DEDICATION

To my beloved mother and the soul of my father, to my wife, children and friends.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Great praise is due to Allah the Almighty Who enabled me to achieve this academic task. Appreciation and gratitude are reserved to supervisor Dr. Abdalla Yassin Ahmad for the huge care he kept paying to me throughout the period of this study. Thanks are extended to colleagues at English Department of Al-Mughtaribeen University for the help they rendered to me. Appreciation is also due to students of Al-Mughtaribeen University for answering the questionnaire and the test of this research.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating some vocabulary learning strategies to overcome the Sudanese university students' inability to distinguish the near-synonyms of English. The mixed-method approach (descriptive, analytical and experimental) was adopted and applied by the researcher. Four tools were utilized for data collection: a proficiency test, a diagnostic test, an interview, and a questionnaire. The findings of the study have revealed that the dictionary was the commonest vocabulary learning strategy (VLS) employed by the Sudanese university students. The findings have also indicated that the English syllabus did not provide sufficient VLS. Additionally, the results have indicated that the corpora were never used by the Sudanese university students as a newly introduced VLS. Furthermore, the findings have indicated that the learners' reported use of discovery strategies (used to discover the meaning of new words) was relatively more outstanding compared to their reported use of consolidation ones (utilized to consolidate the meaning of new words). Moreover, the findings have revealed that the learners failed in the practical use of several VLS despite their success in rating them. In the light of these findings, a number of recommendations and suggestions have been made. The key ones are, respectively, represented in that vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) should be taught to Sudanese university learners, and more studies on near-synonyms should be conducted where corpora are used as the main VLS.

ABSTRACT

(ARABIC VERSION)

المستخلص

هدفت هذه الدراسة لتقصي بعض استراتيجيات تعلم المفردات للتغلب على عدم مقدرة طلاب الجامعات السودانية للتمييز بين مترادفات اللغة الإنجليزية قريبة المعنى. فقد تم استخدام و تطبيق المنهج المختلط (وصفي ، تحليلي و تجريبي) من قبل الباحث. حيث استخدم الباحث أربع وسائل لجمع البيانات : اختبار قدرات ، و اختبار تشخيصي، و مقابلة شخصيه ، و استبانة . أشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى أن القاموس من أكثر الاستراتيجيات استخداما بواسطة طلاب الجامعات السودانية . و قد كشفت الدراسة أن منهج اللغة الانجليزية لم يكن محتويا على استراتيجيات تعلم مفردات بصورة كافية . و من ناحية أخرى ، كشفت الدراسة على أن " المخزونات اللغوية " لم تستخدم أبدا كاستراتيجية تعلم مفردات جديدة . و قد أشارت الدراسة أيضا الى أن أداء الطلاب في الاستراتيجيات الاكتشافية (التي تستخدم لاكتشاف معنى الكلمات الجديدة) كان نسبيا متميزا عن أدائهم في الاستراتيجيات التعزيزية (التي تستحدم لتعزيز معنى الكلمات الجديدة) . علاوة على ذلك ، أشارت الدراسة إلى أن الطلاب قد نجحوا في تصنيف استراتيجيات تعلم المفردات بالرغم من فشلهم في تطبيق بعضها . و بناء على النتائج المذكورة أعلاه ، فقد تمخصت الدراسة عن العديد من التوصيات و الاقتراحات. يتمثل أهمها ـ على التوالي – في ضرورة تدريس استراتيجيات تعلم المفردات لطلاب الجامعات السودانية ، و إجراء المزيد من الدراسات في مجال المترادفات قريبة المعنى حيث يتم استخدام "المخزونات اللغوية " كاستراتيجية رئيسة.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

1.0. Overview

Research into language learning strategies (LLS) began to be a field of much interest for researchers in the 1970s. Since then, researchers have been much interested in the domain of second language acquisition (SLA) and cognitive psychology (e.g. Rubin, 1981; O'Malley *et al*, 1985; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, Schmitt, 1997). Consequently, various learning strategies have been identified and several taxonomies of learning strategies have been suggested.

Generally, the current study is primarily devoted to investigating the use of some vocabulary learning strategies to help university students learn vocabulary, near-synonyms in particular. Why always vocabulary, and why particularly near-synonyms? Well, vocabulary is always considered as the core of language learning and teaching. Vermeer (1992, p. 147) emphasizes the importance of vocabulary in terms of practice:

> "*Knowing words is the key to understanding and being understood. Children acquire words first and next the grammar of language. The bulk of learning a new language consists of learning new words: grammatical knowledge does not make for great proficiency in a language."*

In the same context, Wilkins says: "*Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed*" (Wilkins, 1972, p. 111). This thesis does not aim at underestimating the significance of grammar in language learning, but it displays the real weight of vocabulary

in both languages learning and teaching. Chomsky (1989) also says that all learning is vocabulary learning: "*there is only one human language apart from the lexicon, and language acquisition is, in essence, a matter of determining lexical idiosyncrasies*" (p.44). Similarly, Nation (1993) states that lexical knowledge is generally considered as a key element in language comprehension, and the number of known words is closely related to skillful language use. According to Read (2000: 1) "*words are the basic building blocks of language*".

It is true to say that the aforementioned valuable information is quite enough to stress the fundamental role that played by vocabulary in language learning compared to other language features. However, vocabulary is dichotomous. One dichotomy of vocabulary is near-synonyms. Near- synonyms of English have become an area of difficulty encountering the lexicographers. This is due to the fact that an English word can express a number of meanings: connotations, implications attitudes and its basic dictionary meaning (Palmer, 1981). In order to use near-synonyms of English properly, researchers need to uncover the similarities and the differences among them. However, this task is difficult for the users of language within the wide scope of meanings of a lexical item in English (Edmond 2002:105).

Based on my own experience, the identification of near-synonyms in English has become an obstacle to both Sudanese EFL teachers and students. Concerning teachers, it would be very difficult and a challenge for them to decide on the correct use of near-synonyms. Thus, they always rely on their intuitions which are often misleading. From this perspective, the students exploit this opportunity and try to test their teachers' knowledge on the correct use of near-synonyms. Students, on the other hand, get confused when using vocabulary especially near-synonyms.

As it has been stated earlier, the present study aims at investigating the use of some vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) to solve the Sudanese university students' inability to use near-synonyms. Many local factors have become the major drive for conducting this study. These factors have been observed during my teaching English at the Sudanese secondary schools and university since 1996.First, the EFL learners are encountered by many vocabulary problems in all language skills. These problems are central to lack of knowledge of vocabulary. That is, this lack of knowledge could be represented from two perspectives: competence and performance. Regarding competence, learners do not have sufficient inventory of vocabulary, while performance indicates that they are unable to use the vocabulary they know properly. Thus, the lack of knowledge about vocabulary could produce problems with other language aspects like spelling, meaning, collocation and translation. This lack of lexical knowledge could be attributed to different factors such as their unawareness of vocabulary strategies or their inability to use them effectively. Second, much research has been conducted on vocabulary learning strategies, but- to my knowledge- none of the research has investigated the phenomenon of near-synonyms encountering Sudanese university students. Third, the university syllabuses do not allot much room for near- synonyms or strategies for learning them. Therefore, all language learners depend on dictionaries to get the meaning. However, it is assumed that the dictionary view is to some extent limited to provide the students with most appropriate meaning (Evans and Green, 2006). Fourth, as an EFL teacher in the Sudanese setting for over fifteen years, I have observed that English language classes are teacher-oriented and the learners' role is passive. Thus, the need for learner-oriented education is crucial to learning vocabulary.

Finally, a more convincing reason for conducting this study is making use of corpora which have remarkably distinguished themselves in the field of language analysis and description, etc. Therefore, many researchers have adopted corpora as a tool for learning vocabulary especially near-synonyms.

1.1. Statement of the Study Problem

This study is trying to contribute a solution to the Sudanese university students' inability to use vocabulary learning strategies and in particular to distinguish between the near-synonyms of English. As it has been mentioned earlier that near-synonyms have become a real difficulty facing the EFL teachers , EFL learners and even the native speakers cannot use them precisely (Edmonds and Hirst, 2002).Therefore, many linguists have stressed the essence of mastering near-synonyms more than grammar. Wilkins (1972) notes that a part of meaning can be conveyed even though it is ungrammatical while meaning can be misunderstood if a wrong word is put in an inappropriate context otherwise.

This problem originated from inside the lecture room. While I was teaching my students seemingly synonyms, I noticed that they were unable to use them properly. For instance, when I asked them to describe a person's health condition, most of them got confused and hesitant about whether to use *ill* or *sick*. For example, some of them said that he was *ill* while the others said that he was *sick*. The same procedure applied to describing a car whether it was *fast*, *quick*, *speedy*, *rapid* or *swift*. Some of the students said that the car was fast; others said that the car was quick; some said that the car was swift. Therefore, the description of the way the car travels became a challenge to them. When I asked them to account for their selections, they said that they depended on the dictionary definition. So, uncovering the differences and similarities among the near-synonyms of English is crucial and it deserves urgent solutions.

1.2. Questions of the Study

This study will try to provide answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent does the English language syllabus provide strategies for teaching vocabulary?

2. What kinds of strategies do the Sudanese university students usually use when learning vocabulary and particularly near-synonyms of English?

3. In what ways is the British National Corpus capable of uncovering the differences and similarities among the synonymous words?

1.3. Hypotheses of the Study

For the purposes of investigation, the following hypotheses are formulated.

1. The English language syllabus does not provide sufficient strategies for learning vocabulary.

2. Students use the traditional dictionary method for learning English vocabulary.

3. The British National Corpus is expected to be more capable of uncovering the differences and similarities among the near-synonyms of English compared to other strategies.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The present study aims at investigating some strategies used by the Sudanese English major university students. It also proceeds to investigate the effectiveness of corpora as a new strategy for learning near-synonyms of English. The key issues that will be investigated are:

1. To identify whether the English syllabus provides strategies for teaching vocabulary or not.

2. To identify the types of strategies that the Sudanese university students tend to use.

3. To identify the usefulness of some vocabulary strategies with special emphasis on the British National Corpus (BNC) on uncovering the differences and similarities between among the near-synonyms of English.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons:

1. It is expected to contribute a solution to the problem of near-synonyms of English. Thus, EFL teachers and students will be aware of some effective strategy for learning near-synonyms of English.

2. The Ministry of Education and EFL teachers can make use of the recommendations provided by this study in order to review and revise the English syllabus. It could benefit the Ministry of Education in the field of teacher training on how to deal with synonymous words.

3. It is expected to contribute to the literature in the field of lexicography by uncovering the differences between the near- synonyms and hence paving the road towards teaching and learning them.

1.6. Methodology of the Study

The methodology adopted for this study is the mixed method. That is, the qualitative and quantitative research designs. Thus, the data collection instruments for this study will be a test, an interview and a questionnaire. The subjects of this study will be the first level English major students at Al-Mughtaribeen University. The sample that will be drawn is 100 students. The results will be statistically analyzed. The researcher will also provide:

1. description of the subjects.
2. description of the tools utilized.
3. procedures for ascertaining the validity and reliability of the instruments of data collection.
4. procedures for collecting data.

Furthermore, in the light of the results obtained the hypotheses will be tested.

1.7. Limits of the Study

The subjects for this study will be the students majoring English at Al-Mughtaribeen University, Sudan.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the literature related to the current study. It is organized into four main sections. In the first section, vocabulary is discussed in terms of their types, importance, learning problems and learning strategies. The second section focuses on synonyms and near synonyms. The third section is devoted to the corpora and corpus linguistics. Finally, the fourth section is devoted to a review of related previous studies.

2.1. Vocabulary

In this section, much attention is paid to vocabulary in terms of its nature, types, importance, learning problems and learning strategies.

2.1.1. Definition of Vocabulary

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2013), two definitions are given to the term vocabulary. First, *vocabulary* is defined as all the words a person uses or knows. Second, it is defined as all the words of a particular language. Similarly, Hatch and Brown (1995) defined the term *vocabulary* as a set of words for a particular language used by individual speakers of that language. Based on Hatch and Brown's definition, the term *vocabulary* can be used in the sense of a single word, phrases, phrasal verbs and idioms.

2.1.2. Types of Vocabulary

Vocabulary can be classified into two categories: general and technical. General vocabulary is considered the most frequent one because it is used in everyday speech. It does not directly associate with a particular content area. It includes most of the function and content words. Technical vocabulary, on the other hand, is restricted to a specific content area. For

instance, words like *fungus* and *hemorrhoids* are expected to occur in the medical contexts more than those of economic or engineering ones. In contrast, words such as *carburetor* and *crankshaft* are likely to appear in engineering texts more than that of medicine or economic ones. It is believed that vocabulary can be divided into listening vocabulary, writing vocabulary, reading vocabulary and speaking vocabulary.

2.1.3. Vocabulary Knowledge

As far as learning a foreign or a second language is concerned, knowing a word is associated with two prime fields: one has to do with linguistics, while the other has to do with psycholinguistics. With regard to the former, knowing a word including the lexical information relating to it, while the latter implies the manner via which information is processed and produced.

It has been suggested that the scope of word's knowledge is associated with the knowledge of other language features. For instance, Schmitt (2000) argued that three different perspectives should be considered when handling vocabulary: how words are employed in contexts, how they are acquired and how they are moved from receptive to productive states. One of the best efforts to describe the range of word knowledge aspects that are essential to fully know the word was made by Nation (2001). He provided nine features of word's knowledge categorized under three prime dimensions: from, meaning and use. These multiple components of word's knowledge incorporate receptive and productive use (see table 2.1).

Table (2.1) Nation's (2001) Framework of what is involved in knowing a word

Form	spoken	R	What does the word sound like?
		P	How is the word pronounced?
	written	R	What does the word like?
		P	How is the word written &spelled?
	Word parts	R	What parts are recognizable in this word?
		P	What word parts are needed to express the meaning?
Meaning	Form &meaning	R	What meaning does this word signal?
		P	What word form can be used to express this meaning?
	Concepts &referents	R	What is included in the concept?
		P	What items can the concept refer to?
	Associations	R	What other words does this make us think of?
		P	What other words could we use instead of this one?
Use	Grammatical function	R	In what patterns does the word occur?
		P	In what patterns must we use this word?
	Collocations	R	What words or types of words occur with this one?
		P	What words or types of words must we use with this one?
	Collocation on use	R	Where, when, and how often would we expect to meet this word?
		P	Where, when and how often can we use this word?

Note: R=Receptive, P=Productive

Source: Nation's (2001:27)

Furthermore, Cook (2008) stated that teachers have to consider three levels when teaching vocabulary: the super-ordinate level, the basic level terms and the subordinate level. These levels are illustrated in the following table:

Table (2.2): The three levels of vocabulary

Super-ordinate terms	Furniture	Bird	Fruit
Basic- level terms	Table, chair	Sparrow, robin	Apple, strawberry
Subordinate terms	coffee table, armchair	field Sparrow	Golden, Delicious ,wild strawberry

Source: (Cook, 2008, p.55)

In addition to the dimensions of the word's knowledge proposed by the aforementioned researchers, other researchers such as Brinton, *et al*. (2011) stressed that 'frequency' is a fundamental feature of knowing a word because it helps learners to identify the commonest word from that which is uncommon. They further claimed that vocabulary knowledge can be divided into two categories: depth of vocabulary and breadth of vocabulary. Whereas depth of vocabulary is about the lexical characteristics of the words (phonemic, graphemic, register, syntactic, semantic, collocational and phraseological properties), breadth of vocabulary is about the lexical organization including the storage, connection and representation of words in the mental lexicon. Furthermore, they claimed that the word's knowledge is further characterized by the distinction between receptive knowledge (recognizing a word in reading or listening) and productive knowledge (using a word in writing and speaking).

Based on the maxims of word's knowledge proposed by the researchers, it could be inferred that the word's knowledge is comprehensive and graded. It is comprehensive because it focuses on all the aspects of a word, and it is graded because it can be achieved via several processes. Additionally, two types of knowledge are crucial to the current study: word' frequency knowledge plus collocation knowledge. Their significance stems from the fact that they are the most striking techniques underpinning the use of corpora as a hypothesized vocabulary learning strategy in the present study. With regard to frequency knowledge, it is very much beneficial to

determine the meaning of words particularly near-synonyms because it helps distinguish lexical items that are common and those which are uncommon. That is, the commonest (most frequent) word denotes the appropriate meaning. Collocation, on the other hand, is of great importance because it helps in identifying the natural co-occurrence of words. Therefore, in the current study, a maximum use of these two aspects will be made.

2.1.4. Students' Problems in Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary always plays a fundamental role in language learning. It is considered the heart of language learning. That is, without having sufficient inventory of vocabulary, both EFL and ESL learners cannot communicate effectively. Thus, vocabulary knowledge is indispensable and it is prior to the knowledge of grammar. Despite the effectiveness of vocabulary, learners are encountered by some difficulties when learning it. Based on my own experience as an EFL teacher, learners experience a number of vocabulary problems. On top of these problems are discovering the meaning, appropriate use of vocabulary, spelling and punctuation. Equally, Walter (1995) explained that two factors probably make vocabulary learning either easy or difficult. These factors include similarity to L1 and similarity to an English word that is already known.

On the basis of the above-mentioned facts, it is believed that such factors are real obstacles to vocabulary learning. But identifying the appropriate meaning is a real challenge to learners especially when handling vocabulary such as near-synonyms. Therefore, one ultimate aim of the current study is to investigate how useful are corpora in distinguishing the vocabulary meaning- particularly near-synonyms.

2.1.5. Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS)

2.1.5.1 Definition of the Term Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS)

To understand the concept of the VLS well, it is useful to define "strategy". A "strategy" is a general term derived from the ancient Greek term *strategia* meaning generalship (the skills of leading an army during a battle). However, in terms of school instruction, "*strategy refers to mental and communicative procedures learners use in order to learn or use language'* Nunan (1999, p. 171).

With regard to the concept of VLS, a number of definitions have been suggested by several researchers; however, only the most influential ones have been involved in the present study. Such definitions include those proposed by Schmitt (1997) and Marin's (2005). According to Schmitt (1997:203), vocabulary learning strategies *'is the process by which information is obtained, retrieved, stored and used'*. But this definition sounds rather general in that it suggests that VLS can be observable or unobservable, conscious or unconscious.

In an attempt to provide a concrete definition, Marin (2005, p. 74) defined VLS as those conscious and unconscious, planned and unplanned steps and actions that L2 learners take to discover and consolidate the form, meaning and usage of words. Specifically speaking, Marin's (2005) definition proposes that vocabulary learning can be obtained via (1) conscious and unconscious approach; (2) previously planned or unplanned actions or steps; (3) discovery and consolidation of learned tasks; and (4) using words in the appropriate context.

It is obvious that Marin's (2005) definition seems concrete in that it encompasses all the aspects of VLS reflected in the work of Schmitt (1997). Thus, in the current study, one of the major aims is to find decisive strategies that may help the Sudanese university students to

learn vocabulary. In doing so, Marin's (2005) definition is considered the basis of the nature of VLS that will be under investigation.

2.1.5.2. Factors Affecting the Choice and Use of VLS

An increasing body of research suggests that the choice and use of VLS are affected by a wide range of factors. For instance, Oxford and Crookall (1989) listed several factors associated with certain individual factors plus situational factors. Individual factors include language being learned, language teaching methods, and the level of language learning proficiency. On the other hand, situational factors include course type and study duration.Consequently, certain individual factors (the student's native langue, proficiency level and level of achievement) plus one situational factor (course type) will be taken into account in the present study. Based on what has been mentioned earlier, it seems essential to provide such a discussion because it may help in the explanation of why Sudanese university students tend to use certain VLS.

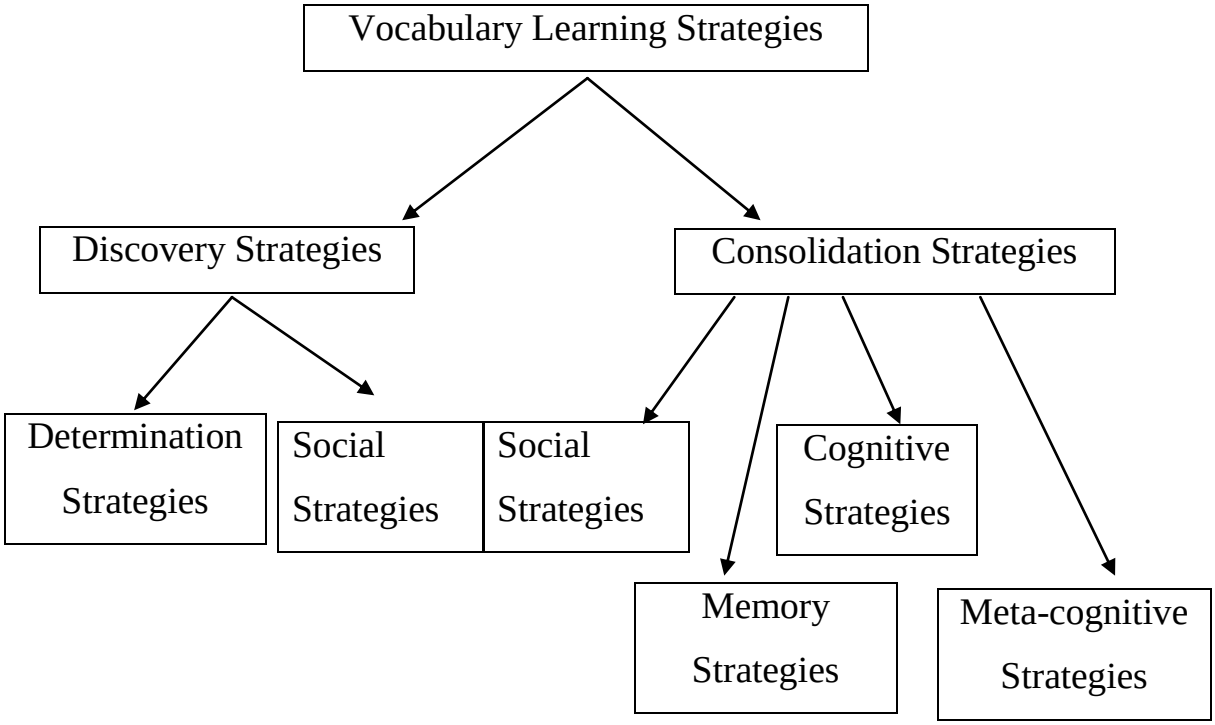
2.1.5.3. Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

A wide range of taxonomies concerning VLS has been proposed by several researchers; however, only those which are oriented to the current study will be involved. In doing so, a particular attention is paid to Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy since the taxonomy for the present study is mainly based on it. This is besides Nation's taxonomy3 (2001).

Schmitt (1997) categorized the vocabulary learning strategies into two types: the discovery strategies (utilized to discover the meaning of a new word) and the consolidation strategies (utilized to consolidate the meaning of a new word). The discovery strategies are further classified into determination strategies (which are used to discover the meaning of new words without recourse to somebody else), and social strategies (which are used when seeking other people's help in getting the meaning of new words).

Additionally, the consolidation strategies are further classified into social strategies, cognitive strategies(entail the manipulation or transformation of the target language by learners), meta-cognitive strategies (involve conscious overview of learning process and making decision about planning, monitoring or evaluating the best way to study), and memory strategies (utilized to remember the new words when they are once learned). This taxonomy is illustrated below:

Figure (2.1) Schmitt's classification of vocabulary learning strategies



Source: Schmitt (1997, p.207)

Concerning Nation's (2001) taxonomy, vocabulary learning strategies are divided into three main classes and each class contains a specific type of vocabulary learning strategies. These classes are represented in planning (choosing what to focus on and when to focus on it), sources (finding

information about words) and processes (establishing knowledge). The following table illustrates the type of strategies each class includes:

Table (2.3) Nation's (2001) taxonomy of VLS

General Class of Strategies	Types of Strategies
Planning: Choosing what to focus on and when to focus on it.	Choosing words. Choosing the aspect of word knowledge. Choosing strategies. Planning repetition.
Sources: finding information about words.	Analyzing the word. Using context. Consulting a reference source in L1 or L2. Using parallels in L1 and L2.
Processes: establishing knowledge.	Noticing. Retrieving. Generating.

Source: Nation (2001, p.218)

2.1.5.4. Discussion of the Taxonomy of VLS

It is essential to hold a discussion on the vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) reviewed earlier so as to have insights into their relevance and irrelevance to the current study.

According to Schmitt (1997), discovering the meaning of a new word is possible via several ways. For instance, it could be obtained via guessing, using the first language cognate, analyzing affixes, or consulting a reference source.

As stated earlier, guessing from context is an effective strategy for discovering the meaning of new words. This claim is substantiated by several researchers such as Clark and Nation (1980). It was argued that

successful guessing is entirely based on the knowledge of some language features including grammar and the word's part of speech.

Despite the efficacy of guessing in discovering the meaning of the new word proposed earlier, it is believed that guessing is no longer useful in providing the learners with the exact meaning especially for the current case (near-synonyms). That is, there is no guarantee for the precision of the meaning drawn via such a strategy; it might rather be a sort of probability which subjects to truth or fallacy. Thus, only good learners can guess because they have a reasonable previous knowledge of the second language. This idea is supported by Laufer (1997) who suggested some conditions for successful guessing. To him, learners have to have knowledge of 3.000- words families, or about 5.000 lexical items. This is due to the fact that 3.000 word families make a percentage of 95% of text coverage and hence allow learners to guess appropriately. She added that guessing can be affected by some factors such as the unavailability of context clues, unfamiliarity with the words that presumably provide the clues, the existence of misleading or partial clues and incongruity (inappropriateness) between the reader's background knowledge and text context.

