

Journal of Educational Research & Social Sciences Review (JERSSR)

Vocabulary Learning Strategies and their Influence on Language Proficiency of Multilingual Undergraduate ESL Learners

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Abstract



The purpose of this study was to focus primarily upon the Vocabulary Learning Strategies and investigate their effects on comprehension, awareness and language competence of ESL undergraduate learners in Karachi, Pakistan. Today's learners in the classroom are more diverse in a number of areas, including linguistic, culture, location, and socioeconomics. This increasing variety inside the classroom highlights the demand for a transition toward education that is more learner-centred and supported by more resources. A system of education that is centred on the learner requires teachers to make use of their expertise and the available resources in order to determine how individual students learn best and then encourage them to actively engage with the appropriate vocabulary learning strategies in the diverse cultural classrooms. The current study used a cross-sectional descriptive survey design and utilized a quantitative research method. The data was processed to derive the facts and figures from the responses of undergraduate respondents. In consideration of vocabulary learning methodologies, data analysis for vocabulary knowledge and vocabulary acquisition was accomplished. The researchers examined the demographics and the questionnaire responses from (n=350), 193 (55.1%) males and 157 (44.9%) females undergraduate ESL/EFL learners using Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences. Results showed that majority of the learners agreed that vocabulary can be enhanced through different but appropriate intensive reading strategies like; words of their interest, reading story books, repeating lesson through rhyming words, repetition of new words and words while listening to colleagues and others, most of the learners rated high scores to intensive reading strategies. In order to gradually improve the learners' language proficiency, comprehension, and expression for practical application in daily life, English vocabulary must be taught taking into account their unique needs and cultural background. The study also showed that undergraduate ESL/EFL learners require support with lexical knowledge for vocabulary learning through a variety of ways. English language is utilized in every aspect of life, so it is essential to provide ESL learners with appropriate lexical knowledge for excellent language competence.

Keywords: Vocabulary Learning Strategies, language proficiency, Diverse Culture, ESL Learners

Introduction

The knowledge of second language, particularly of vocabulary is one of the important aspects of learning English. English Learning as second language occupies an important place in education system and society of Pakistan. It has ever remained a weak area for students in Pakistan owing to the diversity of cultures and heterogeneous society. However, there has been a positive improvement in teaching and learning English, despite non-conducive environments for learning, particularly in remote areas of our provinces. There is a great scarcity of trained and competent teachers, and teaching Practice is influenced by various social, cultural, class, gender, and ethnic factors. This shift towards the social aspects of language learning (Khan, Rahman, & Hamid, 2021). More importantly, English Language knowledge of teachers is quite poor and they do not have adequate knowledge about learning strategies and pedagogical skills to teach learners coming from diverse cultures. More so, the lack of know-how about the words and their functional role in textual and contextual

understanding, the learners suffer on account of gaining true subject knowledge. Knowledge of target lexical items has different dimensions which are essential for a conceptual foundation for active usage of words as functional components of thoughts used in communication. Melka (1997) stated that the adequacy of a better understanding of multiple meanings of lexical items reflects the ability and competence of learners.

English is a widely spoken language around the globe, known as lingua franca, plays an increasingly crucial role in the daily life of Pakistan. The fast-moving and dynamic world with advancement in the field of IT, need to have prompt communication on economic and cultural concerns among communities and countries, nationally and internationally, the importance of English has been recognized by a greater number of people. Therefore, English has been taught in Pakistan since its emergence. The learning of English continues from the elementary level to the university level. The significance of vocabulary acquisition and its role in education and life, especially for college learners, is manifold. When it comes to students' improvement of their English proficiency, it demands from them to improve their linguistic skills, particularly acquiring vocabulary to express thoughts both, in spoken and written expression. Vocabulary learning is essential not only to have knowledge about the meaning of the words but also to know different aspects of the words. According to Taylor (1990), there are seven facets for knowing a word, which includes frequency of the word in the language, register of the word, collocation, morphology, semantics, polysemy and the equivalent of the word in the mother tongue (Taylor 1990, p.3). Learning words poses difficulties to some students with respect to the meaning which are stored in their minds. Speaker, Taylor & Kamen, (2004) argued that Storytelling enhances language acquisition and learners that actively participate in their acquisition of language. Learners' language patterns are learned in social contexts while they are interacting with other children and their elders. Aitchison (2017) states that words are not just stored in our minds in a disorderly or jumbled-up manner, rather the lexicon is organized into an intricate and interlocking system. The organization of the mental lexicon, therefore, is a good way for second language learners to acquire vocabulary more successfully. Dóczi, (2019) explained that classic reflects upon students' basic knowledge of the mental lexicon and its structure in order to demonstrate how they learn, store, and retrieve words.

The present study focuses on understanding various vocabulary learning strategies and its impact, particularly the learning and development of English Language proficiency and communication skills. Moreover, to determine the role of vocabulary learning strategies on learners' linguistic competence to communicate in second language. The study encompasses different learning theories, perspectives and modules and other essential factors, social, psychological, educational etc., which directly or indirectly, have an impact on the understanding of language learning and linguistic competence of undergraduate ESL learners. The learners need to acquire knowledge about different language learning strategies, particularly Vocabulary Learning Techniques, to improve their understanding of contents while reading, besides exposure to academic language items. Wilhelm (2016) points out to make all our students keenly aware of how academic language works, we should use ritual structures to promote conscious understanding. Teachers should naturally begin to incorporate the techniques into their teaching, and students will recognize and know, how to use the techniques to promote their own understanding and performance. Mason and Krashen (2004) present their finding stating that anything which leads to more and better engagement in acquisition of lexical knowledge, leads to improving vocabulary learning.

