least frequently used by ESL learners: Social strategy, Cognitive Strategy, Metacognitive Strategy, Determination Strategy and Memory strategy. This indicates that Social strategy and Memory Strategy are most and least preferred strategy by ESL learners.

Although there are differences in the usage of vocabulary learning strategy, all 5 domains of questionnaires get responses from the ESL learners. This can be concluded that there are variety of vocabulary learning strategy in the use among learners which can help them in the vocabulary learning as well as other language skills. Therefore, the result obtained from this research suggested the teachers to introduce variety of learning strategies that can match different type of learners and their importance. Next, teacher should create platforms or environment that can allow the learners to use these strategies. This can compensate the missing areas in ESL learners' strategy preferences and use.

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