Correspondingly, another argument has been raised towards the issue of guessing involving that it might be affected by the first language knowledge. It is known that the possibility of making use of the first language (L1) is conditioned by the presence of a genetic relation between L1 and the second language (L2). A good example of this is the case of English and German. For instance, learners of English can discover the meaning of 'house' which is the cognate with 'hous' in German. Nevertheless, L1 knowledge cannot benefit learners if L1 and L2 are not genetically related. A good example of this is the case of Arabic learners who are studying English.

Correspondingly, Nation (2001) proposed that learners can obtain the meaning from external sources which are represented in (1) formal (written) sources such as the dictionaries, glossaries, lists and concordances, and (2) more spontaneous sources (oral) such as asking teachers, native speakers or learners for information. With regard to dictionaries, bilingual dictionaries are considered the most widespread tool used for getting the meaning compared to monolingual ones. This is, of course, due to the fact that bilingual dictionaries provide the learners with more information regarding L1 and L2.

Despite the general consensus on the fact that dictionaries are widely utilized by most of the EFL learners to discover the meaning of a new word, they are limited to distinguish the near-synonyms of English. In the same context, Mihalicek and Wilson (2011) argued that many people accept dictionaries as authoritative sources for word meanings, but dictionaries model is no higher authority on word's meaning than the community of native speakers of a language. Therefore, dictionaries themselves cannot be the only sources of the word meanings, particularly for near-synonyms.

As far discovering the meaning of the new word is concerned, Schmitt (1997) explained that affixes and roots knowledge are paramount to discovering the meaning of a new word. This is due to the fact that most of the lexical items in English are produced via morphological processes (derivation).

A growing body of research has argued that affixations are significant in discovering the meaning of a new word; however, this significance is conditioned by the knowledge of some skills. Nation (1990) grouped three skills that learners need to have in order to make use of affixation: breaking a new word into parts so as to reveal the affixes and roots; knowing the

meaning of the parts, and the ability to connect the meaning of the parts with the meaning of the word.

It appears that affixation might not be effective in discovering the meaning of words that have not been derived from other words (stem words).Thus, there is no point in using affixation to discover the meanings of the two pair near-synonyms (ill, sick) or (speak, talk).

With regard to meaning discovery, Schmitt (1997) stated that social strategies are used by learners to discover the meaning of a new word. These strategies involve asking someone who could help in discovering the meaning of new words. In doing so, learners often ask their classmates and/or teachers to provide them with packages of information such as translation, synonymy, explanation of meaning and contextualization. He added that social strategies are not widely used by learners because learners create their vocabulary list outside of class. Therefore, learning which involves such a strategy seems to be independent. In addition to promotion autonomous learning among the EFL learners, it develops in them a sense of co-operative learning and competition. This view is probably notified by Dansereau (1980) who claimed that social strategies do encourage active information processing because it develops in the learners a sort of motivation. Moreover, social strategies can be used for either discovery or consolidation purposes. Therefore, it could be inferred that the VLS devised by Schmitt (1997) are to some extent interdependent in that discovery strategies could conceivably be used as consolidation strategies.

Concerning contextualization, Nation (1990) proposed that it is a vital strategy for discovering the meaning of the new word. It is claimed that complete utilization of contextualization is bound by having a wide range of representativeness, especially when handling vocabulary like near-synonyms. This huge representativeness may not be provided by textbooks and dictionaries; it can be provided by the corpora. Thus, in the present

study contextualization will be exploited to the maximum with the assistance of corpora.

On the other hand, consolidating the newly learned word is vital to learning vocabulary. Thus, some researchers such as Schmitt (1970) and Nation (1990) proposed some strategies for the remembrance of the new words. According to them, consolidation strategies include social, cognitive, memory, and meta-cognitive strategies. With regard to cognitive strategies, which are considered the most widespread strategy used by almost learners all over the world, O'Malley and Chamot (1990, p.8) claimed that "*cognitive strategies are more directly related to individual learning tasks and entail direct manipulation or transformation of the learning materials*". Therefore, to use cognitive strategies effectively, learners need to repeat the verbal and written form of a word more and more. Memory strategies, on the other hands, involve the integration of the new knowledge with the previously learned one. According to Schmitt (1997), memory strategies could be subcategorized as pictures/ Imagery, related words, and word's orthographical or phonological form. According to him, pictures are considered as paramount to remembering a new word because the learners can conceptualize the new word's meaning. In the context of memorizing the new words, learners can use sense relation to link between what they already know and their newly learned words. Such a linking could be obtained via coordinating (goats or camels), using synonym (tough-strong), antonym (rude-polite) and scaling adjectives (small- medium-big –huge). Additionally, the orthographical or the phonological form of a word is indispensable in remembering words. In making use of such strategies, learners rely on noticing the spelling and pronunciation of the new lexical item. Additionally, learners can benefit from the (key- word method). The utilization of such a method is bound by

finding an L1 word or a phrase that is similar to an L2 word. Nevertheless, this method is reported to be the least frequently used one.

Another strategy for consolidating the newly learned word is the meta-cognitive strategies. They involve watching English TV channels (e.g. movies, songs, and documentary), listening to English radio programs, reading English newspapers and magazines, or using computer programs. These strategies are fundamental in developing the learners' vocabulary due to their maximization of the learner's exposure to an L2.

It is true that consolidating strategies are vital in remembering the new words; however, discovering the meaning of the new word is a key concern in the present study. This is because one of the aims of the current study is to solve the Sudanese university students' inability to use near-synonyms correctly, and using near-synonyms well substantiates the need of discovering the meaning rather than consolidating it.

To sum up the above section, it is clear that vocabulary has various definitions and types. Learners often encounter some difficulties when learning it because both of its use and choice are affected by some factors. Thus, such complexities in vocabulary nature have urged researchers to suggest several strategies in order to help students learn the heart of a language-vocabulary.

2.2. Synonyms

In this section, much attention is paid to the concept of synonyms and near-synonyms besides the criteria of distinguishing them.

2.2.1. The Concept of Synonyms

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2013), the synonym is a word or expression that has the same or nearly the same meaning as another in the same language. For instance, 'big' and 'large' are synonyms.

According to Cruse (1986), synonyms cannot be described thoroughly. This is because English synonyms are very much overlapped on the one

hand and do have slight variations on the other. Therefore, three techniques were suggested in order to characterize synonyms: The scale of synonymity, the propositional and expressive meaning and propositional synonymy. Regarding the scale of synonymity, the synonyms are ordered into levels from the lowest to the highest. That is, synonyms that have no strong semantic relation are placed in the lowest level, whereas those who have nearly the same meaning are placed at the highest level. Concerning the propositional and expressive meaning, it tends to be central to the propositional truth condition. In this way, the meaning of a word is described in terms of its falsity or truth. Thus, if two lexical items are propositionally synonymous, they have to have the same propositional features but differ in their expressive ones. On the other hand, the propositional synonymy indicates that the truth conditions of synonyms do not change when they are used in the same sentences.

According to Palmer (1981), synonymy is used to mean "sameness of meaning". He also mentions that English is rich in synonyms due to the historical reason that its vocabulary has come from two different sources, from Anglo-Saxon on the one hand and from French, Latin and Greek on the other. Regarding the perfectness of synonyms, Edmond and Hirst (2002) assumed that there are no two words that exactly have the same meaning. Additionally, many words are close in meaning (have a loose sense of synonymy). They suggested five ways of distinguishing between synonyms: dialects, the degree of formality, words evaluative and emotive meanings, collocational restriction and connotations.

Correspondingly, Lyons (1995) suggested that the variation between synonyms would be gained in terms of substituting them. Moreover, they can be divided synonyms into two types: near-synonymy and absolute synonymy. He claimed that absolute synonyms are rare compared to near-synonymy. This is because absolute synonyms always seek the perfectness

of meaning between two lexical items and hence these two lexical items are capable of including the same meaning in all their linguistic instances. In contrary, near-synonyms may be used interchangeably; however; they differ in their denotative, connotative and expressive use.

In conclusion, it is clear that the above-mentioned views have assumed that absolute synonyms are rare and if they are found, it will be very difficult to distinguish between them.

2.2.2. Criteria for Distinguishing Synonyms

According to Palmer (1981), the distinction between synonyms of English language is possible via five criteria including dialects, register, connotations, emotive and evaluative and meaning and collocations. With regard to dialects, it is viewed that synonyms are distinct in terms of their geographical variety. That is, two synonyms are apparently different in being either related to British or American English variety. For example, the Americans use the word *fall* to indicate the season of the year between summer and winter, while the British use *autumn* to indicate the same context.

Correspondingly, the distinction between synonyms is decided by the stylistic differences and the level of formality of words. That is, words that are used to address laymen are totally different from those which are used to address experts or professional persons. And this is referred to the fact that language has two varieties within the loop of formality: formal form and informal form. For instance, *apologize* is more formal than *sorry*. Similarly, synonyms are apparently different in their connotational manner. For instance, in some contexts, the word sometimes associates with certain characteristics of the thing to which it refers. For instance, the word *woman* has the connotation “gentle”, and the word *pig* has the connotation “dirty”.

Another criterion for distinguishing the synonyms of English could be obtained via expressing emotions and attitudes. For instance, language

users have various ways of describing the goodness and badness of something. Thus, the term *fascist* no longer indicates the member of the *fascist* party, it is rather used to condemn and insult opponents. In contrast to *fascist*, the term *liberty* is always preferred by the British people. Collocation, on the other hand, is often used to distinguish between synonyms Sinclair (1991). This is due to the fact that the use of some words is governed by the use of others. For example, the word *rancid* is only used with bacon or butter, and similarly, the word *addled* is used with *eggs.*

2.2.3. Definition of the Term Near-Synonym

Near-synonyms are words that are almost synonyms, but not quite. They are not fully intersubstitutable, but vary in their shades of denotation, or in the components of meaning they emphasize; they may also vary in grammatical or collocational constraints. In a relevant context, it is claimed that near-synonyms are also known as "Close synonyms" meaning that words which have similar meanings but may not be used interchangeably.

Edmond and Hirst (2000), on the other hand, assumed that the distinction and the use of the near-synonyms have become problematic even for the native speakers who actually do not have certain criteria for making a clear-cut on their distinction. They write:

> *"it can be difficult even for native speakers of a language to command the differences between near-synonyms well enough to use them with invariable precision, or to articulate those differences even when they are known. absolute (complete) synonyms(p.108)".*

Di Marco, Hirst and Stede (1993) assumed that near-synonyms vary in their shades of denotation, connotation, implicature, emphasis, or register. Thus, the principle of difference is crucial to any discussion that

concerning near-synonyms. This claim is supported by Saussure (1916) who claimed that difference is fundamental to the creation and demarcation of meaning.

With regard to the above definitions, it could be inferred that near-synonyms are difficult to distinguish because there is no a clear-cut for their distinction. Thus, one of the major aims of the present study is to find a strategy which helps the Sudanese university students to use English synonyms correctly.

2.2.4. Dimensions of Variation of Near-Synonyms

Cruse (1986) suggested that near-synonyms may vary in several dimensions: denotational, stylistic, expressive and structural variations. Regarding denotational variations, they include propositional, fuzzy, and other peripheral aspects. In contrast, stylistic variations include dialect and register. On the other hand, while expressive variations include emotive and attitudinal aspects, structural variations include collocational, selectional, and syntactic variations.

In a related context, Edmond and Hirst (2002) stressed that the variations among the near-synonyms might be very complex. Therefore, they yielded a table to demonstrate some examples of near-synonymic variations. This table is replicated below:

Table (2.4) Dimensions of variation for near-synonyms

Type of variation	Example
Abstract dimension	seep: drip
Emphasis	enemy: foe
Denotational , indirect	error: mistake
Denotational , fuzzy	wood : forest
Stylistic, formality	pissed: drunk :inebriated
Stylistic, force	ruin: annihilate
Expressed attitude	skinny: thin: slim, slender
Emotive	daddy: dad: father
Collocational	task : job
Selectional	pass away: die
Sub-categorization	give: donate

Source: Edmond and Hirst (2000, p.109)

To conclude this section, it is clear that synonyms and near-synonyms are difficult to distinguish despite the criteria that have been suggested for their distinction. This difficulty in distinguishing both synonyms and near-synonyms has become a serious impediment to the way that the learners use and understand the English language. Thus, one aim of the current study is to help the Sudanese university students to overcome such a difficulty.

2.3. Corpora and Corpus Linguistics

This section is devoted to corpora plus corpus linguistics. These two elements will be discussed in terms of their ontology, concerns, techniques, types and effectiveness.

2.3.1. Definition of Corpus Linguistics

According to McEnery and Wilson (2001, p.1), corpus linguistics is "*the study of language based on examples of "real life" language use*". Similarly, Aijmer and Altenberg (1991) explained that corpus linguistics is the study of language on the basis of text corpora.

Based on the previous definitions, it is clear that corpora have widely been used in analysis and study of language because they have a broader spectrum of representativeness. This merit has qualified corpora to widely be used in several subfields of Applied Linguistics: lexicography, grammar, socio-linguistics, translation, language learning and teaching, stylistic analysis, dialectology and historical linguistics.

2.3.2. Concerns of Corpus Linguistics

Leech (1992) stated that key concerns of corpus linguistics should focus on:

- linguistics performance, rather than competence;
- linguistics description; rather than linguistics universals;
- quantitative; as well as qualitative analyses;
- a more empiricist; rather rationalist view of scientific inquiry.

In the same way, Biber (1998) identified four features for the utilization of corpus linguistics in the analysis of a language in terms of being:

- empirical, analyzing the actual patterns of use in natural texts;
- utilizing a large and principled collection of natural texts, known as a "corpus", as the basis for the analysis;
- making extensive use of computers for the analysis, using both automatic and interactive techniques.

Therefore, in the present study both quantitative and qualitative data are utilized.

2.3.3. Corpus Linguistics Techniques

O'Keeffe, Carter and McCarthy (2007) stated that researchers can make use of certain techniques on the corpus, utilizing standard software such as *WorldSmith Tools* and *Monoconc Pro.* Such techniques are projected in: concordancing, word count (word frequency), key- word analysis, cluster analysis and lexico-grammatical profiles. With regard to Concordancing, it is considered as a key tool in the corpus search and it means using corpus software to find every instance of a particular word or a phrase. The search word or phrase is often referred to as the "node" and the concordance lines are usually presented with node word/phrase in the centre of the line with seven or eight words presented on either side. These are known as Key-word -in Context displays (or KWIC concordances). In the current study, concordance lines will be used to show words instances under investigation.

Another common corpus tool which software can generate is the rapid calculation of word frequency for any batch of a text. The value of this type of search is to facilitate enquiry across various corpora, different language varieties and various contexts of use. Therefore, such a technique is of great importance to our present study because we rely on the interpretation of frequency and data distribution to determine lexical items that are common and those which are uncommon, and hence helps infer the meaning of some vocabulary. Additionally, key- Word analysis is one of the most striking corpus techniques because it allows the identification of the key- words in one or more texts. According to Scott (1991), key- words are those whose frequency is remarkably high compared to some norms. It is noted that the key- word provides a useful way of describing a text or a genre and has potential application in the area of forensic linguistics, stylistics, content analysis and text retrieval.

Cluster analysis, on the other hand, is useful in the analysis of the systematic combination of words or "chunks" (e.g. *I mean*). This technique can provide insights into vocabulary description, teaching and acquisition. So, the researcher will make use of such a technique when applying vocabulary learning strategies.

Finally, the technique of Lexico-grammatical profiles has remarkably distinguished itself in the analyses of corpora. This is due to the fact that concordance lines can provide the researchers with the lexico-grammatical profiles of a word and its context accompanied by its collocations, chunks/idioms, syntactic restrictions (e.g., prepositions use, typical clause-positions and tense-aspect) and semantic restrictions (e.g., words or phrases that are applied to human only).

2.3.4. Concept of Corpora

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2013), a corpus is a collection of written or spoken texts. From the linguistic perspective, a corpus is a large amount of language data stored on a computer for the purpose of linguistics analysis. McEnery and Wilson (1961, p.24) defined a corpus as "a *finite-sized body of machine-readable text, sampled in order to be maximally representative of the language variety under consideration*"

Similarly, Gries, S. (2004,p.7) defined corpora as '*a machine-readable collection of (spoken or written)texts that were produced in a natural communicative setting, and the collection of texts is compiled with the intention (1) to be representative and balanced with respect to a particular linguistic variety or register or genre and (2) to be analyzed linguistically*'.

2.3.5. Corpora Compilation

According to Bibber, Conrad and Reppen (2004), a corpus is always characterized by its inclusion of a wide spectrum of representativeness that is accessible and retrievable with a single click. This representativeness encompasses various language registers in terms of being qualitative and

quantitative. As far as the size of a corpus is concerned, it is argued that the size of a corpus does not only focus on the number of words in a corpus, but also focuses on the number of texts from various categories, the number of samples from each text, and the number of words in each sample.

2.3. 6. Notable Corpora

It is stressed that there is a wide range of English language corpora in the world. However, the most notable ones, according to Bibber, Conrad and Reppen (2004) and Kennedy (1998), are six. On top of them is the British national Corpus (BNC) (our focus of concern for the present study). It was created by Oxford University, Lancaster University and the British Library between 1991 and 1994.It incorporates a wide spectrum of written and spoken texts in English. It is a hundred-million-word corpus. The Brown Corpus (the Brown Standard Corpus of Present-Day American English), on the other hand, has remarkably distinguished itself in the field of linguistics**.** It was compiled by Henry, Kucera and W. Nelson Francis in the 1960s. It consists of 500 texts. It is a million-word corpus. Its notability is drawn from the fact that it is the first modern and electronically readable corpus.

The third type of corpora is the Oxford English Corpus**.** It incorporates more than two million words. The data of this corpus includes all sorts of language features. It is a huge corpus of English language totaling over 2 billion words. The texts included in this corpus are taken from all sorts of sources, ranging from literary works to the language used in forums and chat rooms. It is used by Oxford University Press' linguistic research department and the creators of the Oxford English Dictionary. The fourth type of corpora is the American National Corpus. It is a 22-milllion word corpus including written and spoken text. It incorporates both of the two varieties of American English: spoken and written texts. One of the most striking features of this corpus is that it is annotated (coded).

Another widely well-known corpus is the International Corpus of English is considered as one of the most notable corpora. It was created after 1989. It is a one-million-word text corpus. The purpose of this corpus is its inclusion of Englishes concerning countries where English is either the first or official second language. Finally, the Scottish Corpus of Texts and Speech tends to have a considerable weight in the field of language learning and teaching. It is a 4-million word corpus including a compilation of spoken and written Scottish English.

2.3.7. Types of Corpora

Bibber et al., (2004) argued that a corpus is designed according to the search type that is going to be addressed. Therefore, corpora are classified into eight types. One of the broadest types of corpora is a generalized corpus. The generalized corpus is often very large, more than 10 million words, and contains a variety of language so that findings from it may be somewhat generalized. Although no corpus will ever represent all possible language, the generalized corpus seeks to give users as much of a whole picture of a language as possible. The British National Corpus (BNC), the American National Corpus (ANC) and Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) are examples of generalized corpora.

The second type of corpora includes the Specialized Corpora. It is a specialized corpus contains texts of a certain type and aims to be representative of the language of this type. Specialized corpora can be large or small and are often created to answer very specific questions. Examples of specialized corpora include the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) and the CHILDES Corpus which contains language used by children. Paradoxically, a learner corpus, on the other hand, is a kind of specialized corpus that contains written texts and / or spoken transcripts of a language used by students who are currently acquiring the language. A well-known learner corpus is the International Corpus of

Learner English (ICLE) which is often tagged. Besides the aforementioned corpuses, a pedagogic corpus has made a difference mainly in the field of teaching and learning. It is a corpus that contains language used in classroom settings. The Pedagogic Corpus can include academic textbooks, transcripts of classroom interactions, or any other written texts or spoken transcripts that learners encounter in an educational setting.

Again, one of the techniques used to describe languages is comparing them. In this spirit, comparable corpuses are created to obtain such a goal. They are used to compare corpora from various languages such as English and Spanish or various varieties of a language. The sixth type of corpora is the parallel corpora. They comprise two or more corpora in different languages, each including texts that have been translated from one language into another. They can be used by translators and by language learners to discover the potential equivalent expressions in each language and to investigate differences between languages. The seventh type of corpora is the diachronic corpora. They include texts from various periods of time. They are used to trace the development of aspects of a language over time. Good examples of such corpora include the ARCHER **(**A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers) and Helsinki Corpus. Finally, the monitor corpora are utilized to trace the current changes in a language.

2.3.8. The Use of corpora in Pedagogy

Leech (1997) stated that the interplay between corpora and pedagogy focuses on three areas: indirect use of corpora, direct use of corpora and teaching-oriented corpus development. With regard to the indirect use of corpora in pedagogy, it is true to say that a corpus is playing a major role in reference publishing, syllabus and materials development, language testing and teacher development. With regard to reference publishing, publishers can make use of taggers and frequency information in reference publishing.

Nowadays, many scholars have entirely made the maximum use of corpora to critically look at some learning material such as TOEFL (Teaching of English as a Foreign Language), syllabuses and teaching materials. They actually depend on the huge data which a corpus provides. Teacher development, on the other hand, has become the key focus of a corpus. Benefitting from the huge packages of information that a corpus provides, a corpus is used to raise the language awareness of English teachers. Moreover, corpora are used in language testing. Kaszubski and Wojnowska (2003) revealed that some annotated (coded) corpora have recently been used: as an archive of examination scripts; to develop test materials; to optimize test procedures; to improve the quality of test marking; to validate tests; and to standardize tests.

With regard to the direct use of corpora, they have become rather a distinct source of information in teaching compared to the traditional teaching methodologies. McEnery and Wilson (2001) indicated that the main scope of corpora in learning is interacting, inducting and illustrating. Illustration' means looking at real data, 'interaction' means discussing and sharing opinions and observations, and 'induction' means making one's own rule for a particular feature, which will be refined and developed as more and more data is encountered. In contrast, the traditional teaching methods focus on practicing, producing and presenting of information.

The third type of the uses of corpora in the area of pedagogy is teaching-oriented corpus development. This technique is particularly useful in teaching languages for specific purposes (LSP corpora) and in research on L1 (developmental corpora) and L2 (learner corpora) acquisition Leech (1997).

In the above section, a detailed account is given to corpus linguistics and corpora. This description has dealt with their concept, types, and techniques besides showing the efficacy of corpora to the present study.

2.4. Review of Previous Studies

This section is devoted to the review of previous studies conducted on VLS nationally and internationally. Such research will critically be discussed**.**

2.4.1. Previous Studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategies Conducted in the Sudanese Context

Ahmad (1989) investigated the Sudanese EFL learners' vocabulary learning strategies at different educational levels. He used think-aloud protocol and an interview. Findings revealed that there were some differences between good learners and bad ones. While good learners employed more strategies, demonstrated awareness of how to deal with new words, took collocation and spelling into account, and displayed consciousness of contextual learning, the underachievers did not. Additionally, individual differences between the both groups were identified.

Mohammad (2014) investigated English specialized vocabulary learning strategies used by Sudanese university students. She used a questionnaire and an interview. Findings revealed that 95% of teachers were unaware of the essence of vocabulary learning strategies in teaching specialized vocabulary, and there were no specialized courses for teaching specialized vocabulary. In addition, findings suggested that students had a positive attitude towards the use of multi-media (internet and computer). However, students encountered some difficulties in learning specialized vocabulary such as the lack of communication with their teachers who were not qualified enough.

Garri (2004) investigated the vocabulary learning strategies (discovery and consolidation) used by the third- year university students in the Sudan. He used a questionnaire Results showed that students neither employed effective determination strategies to discover the meaning nor did they use effective consolidation strategies to retain the meaning. The findings also

revealed that the instruction of vocabulary learning strategies was urgently needed to raise the learners' awareness in choosing the appropriate VLS. He added that pedagogical measures had to be adopted to improve the students' learning habit.

Alhasan (2010) investigated the problems of vocabulary learning and loss encountering the third-year secondary school students. He used an achievement test and a teacher's questionnaire. Findings indicated that there was a high rate of vocabulary loss which was attributed to several factors. For instance, the students were not motivated to advance their vocabulary learning, the syllabus did not have clear strategies for new vocabulary learning, and marginalization of the role of English dictionaries.

2.4.2. Previous Studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategies conducted Abroad

Gu and Johnson (1996) studied the VLS used by Chinese students. They used a questionnaire and a test to collect data. Findings revealed that guessing from context, using dictionaries, taking notes and verbal repetition ranked the highest strategies used, however; using vocabulary lists ranked the lowest. Additionally, findings revealed that the learners' scores in the vocabulary test positively correlated with some strategies such as using dictionaries contextualized guessing, note –taking, paying attention to word form and activating newly learned words. On the other hand, results suggested that the strategies of memorization and visual repetition negatively correlated with both students' vocabulary size and language proficiency.

Nation and Moir (2002) investigated the vocabulary learning strategies used by Australian learners enrolled in an intensive L2 course. They utilized an interview in which students were asked to provide as much information they know about each word as possible. Results suggested that

almost all the learners were failed to provide information about each word they knew. This failure was attributed to their unawareness of vocabulary learning strategies.

Based on the information provided above, vocabulary learning strategies may be marginalized in the setting of Sudanese Universities. Thus, learners are unaware of VLS as well as their use. Therefore, one aim of the current study is to identify the extent to which the Sudanese university students know vocabulary learning strategies and the extent to which they use them.

Al-Qarni (1997) searched the VLS used by Saudi students. He used a questionnaire. Results revealed that participants used probably all various types of vocabulary learning strategies mentioned in the literature.