The learning of English language, particularly the acquisition of vocabulary, is an area where students lack in language awareness and are below the vocabulary threshold level. They do not have the required stock of words; types of words, knowledge about words and usage implications. This very aspect of English language learning is a need of learners in a diverse culture like Pakistan. The deficiencies in teaching English language and lack of knowledge of the strategies for learning English adversely affect the learners' performance, restricting them to acquire better productive communication skills. Rehman and Perveen, (2021) pointed out in their study that teachers are reluctant to apply authentic material in their classrooms in Pakistan because of the syllabus, assessment restrictions and authorities' pressures. Another study was carried out in Sindh, Pakistan, by Ali, Thomas, and Hamid (2020), the results revealed that teachers were displeased with the facilities and available learning material to them. Additionally, these teachers were unable to improve their students' academic performance. They suggested that teachers must apply various strategies and

approaches to enhance students learning and skills for their academic success. There is a need to enhance the vocabulary learning skills of undergraduate learners in Pakistan so that their productive communication skills could be refined and their ability to speak and write better gets improved and they become competent to apply these skills in achieving their objectives in life. In order to attain this objective, it necessitates revisiting vocabulary teaching practices in schools and colleges of Pakistan, instituting prudent measures for the teaching of vocabulary to enhance students' vocabulary knowledge as it also builds their confidence. When students are exposed to intensive reading and understanding of the given text in light of the context, guessing and deriving the functional meaning of the words used in the text, it enhances comprehension and leads to better productive skills, which find their reflection in learners' social and professional life.

Literature Review

Vocabulary Learning Strategies

The development of one's vocabulary has been the focus of research within the mainstream of second language acquisition since at least the late 1980s, as reported by Nation (1990). It has become clear to researchers that a lack of vocabulary is a major cause of receptive and productive challenges for learners, and that this need persists even at higher levels of language ability and performance. Most studies of vocabulary learning strategies, as pointed out by Gu and Johnson (1996), have focused on the impact of different vocabulary presenting approaches on retention. Words are the foundation of any language, serving as labels for the things, acts, and ideas without which communication would be impossible. Researchers and theorists in the field of second and foreign language learning have only recently begun to acknowledge the importance of vocabulary knowledge in the process. As a result, many different strategies, methods, activities, and drills have been added to the subject of vocabulary instruction. Vocabulary learning strategies, as Nation (2013) makes clear, are a subset of language learning strategies, which are a subset of general learning strategies. Vocabulary learning, unlike more integrated tasks like listening and speaking, has been demonstrated to need a greater number of techniques from students. Al-Khresheh, and Al-Ruwaili, (2020) enlightened that vocabulary is essential for effective and useful communication. Therefore, understanding the strategies that language learners use to learn vocabulary is a matter of great importance. Teachers may benefit greatly from a deeper understanding of vocabulary acquisition processes if they used this information to better prepare classes and guide students in developing productive study habits. Dictionary is the greatest source for acquiring lexical knowledge about the words. It includes origin development phonological awareness and usage. While acquiring vocabulary during learning in the class, the instructions include consultation of dictionary with a view to have various implications of words which adjacent to the focus words. This helps students to add to their stock of words. Recently there has been an interest in using a dictionary in understanding contextual meaning of words. Previous researches on vocabulary learning strategies also highlighted the significance of vocabulary acquisition through intensive reading and listening strategies (Laufer & Hill, 2000; Teng, 2019; Schmitt, 2019; Shin, Sok, & Do, 2022)

Developing Vocabulary through Conversational and Reading Activities

Bruner, (2022), stated that Reading aloud to children in their early years has several advantages, one of which is exposing them to new words. , including supporting children's comprehension of words they decode, assisting children in recognizing words more quickly, encouraging phonological awareness skills, and enhancing children's comprehension of subject-matter instruction. Talking leads to application of learnt lexicon and acquisition of new words during the process of communication involving listening and participation in conversation and discussions. Beals, (1997) one study showed that young children whose parents use more "rare words" at the dinner table had higher vocabularies and later reading achievement than other children. Therefore the learners need to involve themselves in healthy and meaningful conversations whenever possible; and teachers are required to organize and arrange classroom activities to achieve the desired objectives for better second language acquisition, applying various vocabulary learning strategies along with other teaching tools essential for improving linguistic skills. Vocabulary learning needs encouragement, particularly outside the school hours where learners must be supported to involve in conversations, read books and involve in interactive activities (Koskinen, Blum, Bisson, Phillips, Creamer, and Baker, 2000). A prerequisite for effective incidental vocabulary learning through reading is, as mentioned earlier, reading ability, an ability beginning foreign language learners possess only to a very limited extent. Moreover, where

learners have little target language input and insufficient reading materials at their disposal, an exclusive incidental vocabulary learning helps in language development and its acquisition. Vocabulary acquisition is an integral part of learning English as second language. Vocabulary in its wider sense includes conceptual knowledge of words that goes beyond the denotative meaning given in the dictionary. Vocabulary building is a process which relates to the already gained words knowledge and interpreted within the context of the sentence (Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005). The larger the vocabulary, the greater is the academic performance, particularly the function words, and the pre-knowledge of key words of text helps greatly in better comprehension and vocabulary instruction. Mihai (2021) specified that during the preschool years, language learning is a crucial developmental experience for young children, and reading is an essential setting for fostering this development. Reading books exposes kids to a larger variety of words than what they often hear in discussions, and it gives them valuable opportunity to practice using new words in context with peers and adults to boost vocabulary growth.

Methodology

Research Design

The present study was a descriptive survey research and cross-sectional in nature where quantitative method was applied. According to Creswell (2014), the function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible. The data collected has been used to determine the facts and figures derived from responses of undergraduate respondents. The descriptive design included easily available target population, and various indicators helpful to draw inferences. Descriptions presented concrete information regarding different demographics and abstract questions pertaining to the phenomena. In the present research, the design included independent and dependent variables (strategies) and learning outcomes of ESL / EFL undergraduate learners. The items included in the questionnaire were relevant for obtaining input to achieve the research objective. This design was chosen due to ease of accessibility and convenience and number of researches conducted previously and presently on such and similar patterns of questionnaires were supportive to reliability and validity. Conventionally speaking, it was advisable to set closed-ended questions near the end of the questionnaire rather than at the beginning, but in this research, it was other way round and had been feasible due to blending of VAT as the focus was to take input as a whole. Moreover, all the items of the questionnaire were manageable and no observations were made by respondents. The study consisted of undergraduate ESL / EFL learners, who were pursuing, BBA, B.Com, BE, B.Sc. and BA degree courses, (English non major) studying in four institutions located in Karachi Pakistan. Most of the participants of the population were in third year or in fourth year, BBA. The Vocabulary Learning Strategy Questionnaire (VLSQ) and Vocabulary Acquisition Test (VAT) were prepared. The sample chosen for this study comprised of 350 participants from population, the students selected for this study were required to fill in the questionnaire in totality and give their fair understanding and response so as to draw true result from the data. The participants were briefed about the questionnaire prior to the execution of VLSQ and VAT. Moreover, the ESL / EFL learners were pursuing graduate courses and belonged to management group, (English non major) from private universities; and most of them were BBA students of management group. These students responded voluntarily to VLSQ and VAT. Prior to the conduct of the study, the participants were briefed about this survey activity and were informed that the confidentiality of the information provided by them would be maintained. Accordingly, no names were mentioned in the questionnaire or VAT. During the process, the researcher ensured that no ethical violation took place and all such considerations were kept in mind with due importance.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire was adapted from Model of Višnja Pavić Takac (2008), which consisted of different Vocabulary Teaching Strategies (VTS) and Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS). The VLSQ model of Višnja Pavić Takac (2008) was used with addition of two strategies (Word Knowledge, Greek and Latin roots words), as these were not in the said model. The focus was to find out how vocabulary could be learnt and what is the size or present level of under graduate ESL/EFL learners, speaking different languages living in diverse culture. The Višnja Pavić Takac (2008) model was on 3- point scale and the statements given were mostly in plain language expressed in first person or with a condition. In order to follow the present practice and to have real time input of the data, the researcher changed the Višnja Pavić Takac (2008) scale model into 5- point Likert scale as

1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree. The questionnaire included statements pertaining to both the areas, however, vocabulary learning strategies comprised upon the Memorizing word lists, Contextualization, Reading(intensive/extensive/aloud), Phonological Awareness, Semantic relationship, Kinesics strategy, Guessing word meaning, Word usage strategy, Using dictionaries, Revisiting word lists, Note taking, Self and peer correction. The researcher keeping in view the diverse culture and much needed strategies for learning vocabulary of target language (English) added Greek and Latin roots words and Word Knowledge.

The statements were accordingly tailored and questionnaire was prepared, catering for the added strategies (Word Knowledge, Greek and Latin roots words). However, while preparing the items related to each VLSQ; it was kept in mind that the target population was from the educational group, which was pursuing degree courses having English as non-major subject. Additionally, while choosing target sample (respondents), it was also considered that the target population belonged to diverse culture and spoke different languages and their medium of instructions was English. Moreover, the questionnaire contained 10 other related items of general nature, under the caption of 'Demographic Information' to elicit the response of the participants about English language and vocabulary learning, which they provided indicators useful for acquisition of vocabulary. The final questionnaire comprised demographic Information, 'English Language Learning Input (general), closed ended questions to know the understanding of respondents about English language learning, Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Vocabulary Acquisition. The questionnaire was capable for eliciting the required input to answer the research questions based on the participants' Words Knowledge and extent of vocabulary.