Schmitt (1997) assessed the vocabulary learning strategies used by Japanese students. He used a questionnaire. Results revealed that strategies such as using the bilingual dictionary, guessing from context, asking classmates for the meaning, verbal repetition, written repetition, and saying new words aloud ranked the highest whereas strategies such as checking for L1 cognate and utilizing physical action ranked the lowest.

Alyami (2011) investigated the vocabulary learning strategies across genders in Saudi Arabia. He utilized a questionnaire, a structured interview and a vocabulary level test. Findings revealed that strategies such as guessing and associating the new word with personal experience were more frequently used by males than that of females. In contrast, males used English-English dictionary more than females. On the other hand, findings revealed that both males and females used strategies such as guessing the meaning of the unknown word from its structure, asking for Arabic equivalent, consulting an on-line dictionary and organizing new words randomly. It was also found that the fourth-year students used the strategies of skipping the meaning and looking up the word's grammatical category more than that of the first-year students. More importantly, vocabulary

proficiency was found to correlate positively with some strategies such as guessing and use of the monolingual dictionary.

Aljdee (2007) investigated the vocabulary learning strategies of Libyan University students and their vocabulary knowledge. He used a questionnaire and a test. Results indicated that learners used discovery strategies such as a dictionary and contextualized guessing more often than consolidation strategies such as practicing in a group, making word list or assessing vocabulary knowledge. Findings of the test also revealed that using discovery strategies such guessing, identifying the part of speech and using a monolingual dictionary positively correlated with learners' vocabulary knowledge. With regard to consolidation strategies: making an image of the form of the word, using the new word in a sentence, and using media positively correlated with the learners' vocabulary knowledge.

Al-Hatmi (2012) investigated the use of note- taking strategy by university EFL learners in Saudi Arabia. He used a questionnaire, a structured interview and a test. Results showed that whereas taking words from the textbook, selecting new words and L1 translation were the most common note-taking micro strategies, using notes on audio tapes and on cards, organizing words alphabetically and recording pronunciation and collocations were the least common ones. Additionally, results indicated that the students' vocabulary and proficiency level positively correlated with their use of some note-taking strategies.

Cusen (2005) examined the vocabulary learning strategies of undergraduates majoring English at university in Romania. She used a diary and an interview. Results indicated that advanced learners with a professional interest in the study of English seemed to use almost all types of vocabulary learning strategies.

Stoffer (1995) examined the vocabulary learning strategies as related to individual difference variables in Britain. A questionnaire was used.

Findings suggested that there was a high correlation between the strategies used and previous vocabulary learning instruction.

Al-Fuhaid (2004) investigated the vocabulary learning strategies used by Saudi students majoring English. He used a questionnaire, a think-aloud protocol experiment and an interview. The key categories of the vocabulary learning strategies investigated were discovery and consolidation strategies. Findings showed that the subjects utilized both strategies. However, their preference and reliance on mechanical (shallow) VLS such as the bilingual dictionary outnumbered the use of imagery or pictures. Findings also indicated the subjects were incompetent in terms of dictionary use and guessing. Thus, the more successful learners exploited the dictionary more flexibly than the less successful ones. Finally, the researcher recommended that the learners needed to be trained on how to use VLS properly.

Tassana-ngam (2004) investigated the effect of training on five vocabulary learning strategies at Thai University. She used two vocabulary tests; think-aloud protocol and an interview. Findings revealed that learners of the experimental group outperformed those of the control one in using VLS. Moreover, students showed an increasing awareness of the need to select a suitable vocabulary learning strategy to help remember various types of words.

Al-Talhab (2014) investigated the teaching and learning VLS via reading in the context of Saudi Universities. He utilized a questionnaire conducted to fifty students majoring English. He also used an interview conducted to teachers. Results revealed that the teachers employed diverse vocabulary teaching techniques such as synonyms, defining new words in English and using Arabic translation. Students, on the other hand, used strategies which were simple and tended to avoid the complex ones. Furthermore,

students felt getting benefitted much from using VLS in that they became leaner-centered.

Al-Shuwairikh (2001) investigated the VLS used by Arabic as foreign language learners in Saudi Arabia. He used a multiple case approach and a survey. Findings of the multiple cases demonstrated that there were major differences between the two groups of students in the seven categories of vocabulary learning strategies adopted in this study, namely, non-dictionary strategies for discovering the meanings of new words, dictionary use, note-taking, memorization, practice, meta-cognitive strategies, and expanding lexical knowledge. The results of the survey indicated that the course type had a strong relationship with the vocabulary strategy used. The individual's factors (students' first language, proficiency level and level of achievement), on the other hand, appeared to have a weak relationship with the use of vocabulary learning strategies.

Easterbrook (2013) investigated the VLS used by Chinese students and their beliefs about language and language learning. He used a questionnaire and an interview. Findings suggested that there was a consistency in the discovery strategies learners often used to discover the meaning of a new word in written texts and beliefs about language and language learning. Moreover, findings indicated that the most frequent strategies utilized by Chinese students were: guessing, using a dictionary, memorizing new word's spelling and pronunciation, repeating and connecting the new word with the Chinese meaning. He recommended the teaching and the training of VLS.

Li (2004) investigated the Chinese EFL learners' beliefs about the role of rote learning (a method involving repletion and memorization) in vocabulary learning strategies. He used a questionnaire, an interview and a test. Findings suggested that some Chinese EFL learners had positive beliefs about the rote strategy in vocabulary learning. This was attributed to

the fact that rote learning incorporates some strategies such as repetition, memorization and practice. Others, however; had negative beliefs about it.

Siriwan (2007) investigated and described the types of vocabulary learning strategies utilized by Thai university students. He used an interview and a questionnaire. Findings indicated that the learners did not use vocabulary learning strategies frequently. Findings also revealed that individual factors such as the major field of the study, previous learning experience, the level of vocabulary proficiency and gender strongly correlated with the learners' use of discovery strategies.

2.4.3. Discussion of the Previous Studies Reviewed

In terms of area of investigation, all the above research has generally focused on vocabulary and has used the same learning strategies. Notwithstanding that the current study is distinct in two ways. First, it focuses on some strategies that related to vocabulary in general besides those related to a certain aspect of vocabulary (near-synonyms). Second, it incorporates the corpora as a new strategy to vocabulary learning mainly near-synonyms which none of the reviewed studies has incorporated them.

Learners' awareness of using VLS, on the other hand, tends to be central to the current study. Findings have indicated that despite the efficacy of VLS, some studies have demonstrated that learners are unaware of using them (e.g., Siriwan, 2007; Muhammad, 2014; Al-Fuhaid, 2004; Nation and Moir, 2002; Garri, 2004). Thus, investigating the extent to which the Sudanese university students use VLS is a key objective in the present study.

Additionally, some studies have shown that the choice of VLS is influenced by some variables such as the learners' level of proficiency, age, gender, major field of study and previous vocabulary knowledge (e.g., Aljdee, 2001; Gu and Johnson, 1996; Cusen, 2005; Alyami, 2011; Al-Shuwairikh, 2001; Al-Fuhaid, 2004)). That is, such factors have correlated

positively or negatively with the learners' use of VLS. Therefore, in the current study, some vocabulary learning strategies as well as a corpus will be investigated in discovering the meaning of vocabulary especially near-synonyms. And the correlation of the aforementioned variables along with the corpora will be examined.

Regarding data collection instruments, it is clear that various data collection instruments have been adopted in the investigation of VLS: questionnaires, interviews, surveys, think-aloud protocols. Some studies (e.g., Stoffer, Al-Qarni, and Schmitt) have used only one instrument to gather data, whereas other studies have used more than one strategy (e.g. Ahmad, 1998; Siriwan, 2007; Li, 2004; Easterbrook, 2013; Al-Talhab, 2014; Tassana-ngam, 2004). Up to my knowledge, mixed method approach is needed because it produces more authentic, reliable and correct data. Therefore, in the present study, a questionnaire and an interview as well as a test will be adopted. Participants, on the other hand, have become an influential element in the current study. Most of the studies have focused on their learning level, number and age. In terms of age, the studies can be divided into two groups. The first group involves studies that have been applied to learners of various ages (e.g., Ahmad). The second group consists of studies that have been applied to learners of the same age (Muhammad, 2013; Easterbrook, 2012; Li, 2007, Tassana-ngam, 2004).

The participants of the current study can be categorized with the second group. This categorization indicates the homogeneity of the subjects and hence helps in the interpretation of the results in terms of age factor. Furthermore, it has been noted that all the studies discussed above involve subjects with the same L2 contexts and nearly the same learning level (university students). However, the current study includes learners of various L2 contexts as they have received their primary education in various countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and

Nigeria. This linguistic diversity will be of great help in evaluating the learners' performance in the way they use and choose VLS.

Another aspect which seems paramount to the current study is the VLS use and success. Within the scope of the aforementioned studies, it could be deduced that the correlation between the use of specific VLS and success in language learning has been investigated in two ways: either by comparing certain strategies utilized by good and bad learners (Ahmad, 1988), or by comparing the use of certain vocabulary learning strategies by the learners' performance in the test. Honestly speaking, the relation between the use of certain VLS and the learners' success is still fuzzy, although it has been explored by several studies. Therefore, one of the aims of the current study is to investigate the correlation of some vocabulary learning strategies and corpora with the learners' success.

In the same context, most of the studies reviewed have shown that learners tend to use certain VLS such as the dictionary and guessing (e.g., Gu & Johnson, 1996; Easterbrook, 2013; Aljdee, 2007; Alyami, 2011). However; the frequent use of certain strategies does not necessarily mean that they are good. This view is supported by Politzer and McGroarthy (1985) who warned that the common use of VLS is not vital. In contrast to Politzer and Mc Groarthy (1985), Schmitt (1981) found that the frequent use of a certain VLS is allegedly effective. Despite this controversy, identifying the most frequent vocabulary learning strategies used by the Sudanese university students is central to the present study.

Learners' characteristics are paramount to the investigation of VLS. That is, the effectiveness of VLS is entirely bound by some variables including the learners' proficiency level, background knowledge, context of learning and learners' characteristics Chamot and Rubin (1994). Thus, the present study will make use of the learners' linguistic competence and background knowledge, especially when dealing with corpus data.

To sum up, the previous studies have been discussed in terms of their research designs adopted, data collection tools utilized and findings reached. Most of the studies have investigated VLS, and most of the studies have probably reached the same results. That is, learners are encountered by some difficulties in using VLS because they are unaware of them. This is besides certain VLS are utilized (guessing and dictionary). Despite this consensus, very few studies have investigated the possibility of teaching VLS plus the effect of training learners on them. In the light of the information provided by the previously reviewed studies, the current study seems sharply distinct and it is expected to contribute to the field of VLS. The sharp distinction and the expected contribution of the current study are attributed to its investigation of all vocabulary with a special focus on near-synonyms, and its adoption of corpora as a new VLS. It is worth mentioning that none of the aforementioned studies has dealt with the problem of near-synonyms or utilized corpora as the latest strategies for vocabulary learning.

2.5. Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, brief accounts of literature concerning vocabulary, VLS, synonyms, near-synonyms and corpora have been reviewed. Other aspects related to these components have been discussed from theoretical and practical perspectives.

The significance of this literature can be seen in two ways. First, it ascertains the importance of vocabulary in language learning. Second, it proves that the use and knowledge of VLS have globally existed phenomena. Thus, great efforts have been exerted to reach decisive resolutions for such problems. What is amazing, all the studies that have been conducted have investigated vocabulary in general and have utilized the same VLS. Thus, other categories related to vocabulary are needed to be investigated besides diversifying their learning strategies. The

significance of the present study stems from these two points. That is, all vocabulary will be investigated with a special focus on near-synonyms. This is besides adopting a new VLS (corpora). In addition to what have been mentioned earlier, it is worth notifying that this review is crucial to the design and instruments of the current study which will be dealt with in the next chapter. All in all, the current study will hopefully be expected to provide meaningful, significant information in the field of vocabulary learning strategies.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology adopted in this study. It also provides description of the research population, sampling, tools and the process of data collection.

3.1. Research Methodology Adopted

The research design can be defined as the plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. There are three types of research designs: quantitative, qualitative and mixed. For the current study, a mixed research design is adopted due to its incorporation of qualitative and quantitative elements in such a way that the qualitative and quantitative information complements each other. Thus, utilizing the mixed method design is likely to provide authentic and precise results, Creswell (2009).

3.2. Research Tools

A research instrument is known as a tool that used to collect data. According to Creswell (2009), different types of research tools can be used to collect data: observation, interviews, questionnaire, documents, audiovisual materials and tests. In the present study, a questionnaire, an interview and two tests were used. The selection of these instruments stemmed from the research questions.

3.2.1. Questionnaire

Brown (2001, p.6) states that a questionnaire refers to "*any written instruments that provide respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting them among existing answers*". Adding to that, questionnaires allow researchers to gather information that learners are able to report

about themselves such as their beliefs and their motivation about learning or their reactions to learning and classroom activities and instructions. On the other hand, Dornyei (2003, p.8) claims that questionnaires provide the researcher with three types of data about the respondents '*factual, behavioral and attitudinal*". Thus, in the present study, a questionnaire was adopted with the aim of seeking factual and behavioral data towards the strategies that the learners used to discover the meaning of vocabulary and particularly near-synonyms of English.

The learners' questionnaire (LQ)was formulated in accordance with Likert 5-point Scale. Thus, five choices were given. Participants were asked to choose one of the five choices (always, often, sometimes, rarely, never) by ticking the box that suits their actual use of the vocabulary learning strategy. Learners' questionnaire consisted of two parts. In part one, learners were asked to provide factual information because this helps in obtaining background data about the respondents. In part two, participants were asked to answer behavioral information concerning the way they deal with discovering the meaning of vocabulary as well as consolidating them. It consisted of twenty-eight items. These items were based on Schmitt's (1997) vocabulary learning strategies. However; one item was added (corpora). For instance, statements from 1 to 11 dealt with discovery strategies while statements from 12 to 28 dealt with consolidating strategies. It should be noted that discovery strategies are divided into determination strategies from 1 to 6 and social strategies from7 to 11. Similarly, consolidating strategies are divided into memory strategies from 12 to 20, cognitive strategies from 21 to 24 and meta-cognitive strategies from 25 to 28. These items are categorized as follows:

Table (3.1): Learners' Questionnaire Matrix

Statement	Variable measured	
1.2.3.4.5.6	Determination strategies	Discovery Strategies
7.8.9.10.11	Social Strategies	
12.13.14.15.16.17.18.19.20	Memory Strategies	Consolidating Strategies
21.22.23.24	Cognitive Strategies	
25.26.27.28	Meta-Cognitive Strategies	

3.2.2. Interview

The interview is a type of data collection. It is mainly intended to gather the respondents' opinions. There are several reasons for conducting an interview. For instance, interviews are used to directly find out information oriented to research questions, to test hypotheses or to suggest new ones. Therefore, many researchers had utilized the interview as the main source of data collection (e.g., Altahlab; Al-Fuhaid, 2004; Aljdee, 2007). Creswell (2009) claims that interviews are divided into two types: the first one is conditioned by the number of participants. This type includes: "face-to-face", 'by telephone'', and "group interviews". The second is bound to the type of the questions that will be addressed. Thus, interviews can be structured, semi-structured and unstructured.

In the current study, a semi-structured interview was adopted. It consisted of 4 questions. The first questions aimed at identifying the name of the syllabus prescribed for learning vocabulary and the types of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) provided by the syllabus and how were they presented. The second question dealt with the most frequent strategy provided by the syllabus plus the sufficiency of VLS included in the syllabus. The third question dealt with the range of vocabulary to which the learners were exposed to. The fourth question dealt with the possibility of teaching VLS and the extent to what it was useful.

Table (3.2): EFL Teachers' Interview Matrix

Statement	Variable measured
1	Name of the syllabus, types of VLS and the way they presented
2	The most frequent VLS along with its sufficiency
3	The range of VLS the learners exposed to and its sufficiency
4	Teaching VLS

3.2.3. Test

A test is defined as "*a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain*" (Brown 2004, p. 3). Some researchers, such as Hughes (1989; 2003); Genesee and Upshur (1996); and Brown (2004), have classified language test into four main types of tests: '*proficiency tests*, *achievement tests*, *diagnostic tests*, placement *tests*, *progress tests* and *language aptitude tests'*.

With regard to the present study, a proficiency test and diagnostic test were designed. With regard to the diagnostic test, it aims at investigating the students' actual use of some vocabulary learning strategies to discover the meaning of difficult words. These strategies include: using a dictionary, analyzing root, guessing and synonyms and antonyms. The test consisted of five questions. Each question dealt with a certain strategy. For instance, question one, which consisted of three items, dealt with contextualized guessing. Learners were asked to choose the correct answer A, B or C. With regard to question two and three, they dealt with synonyms and antonyms. Each one consisted of six items where learners were asked to match each word with its synonyms and antonyms.

The last question dealt with the students' practical use of the dictionary. It was divided into to three sub-questions. The first sub-question dealt with

alphabetical order. That is, the learners were provided with six words and they were asked to order them alphabetically. In the second sub-question, a dictionary extract was provided. It related to the definitions of the word 'bar'. Learners were asked to identify the correct definition of the word 'bar'. The third sub-question dealt with identifying the class of the word 'bar'. These strategies are classified as follows:

Table (3.3): Diagnostic Test

Question	Number of items	Variable measured
1	3 items	Guessing
2	6 items	Synonyms
3	6 items	Antonyms
4	3 items	Dictionary

The proficiency test on the other hand, dealt with near-synonyms. It included 8 items. Each one dealt with a pair or two pairs of near-synonyms. The selection of these synonyms was based on the students' syllabus. The students were asked to choose the most correct near-synonym. The variables of this test are categorized as follows:

Table (3.4): The Proficiency Test

Question	Number of items	Variable measured
1	two items	error / mistake
2	two items	trip / journey
3	three items	answer/ replied/ respond
4	two items	choose/select
5	two items	ill/sick
6	six items	quick/swift/fast/rapid/express/speedy
7	two items	talked/spoken
8	two items	reach/arrive

3.3. Validity of the Tools

Validity refers to '*the extent to which an indicator or variable adequately measures the theoretical concept it purports to measure'* (Jupp, 2006:314). Correspondingly, it indicates that '*the tools should measure what are supposed to measure*' Creswell (2009, p.141). Therefore, to ensure the validity of the tools for the current study, some considerations suggested by Mackey and Gass' (2005) were taken into account. According to them, the tools should be simply designed, reviewed by several experts and their questions should be unambiguous, answerable besides being piloted. In doing so, the questionnaire, the two tests and the interview were given to a number of experts to authenticate their construct validity. The experts who assisted in constructing these tools were the supervisor of the study in addition to other experts at Al-Mughtaribeen University. The experts made some modifications by adding and deleting some items. After that, the tools were given to some participants for piloting. Piloting tests had provided some benefits for the researcher. For examples, some students did not understand the English version of the questionnaire. Thus, it was translated into their mother tongue language (Arabic) while being administered.

Another difficulty was that some students did not understand some VLS included in the questionnaire such as *corpora* and *utilizing word's coordinates.* This difficulty was settled via explaining the concept of both items. Finally, the results of the piloting tests were statistically analyzed to guarantee their reliability.

3.4. Reliability of the Tools

According to Creswell (2009), reliability means repeatability. That is, the same results have to be obtained when the tools conducting more than once. It is also known as '*a measure of consistency over time and over similar samples*' (Cohen *et al*., 2011, p.200).

In the current study, the questionnaire was piloted on 15 students, the Diagnostic Test was piloted on 10 students and the Proficiency Test was piloted on 21 students. The reliability of the tools was calculated by using *Cronbach's Alpha* which is a statistical measure in the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of the four tools are displayed in the following tables:

Table (3.5): The Reliability Coefficient of the Questionnaire

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.912	28

Table (3.6): The Reliability Coefficient of Diagnostic Test

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.847	4

Table (3.7): The Reliability Coefficient of the Proficiency Test

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.829	8

It should be noted that the higher the alpha, the higher the reliability. According to Mueller (1986), a well-constructed scale should have a reliability coefficient of (0.80) or higher, although some researchers suggest some lower coefficients to be acceptable as well. As shown in the three tables mentioned above, the alpha coefficients are (.98), (.84) and (.81) signal a very high level of internal consistency. Thus, the three tools are ready to be administered.

With regard to the reliability of the interview, it cannot be calculated statistically because the data were qualitative. Therefore, it was obtained by interviewing three EFL teachers. This piloting provided the researcher with the opportunity to practise interviewing which resulted later in the development of the skills required. It also led to the reduction of the amount of bias projected in the characteristics of the interviewer and the respondent and the content of the questions (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

3.5. Population and Sampling of the Study

The population is a complete set of elements (persons or things) that possess some common characteristics defined by the sampling criteria established by the researcher. The population of this study was composed of the EFL teachers and students majoring English at Al-Mughtaribeen University, Khartoum. Concerning the students, they were the students who were in the first, the second and the third levels. Their ages ranged from 18 to 21. Most of them were native speakers of Arabic. Very few of them were second language English speakers (Nigerians). Some of them had received their primary and secondary education in some of the Gulf countries: Saudi

Arabia, UAE, Qatar and Oman. With regard to the EFL teachers, they were Sudanese nationals. They were 23. Four females and 19 were males. While 5 of them were full-timers, 18 are part- timers. Two of them were professors whereas two were PhD holders. The rest of them were M.A. holders.

With regard to the choice of the aforementioned subjects, it was determined by some factors. For instance, the students were in a position (English learners) which might help in providing deep insights into the use of vocabulary learning strategies. Teachers, on the other hand, were the most experienced to provide beneficial information about the syllabus.

3.5.1. The Sampling

Sampling is a process of selecting a few from a bigger group. Creswell (2009) claims that sample designs are divided into two types: probability (random) and non-probability. Kothari (2004) claims that while non-probability sampling involves deliberate selection of items, the probability sampling does not. It is worth mentioning that both probability and non-probability sampling are further categorized to include multiple types of samples. In the current study, a non-probability sampling technique was adopted. This technique is projected in using convenience sampling which is a subcategory of non-probability sampling. This type of sampling has been selected because it appears ideal for testing entire population, for its inexpensiveness, fastness and availability. In addition, convenient sampling is useful for detecting relationships among different phenomena.

In the current study, the students chosen for sampling consisted of three academic levels: the first level students, the second level students and the third level students. Regarding the participants of the questionnaire, 40 students were selected from the first year students, 30 were selected from the second and the third ones. With regard to the two tests, 50 students were selected for the diagnostic test and 78 were selected for the

proficiency test. Concerning the participants in the Proficiency Test, they were divided into two halves which were both allotted to the control group and the experimental one. Concerning the sample for the questionnaire, 19 EFL teachers were selected to participate in the current study. Coding of the participants is shown in the following tables:

Table (3.8): Participants in the Questionnaire

Academic Level	**Number of students**
First-year students	40
Second-year students	30
Third-year students	30
Total	**100**

Table (3.9): Participants in the Interview

			Sex	
University	**Number of teachers**	**Degree**	**Male**	**Female**
Al-Mughtaribeen	2	Associate Prof.	2	
Al-Mughtaribeen	1	PhD	1	
Al-Mughtaribeen	4	M.A.	4	
Part-timers	12	M.A.	6	6
Total	**19**		**13**	**6**

Table (3.10): Participants in the Diagnostic Test

Test	**Number of Participants**
Diagnostic Test	50

Table (3.11): Participants in the Proficiency Test

Group	Number of Participants
Control Group	39
Experimental Group	39
Total	**78**

3.6. Data Collection and Analysis

After finishing piloting the instruments, the researcher began collecting data in April 2016. It took place at the Department of Languages. Prior to data collection process, a short meeting was held with Head of English Department in which the purpose of the study and the process of data collection were explained. During this meeting, permission for data collection was granted to the researcher. Similar short meetings were held with the staff teaching and students in which they were enlightened about the purpose of the study and the need for their participation. Upon granting the participants' willingness, data collection began the following day.

Firstly, the questionnaire was administered. Before handing out the questionnaire, the students were told that there was no wrong and right answer to the statements, and that they should respond as honestly and accurately as possible, and that their responses would remain confidential. Furthermore, the students were provided with an example of how to respond to the questions in the questionnaire.