Data Analysis

This section presents the results and analysis of quantitative data gathered from the survey instruments used in this study. It constitutes a discussion of the results of the quantitative analysis on the VLSQ that was used to investigate the knowledge of undergraduate ESL / EFL learners about the Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Learning Outcome, who were from management group English non major, and pursuing their degree courses at institutions in Karachi Pakistan. The data analysis for the vocabulary knowledge and vocabulary acquisition was carried out in view of vocabulary learning strategies. The researchers used Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS), to analyze the demographics and see the response of undergraduate ESL / EFL learners to the questionnaire; and to find out minimum and maximum range given by the participants on Likert Scale, besides determination of learners' knowledge about vocabulary learning strategies and their achievement level. The discussion on the responses given by the learners, in light of the analysis, is explained with a tabulated display of learner numbers and frequencies obtained from learners' responses on 5-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The demographics of the sample along with other variables is reported in (Table 1)

Demographic Statistics of the Study:

Table 1 Profile of the Students

Demographic Factors	Categories	<i>F</i>	%
Gender	Male	193	55.1
	Female	157	44.9
Age Group	18-22 Years	326	93.1
	23-27 Years	12	3.4
	28-31 Years	8	2.3
	32 Years & Above	4	1.1
	Urdu	244	69.7
Mother Tongue	Sindhi	41	11.7
	Punjabi	20	5.7
	Pushto	17	4.9
	Others	28	8.0
	Less than 2.5	14	4.0
CGPA	2.51 to 2.75	40	11.4
	2.76 to 3.0	71	20.3
	3.01 to 3.25	141	40.3
	3.26 to 3.50	41	11.7
	3.51 to 3.75	20	5.7
	3.76 & above	23	6.6

N=350

Table 1 provides demographic information about the entire sample of the study. The above table covers genders, age, mother tongue and CGPA of the undergraduate ESL / EFL learners. There were 193 (55.1%) males and 157 (44.9%) females students who were students of management group (English non major), who participated in the study. The sample consist of students who spoke different languages and included sample comprises students whose mother tongue was Urdu, Sindhi, Punjabi, Pushto and others. The number of students speaking Urdu language was 244 (69.7%), which was the maximum number in this study. It was so because this study was carried out in Karachi area. The mother tongue of other students who participated in this study, in ascending order is, Pushto 17 (4.9%), Punjabi 20 (5.7%), Sindhi 41 (11.7%), whereas students having other mother tongue is 28 (8%). Out of the entire sample comprising 350 participants, 326 (93.1%) students were between the age group of 18-22 years and only 4 (1.1%) participants were above the age of 32 years. Out of the sample, 141 (40.3%) participants acquired CGPA ranging between 3.01 to 3.25 however, there are only 20 (5.7%) students who gained 3.51 to 3.75 and only 23 (6.6%) participants attained CGPA above 3.76.

Table 2 Response of participants to Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Response to statement 1 of Intensive Reading Strategy

Cross tabulation of Statement 1:			I can expand my vocabulary through intensive reading.							
Demographic Factors	1(SD)		2(D)		3(UD)		4(A)		5(SA)	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Gender										
Male	4	2.1	7	3.6	13	6.7	107	55.4	62	32.1
Female	5	3.2	5	3.2	7	4.5	78	49.7	62	39.5
Age										
18-22 Years	8	2.5	10	3.1	19	5.8	170	52.1	119	36.5
23-27 Years	1	8.3	1	8.3	-	-	9	75.0	1	8.3
28-31 Years	-	-	1	12.5	1	12.5	6	75.0	-	-
32 Years & Above	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	100.0
Mother Tongue										
Urdu	5	2.0	8	3.3	12	4.9	131	53.7	88	36.1
Sindhi	3	7.3	-	-	1	2.4	19	46.3	18	43.9
Punjabi	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	60.0	8	40.0
Pushto	1	5.9	2	11.8	4	23.5	9	52.9	1	5.9
Others	1	0.0	2	7.1	3	10.7	14	50.0	9	32.1
CGPA										
Less than 2.5	-	-	1	7.1	1	7.1	10	71.4	2	14.3
2.51 to 2.75	2	5.0	4	10.0	2	5.0	23	57.5	9	22.5
2.76 to 3.0	1	1.4	-	-	3	4.2	43	60.6	24	33.8
3.01 to 3.25	4	2.8	6	4.3	6	4.3	65	46.1	60	42.6
3.26 to 3.50	2	4.9	-	-	4	9.8	22	53.7	13	31.7
3.51 to 3.75	-	-	1	5.0	1	5.0	6	30.0	12	60.6
3.76 & above	-	-	-	-	3	13.0	16	69.6	4	17.4

N = 350

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

As can be seen from the table above, 169 (87.5%) male and 140 (89.2%) female respondents agreed to the statement, whereas total of 11(5.7%) male and 10(6.4%) female participants disagreed to the statement. 88.6% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years were in agreement, however 83.3% respondents, who also agreed to the statement, but were within age group of 23 – 27 years. On contrary, 5.6% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years and 16.6% respondents within age group of 23 – 27 years were disagreed with the said statement. Additionally, 89.8% participants who gave positive response were from Urdu speaking language group; and 88.7% participants fall within 3.01 to 3.25 CGPA.