100 students from the three academic levels completed the questionnaire. The researcher was present when the students were completing the questionnaire in order to answer any question or clarify any item that they might not understand or might find ambiguous. In order to achieve the most possible results of the questionnaire; the students were given a three- day period to answer it. On the third day, all the respondents- except 10- were able to submit their scripts. It is worth mentioning that those who were not

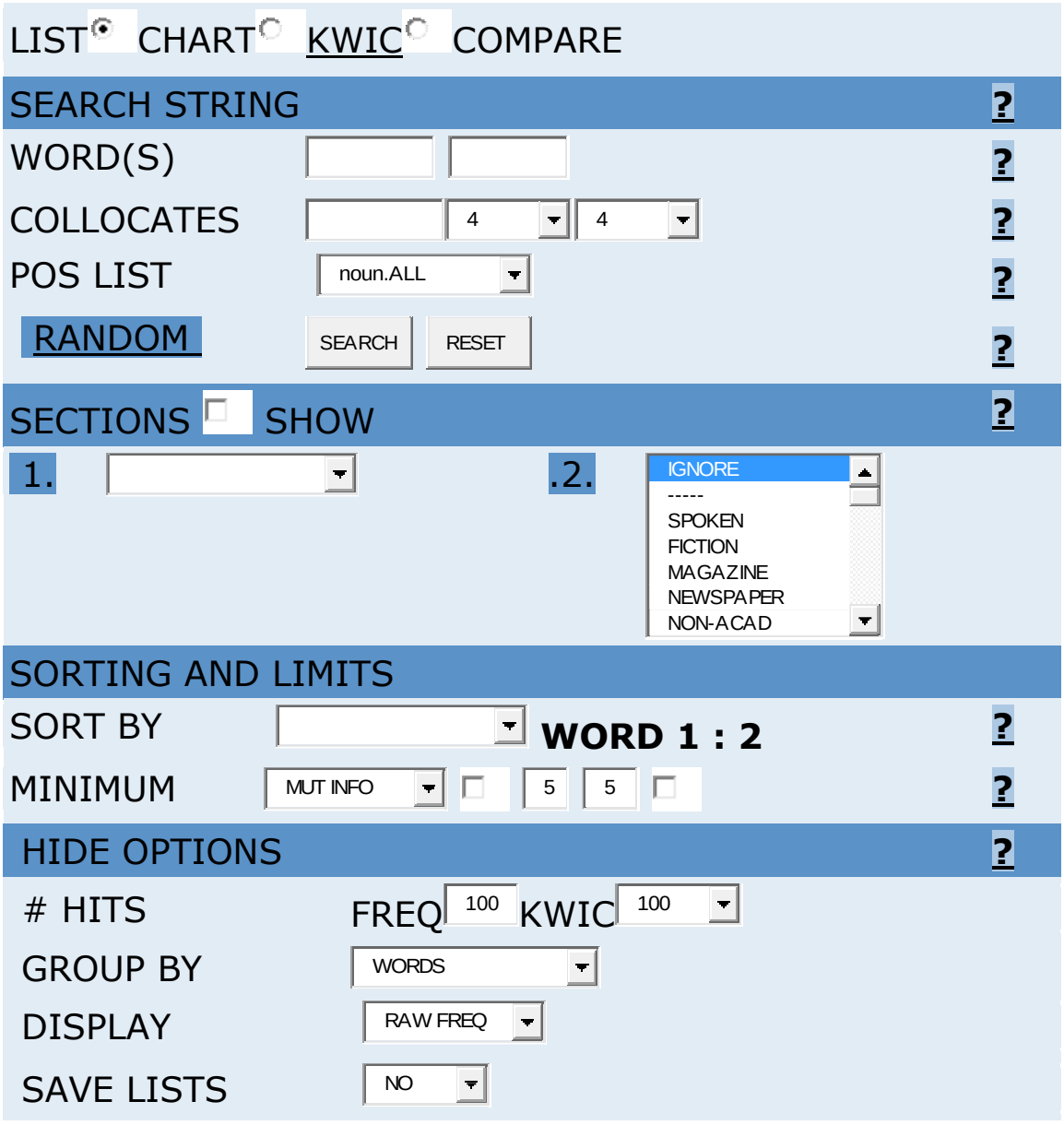
able to submit their scripts promised to submit them the following day. After collecting all the scripts, they were coded for the purpose of statistical analysis.

After that the learners were informed about the possibility of administering two extra tests (diagnostic test & proficiency test) the following week. However, prior to conducting the diagnostics test, a lecture was held on the practical use of four VLS including dictionary, guessing, synonyms and antonyms. In this lecture, learners were taught how to make use of dictionary, guessing, synonyms and antonyms when discovering the meaning of difficult words. Then the test was administered at the Lecture Room 1. All the students attended the test. They were 60. The test took 25 minutes. The test was invigilated by the researcher. After completing the test, the scripts were collected and marked.

Regarding the administration of the proficiency test, students were divided into two groups: control group and experimental one. The number of the students in both groups, which were randomly selected, was 39. It is worth notifying that the proficiency test was near-synonyms- oriented. The test was administered to the control group in Room 2. It took 30 minutes. It was invigilated by the researcher. After the test was completed, the scripts were collected and marked. Immediately after that, preparations for administering the test to the experimental group began. These preparations represented in reserving the English lab (A) in liaison with the Head Department. In addition, the information technology teacher (IT) was requested for checking the workability of computer devices as well as the internet connection. Then a lecture was held on the concept of corpora as a new vocabulary learning strategy and how to use them. The students were theoretically oriented towards corpora instruments such as the word frequency and the key- words in context (KWIC). Then the practical orientation began on the British National Corpus (BNC). It took place in

the English Lab (A). After confirming that none of the learners had encountered a corpus before, two lectures were allotted to this orientation. In this orientation, the students were introduced to the corpus user's interface and the functions of terminologies. The corpus user's interface includes: *KWIC, Compare, Chart, Pos list, Collocates, Sorting* and *Limits, Search, Reset and Random.* A copy of the interface of the BNC is displayed below.

Figure (3.1): the British National Corpus user's interface



During the lecture, the students were trained on how to actually make use of the terminology *list* to draw the instances of a word. They also trained on how to use the terminology collocates to identify the number of collocates the follows or precedes a word. In addition to the utilization of *Pos List* to find the type of word class that accompanies a word. This besides making use of the terminology *Compare* to compare between two lexical items. The students were also trained on how to limit their search according to the type of genre or sub-genre and how to statistically represent the distribution of a lexical item across registers or genres. Finally, the learners were trained on how to generate the concordancer lines and make use of word frequency. To ensure the learners' complete understanding of corpora, they were given some exercises to be answered with the assistance of the corpus. For instance, the students were asked to generate the concordance lines and the frequencies for the words: start, begin, error, mistake and large. They were also asked to limit the number and the type of collocates that accompany these words. Learners were also asked to identify the distribution of these words in some registers such as spoken, academic, prose and non-fiction besides drawing their charts. Finally, the students were asked to distinguish between the exact meanings of the four pairs of near-synonyms: big/ large, begin/start, house/home and smart/clever/intelligent. After that, the students were informed that they would do a test on near-synonyms the following day. They had to use the British National Corpus (BNC) to answer it. On the fixed day, the test, which had been administered to the control group, was also administered to the experimental one. It was conducted in the English Lab (A). It took about 60 minutes. The students were able to use the British National Corpus to answer the test. The test was conducted in the presence of the researcher. After having completed the test, the scripts were gathered and

marked. It is worth mentioning that the students were requested to save the information drawn from the corpus to be discussed in Chapter Four.

Concerning the conduction of the interview, it took place the Faculty of Languages. All the members of the staff were interviewed at their offices during the working hours. While interviewing, notes were taken. Each interview lasted for at least 10 minutes. Due to the availability of the interviewees at the University, the researcher was able to interview all the staff members in two weeks. Having completed the interview, the responses were coded for analysis.

Concerning the data analysis of the questionnaire and the diagnostic test, the quantitative data were entered into the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 21 for windows) to be analyzed via 'descriptive statistics' in which the mean, the standard deviation and the variance were displayed. The following procedures were taken when analyzing them:

- The SPSS was run.
- The variables of the questionnaire and the test were entered in *variable view* then the numeric data were entered in the *data view*.
- From the user's interface the order 'analyze' was clicked. Then a long sub-menu bar appeared.
- From this sub-menu 'descriptive statistics' was selected. Then both of the orders 'descriptives' and 'frequencies' were selected. The outcomes were tables and charts.

However, the proficiency test was analyzed via the statistical measure 'paired-samples T-Test'. This measure is advantageous in uncovering the difference in means between the performance of the control group and that of the experimental one. The following steps were taken to analyze the proficiency test:

- The SPSS was run.

- The test variables were entered in *variable view* then the numeric data were entered in the *data view*.
- From the user's interface the order 'analyze' was clicked. Then a long sub-menu bar appeared.
- From this sub-menu the order 'compare means' was selected. Then the order 'paired-samples T-Test' was selected. The outcomes were tables and charts.

Regarding the interview, it was analyzed qualitatively. This was due to the fact that the interview information could not be turned into numbers. Therefore, the interview is an aspect of qualitative research design. Qualitative analysis involves the linguistic description of the data.

3.7. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has described the methodology followed in the present study. A rationale has been provided for adopting mixed method design. In this chapter, the targeted population and the sampling have also been discussed. In addition, Data collection tools, their validity and reliability have been discussed. Furthermore, the procedures that were followed in collecting and analyzing the data have been described in detail. The following chapters will focus on data analysis, research results and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the analyses obtained from the research tools. It also discusses the findings starting with the vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire that covers the range of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) used by Al-Mughtaribeen University, and then proceeds to the results of test (A) which is utilized to determine the actual use of VLS, and test (B) which is intended to measure the effectiveness of corpora as a new VLS. The discussion also tries to confirm the hypotheses suggested earlier in the light of the findings reached, the previous related studies and the researcher's own knowledge and experience.

4.1. Results of the Questionnaire

With regard to the outputs of the questionnaire analysis, the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) has provided the following tables and figures:

4.1.1. Determination Strategies

Table 4.1: Participants' reported use of determination strategies

Strategies	**Frequency Responses**						
Determination Strategies	**A**	**O**	**S**	**R**	**N**	**Mean**	**Mode**
Analyzing part of speech	16	20	27	20	17	49.75	S
Analyzing word root	29	19	21	20	11	58.75	A
Analyzing illustration	43	30	11	11	5	73.75	A
Using dictionary	95	3	2			98.25	A
Guessing	43	30	20	4	3	76.5	A
Using corpora					100	0.00	N
A= Always, O = Often, S= Sometimes, R= Rarely, N = Never							

Figure 4.1: Determination Strategies

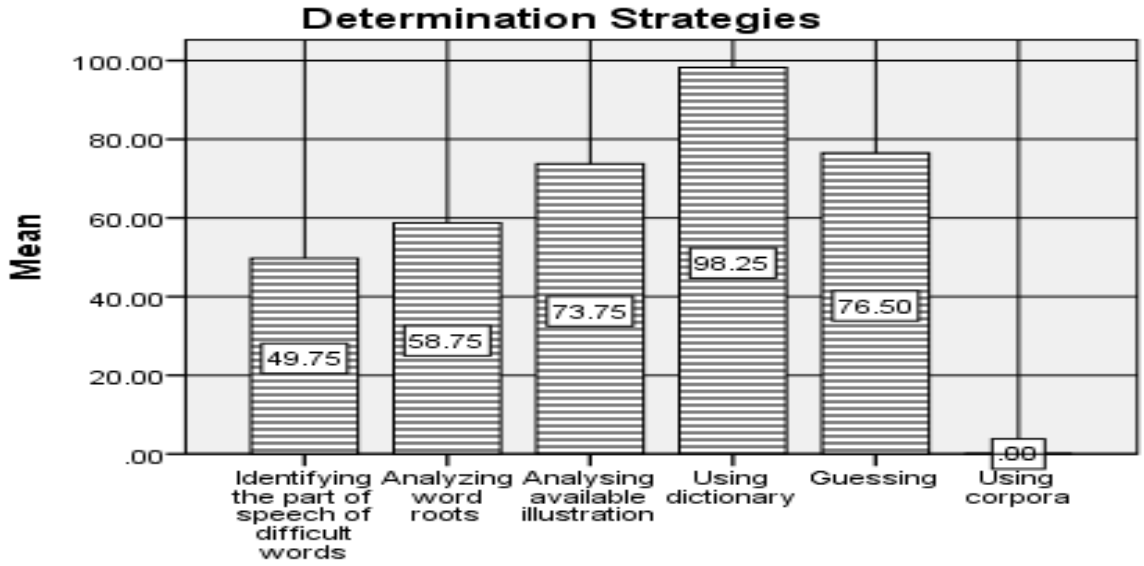
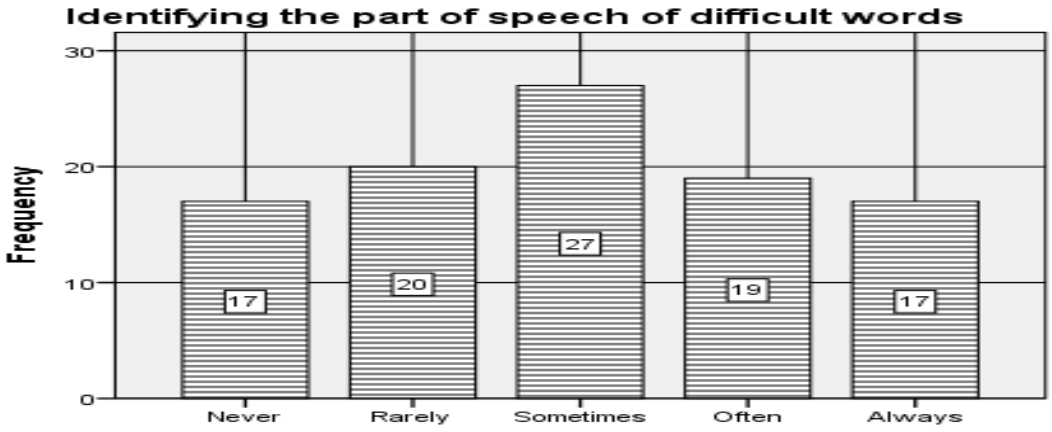


Figure 4.1 presents the participants' responses of determination strategies. It is clear that using the dictionary to discover the meaning of the difficult word has ranked the highest frequency with a mean index of (98.25), followed by the strategies of guessing, analyzing available illustration, analyzing word roots and identifying the part of speech. It is worth mentioning that the strategy of using corpora has received no frequency.

4.1.1.1. Identifying the Part of Speech of Difficult Words

Figure 4.2: Identifying the part of speech of difficult words



Identifying part of speech is moderately used by the respondents. It receives a mean index of (49.75) points with a mode of *sometimes*. The

majority of the respondents are reported to use this strategy sometimes (27 respondents). In addition, 17 respondents have never used it before, 17 always use it, 19 often use it and 20 use it rarely.

4.1.1.2. Analyzing Word Root

Figure 4.3: Analyzing word roots

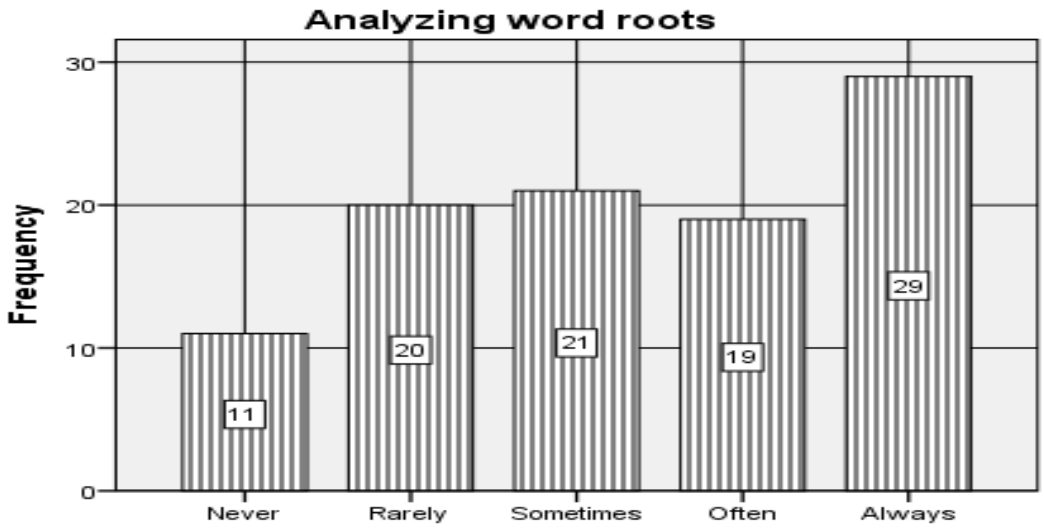
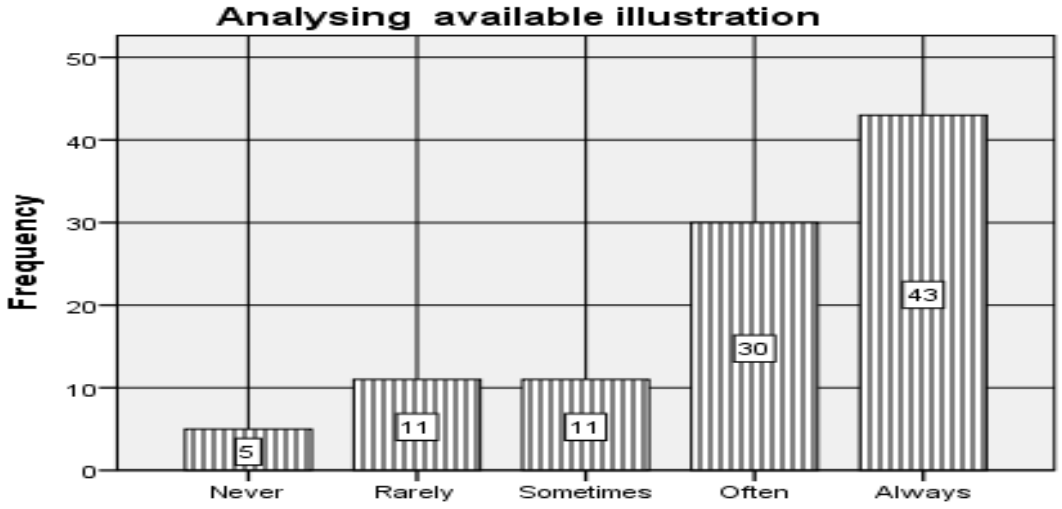


Figure4.2 demonstrates the respondents' reported use of analyzing the word root to discover the meaning of the new word. It is clear that this strategy scored a slightly high index of (58.75) points with a mode of *always*. It is clear that 29 respondents always use this strategy, 21 use it sometimes, 20 rarely use it, 19 often use it and 11 never use it at all. This relative high use of this strategy could be justified by the fact that English is rich in affixation and the learners always encounter them.

4.1.1.3. Analyzing Illustrations that Accompany the Word

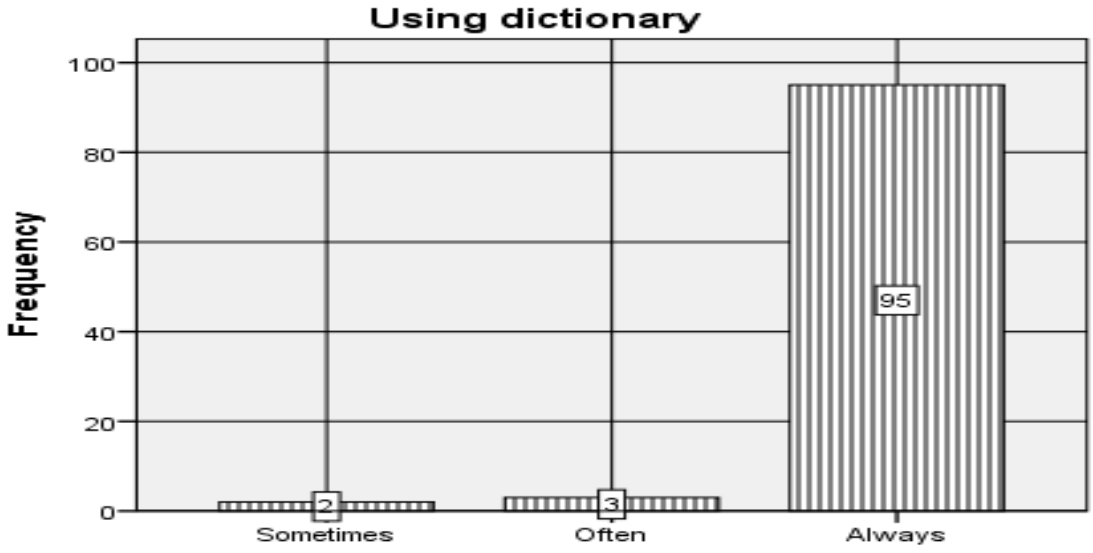
Figure 4.4: Analyzing illustrations that accompany a word



Analyzing available illustrations is frequently used by the respondents. It receives a relatively high mean index of (73.75) points with a mode of '*always'*. Figure 4.4 indicates that the majority of the respondents always use this strategy (43). 30 respondents often use it, 11 use it sometimes, 11 use it rarely and 5 never use it. This high score is related to the fact that the syllabus (Vocabulary in Use) is rich in illustrations.

4.1.1.4. Using the Dictionary

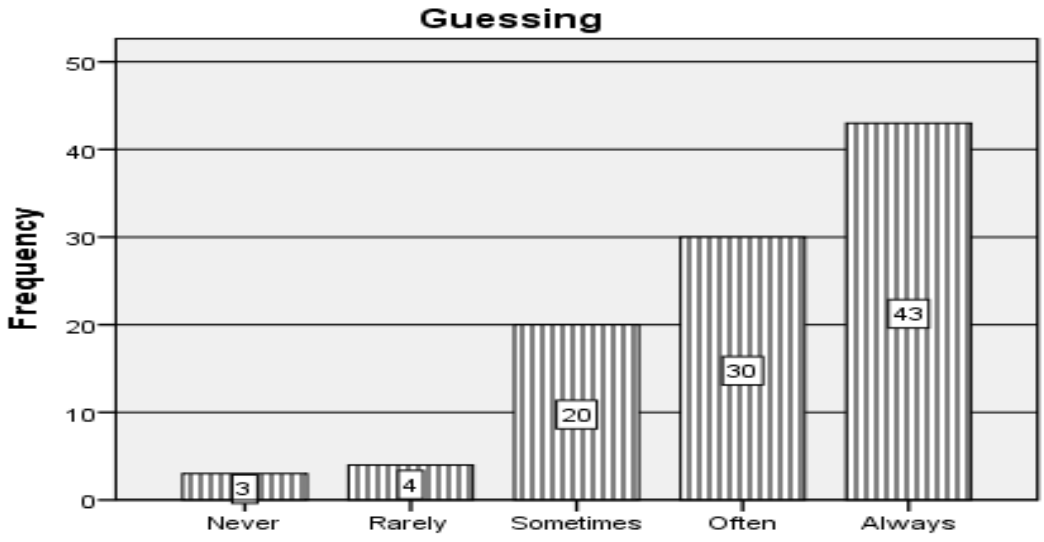
Figure 4.5: Using the dictionary



This strategy (using the dictionary) is used by the respondents most frequently. It receives the highest mean index of (98.25) points with a mode of *always*. 95 respondents reported their frequent use of this strategy, and only 2 use it sometimes and 3 often use it. The high rating index of this strategy can be seen as a strong indication of respondents' awareness of how useful such dictionaries are and of their willingness to use them more frequently. This frequent use of the dictionary is also justified by the fact that the dictionary is the traditional strategy utilized by almost most of the learners and has been given prominence by most of the lexicographers. Another possibility for the broad usage of this strategy by almost all of the respondents is the wide spread of electronic dictionaries due to technological advances. Thus, the number of the electronic dictionaries stored on the learners' cellular phones outnumbers the paper ones.

4.1.1.5. Guessing the Meaning from Context

Figure 4.6: Guessing the meaning from context



Guessing is frequently used by the respondents. It receives a relatively high mean index of **(**76.5) with a mode of *always*. It is clear that 43 respondents always use this strategy, 30 often use it, 20 sometimes use it, 4 rarely use it and 3 never use it. This frequent use of this strategy is referred to the fact

that vocabulary is commonly presented in context namely in the syllabus prescribed for the learners at AL-Mughtaribeen University.

4.1.1.6. Using Corpora to discover the meaning of difficult words mainly near-synonyms (for the definition of this term see Chapter Two page 28)

Figure 4.7: Using corpora

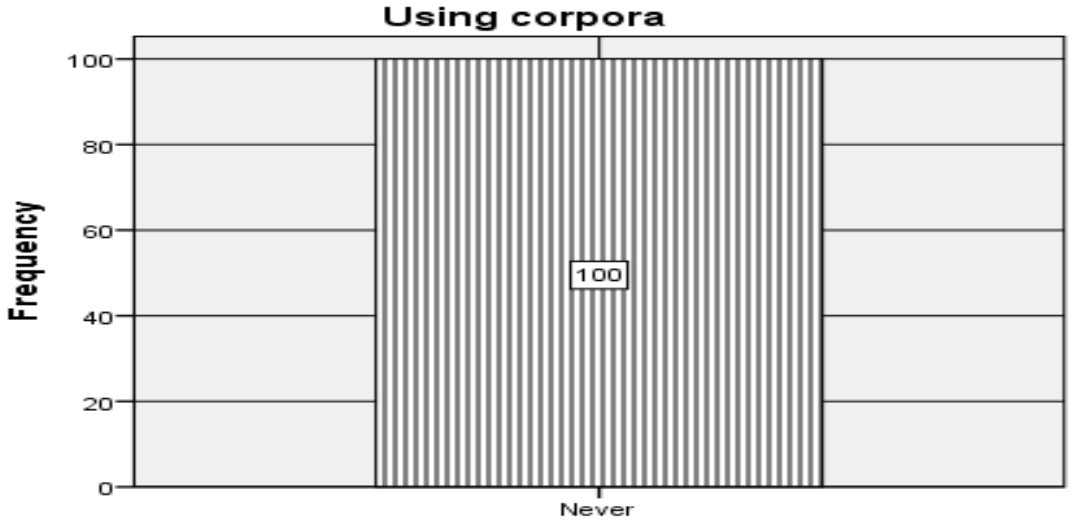


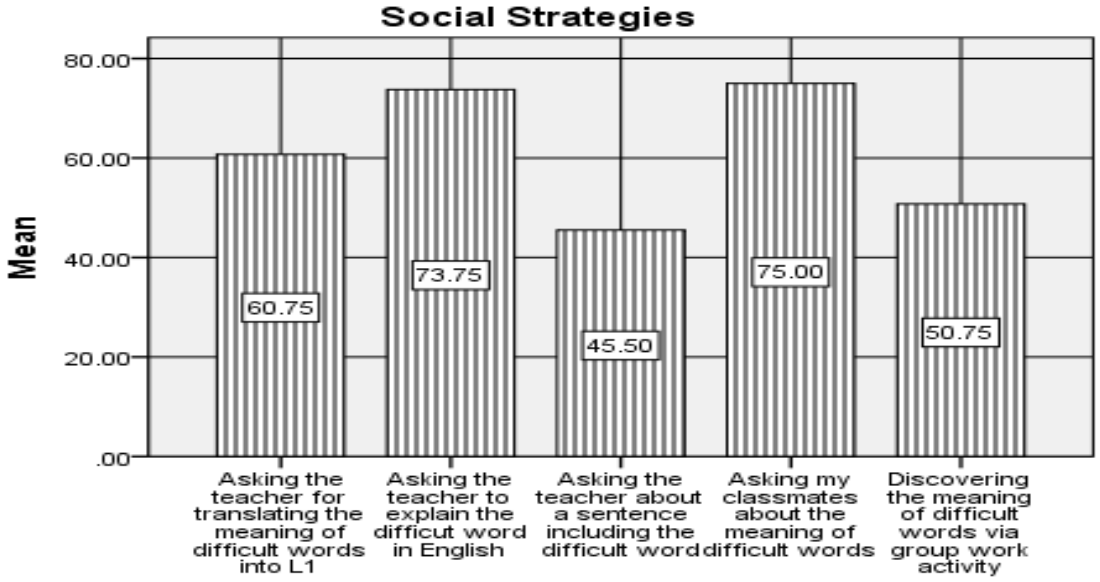
Figure 4.7displays that respondents have never used corpora before. This fact could be interpreted by the fact that learners have never heard of corpora because they are newly introduced VLS. Thus, one aim of the current study is to draw the learners' attention to a new VLS which is useful in discovering the meaning of difficult words particularly the near-synonyms of English.