Table 3

Response to statement 2 of Intensive Reading Strategy

Cross tabulation of Statement 2:		I can acquire a large vocabulary by reading words of my interest.								
Demographic Factors	1(SD)		2(D)		3(UD)		4(A)		5(SA)	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Gender										
Male	4	2.1	17	8.8	38	19.7	90	46.6	44	22.8
Female	7	4.5	14	8.9	29	18.5	71	45.2	36	22.9
Age										
18-22 Years	10	3.1	27	8.3	66	20.2	148	45.4	75	23.0
23-27 Years	1	8.3	2	16.7	1	8.3	8	66.7	0	0.0
28-31 Years	-	-	1	12.5	-	-	3	37.5	4	50.0
32 Years & Above	-	-	1	25.0	-	-	2	50.0	1	25.0
Mother Tongue										
Urdu	6	2.5	17	7.0	50	20.5	112	45.9	59	24.2
Sindhi	3	7.3	8	19.5	7	17.1	13	31.7	10	24.4
Punjabi	-	-	1	5.0	4	20.0	9	45.0	6	30.0
Pushto	2	11.8	2	11.8	1	5.9	11	64.7	1	5.9
Others	-	-	3	10.7	5	17.9	16	57.1	4	14.3
CGPA										
Less than 2.5	-	-	1	7.1	1	7.1	8	57.1	4	28.6
2.51 to 2.75	2	5.0	5	12.5	7	17.5	17	42.5	9	22.5
2.76 to 3.0	2	2.8	6	8.5	7	9.9	41	57.7	15	21.1
3.01 to 3.25	4	2.8	13	9.2	31	22.0	61	43.3	32	22.7
3.26 to 3.50	2	4.9	4	9.8	9	22.0	14	34.1	12	29.3
3.51 to 3.75	1	5.0	-	-	7	35.0	7	35.0	5	25.0
3.76 & above	-	-	2	8.7	5	21.7	13	56.5	3	13.0

N = 350

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

The table above shows that a total of 134 (69.4%) male and 107 (68.1%) female participants agreed to the statement, whereas total of 21 (10.9%) male and 21 (13.4%) female participants disagreed to the statement. 68.4% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years were in agreement, however 66.7% respondents, who also agreed to the statement, but were within age group of 23 – 27 years. On contrary, 11.4% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years and 25% respondents within age group of 23 – 27 years were disagreed with the said statement. Additionally, 70.1% participants who gave positive response were from Urdu speaking language group; and 66% participants fall within 3.01 to 3.25 CGPA.

Table 4

Response to statement 3 of Intensive Reading Strategy

Cross tabulation of Statement 3:		I look up words that I am interested in while reading story books.								
Demographic Factors	1(SD)		2(D)		3(UD)		4(A)		5(SA)	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Gender										
Male	5	2.6	30	15.5	30	15.5	85	44.0	43	22.3
Female	3	1.9	22	14.0	15	9.6	83	52.9	34	21.7
Age										
18-22 Years	7	2.1	47	14.4	44	13.5	157	48.2	71	21.8
23-27 Years	-	-	3	25.0	1	8.3	4	33.3	4	33.3
28-31 Years	-	-	1	12.5	-	-	7	87.5	-	-
32 Years & Above	1	25.0	1	25.0	-	-	-	-	2	50.0
Mother Tongue										
Urdu	5	2.0	36	14.8	34	13.9	122	50.0	47	19.3

Sindhi	1	2.4	10	24.4	3	7.3	13	31.7	14	34.1
Punjabi	-	-	1	5.0	3	15.0	8	40.0	8	40.0
Pushto	-	-	2	11.8	2	11.8	10	58.6	5	17.9
Others	2	7.1	3	10.7	3	10.7	15	53.6	5	17.9
CGPA										
Less than 2.5	-	-	1	7.1	1	7.1	10	71.4	2	14.3
2.51 to 2.75	-	-	8	20.0	6	15.0	16	40.0	10	25.0
2.76 to 3.0	-	-	7	9.9	11	15.5	29	40.8	24	33.8
3.01 to 3.25	5	3.5	26	18.4	14	9.9	76	53.9	20	14.2
3.26 to 3.50	1	2.4	6	14.6	7	17.1	17	41.5	10	24.4
3.51 to 3.75	-	-	2	10.0	2	10.0	11	50.0	5	25.0
3.76 & above	2	8.7	2	8.7	4	17.4	9	39.1	6	26.1
N = 350										

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

The table above shows that a total of 128 (66.3%) male and 117 (74.6%) female participants agreed to the statement, whereas total of 35 (18.1%) male and 25 (15.9%) female participants disagreed to the statement. 70% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years were in agreement, however 66.6% respondents, who also agreed to the statement, but were within age group of 23 – 27 years. On contrary, 16.5% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years and 25% respondents within age group of 23 – 27 years were disagreed with the said statement. Additionally, 69.3% participants who gave positive response were from Urdu speaking language group; and 85.7% respondents in agreement were having less than 2.5 CGPA.

Table 5

Response to statement 4 of Intensive Reading Strategy

Cross tabulation of Statement 4:			I develop intimacy with words by repeating my lesson.							
Demographic Factors	1(SD)		2(D)		3(UD)		4(A)		5(SA)	
	f	%	f	%	f		f	%	f	%
Gender										
Male	6	3.1	24	12.4	66	34.2	87	45.1	10	5.2
Female	2	1.3	27	17.2	45	28.7	71	45.2	12	7.6
Age										
18-22 Years	8	2.5	44	13.5	104	31.9	150	46.0	20	6.1
23-27 Years	-	-	4	33.3	4	33.3	2	16.7	2	16.7
28-31 Years	-	-	2	25.0	2	25.0	4	50.0	-	-
32 Years & Above	-	-	1	25.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	-	-
Mother Tongue										
Urdu	6	2.5	35	14.3	75	30.7	113	46.3	15	6.1
Sindhi	2	4.9	6	14.6	10	24.4	20	48.8	3	7.3
Punjabi	-	-	1	5.0	7	35.0	12	60.0	-	-
Pushto	-	-	4	23.5	4	23.5	5	29.4	4	23.5
Others	-	-	5	17.9	15	53.6	8	28.6	-	-
CGPA										
Less than 2.5	-	-	1	7.1	7	50.0	6	42.9	0	0.0
2.51 to 2.75	1	2.5	10	25.0	12	30.0	15	37.5	2	5.0
2.76 to 3.0	1	1.4	9	12.7	19	26.8	38	53.5	4	5.6
3.01 to 3.25	3	2.1	17	12.1	46	32.6	65	46.1	10	7.1
3.26 to 3.50	3	7.3	5	12.2	14	34.1	16	39.0	3	7.3
3.51 to 3.75	-	-	6	30.0	8	40.0	5	25.0	1	5.0
3.76 & above	-	-	3	13.0	5	21.7	13	56.5	2	8.7
N = 350										