4.1.2. Social Strategies (for the definition of social strategies see Chapter Two page 15)

Table 4.2: Participants' reported use of social strategies

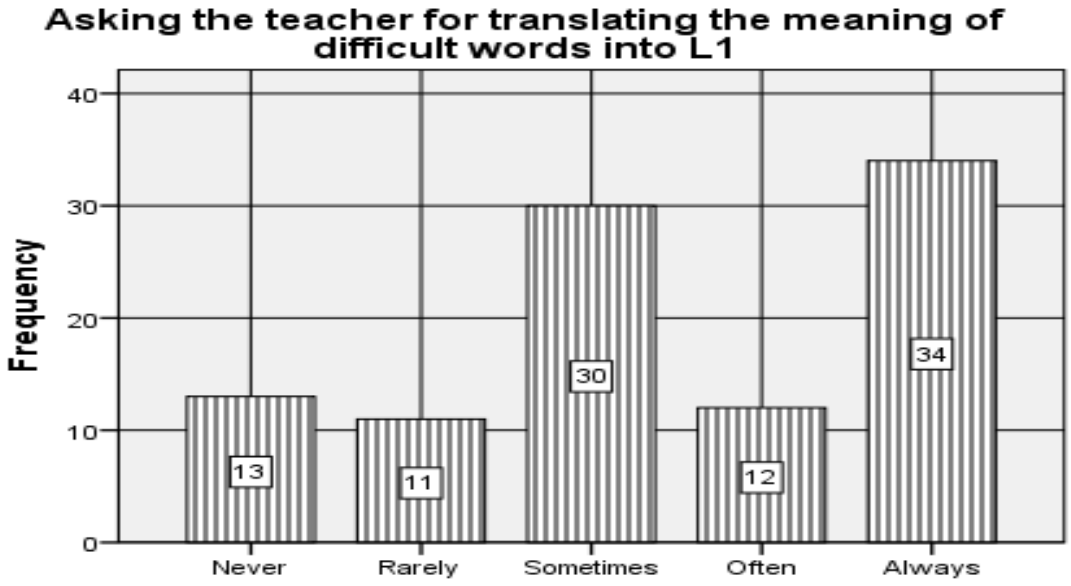
Social Strategies	Frequency Responses					Mean	Mode
Social Strategies	**A**	**O**	**S**	**R**	**N**		
Asking the teacher for translation	34	12	30	11	13	60.75	A
Asking the teacher to explain the difficult word	37	31	25	4	3	73.75	A
Asking the teacher to provide an example	14	19	23	23	21	45.50	S&R
Asking my classmates	46	21	23	7	3	75.00	A
Making use of group activity	21	21	18	20	20	50.75	A&O
A= Always, O = Often, S= Sometimes, R= Rarely, N = Never							

Figure 4.8: Participants' reported use of social strategies



4.1.2.1. Asking the Teacher for Translating the New Word into L1

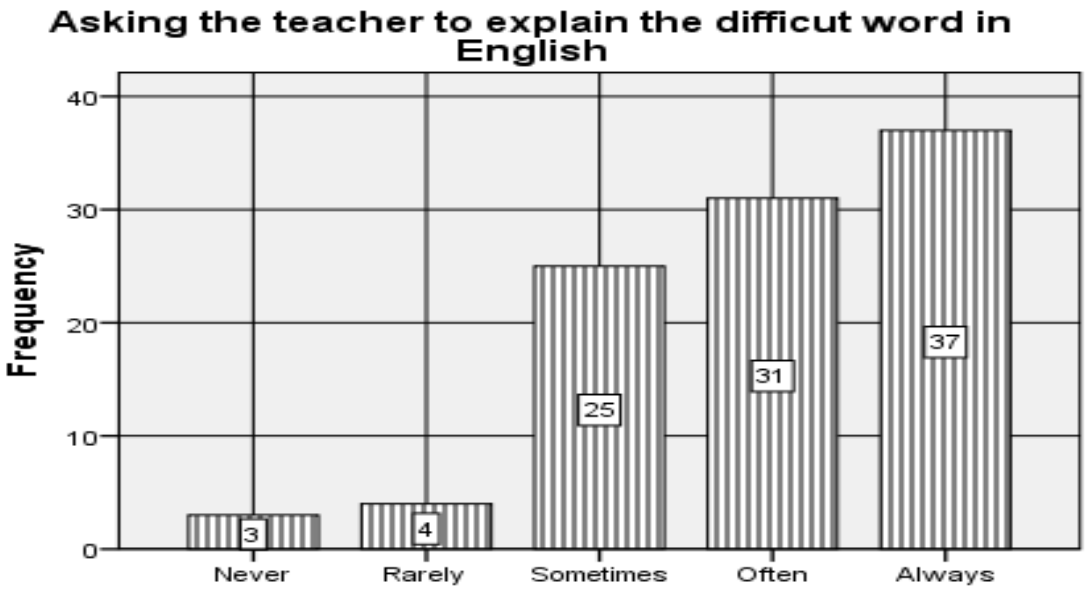
Figure4.9: Asking the teacher for translating the new word into L1



Seeking help from the teacher to translate the difficult word into L1 is slightly high. It scores a mean index of (60.75) points. Figure 4.9 displays that the majority of the respondents always use it (34 respondents) with a mode of always. In addition, 30 respondents sometimes use it, 12 often use it, 11 rarely use it and 13 never use it. The slight usage of such a strategy is referred to the availability of the teacher who considered the main source of knowledge.

4.1.2.2. Asking the Teacher to Explain the Difficult Word in English

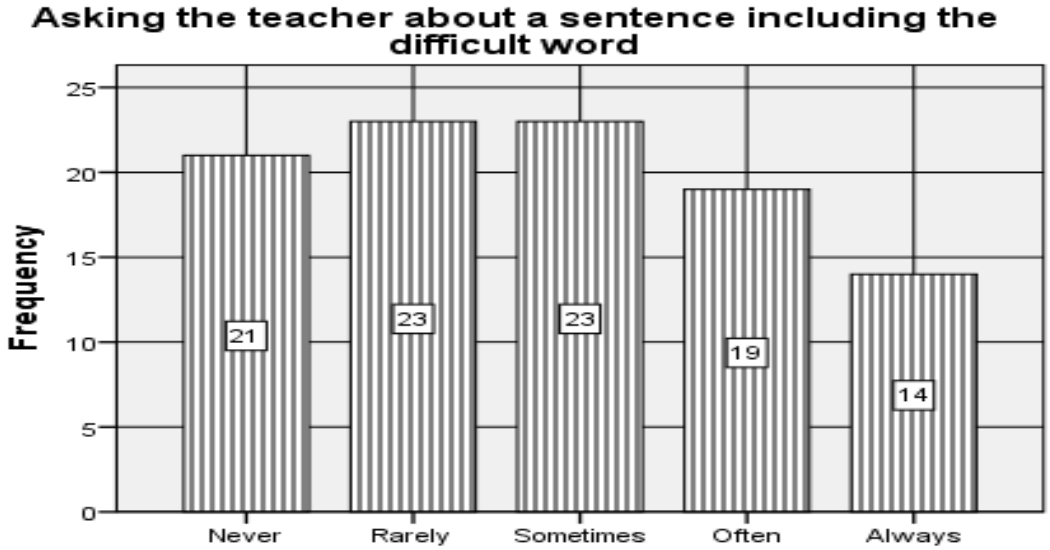
Figure4.10: Asking the teacher to explain the difficult word in English



Asking the teacher to explain the difficult word in English has scored a mean index of (73.75) with a mode of always. Thus, 37 respondents are reported to always ask their teacher to explain the difficult word in English, 31 often behave similarly, 25 behave in the same way. 4 rarely use this strategy and 3 never it. This relative high frequent usage might be oriented to the way of instruction in which learning is a teacher-centered.

4.1.2.3. Asking the Teacher to Provide an Example Using the Difficult Word

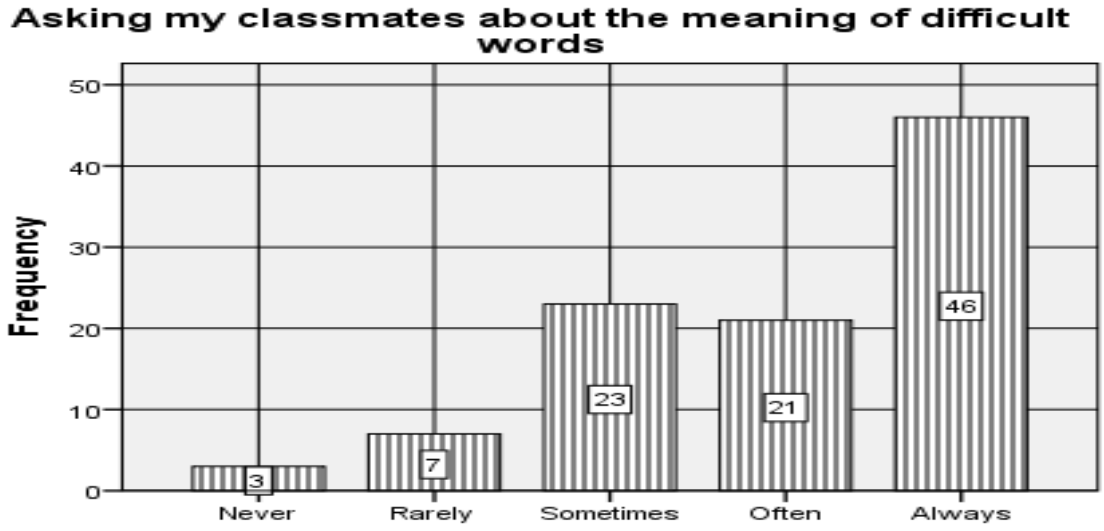
Figure4.11: Asking the teacher to provide an example using the difficult word



With regard to discovering the meaning of difficult word via asking the teacher for providing an example including it, it is clear that a reasonable number of the respondent avoid using this strategy. That is, 21 respondents never use it and 23 use it rarely. This strategy has scored a mean index of (45.50) points with a mode of *sometimes*. Therefore, 23 respondents sometimes use it, 19 often use it, and only 14 are reported to use it always. This infrequent usage of this strategy is referred to learners' poor vocabulary proficiency besides inferencing meaning requires considerable linguistic competence.

4.1.2.4. Asking My Classmates about the Meaning of the Difficult word

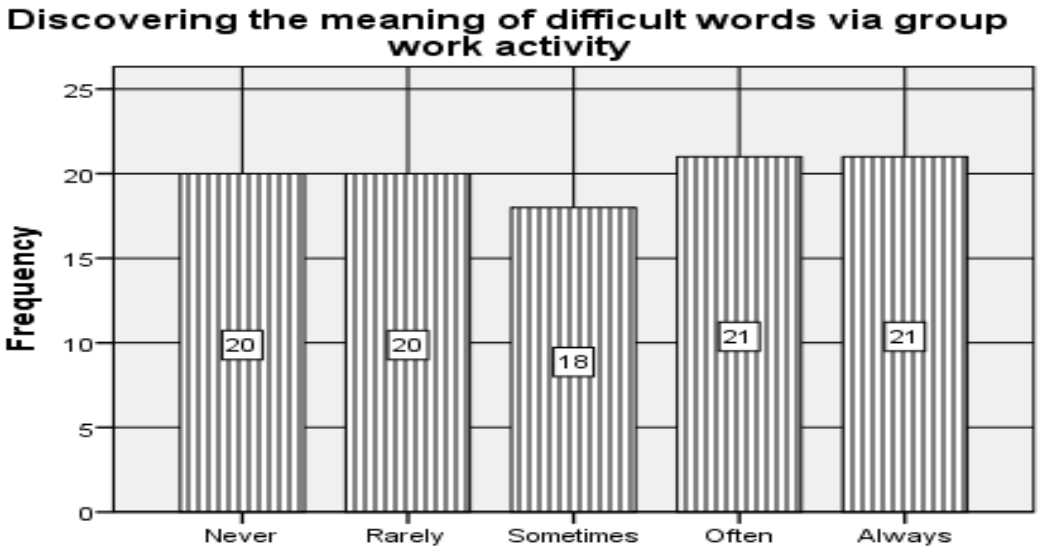
Figure4.12: Asking my classmates about the meaning



Asking classmates for the meaning of difficult words is frequently used by the respondents. It receives a relatively high mean index of (75) points with a mode of *always*. Figure4.12 shows that (46) respondents always use it, 21 often use it, 23 use it sometimes, 7 rarely use it and only 3 never use it. Honestly speaking, this strategy is expected to score a high rating because learners often learn from their classmates better, and that the level of formality among learners and their classmates is quite low. Thus, there are no barriers preventing learners from asking their classmates.

4.1.2.5. Discovering the Meaning via Group Work Activity

Figure4.13: Discovering the meaning via group work activity



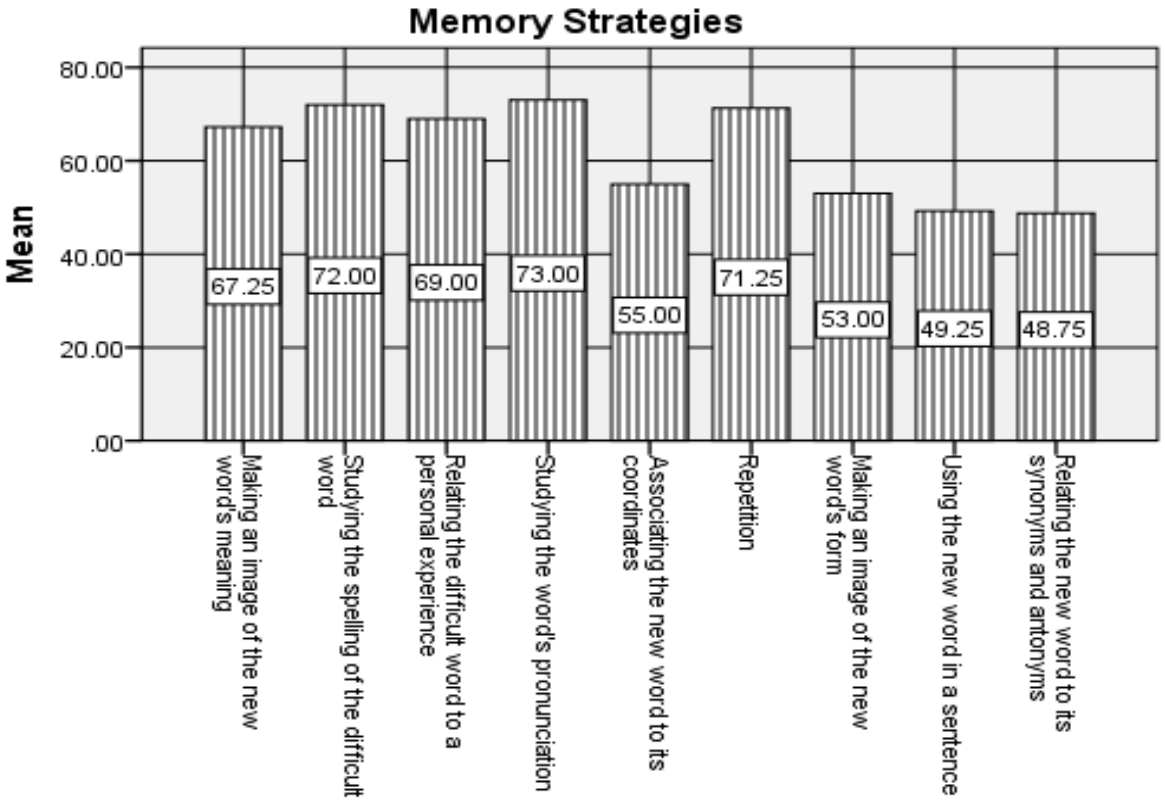
Discovering the meaning via group work activity is moderately used by the respondents. It receives a moderate mean index of (50.75) points with the modes of *often* and *always*. Figure 4.13 tells us that 21 respondents always prefer to use this strategy, 21 often use it, 18 use it sometimes, 20 use it rarely and 20 never use it. Discovering the meaning via group work activity is not preferred by most of the respondents. This might be referred to the unavailability of time or other social factors related to personality and level of vocabulary proficiency.

4.1.3. Memory Strategies (For the definition of this strategy see Chapter Two page 15)

Table 4.3: Participants' reported use of memory strategies

Memory Strategies	Frequency Responses					Mean	Mode
	A	O	S	R	N		
Making an image about the word meaning	37	22	22	11	8	67.25	S & O
Studying the spelling of the word	37	30	21	8	4	72	A
Connecting the word to a personal experience	40	20	22	12	6	69	A
Studying the word's pronunciation	47	21	15	11	6	73	A
Relating the word to its coordinates	19	33	15	15	18	55	O
Repetition	50	15	16	8	11	71.25	A
Making an image about the word's form	20	20	27	18	15	53	S
Employing a word in a sentence	18	21	19	24	18	49.25	R
Relating the difficult word to its synonyms and antonyms	14	20	30	19	17	48.75	S
A= Always, O = Often, S= Sometimes, R= Rarely, N = Never							

Figure4.14: Participants' reported use of memory strategies



4.1.3.1. Make an Image about the New Word's Meaning

Figure4.15: Make an image about the new word's meaning

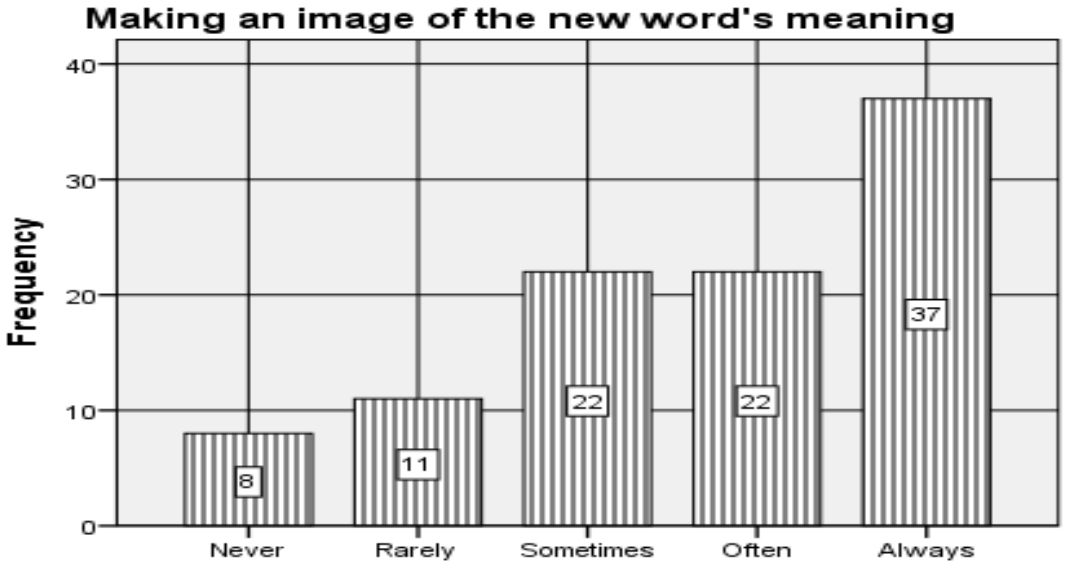
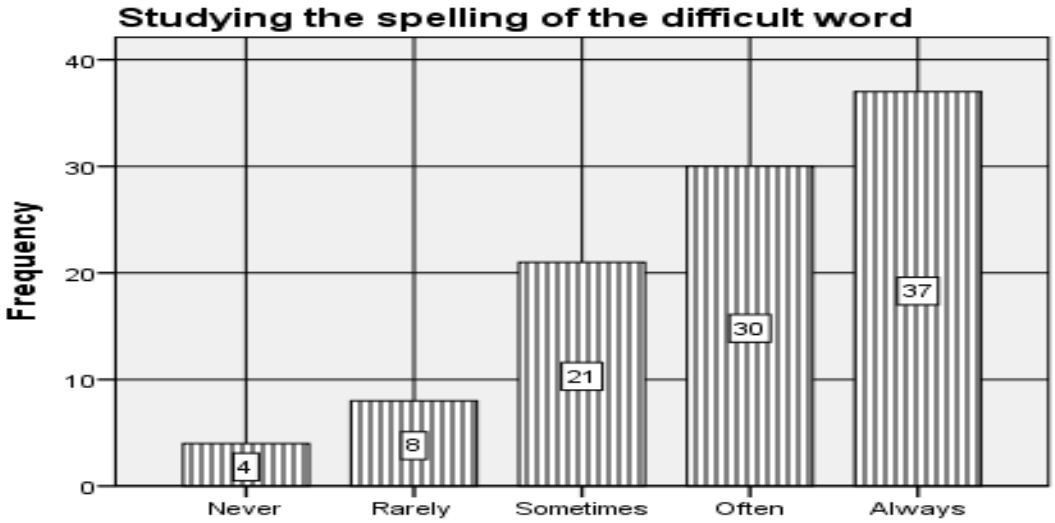


Figure4.15 displays the respondents' relatively high usage of memorizing the word via making an image of its meaning. It receives a mean index of (67.25) with a mode of *always*. It is clear that 37 respondents have reported

that they always use this strategy, 22 often use it, 22 use it sometimes, 11 use it rarely and 8 never use it. The slight usage of this strategy is supported by the fact that learning a language is a process of mental activity in that a language is structured inventory in the mind of the human being (Evans and Green, 2006).

4.1.3.2. Study the Spelling of the Difficult Word

Figure4.16: Study the spelling of the difficult word



Memorizing words via studying their spelling is more commonly used by the respondents. It has scored a relatively high mean index of (72) points with a mode of *always*. As shown in the figure above, 37 respondents use it always, 30 often use it, 21 use it sometimes, 8 use it rarely and 4 never use it. This high frequent usage of such a strategy is due to the fact that learning a language is mainly based on indoctrination which originally substantiates the memorization of its alphabets.

4.1.3.3. Relating the Difficult Word to a Personal Experience

Figure4.17: Relating the Difficult Word to a Personal Experience

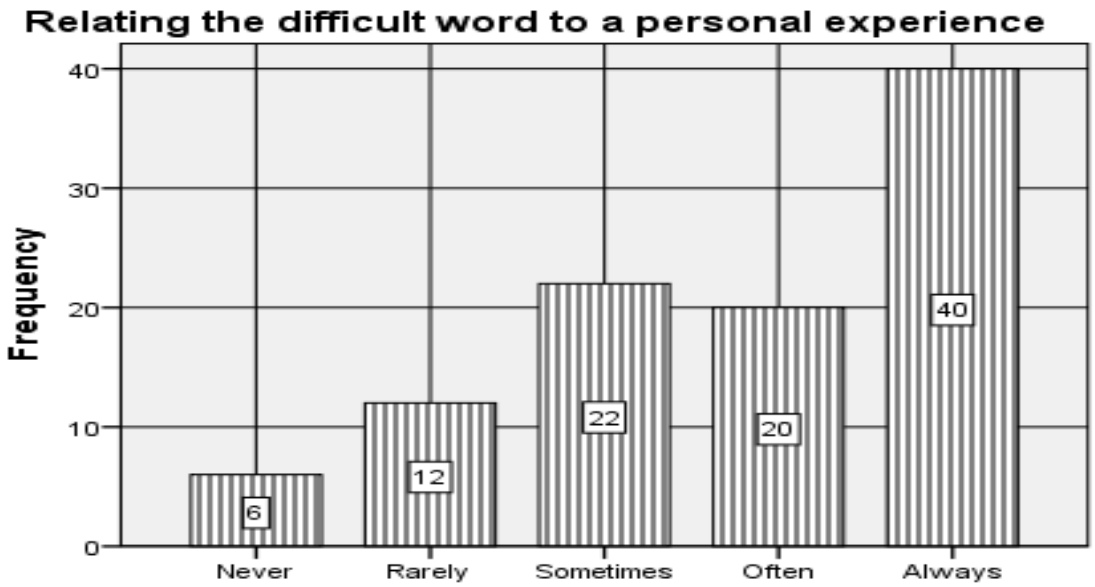
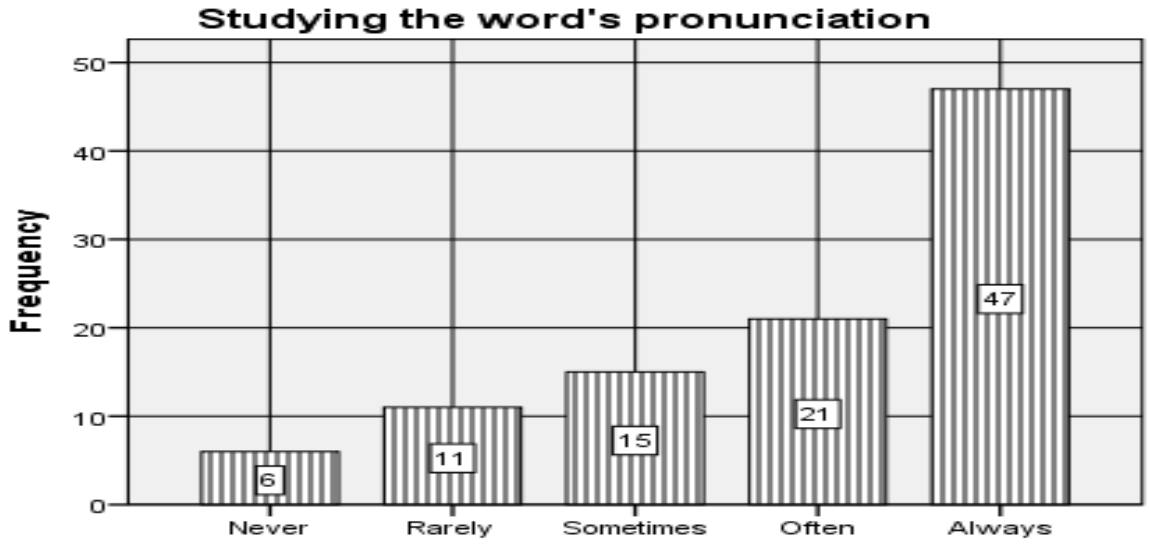


Figure4.17 indicates that the respondents memorize a difficult word via relating it to a personal experience more frequently. It has obtained a mean index of (69) with a mode of *always*. It is clear that 40 respondents always use it, 20 often use it, 22 use it sometimes, 12 rarely use it and 6 never use it. This relatively high usage of this strategy is explained by the fact that learning a new language via certain educational instances is useful because it consolidates the materials being taught and hence facilitates its recalling.

4.1.3.4. Studying the Word's Pronunciation

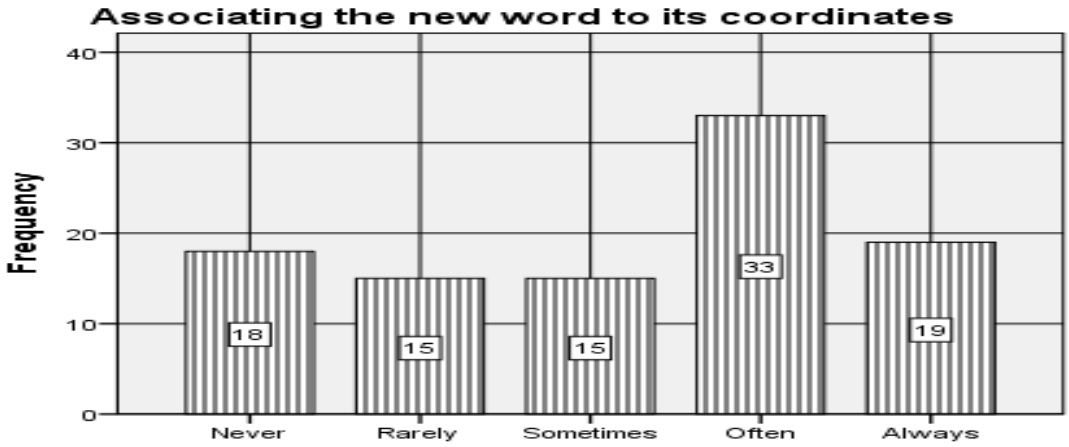
Figure4.18: Studying the word's pronunciation



Memorizing the new word by studying their pronunciation has received a relatively high mean index of (73) points. Figure 4.18 demonstrates that 47 respondents always it, 21 often use it, 15 use it sometimes, 11 use it rarely and 6 never use it. This relatively high rating is explained by the fact that pronunciation, repetition and spelling are the dominant strategies that should accompany the process of learning a language; they are indispensable and inseparable when learning or instructing a foreign language.

4.1.3.5. Associate the New Word with its Coordinates

Figure4.19: Associate the new word with its coordinates



Remembering words via associating them with their coordinates has received a moderate mean index of (55) points. Figure4.19 demonstrates that 33 respondents often use it, 19 always use it, 15 sue it sometimes, another 15 use it rarely and 18 never used it. The low rating of this strategy is not a surprise. Based on my own experience, the vast majority of EFL teachers may not connect the new vocabulary with their coordinates when teaching it. Thus, most of the learners are prevented from making use of such a strategy.

4.1.3.6. Repeating the Difficult word Many times so as to Memorize it

Figure 4.20: Repeating the difficult word many times so as to memorize it

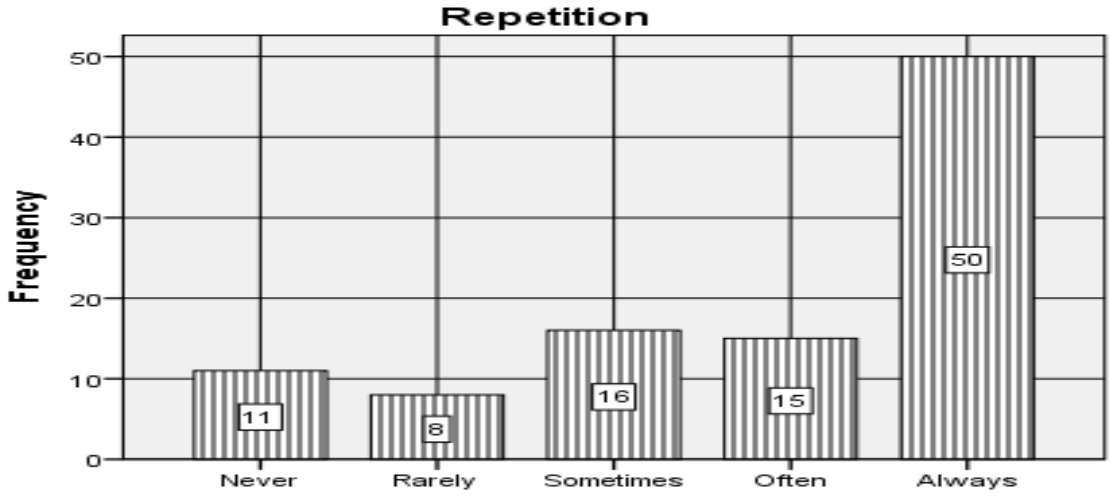
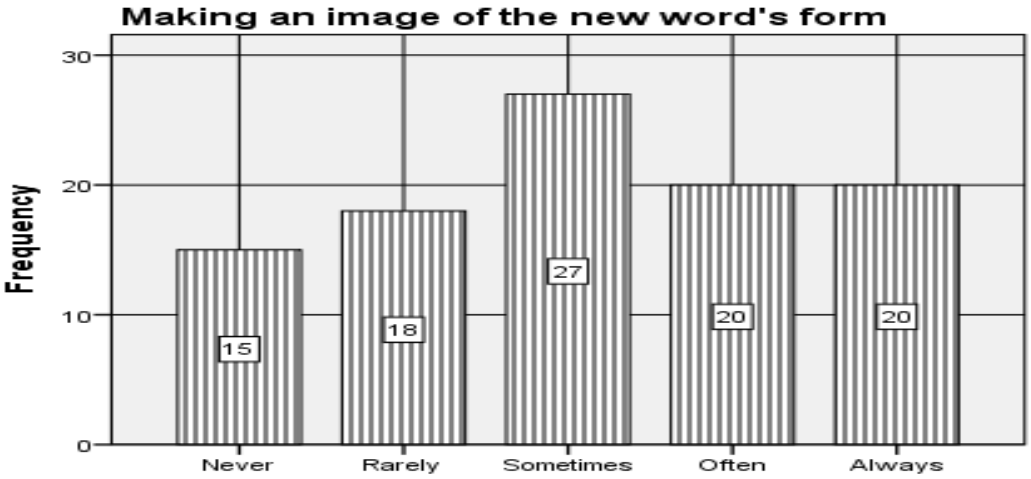


Figure4.20 shows that half of the respondents always use this strategy to memorize the difficult words, 15 often use it, 16 use it sometimes, 9 rarely

use it and 11 never use it. Generally, this strategy has received a relatively high mean score of (71.25). This is because learning a foreign language substantiates the repetition of its words.

4.1.3.7. Make an Image of the New Word's Form

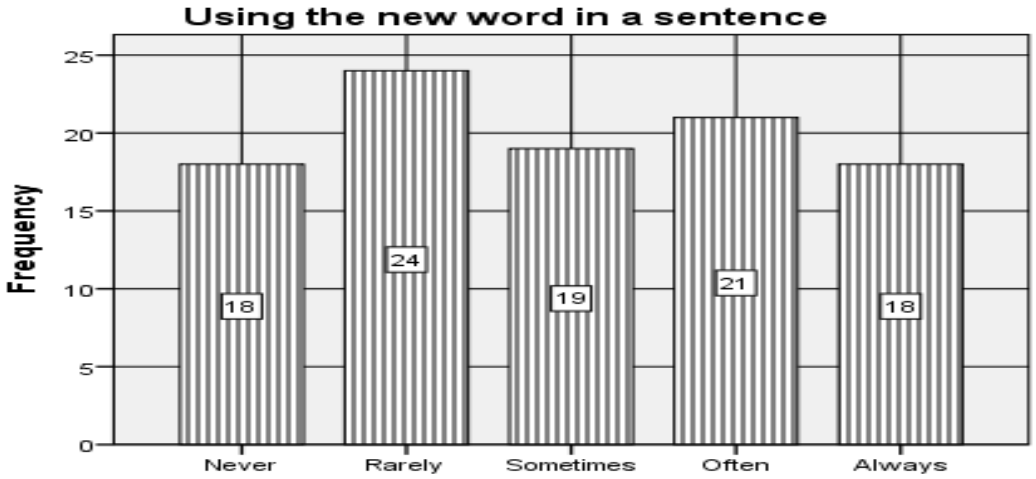
Figure4.21: Make an image of the new word's form



Memorizing the new word via making an image of it's from is reported to be moderately utilized by the respondents. That is, it receives a mean score of (53) points with a mode of '*sometimes'*. As shown in the figure above, 27 respondents use it sometimes, 20 often use it, another 20 always use it, 18 rarely use it and 15 never use it. This moderate usage of this strategy reflects that the syllabus does not include sufficient strategies for learning vocabulary.

4.1.3.8 Using the New Word in a Sentence

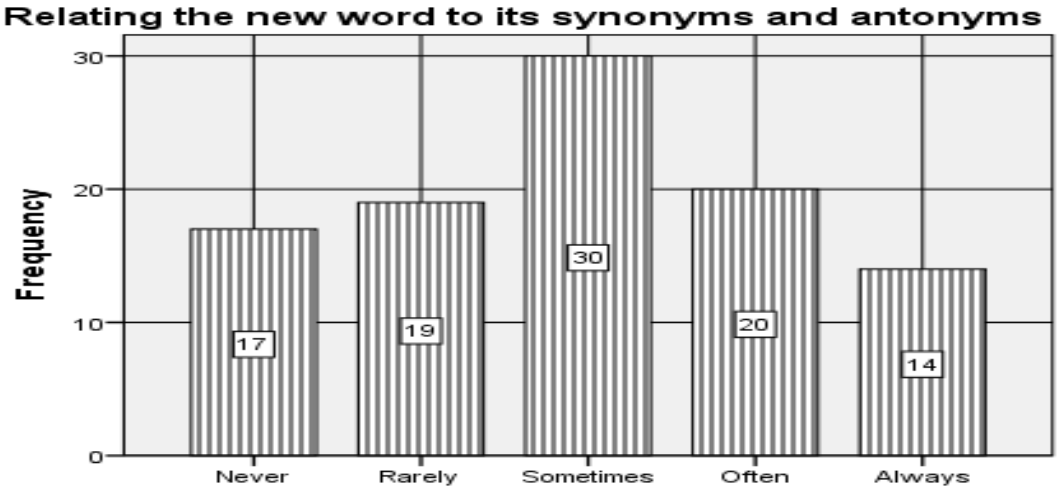
Figure4.22: Using the new word in a sentence



Respondents' reported usage of exemplifying new words is quite low. It has received a mean index of (49.25) points with a mode of *rarely*. It is obvious that 24 respondents have reported their rarity of utilizing such a strategy, 18 have reported that they always use it, 21 have reported that they often use it, 19 have reported that they use it sometimes and only 18have never used it before.

4.1.3.9. Relating the New Word to its Synonyms and Antonyms

Figure4.23: Relating the new word to its synonyms and antonyms



Respondents' reported utilization of relating the difficult word to its synonyms and antonyms to remember it is quite low. It has received a mean score of (48.75) points with a mode of *sometimes*. As shown in figure

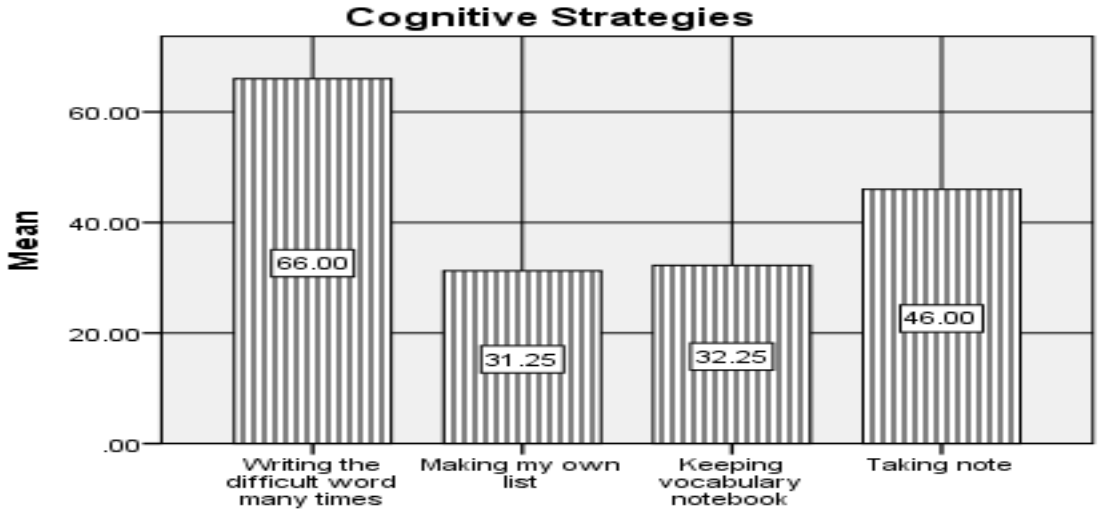
4.23, 30 respondents are reported to use it sometimes, 20 are reported to often use it, 14 are reported to always use it, 19 rarely us it and 17 never use it. This low rating of this strategy is supported by the fact that the syllabus (English Vocabulary in Use) does not include enough vocabulary learning strategies especially for learning near-synonyms on the one hand, and that near-synonyms have become a real obstacle towards language learning from the other hand.

4.1.4. Cognitive Strategies

Table 4.4: Participants' reported use of cognitive strategies

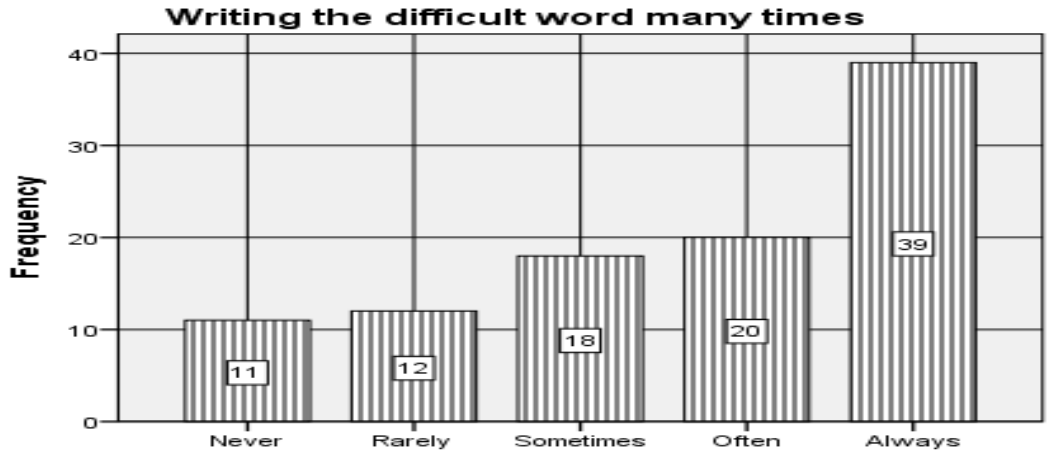
Cognitive Strategies	**Frequency Responses**					**Mean**	**Mode**
	A	**O**	**S**	**R**	**N**		
Writing the difficult word many times	39	20	18	12	11	66.00	A
Making my own word list	7	15	19	14	45	31.25	N
Keeping vocabulary note book	13	8	17	19	43	32.25	N
Taking note	15	22	22	14	27	46.00	N
A= Always, O = Often, S= Sometimes, R= Rarely, N = Never							

Figure4.24: Participants' reported use of cognitive strategies



4.1.4.1. Writing the Difficult Word Many Times

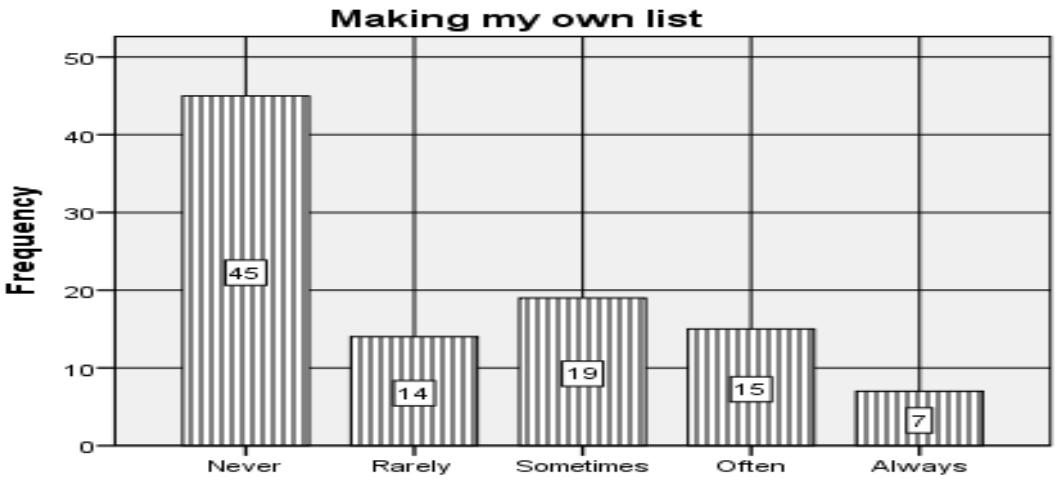
Figure4.25: Writing the difficult word many times



The respondents' reported utilization of writing the difficult words many times has received an above average mean score of (66.00) points with a mode of *always*. Figure 4.25 demonstrates that the majority of the respondents (39) always memorize the difficult words by writing them. 20 often write the difficult word to be memorized. 18 sometimes behave similarly, 12 rarely behave in such a way and 11 never use it. This unexpected low usage of this strategy scored by the respondents is due to their ignorance of VLS despite the fact that writing is an indispensable skill which accompanies language learning.

4.1.4.2. Making My Own List of the Difficult Word to Memorize it

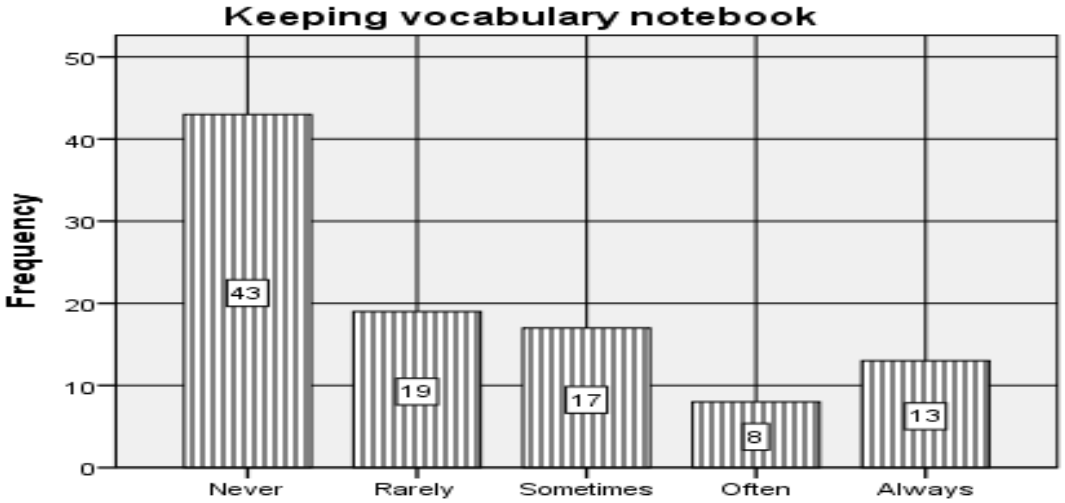
Figure4.26: Making my own list



With regard to making use of the cognitive strategy, making my own vocabulary list is reported to be the least strategy used by the respondents to memorize the difficult words. It has scored a mean index of (31.25) points with a mode of *never*. It is obvious that the majority of the respondents never use it (45). 19 use it sometimes, 14 use it rarely, 15 often use it and only 7 always use it. The respondents' infrequent use of such a strategy proves the learners' complete underrating of the importance of note-taking.

4.1.4.3. Keeping a Vocabulary Book

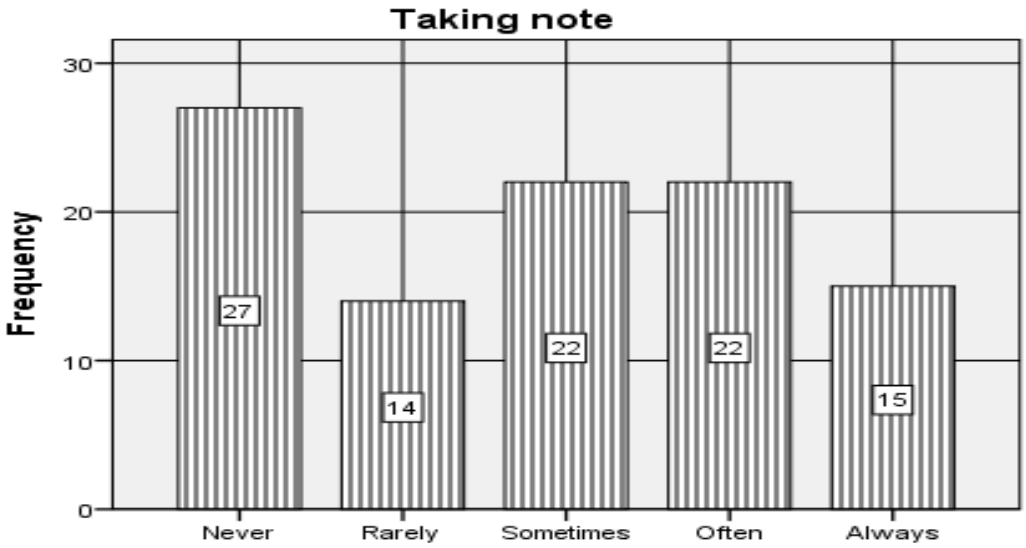
Figure4.27: Keeping a vocabulary book



Similarly, the utilization of keeping a vocabulary book to memorize difficult words has become approximately disregarded. It has received the least mean index of (32.25) points with a mode of *never*. Thus, 43 respondents never use it, 19 use it rarely, 17 sometimes use it, 8 often use it and only 13 always use it.