1=strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=strongly agree

The table above shows that a total of 97 (50.3%) male and 83 (52.8%) female participants agreed to the statement, whereas total of 30 (15.5) male and 29 (18.5%) female participants disagreed to the statement. 52.1% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years were in agreement, however 33.4% respondents, who also agreed to the statement, but were within age group of 23 – 27 years. On contrary, 16% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years and 33.3% respondents within age group of 23 – 27 years were disagreed with the said statement. Additionally, 52.4% participants who gave positive response were from Urdu speaking language group; and 53.2% participants fall within 3.01 to 3.25 CGPA.

Table 6

Response to statement 5 of Intensive Reading Strategy

Cross tabulation of Statement 5:			The rhyming words are easy to remember							
Demographic Factors	1(SD)		2(D)		3(UD)		4(A)		5(SA)	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Gender										
Male	8	4.1	10	5.2	16	8.3	92	47.7	67	34.7
Female	5	3.2	11	7.0	29	18.5	58	36.9	54	34.4
Age										
18-22 Years	10	3.1	20	6.1	40	12.3	143	43.9	113	34.7
23-27 Years	2	16.7	1	8.3	2	16.7	3	25.0	4	33.3
28-31 Years	1	12.5	-	-	1	12.5	2	25.0	4	50.0
32 Years & above	-	-	-	-	2	50.0	2	50.0	-	-
Mother Tongue										
Urdu	10	4.1	16	6.6	29	11.9	115	47.1	74	30.3
Sindhi	-	-	2	4.9	7	17.1	18	43.9	14	34.1
Punjabi	1	5.0	0	0.0	4	20.0	7	35.0	8	40.0
Pushto	2	11.8	1	5.9	2	11.8	3	17.6	9	52.9
Others	-	-	2	7.1	3	10.7	7	25.0	16	57.1
CGPA										
Less than 2.5	-	-	1	7.1	-	-	3	21.4	10	71.4
2.51 to 2.75	3	7.5	-	-	6	15.0	22	55.0	9	22.5
2.76 to 3.0	3	4.2	3	4.2	12	16.9	28	39.4	25	35.2
3.01 to 3.25	2	1.4	8	5.7	19	13.5	65	46.1	47	33.3
3.26 to 3.50	5	12.2	3	7.3	4	9.8	17	41.5	12	29.3
3.51 to 3.75	-	-	2	10.0	2	10.0	9	45.0	7	35.0
3.76 & above	-	-	4	17.4	2	8.7	6	26.1	11	47.8
N = 350										

1=strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=strongly agree

The table above shows that a total of 159 (82.4%) male and 112 (71.3%) female participants agreed to the statement, whereas total of 18 (9.3%) male and 16 (10.2%) female participants disagreed to the statement. 78.6% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years were in agreement, however 58.3% respondents, who also agreed to the statement, but were within age group of 23 – 27 years. On contrary, 9.2% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years and 25% respondents within age group of 23 – 27 years were disagreed with the said statement. Additionally, 77.4 % participants who gave positive response were from Urdu speaking language group; and 79.4% participants fall within 3.01 to 3.25 CGPA.

Table 7

Response to statement 6 of Intensive Reading Strategy

Cross tabulation of Statement 6: I think the repetition of new words is a good technique for enhancing vocabulary.										
Demographic Factors	1(SD)		2(D)		3(UD)		4(A)		5(SA)	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Gender										
Male	13	6.7	-	-	11	5.7	89	46.1	80	41.5
Female	16	10.2	-	-	5	3.2	75	47.8	61	38.9

Age										
18-22 Years	27	8.3	-	-	15	4.6	149	45.7	135	41.4
23-27 Years	2	16.7	-	-	1	8.3	7	58.3	2	16.7
28-31 Years	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	62.5	3	37.5
32 Years & Above	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	75.0	1	25.0
Mother Tongue										
Urdu	21	8.6	-	-	10	4.1	114	46.7	99	40.6
Sindhi	3	7.3	-	-	3	7.3	20	48.8	15	36.6
Punjabi	2	10.0	-	-	-	-	7	35.0	11	55.0
Pushto	1	5.9	-	-	3	17.6	10	58.8	3	17.6
Others	2	7.1	-	-	-	-	13	46.4	13	46.4
CGPA										
Less than 2.5	4	28.6	-	-	-	-	6	42.9	4	28.6
2.51 to 2.75	3	7.5	-	-	2	5.0	23	57.5	12	30.0
2.76 to 3.0	2	2.8	-	-	6	8.5	35	49.3	28	39.4
3.01 to 3.25	14	9.9	-	-	3	2.1	65	46.1	59	41.8
3.26 to 3.50	2	4.9	-	-	2	4.9	16	39.0	21	51.2
3.51 to 3.75	2	10.0	-	-	-	-	8	40.0	10	50.0
3.76 & above	2	8.7	-	-	3	13.0	11	47.8	7	30.4
N = 350										

1=strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=strongly agree

As can be seen from the table above, 169 (87.6%) male and 136 (86.7%) female respondents agreed to the statement, whereas total of 13 (6.7%) male and 16 (10.2%) female participants disagreed to the statement. 87.1% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years were in agreement, however 75% respondents, who also agreed to the statement, but were within age group of 23 – 27 years. On contrary, 8.3% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years and 16.7% respondents within age group of 23 – 27 years were disagreed with the said statement. Additionally, 87.3% participants who gave positive response were from Urdu speaking language group; and 87.9% participants fall within 3.01 to 3.25 CGPA.

Table 8

Response to statement 7 of Intensive Reading Strategy

Cross tabulation Statement 7: Teachers input on new words appearing in text during reading practice, help in increasing vocabulary

Demographic Factors	1(SD)		2(D)		3(UD)		4(A)		5(SA)	
	f	%	f	%	f		f	%	f	%
Gender										
Male	-	-	14	7.3	15	7.8	98	50.8	66	34.2
Female	-	-	9	5.7	16	10.2	91	58.0	41	26.1
Age										
18-22 Years	-	-	-	-	2	25.0	1	12.5	5	62.5
23-27 Years	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	50.0	2	50
28-31 Years	14	7.3	-	-	15	7.8	98	50.8	66	34.2
32 Years & Above	9	5.7	-	-	16	10.2	91	58.0	41	26.1
Mother Tongue										
Urdu	14	5.7	-	-	20	8.2	138	56.6	72	29.5
Sindhi	4	9.8	-	-	6	14.6	18	43.9	13	31.7
Punjabi	3	15.0	-	-	1	5.0	13	65.0	3	15.0
Pushto	-	-	-	-	1	5.9	12	70.6	4	23.5
Others	2	7.1	-	-	3	10.7	8	28.6	15	53.6
CGPA										
Less than 2.5	-	-	-	-	2	14.3	10	71.4	2	14.3
2.51 to 2.75	1	2.5	-	-	5	12.5	23	57.5	11	27.5
2.76 to 3.0	8	11.3	-	-	5	7.0	35	49.3	23	32.4

3.01 to 3.25	11	7.8	-	-	13	9.2	73	51.8	44	31.2
3.26 to 3.50	2	4.9	-	-	3	7.3	24	58.5	12	29.3
3.51 to 3.75	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	75.0	5	25.0
3.76 & above	1	4.3	-	-	3	13.0	9	39.1	10	43.5
N = 350										

1=strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=strongly agree

The table above shows that a total of 164 (85%) male and 132 (84.1%) female participants agreed to the statement, whereas total of 14 (7.3%) male and 09 (5.7%) female participants disagreed to the statement. 75% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years were in agreement, however 100% respondents, who also agreed to the statement, but were within age group of 23 – 27 years. On contrary, 7.3% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 28 – 31 years and 5.7% respondents within age group of 32 Years & above were disagreed with the said statement. Additionally, 86.1% participants who gave positive response were from Urdu speaking language group; and 83% participants fall within 3.01 to 3.25 CGPA.

Table 9

Response to statement 8 of Intensive Reading Strategy

Cross tabulation of Statement 8:			I learn many words while listening to colleagues and elders.							
Demographic Factors	1(SD)		2(D)		3(UD)		4(A)		5(SA)	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Gender										
Male	-	-	6	3.1	24	12.4	86	44.6	77	39.9
Female	-	-	6	3.8	18	11.5	74	47.1	59	37.6
Age										
18-22 Years	1	12.5	-	-	1	12.5	4	50.0	2	25.0
23-27 Years	-	-	-	-	0	0.0	2	50.0	2	50.0
28-31 Years	6	3.1	-	-	24	12.4	86	44.6	77	39.9
32 Years & Above	6	3.8	-	-	18	11.5	74	47.1	59	37.6
Mother Tongue										
Urdu	8	3.3	-	-	32	13.1	112	45.9	92	37.7
Sindhi	-	-	-	-	2	4.9	20	48.8	19	46.3
Punjabi	2	10.0	-	-	3	15.0	6	30.0	9	45.0
Pushto	-	-	-	-	3	17.6	10	58.8	4	23.5
Others	2	7.1	-	-	2	7.1	12	42.9	12	42.9
CGPA										
Less than 2.5	1	7.1	-	-	1	7.1	9	64.3	3	21.4
2.51 to 2.75	1	2.5	-	-	5	12.5	17	42.5	17	42.5
2.76 to 3.0	1	1.4	-	-	8	11.3	35	49.3	27	38.0
3.01 to 3.25	2	1.4	-	-	20	14.2	65	46.1	54	38.3
3.26 to 3.50	1	2.4	-	-	6	14.6	18	43.9	16	39.0
3.51 to 3.75	2	10.0	-	-	1	5.0	8	40.0	9	45.0
3.76 & above	4	17.4	-	-	1	4.3	8	34.8	10	43.5
N = 350										

1=strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=strongly agree

The table above shows that a total of 163 (84.5%) male and 133 (84.7%) female participants agreed to the statement, whereas total of 06 (3.1%) male and 06 (3.8%) female participants disagreed to the statement. 75% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years were in agreement, however 100% respondents, who also agreed to the statement, but were within age group of 23 – 27 years. On contrary, 12.5% of the respondents falling within the age bracket of 18 – 22 years and 3.1% respondents within age group of 28 – 31 years were disagreed with the said statement. Additionally, 83.6% participants who gave positive response were from Urdu speaking language group; and 84.4% participants fall within 3.01 to 3.25 CGPA.