4.1.4.4. Taking- Note in order to memorize the Difficult Word

Figure4.28: Note-Taking



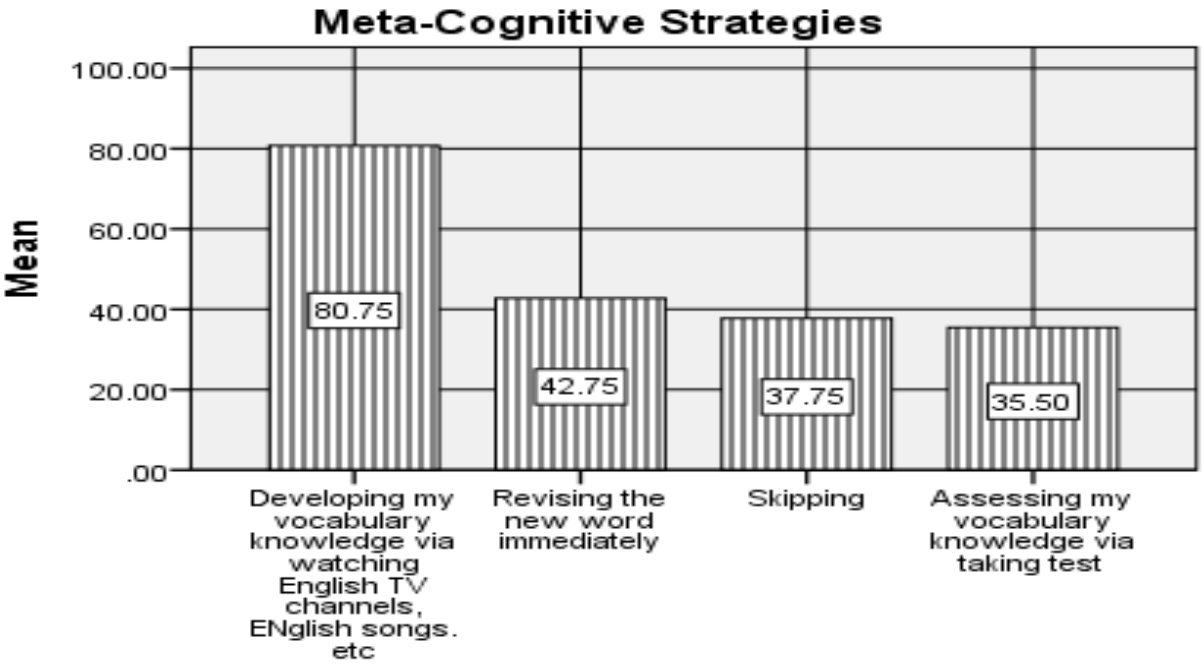
Concerning note taking, it is reported that the 27 respondents never use it, 14 use it rarely, 22 use it sometimes, and another 22 often use it and 15 never use it. Generally, this strategy has also been underrated. It has scored a quite low mean index of (46.00) with a mode of '*never'*. It is clear the last three vocabulary learning strategies are reported to be the least VLS used by the respondents. This projects that learners do not take notes while the lecture is in progress.

4.1.5. Meta-Cognitive Strategies

Table 4.5: Participants' reported use of meta-cognitive strategies

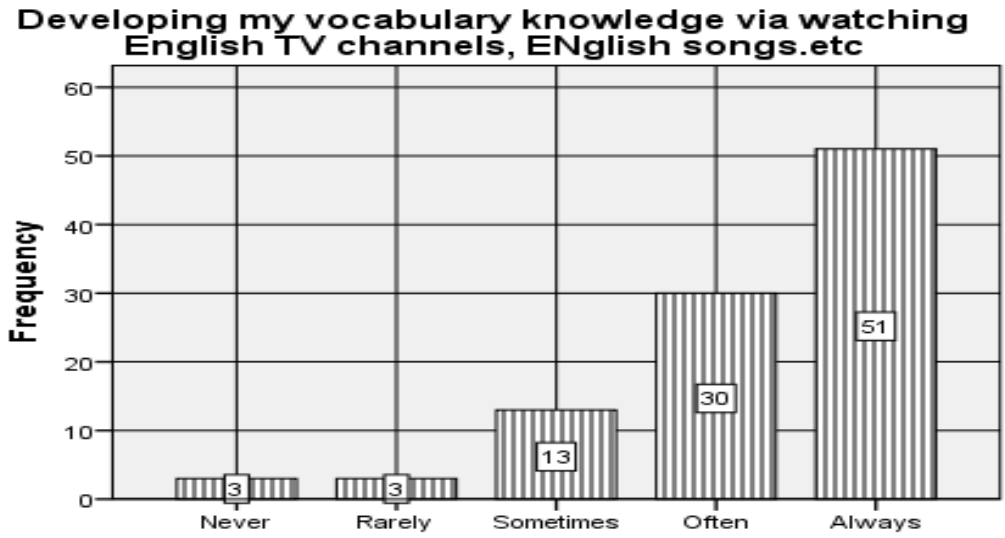
Meta-Cognitive Strategies	Frequency Responses					Mean	Mode
	A	O	S	R	N		
Developing my vocabulary via watching English TV channels	51	30	13	3	3	80.75	A
Revising the newly learned word immediately	10	19	28	18	25	42.75	S
Skipping	6	13	31	26	24	37.75	S
Assessing my vocabulary knowledge	12	13	17	21	37	35.50	N
A= Always, O = Often, S= Sometimes, R= Rarely, N = Never							

Figure4.29: Meta-cognitive strategies



4.1.5.1. Developing My Vocabulary Knowledge by Watching English TV Channels

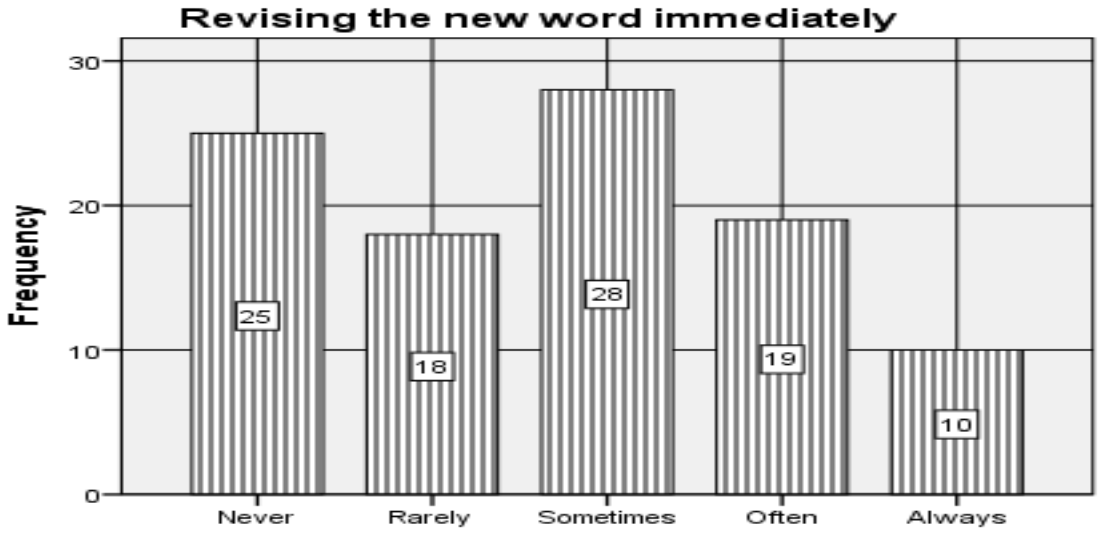
Figure4.30: Developing my vocabulary knowledge by watching English TV channels



Developing vocabulary knowledge via watching English TV channels, listening to radio casting in English, listening to English songs and so on, has received the highest mean score index of (80.75) points with a mode of 'always'. It is clear that more than half of the respondents always use this strategy, 30 often use it, 13 use it sometimes, 3 never use it and another 3 use it rarely. This frequent usage of this strategy is due to the availability of mass media particularly we are witnessing the era of technological development.

4.1.5.2. Revising the New Word Immediately

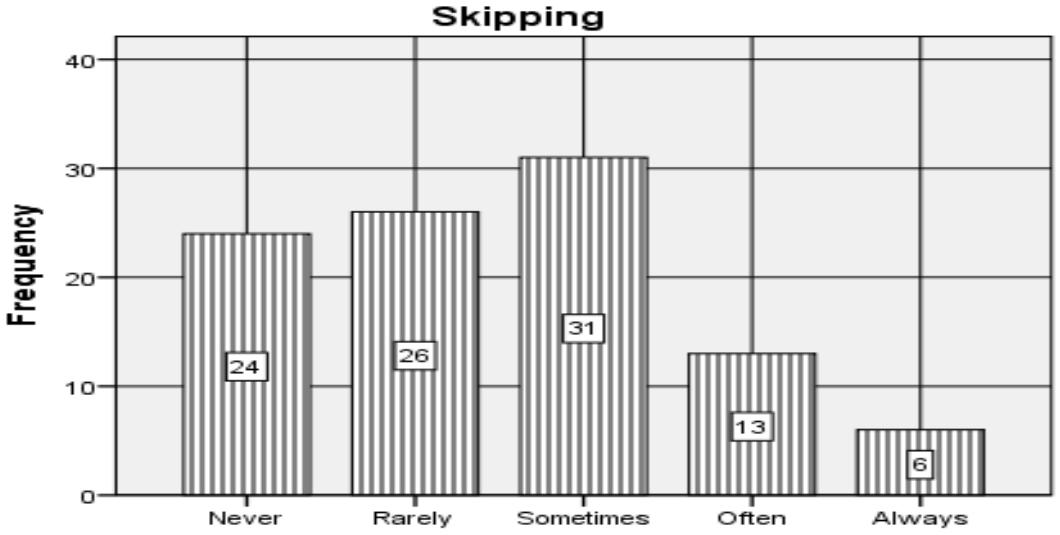
Figure4.31: Revising the new word immediately



With regard to revising the difficult word immediately after being taught, it has received a low- frequency index of (42.75) points with a mode of 'sometimes'. It is clear that 25 respondents never use it, 18 use it rarely, 19 often use it and only 10 always use it

4.1.5.3. Skipping the Difficult Word

Figure4.32: Skipping

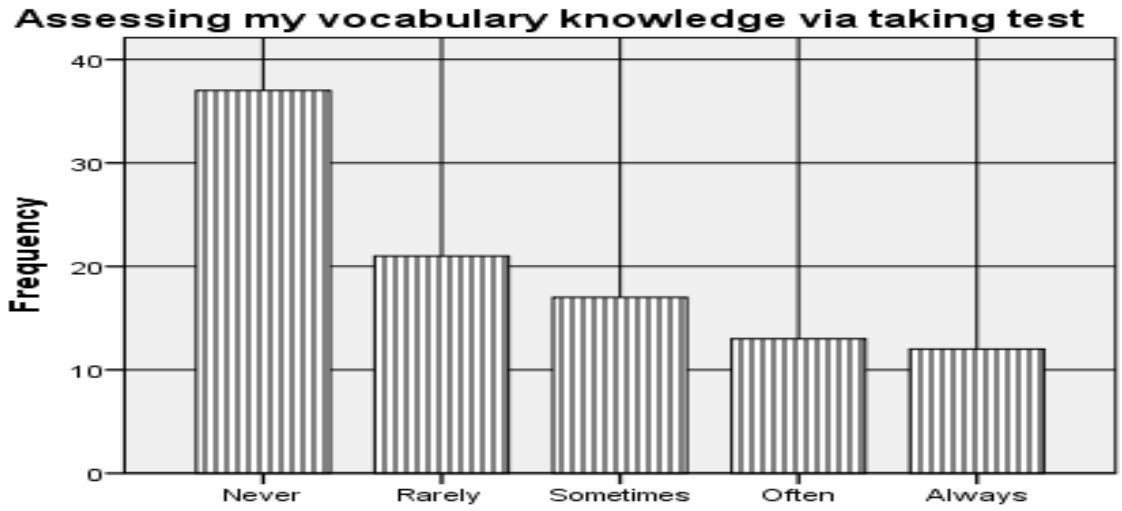


The usage of skipping strategy to consolidate the difficult word is infrequently used by the respondents. It has received a mean score of (37.75) points with a mode of 'sometimes'. As shown in figure 4.32, 24 respondents never use it, 26 rarely use it, 13 often use it and only 6 always

use it. Based on my own experience, skipping is not a useful strategy because learning the meaning of difficult words should not focus on some words and ignoring the others. So, it is advantageous to provide the learners with fruitful VLS that would never *paralyze* the learning process.

4.1.5.4. Assessing My Vocabulary Knowledge by Taking a Test

Figure4.33: Assessing my vocabulary knowledge by taking a test



As utilizing meta-cognitive strategies as concerns, assessing vocabulary knowledge has ranked the lowest strategy with a mean score of (37.50) points and a mode of '*never'*. Based on my experience, taking a test is not favored by most of the learners in that learners often try to escape them because they dislike exposing their level of vocabulary proficiency to others.

To sum up, it is noted that section 4.1 has discussed the types of vocabulary learning strategies that are commonly employed by the Sudanese university learners in order to discover the meaning of new words (near-synonyms in particular) and the way via which this vocabulary is memorized.

4.2. Results of Test (A)

Before delving in explaining the analyses of test (A), it is worth mentioning that this test was conducted to support the interview which aims at answering the research hypothesis saying that *the syllabus provides*

insufficient vocabulary learning strategies. The (SPSS) has produced the following tables and bars:

4.2.1. Dictionary Use

Table 4.6: Test (A) outputs

Category	Overall Number of Students	Overall Items	Correct Items	Percentage	Participants Answered Correctly
Alphabetical Order	50	300	210	70	35
Word Class	50	50	18	36	18
Word Meaning	50	150	100	67	23

Figure 4.34: Dictionary practical use

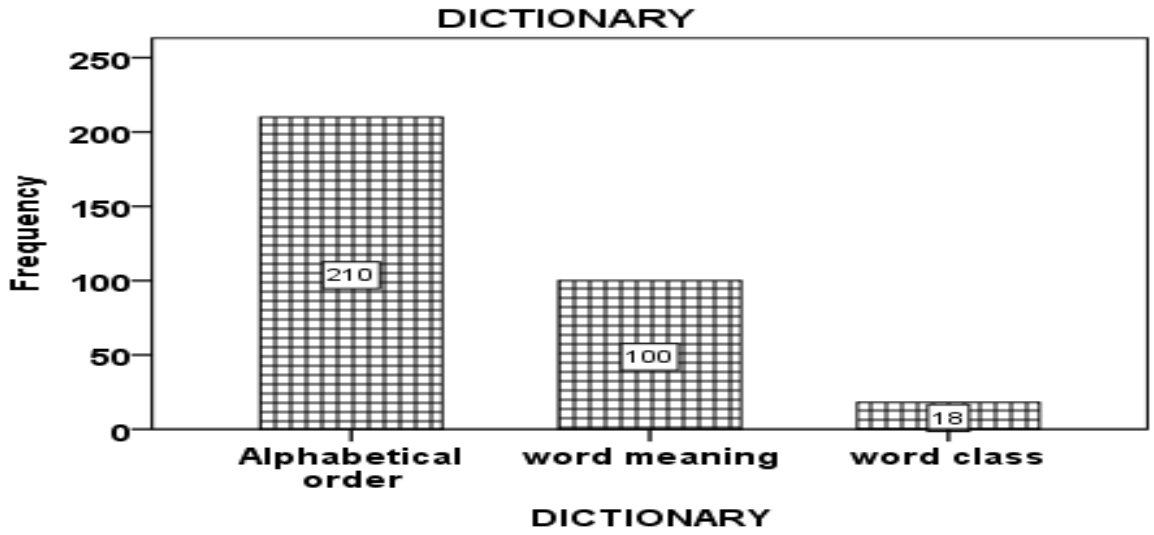


Table 4.6 and figure 4.34 have dealt with the respondents' practical usage of the dictionary which is divided into three variables: putting words into their alphabetical order, identifying the word class and identifying word meaning. Regarding putting words into their alphabetical order, it is clear that 35 respondents with a percentage of (70) are able to gain 210 points out of 300 points. This relatively high score is interpreted by the fact that respondents keep the English alphabet by heart. However, identifying word class has scored the lowest percentage (36). That is, 18 respondents out of 50 are able to answer correctly. This failure in identifying the word class is

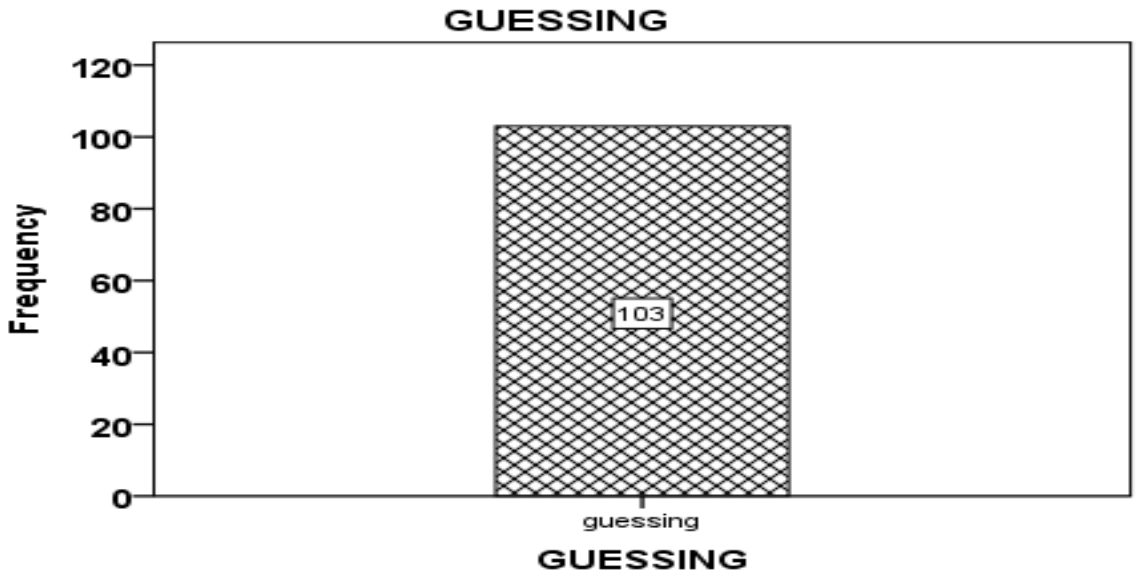
based on the ground that the syllabus does not provide sufficient strategies that related to identifying the word class. Identifying the word meaning has scored a slightly high percentage of (67) points. Unlike identifying the word class, only 23 respondents out of 50 are able to identify the word meaning.

4.2.2. Guessing the meaning from Context

Table 4.7: Contextualized guessing

Category	Number of students	Overall Items	Correct Items	Percentage	Participants Answered Correctly
Guessing	50	150	103	69	35

Figure4.35: Guessing



The second variable regarding the practical usage of vocabulary learning strategies is guessing. Both of table 4.7 and figure 4.35 have revealed that 35 respondents out of 50 are able to guess correctly with a slightly high percentage of (69). This slight high score refers to the fact that guessing is

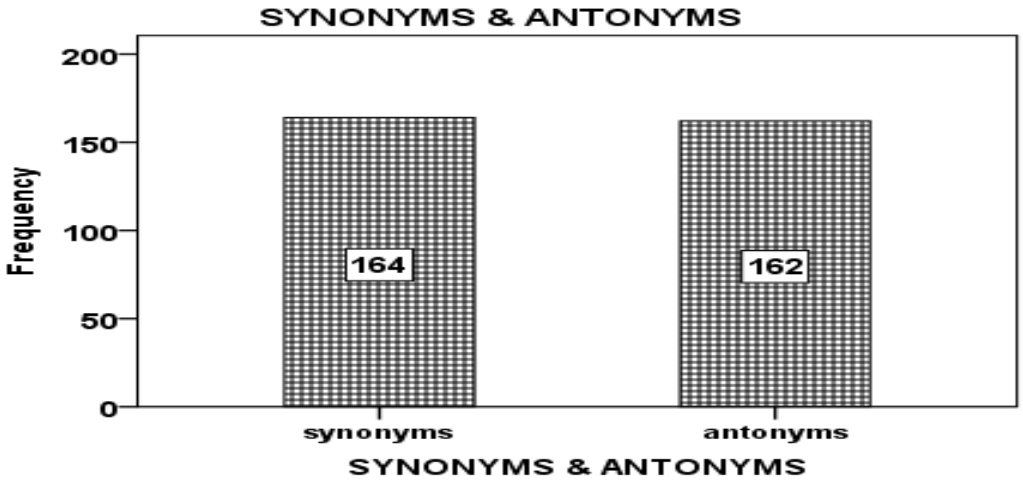
such a strategy that is inseparable from learning a new word and almost all the syllabi present their vocabulary in contexts.

4.2.3. Matching the words with their Synonyms and Antonyms to Learn Vocabulary

Table 4.8: The use of synonyms and antonyms

Category	Number of students	Overall Items	Correct Items	Percentage	Participants Answered Correctly
Synonyms	50	300	164	55	29
Antonyms	50	300	162	54	27

Figure4.36: Respondents' practical use of synonyms and antonyms



Regarding matching words to their synonyms and antonyms, it is clear that they have received moderate percentages of (55) and (54) points. That is, (29, 27 respondents out of 50) are able to supply the correct answers. This moderate usage of utilizing synonyms and antonym strategies to discover the meaning is due to the fact that both strategies require a reasonable linguistic competence which the respondents might not have.

4.2.4. Analyzing Word's Roots

Table 4.9: Analyzing word's roots

Category	Total Number of students	Overall Items	Correct Items	Percentage	No. of Students who Answered correctly
Suffix	50	50	35	70	35
Prefix	50	100	78	78	39
Suffix-Root-Prefix	50	150	34	23	11

Figure 4.37: Respondents' practical use analyzing word root

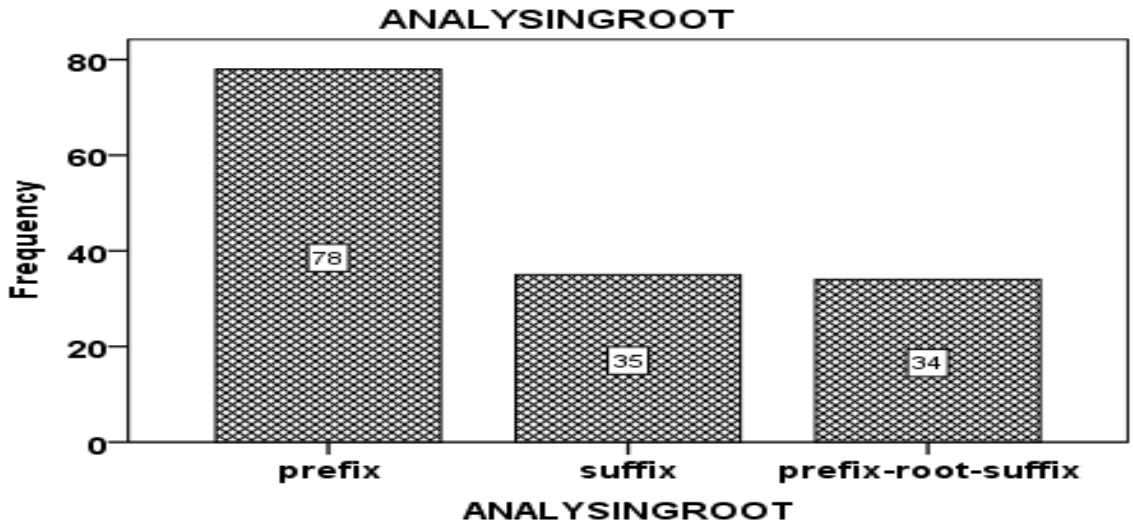


Table 4.9 and figure 4.37 show the respondents' performance in utilizing the strategy of analyzing word root. Concerning identifying suffixes and prefixes, respondents are capable of identifying them. That is, 35 respondents out of 50 with a percentage of (70) are capable of identifying the word suffix. Similarly, 39 respondents out of 50 with a percentage of (78) are able to identify the word prefix. These slight high scores in identifying suffixes and prefixes are interpreted by the fact that the English language is rich in affixations. It is also possible that the respondents have already been aware of the affixations since they are the main components of the SPINE series (4, 5, and 6).

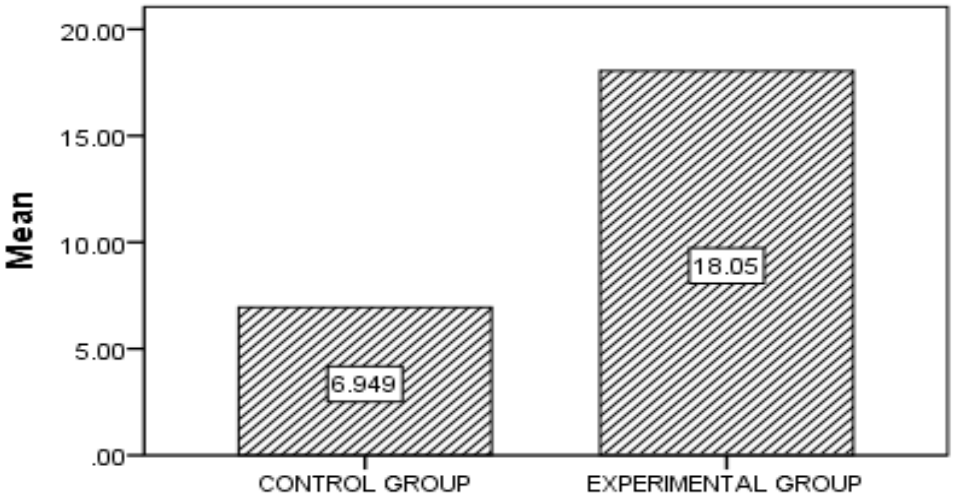
To sum up, it is noted that section 4.3 has dealt with test (B) which aims at investigating the learners' practical use of vocabulary learning strategies involved in their syllabus. The ultimate aim of this test is to ensure the hypothesis claiming that the English syllabus does not provide sufficient vocabulary learning strategies for the learners.

4.3. Analysis of Test (B)

Table 4.10: The performance of the control and experimental groups in test (B)

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	CONTROL GROUP	6.94	39	1.33
	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	18	39	1.41

Figure4.38: The reported results of the control and experimental groups



Tables 4.10 and figure represent the number of participants, the mean and the standard deviation. It is clear that 39 students participated in both the control group and the experimental one. The control group has received a mean of (6.94) points and the standard deviation of (1.33) points whereas the experimental group has received a mean score of (18) points and a

standard deviation of (1.41) points. The statistical values indicate that the participants in the experimental group have performed significantly better than those in control one. From statistic perspectives, the high value of the mean is always considered significant whereas the high value of the standard deviation is not significant. Thus, in the table above the value of the standard deviation (a statistical measurement use for measuring the central tendency of items) is lower than that of the mean.

Table 4.11: Paired Samples Correlations of both control and experimental groups

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	CONTROL GROUP & EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	39	0.949	.000

Table 4.11 shows that the participants in the experimental group have performed significantly better than those of the control one. This fact is proved by the value shown in column four (.000) which is less than (.05). Thus, corpora are substantial in distinguishing the near-synonyms of English. The significance in the learners' performance may be referred to the fact that the learners have a positive attitude towards using a computer (Mohammad, 2014). Correspondingly, this result is consistent with Leech's (1997), who ascertained the interplay between corpora and pedagogy, and Chen et al., (2013) who found that the students who were taught near-synonyms via corpora achieved a high rate of performance compared to those who were not.

To conclude, test (B) has dealt with the effect of corpora in uncovering the differences and similarities among the near-synonyms of English. It is

shown that the experimental group has performed significantly better than that of the control one.

4.4. Results of the Interview

The interview was conducted to investigate the EFL teachers' views at Al-Mughtaribeen University on the following variables:

- Name of the syllabus, types of VLS and the way they presented.
- The most frequent VLS along with its sufficiency.
- The range of VLS the learners exposed to and its sufficiency.
- The possibility of teaching VLS.

With regard to the first variable dealing with the name of the syllabus, types of VLS and the way they presented, all the interviewees agreed that they taught 'English Vocabulary in Use' as a main module prescribed for the all the students who specialized in the English language. They also confessed that most of the vocabulary was presented in contexts; very few of it was listed.

Regarding the commonest type of vocabulary learning strategies provided by the syllabus and its sufficiency, most of the interviewees agreed that while contextualized guessing was the commonest strategy included in the syllabus, the dictionary was the most frequent strategy utilized by the students to discover the meaning of the difficult words. They added that electronic dictionaries were very popular among the students compared to paper ones. With regard to the range of VLS and its sufficiency, the interviewees consensually proved the insufficiency of the range of VLS included in the syllabus despite its inclusion of some the VLS. Interestingly, one of the interviewees had raised a very substantial issue which is that ' no syllabus includes vocabulary learning strategies' and the syllabus 'must concentrate on how to increase and measure the range of vocabulary that the learners have and the ways of memorizing it'. Another interviewee commented that ' the syllabus should deal with all types of

VLS particularly those related to discovering the meaning of new words, but the current syllabus does not include enough VLS'. Other interviewees proved that 'the range of vocabulary the learners were exposed to was insufficient'. Thus, 'syllabus designers should focus on the range of VLS from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives'.

With regard to the possibility of the inclusion of vocabulary learning strategies and the possibility of teaching them, all the interviewees agreed that the syllabus does not provide any hints for teaching vocabulary learning strategies despite their usefulness. Others added that teachers should teach some of VLS and train their learners on how to use them.

4.5. Discussion and Verification of the Study Hypotheses

This research is conducted to investigate some VLS to overcome Sudanese university students' inability to distinguish the near-synonyms of English. It also seeks to confirm the following hypotheses:

1. The English language syllabus does not provide sufficient strategies for learning vocabulary.
2. Students use the traditional dictionary method for learning English vocabulary.
3. The British National Corpus is expected to be more capable of uncovering the differences and similarities among the near-synonyms of English compared to other strategies.

With regard to the **first hypothesis** claiming that ***the English syllabus prescribed for the students at Al-Mughtraibeen University does not provide sufficient VLS***, two instruments were used to prove this hypothesis: an interview and a test. According to the results obtained from the interview, all the interviewees proved that the syllabus did not provide sufficient strategies for learning vocabulary particularly near-synonyms. They added that contextualized guessing was the commonest strategy included in the syllabus, and the dictionary was the commonest strategies

used by the learners to discover the meaning of vocabulary particularly near-synonyms. It is worth mentioning that neither dictionary nor guessing was useful in discovering the meaning of near-synonyms. Concerning the practical use of the VLS, the participants' performance was moderate. That is, there was no outstanding performance of their dealing with such VLS. This fact could be referred to the insufficiency of VLS that the syllabus includes or the range of VLS that they exposed to. It is true that the participants succeeded in putting the words in their alphabetical order but they failed to discover the meaning from context or to identify the word class. This could be attributed to the fact that learning English is , by definition, requires memorizing its alphabets. The participants' moderate performance on the other VLS (guessing, synonyms and antonyms, affixation) reflects the learners' ignorance of using VLS, and the weakness in their level of vocabulary proficiency and vocabulary size. These results are congruent with Siriwan's (2007) who found that the Thai learners did not use vocabulary learning strategies frequently and that individual factors such as the major field of the study, previous learning experience, level of vocabulary proficiency and gender strongly correlated with the learners' use of discovery strategies synonyms and antonyms and affixation. Similarly, these results are also congruent with Al-Shuwairikh (2001) who found that the course type had a strong relationship with the vocabulary strategy used by the Saudi learners. In the same context, Al-Fuhaid (2004) proved that the Saudi learners were incompetent in terms of dictionary use and guessing. Similarly, Nation and Moir (2002) confirmed that almost all the Australian learners were failed to provide information about each word they knew. This failure was attributed to their unawareness of vocabulary learning strategies.

These results are also consistent with Garri's(2004) and Alhasan's (2010) who found that the syllabus prescribed in the Sudanese context did not

have clear strategies for new vocabulary learning calling for an urgent instruction of vocabulary learning strategies so as to as raise the learners' awareness in choosing the appropriate VLS.

Thus, it is possible to say that the first hypothesis (the English syllabus prescribed for the students at Al-Mughtraibeen University does not provide sufficient VLS) has been verified.

With regard to the **second hypothesis** claiming that ***students frequently tend to use the traditional dictionary method for learning English vocabulary***, the results obtained from the questionnaire have proved that dictionary is the commonest VLS utilized by the respondents. It has the highest mean score of (98.25) and a mode of 'always'. This result is consistent with Gu's and Johnson's (1996), Schmitt's (1997), Aljdee's (2007), Al-Fuhaid's (2004) and Easterbrook's (2013). All the researchers mentioned above found that the dictionary had a voice over the other VLS. This remarkable consistency in the use of dictionary could be attributed to the fact that dictionary is considered as the most familiar VLS besides being given much attention by most of the lexicographers from both quantities and qualitative perspectives. Thus, this sort of attention has come at the expense of the other VLS. Another interpretation is that the learners seem to be interested in discovering the meaning more than understanding it. In other words, after finding out the meaning of a word, for example, by looking it up in a dictionary, no further actions such as taking notes of the new word are taken in order to learn it. This could be attributed to the fact that the Sudanese English majors restrict themselves to the task they perform during a reading activity; they just discover the meanings to understand the reading passage and/or to answer the comprehension questions. On the other hand, contextualized guessing has ranked the second determination strategy used by learners to discover the meaning of difficult words. It has scored a relatively high mean index with (76.5)

points. The relatively high response scale of guessing is explained by the fact that vocabulary is always presented in context and hence the learners often encounter it. This result is consistent with those of Aljdee's (2007), Easterbrook's (2013) Stoffer's (1995) and Alyami's (2011). It is worth mentioning that guessing might be misleading particularly for vocabulary such as near-synonyms. Thus, successful guessing requires a good knowledge of vocabulary estimated at 2000 and 3000-keyword level (Laufer (1997b). Analyzing illustrations that accompany the difficult word has ranked the third with a mean index of (73.75) points. This high relatively high rate is due to the fact that the syllabus is probably rich in illustrations which are meant to explain the meaning of difficult words. This result also reached by Al-Qarni (1997) and Al-Fuhaid (2004). But it should be noted that illustrations might not cover all the diverse types of vocabulary, and they are no longer useful to discover the meaning of near-synonyms.

Analyzing word root has ranked the fourth VLS utilized by the Sudanese students majoring English. It has scored a mean index of (58.75) points. This moderate usage of this strategy could be justified by the fact that a small proportion of new word are compound or affixed words whose roots and affixes are already known. This result is, however, also in line with the frequent use of dictionaries by the respondents. Similarly, the Sudanese EFL low usage of analyzing part of speech is due to the effectiveness of this method in discovering the meaning of all vocabulary particularly near-synonyms. Another possible justification is that learners might avoid complex VLS and adopt the easiest ones. The same result is reached by Al-Talhab (2014).

Expectedly, using corpora has scored the lowest mean index. This could be justified by that corpora are newly introduced VLS and that the learners

have never heard of them. Thus, one major aim of the current study is to draw the learners' attention to them.

Social strategies seem to be quite appealing to the subjects. That is, three strategies have scored relatively high means of over 60 points with the modes of always. For instance, the two social strategies, asking the teacher to explain the difficult word and asking classmates have obtained the highest mean scores. One of the reasons behind this high usage is probably that both the teacher and the classmates are probably the most available source of information that the learners might resort to. The frequency of use of this method may be referred to the system of education adopted in the Sudan (teacher-centered) where learners still view themselves as passive human beings who respond to what they have received from their teachers. Another possible interpretation is that seeking help from classmates is supported by the fact that some EFL learners might understand better form their classmates more than their teachers. This result is congruent with Al-Fuhaid's (2004) who found that the Saudi EFL used these two strategies more frequently.

Contrary to our expectations, asking the teacher to translate the difficult word into L1 has received an above- average mean index of (60.75) points. The moderate use of this strategy might be due the fact that the Sudanese EFL learners prefer not to seek help from their teachers because they expect them to provide rich information on difficult words. This result is consistent with Alyami's (2011) and ALqahtani's (2005) who found that the Saudi university student asked their teachers for translating the difficult words infrequently.

In contrast, asking the teacher to provide an example and making use of group activity have ranked the lowest. One possible reason behind the infrequent use of these two strategies might be explained by the fact that

group discussion is usually in Arabic and dominated by one or two members. This agrees with Alyami's (2011) and Al-Fuhaid's (2004).

With regard to memory strategies, the most frequently used ones are (in descending order) studying the word's pronunciation (73) points, studying the spelling of the word (72) points and repetition (71.25) points. A powerful interpretation for this frequent use of the first three strategies is that all these strategies are indispensable and inseparable when learning a foreign language. Similar results are reached by Alyami's (2011), ALqahtani's (2005) and Al-Fuhaid's (2004). This result also agrees with the findings of Lawson and Hogben(1996), Gu and Johnson (1996) and Schmitt (1997) that repetition strategies were among the most frequently used strategies. This also confirms O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) suggestion that these strategies are so deeply rooted in learners' minds that learners resist giving them up to utilize other ones. On the other hand, the relative high use of the strategy connecting the word to a personal experience (69 points) is explained by the fact that the EFL learners are not in a regular and varied contact with the target language and its native speakers (Nakamura, 2000).

Making an image of the word meaning (67.25 points) has relatively frequently used by the respondents. This is because learning a language is a mental process. In contrast, memory strategies such as relating the word to its coordinates, making an image of the word's form and employing the difficult word in a sentence have ranked the lowest. One possible reason for this low rating is that EFL might believe that these strategies are useless for consolidating the learning of difficult words. This result is consistent with Al-Fuhaid's (2004) and Alljdee's (2007). With regard to cognitive strategies, (in descending order: writing the difficult word many times 66.00points, taking note 46.00 points, keeping vocabulary notebook 32.25 points , making my own word list 31.25 points), at first glance, it apparent

that these strategies have received a low rating. This finding supports to a certain extent that of Gu and Johnson (1996) who reported that Chinese EFL learners responded negatively to memorization strategies.

With the exception to the strategy of developing my vocabulary via watching English TV channels (80.75) points, the rest of meta-cognitive strategies such as revising the newly learned word immediately (42.75) points, skipping (37.75) and assessing vocabulary knowledge (53.50), have ranked the lowest. The frequent use of the strategy developing vocabulary via watching English TV channels can be attributed to the fact that some learners like everybody are just watching TV for pleasure, and that the TV channels are available. The same result is reached by Aljdee (2007) who found that the Libyan university student used this strategy more frequently.

Therefore, all the aforementioned findings prove the second hypothesis (students frequently tend to use the traditional dictionary method for learning English vocabulary).

Concerning the **third hypothesis** claiming that ***the British National Corpus is expected to be more capable of uncovering the differences and similarities among the near-synonyms of English compared to other strategies***, the results obtained from test (B) revealed that there is a significant difference between the performance of the control group and that of the experimental group. Many studies have reached similar results. For instance, Tassana-ngam (2004) found that learners of the experimental group outperformed those of the control one in using VLS. This result is also consistent with Chan's (2007) who proved that the performance of the experimental group in learning collocations was better than that of the control one. In addition, Term (1994) proved that the performance of the students taught part of speech via corpora was rather significant than those who were taught via traditional learning methods. Chen et al., (2013), too, found that the students who were taught near-synonyms achieved a high

rate of performance compared to those who were not. Zhuang (2011) found that using bilingual paralleled corpora data was a valid method in learning verb errors committed in written English by Chinese College students.

In my own calculation, it is true to confess that learning and teaching via modern data bank, such as corpora, is very beneficial because corpora provide the learner or the teacher with authentic information presented in huge and various packages of information. Also, corpora save time and effort compared to traditional teaching methods which are always boring and time-consuming According to Biber et al., (2004) one of the strengths of corpus data lies in its empirical nature. Using corpora in teaching synonyms expose the students to the kinds of sentences that they will encounter when using the language in real- life situations. In the present study, my students have been benefitted much from being exposed to authentic language a matter which makes most of them answer the questions of the test in an easy way. In addition, the concordncing lines have provided my students with the linguistic environment in which words co-occur. Thus, such students are able to draw the meaning even they are dealing with complex sentences or texts.

Specifically speaking, corpora can furnish the learners and teachers with words frequencies, collocations and even distribution of words across registers. Moreover, language users can get benefitted from the concordance lines which project all the instances that a word may tend to occur. On the other hand, language users can diversify the search purpose according to their pedagogical need. For example, if a learner wants to investigate lexical items, he should use coded corpora; and if he wants to look for the history of words, he should use diachronic and synchronic corpora, etc. Again, this study is based on the *connectivist theory* which, by definition, seeks to connect learners with the huge flow of information via computers. In this way, getting knowledge becomes learner-centered, updated, authentic and

interesting. In the light of the findings achieved from this study, it is true to acknowledge the validity of this theory because all the findings have proved the infinite effectiveness of corpus-based instruction.

Based on the above-mentioned findings, it could be said that the third hypothesis (the British National Corpus is expected to be more capable of uncovering the differences and similarities among the near-synonyms of English compared to other strategies) is confirmed

4.6. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has analyzed and discussed the findings of the current study with respect to the vocabulary learning strategy used by the Sudanese majors of English at AL-Mughtaribeen University. It has also proceeded to discuss their results in two tests (diagnostic and proficiency) which are in turn measure the learners' actual use of VLS and the effectiveness of corpora on discovering the meaning of near-synonyms of English. Then it has discussed the EFL's views on the syllabus prescribed for the students at AL-Mughtaribeen University. In the following chapter, a list of the major findings will be summarized along with the conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

5.0. Introduction

This chapter provides the summary, conclusions, recommendations of the study and suggestions for further studies.

5.1. Summary and Conclusions of the Study

This study is mainly an investigation of some vocabulary learning strategies to Sudanese university students' inability to distinguish the near-synonyms of English. Three research questions, which correspond to three hypotheses, were raised:

- To what extent does the English language syllabus provide strategies for teaching vocabulary?
- What kinds of strategies do the Sudanese university students usually use when learning vocabulary and particularly near-synonyms of English?
- In what ways is the British National Corpus capable of uncovering the differences and similarities among the synonymous words?

Four tools were employed to collect the quantitative and qualitative data: a proficiency test, a diagnostic test, an interview and a questionnaire. The population targeted in this study was the EFL learners and EFL teachers at the College of Languages, Almughtaribeen University. 100 students majoring English at Almughtaribeen University participated in the questionnaire. 50 students participated in the diagnostic test, 78 students participated in the proficiency test and 13 EFL teachers were interviewed. The findings indicated that the syllabus did not provide sufficient strategies for learning vocabulary, particularly near-synonyms. In addition,

contextualized guessing was the commonest strategy included in the syllabus, and the dictionary was the commonest strategies used by the learners to discover the meaning of vocabulary, particularly near-synonyms. Moreover, the findings revealed that the learners' practical use of several VLS was different from their rating them. For instance, the dictionary was reported to be the commonest VLS used by the learners despite their failure in practically using it.

Additionally, the findings revealed that the learners' reported use of determination strategies was relatively more outstanding compared to their reported use of meta-cognitive ones. Furthermore, the findings also revealed that corpora had never been used by the learners as a newly introduced VLS although they are capable of uncovering the differences and similarities among the near-synonyms of English.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the results obtained from this study, the following recommendations have been formulated:

1- Vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) should precisely be defined within the modules plan that the Sudanese university learners study. This will assist the learners to gain optimum results in using and learning VLS.

2- Learning modules should include a wide range of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS), and the teachers should train their learners on their use.

3- The inclusion of English synonyms in the syllabi is essential because it fosters the way that synonyms are learned.

4- Corpora are central to resolving the problem of learning synonyms of English. This is because corpora have a huge representativeness of language features. Thus, the introduction of corpora in the field of pedagogy is a necessity.

5- Teachers need to be trained on how to deal with corpora and on how to designate corpus-centered activities.

6- Corpus dictionaries need to be designed to complement the current ones. This is because current dictionaries do not, for instance, include huge representativeness of English language and hence fail to uncover the differences and similarities among the near-synonyms of English.

5.3. Suggestions for Further Studies

Taking into account the research methods and findings of this study, the following are some suggestions for further research:

1. More research is to be conducted on vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) with the aim of measuring the size of vocabulary that the learners have already learned.

2. Research should focus on the area of near-synonyms utilizing corpora as VLS.

3. This study restricted itself to EFL majoring English at a single university in the Sudanese context, so it can be replicated at other universities in the Sudan to compare their findings with the current study's to see if similar or different the results are obtained.

4. The findings have revealed the less frequent use of consolidating strategies. Other experimental studies can be conducted to compare the impact of strategy training in using such strategies on control and experimental groups to see if the use of these strategies influences the learners' vocabulary knowledge.

5.4. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has presented the key findings of the study. It has also arrived at some recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

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APPENDICES

APPENDICES

Appendix (1)

Diagnostic Test (A)

1. We are sitting by the river bank. The word ‘bank’ here means:

a. a financial institution that accept deposits and channels the money into lending activities.

b. a sloping raised land, especially along the sides of a river.

c. a garage

2. The school is run by a good headmaster. The word ‘run’ means:

a. to walk quickly b. to walk slowly c. to administer

3. Match the following words with their **synonyms**:

Zeal ..... keep

Retain ..... thin

Scheme ..... plenty

Slender ..... plan

Enough ..... eagerness

4. Match the following words with their **antonyms**:

Selfish ..... extremely

Outgoing ..... very small

Deep ..... shy

Tiny ..... shallow

Very ..... generous

5. Identify the **roots** of the following words

Recycling ..... incorrect .....

Unavailability ..... unsafely .....

Hardship ..... foreknowledge .....

6. (A) Put the following words into their alphabetical order:

Schedule, insert, and roar germs, workshop, choice.....

(B)Look at the dictionary entry for '**bar'** and match its meanings with the sentences below.

> **Bar** /ba:$^{r/}$ *noun[C] 1 DRINKING a place where alcoholic drinks are sold and drunk. 2 BLOCK a small block of something solid a chocolate* *are sold and drunk. 2 BLOCK a small block of something solid a chocolate*

1. We went to a bar in the centre of a town.
2. Could you get me a bar of soap?
3. They put the bars inside the rooms to keep them safe.
4. Is the word 'bar' uncountable noun? (Yes/No)

Appendix (2)

Proficiency Test (B)

Complete the following sentences using the words in brackets.

1. There are too many .....in your work. (errors / mistakes)
2. They took a .....down the river. (journey/trip)
3. Fatima went on a long train.....across India. (journey/trip)
4. I am writing to.....your question. (answer/ reply/ respond)
5. 'I won't let you down'. She..... (answer/ reply/ respond)
6. How did they .....to the news? (answer/ reply/ respond)
7. All our players have been carefully..... (chosen/selected)
8. There are plenty of restaurants to.....from. (chosen/selected)
9. His father is seriously..... (ill/sick)
10. If you eat any more cake, you will make yourself..... (ill/sick)
11. The car is running..... (speedy/swift/quick/fast)
12. She made a .....glance. (speedy/swift/quick/fast)
13. There is a .....increase in the number of population. (speedy/swift/quick/fast
14. The government took .....action.
(speedy/swift/quick/fast)
15. We wish a .....recovery. (speedy/swift/quick/fast)
16. I have .....to the manager about it. (talked/ spoken)
17. Have you .....to your parents about the problem you have? (talked/ spoken)
18. They didn't .....at the border until after dark. (arrive/ reach)
19. I was pleased to hear you .....home safely. (arrive/ reach)

Appendix (3)

Teachers' Interview

Name: …… Academic Qualification: ……

Sex:……..

Status: (lecturer. Associate professor, assistant professor)

Teaching Experience: ……

University: …… College/ Faculty……..

1. Have you ever taught vocabulary? (always/ sometimes/ never/ often)

2. Is vocabulary learned via a syllabus? If yes, mention its name.

3. In your opinion, what types of vocabulary learning strategies does the syllabus prescribed for your students provide?

A. dictionary B. guessing C. analyzing word's root D. analyzing word's part of speech

4. What do you think about the way that vocabulary presented in your syllabus?

A. in lists B. in contexts C. others (specify)

5. In your opinion, does the syllabus provide strategies for learners to consolidate the difficult vocabulary such as

A. using the difficult words in sentences?,

B. relating the difficult words to their synonyms and antonyms?

C. or providing vocabulary test for self-assessment?

6. in your opinion, the most frequent strategies included in the syllabus is…

A. using dictionary B. guessing from context C. asking the teacher D. others

7. In your opinion, are the vocabulary learning strategies provided by the syllabus enough?

A. Yes, they are B. No, they aren't C. I am not sure

8. What types of strategies does the syllabus provide for learning the meanings of near-synonyms?

A. dictionary B. Contextualized guessing C. Corpora D. asking a teacher for the meaning

9. In your opinion, does the syllabus provide strategies for learning all types of vocabulary?

A. antonyms B. synonyms C. idioms D. technical vocabulary

10. Does the syllabus suggest teaching vocabulary learning strategies?

11. What do you think about teaching vocabulary learning strategies?

A. useful B. useless C. neutral

12. Have you ever taught vocabulary learning strategies?

A. sometimes B. Never C. often D. rarely E. always

Appendix (4)

Students' Questionnaire on Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Dear student,

This questionnaire is a part of study which attempts to investigate some vocabulary learning strategies to Sudanese university students' inability to distinguish the near-synonyms of English. The questionnaire is meant to assess the views of Al-Mughtaribeen University students on the kinds of strategies that they usually use when learning vocabulary and particularly near-synonyms of English. . Please indicate your opinion by rating the following statements using the scale shown below

Always100%(5)	Often 75%(4)	Sometimes 50%(3)	Rarely 25% (2)	Never 0%(0)

Remember that your cooperation and responding honesty are extremely important for the researcher, and be assured that the contents of this questionnaire are strictly confidential and purely academic.

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Ahmad Muhammad Atiya

PhD student

Sudan University of Science & Technology

Name: ……..

1. Determination Strategies: are used by learners to discover the meaning of difficult word without getting help from another person.					
1. I identify the part of speech of the difficult word (verb, noun, adjective) to help me know its meaning.	5	4	3	2	0
2. I analyze the difficult word into its main parts: prefix-root-suffix e.g. (unsafely = un-safe-ly).					
3. I analyze the available illustrations to help me understand difficult words.					
4. I use a dictionary to discover the meaning of the difficult word.					

5. I guess the meaning of the difficult word from the context in which it occurs.					
6. I use corpora to discover the meanings of near-synonyms.					
2. Social Strategies: They are used by learners to discover the meaning of difficult word by getting help from somebody else.					
7. I ask a teacher for the translation of the difficult word into Arabic.					
8. I ask a teacher to explain the difficult word.					
9. I ask a teacher about a sentence including the difficult word.					
10. I ask my classmates for the meaning of the difficult word.					
11. I try to discover the meanings of difficult words through group work activity.					
3. **Memory Strategies**: They entail linking the word to be memorized with some previously learned knowledge.					
12. I make an image in my mind of the new word's meaning.					
13**.** I study the spelling of the difficult word.					
14. I try to connect the difficult word to a personal experience (e.g. connecting the word research with the final project).					
15. I study the pronunciation of the difficult word.					
16. I associate the new word with its coordinates (apples with oranges, peaches and etc.).					
17. I repeat the difficult word aloud when studyingit.					
18. I make an image in my mind of the form of the difficult word.					
19. I use the new word in sentence.					
20. I try to relate the difficult word to its synonyms and antonyms.					
4**. Cognitive Strategies:** They entail linking the word to be memorized with some previously learned knowledge though they less obviously linked to mental manipulation. They include repetition and using mechanical means to study vocabulary.					
21. I repeat the difficult word over and over in order to memorize it.					
22. I write the difficult word many times in order to memorize it.					
23. I make my own lists of the new words.					
24. I keep a vocabulary notebook for expanding my vocabulary knowledge					
25**.** I take note of the newly learned words in the class.					
5**. Metacognitive Strategies**: They are used to consolidate the meaning of the newly learned words. They entail conscious overview of the learning process and making decisions about planning, monitoring, or evaluating the best ways to study.					
26. I try to develop my vocabulary knowledge by watching English TV channels (e.g. movies, songs, news, and documentary) or reading English newspapers and magazines.					
27. I immediately revise the newly learned words.					
28. Sometimes, I skip the new word.					
29. I try to assess my vocabulary knowledge (e.g. with word tests).					