Table 10
Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Intensive Reading

Intensive Reading	Mean Ratings		Overall Mean Ratings	Standard Deviation
	Male	Female		
Vocabulary expansion through intensive reading.	4.12	4.19	4.15	0.871
Vocabulary acquisition by reading interested words.	3.79	3.73	3.77	1.003
Vocabulary increase through reading story books.	3.68	3.78	3.77	1.038
Repetition provides familiarity with words.	3.37	3.41	3.39	0.891
Rhyming is good for memory of words.	4.04	3.92	3.99	1.025
Repetition increases memorization of words.	4.22	4.15	4.19	0.863
Teachers' word input during text reading increases vocabulary.	4.12	4.04	4.09	0.807
Listening others help learning new words.	4.21	4.18	4.20	0.779

In response to the first item of intensive reading strategy “Vocabulary expansion through intensive reading”, the overall mean rating of male and female is 4.15 with standard deviation 0.871, whereas about second item, “Vocabulary acquisition by reading interested words.”, the overall mean rating of both gender is 3.77 with 1.003 standard deviation. As far as repetition, rhyming and memorization items of intensive reading strategy are concerned, the overall mean rating for both the genders is 3.39,3.99,3.419 with standard deviation of 0.891,1.025 and 0.863 respectively. The listening and teachers' input during text reading, the overall main rating for male and female is 4.20, 4.09 with standard deviation of 0.779 and 0.807 respectively, whereas the item regarding story reading indicates overall mean rating of 3.77 about male and female with 1.038 standard deviation.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study implies what lies behind this phenomenon and examines various linguistic and socio-psychological aspects, which have some bearing upon second language acquisition, particularly building vocabulary and its role in attaining competence in second language. Results showed that majority of the learners male and female both agreed that vocabulary can be enhanced through appropriate intensive reading strategies like; reading words their interest, reading story books, repeating lesson, through rhyming words, repetition of new words and words while listening to colleagues and others, most of the learners rated high scores to intensive reading strategies. Teachers also agreed that word input during text reading increases vocabulary and listening to others help learning new words. The study's findings showed that these various teaching methods gradually enhance students' language competency, comprehension, and expression for use in real-world situations. The students' perspectives also indicated that teaching English vocabulary while taking into account each student's specific requirements and cultural background will help students improve their language skills. The study's conclusions showed that both teachers and ESL learners believed that vocabulary learning practices have a substantial impact on language competency among multilingual/diversely cultural ESL learners. These results concur with those of the earlier researchers (Laufer & Hill, 2000; Teng, 2019; Schmitt, 2019; Shin, Sok; Mihai, 2021 & Do, 2022) findings. The study also demonstrated that undergraduate ESL/EFL students need assistance with lexical knowledge for vocabulary learning in a number of different methods. Since English is a language that is used in every part of life, it is crucial to give ESL students the proper lexical knowledge for great language competency. The study also showed that undergraduate ESL/EFL learners require support with lexical knowledge for vocabulary learning through a variety of ways. English language that is utilized in every aspect of life, so it is essential to provide ESL learners with appropriate lexical knowledge for excellent language competence.

Recommendations for teachers and learners

When teachers apply vocabulary learning strategies for diverse cultures of ESL learners in a classroom to address instructional problems, they need to consider micro-level contextual factors such as students' culture, background, and their preferred learning styles. This allows teachers to use a variety of approaches and innovation to make meaningful personalization for their students. However, vocabulary research and studies that tend to illustrate the acquisition of vocabulary in varied classroom settings have not identified the student-level contextual effects that are relevant to vocabulary acquisition. The learners are required to be taught English vocabulary in view of their particular needs and cultural background, with an aim to gradually enhance their language ability, improving comprehension and expression for its application in life. Teachers' must have proficiency

to know the level of comprehension of their students' cultural backgrounds, learning styles, and learning styles in general on their students' vocabulary development so that this gap might be filled. The study also indicates that undergraduate ESL/EFL learners need facilitation regarding lexical knowledge for vocabulary acquisition through various vocabulary learning approaches. In order to have better learning outcomes from undergraduate ESL/EF learners, there is a need to equip them with adequate lexical knowledge for better performance as English is the lingua franca and a language used in every sphere of life. Therefore, in today's dynamic world, better communication is the key to success and in Pakistan's education system, different factors and variables as discussed in this study, need proper attention to provisioning of awareness on improving English language to undergraduate ESL/EFL for use in life. Intensive Reading should be given more weightage in the present teaching process at undergraduate ESL/EFL Learners' level. Undergraduate ESL / EFL Learners need to revisit various aspects of intensive reading for better vocabulary acquisition. Special focus should be given to reading strategies and approaches.

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